

THE FIRST BOOK OF DISCIPLINE
AND ITS USE IN
THE SCOTTISH REFORMATION

by

Clinton Baker

A.B., Emory University

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

A.	Subject Defined.....	iv
B.	Subject Delimited.....	iv
C.	Subject Justified.....	v
D.	Method of Procedure.....	v
E.	Sources.....	vi

CHAPTER I

POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS

IN SCOTLAND BEFORE THE REFORMATION

32489

A.	Introduction.....	1
B.	Political Developments in Scotland.....	1
C.	The Character of the Scotch People.....	7
D.	Economic Conditions in Scotland.....	8
E.	The Roman Church in Scotland.....	9
	1. The Early Scottish Church.....	10
	2. Power and Wealth of the Pre-Reformation Church.....	11
	3. Worship in the Church.....	12
	4. Doctrines of the Church.....	12
	5. The Lives of the Clergy.....	13
	6. The Church's Relation to the People.....	14
	7. The Church and Education.....	15
	a. Secondary Education.....	15
	b. Higher Education.....	16
F.	The Growth of Reformation Doctrine.....	17
	1. The Lollards.....	17
	2. The Culdees.....	17
	3. Luther.....	17
	4. Patrick Hamilton.....	18
	5. George Wishart.....	20

May 1954

6.	Lords of the Congregation.....	20
7.	Somerset's Bibles.....	21
G.	Summary.....	22

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST BOOK OF DISCIPLINE, ITS

PREPARATION AND COMPOSITION

A.	Introduction.....	23
B.	Description of the Times Around the Year 1560.....	23
C.	John Knox - His Preparation and Qualifications for Leadership in the Scottish Church.....	30
D.	The First Book of Discipline.....	35
1.	The First Head - Of Doctrine.....	35
2.	The Second Head - Of Sacraments.....	36
3.	The Third Head - Touching the Abolishing of Idolatry.....	37
4.	The Fourth Head - Concerning Ministers and Their Lawful Election.....	38
5.	The Fifth Head - Concerning the Provisions for the Ministry and the Distribution of the Rents and Possessions Justly Appertaining to the Church.....	40
a.	The Head of the Superintendents.....	41
b.	For the Schools.....	42
(1)	Elementary School.....	43
(2)	Grammar School.....	43
(3)	College.....	44
(4)	University.....	44
6.	The Sixth Head - Of the Rents and Patrimony of the Church.....	46
7.	The Seventh Head - Of Ecclesiastical Discipline	48
8.	The Eighth Head - Touching the Election of Elders and Deacons.....	50
9.	The Ninth Head - Concerning the Policy of the Kirk.....	50
a.	For Prophesying or Interpreting of the Scriptures.....	51
b.	Of Marriage.....	51
c.	Of Burial.....	52
d.	For Reparation of the Kirk.....	52
e.	Of Punishment of False Leaders.....	53
E.	Summary.....	53

CHAPTER III

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE FIRST BOOK OF DISCIPLINE

A.	Introduction.....	56
B.	The Issue of the Patrimony of the Roman Church.....	56
C.	Contributions to Education.....	60
D.	Contributions in Church Polity.....	65
	1. Elders.....	70
	2. Deacons.....	70
	3. Readers.....	70
E.	Summary.....	70

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	72
------------------------	----

BIBLIOGRAPHY	76
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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

A. Subject Defined

The Reformation is considered a major turning-point in the history of Scotland. From the first introduction of Christianity in about the fifth century until the middle of the sixteenth century, the religious life of the country was dominated by the Church of Rome. Then one day in 1560 the old Roman Church was done away with by the Scottish Parliament, and the new Protestant Reformed Church officially replaced it. From that day to this the religious life of Scotland has been dominated by the Reformed Church of Scotland. As the Church has always played a major role in the life of the nation - the Church owning almost half the land just before the Reformation and the General Assembly of the Reformed Church at times having more power than Parliament itself - it is quite evident that a study of some aspects of the Scotch Reformation would reveal religious factors that have been major influences in the life of Scotland.

B. Subject Delimited

Naturally it would be impossible in the limited space that is allocated to cover all the aspects of the Scotch Reformation. Much has been written on the subject, and the Reformation in Scotland is spread out over a century

and a half of struggle. Since there are so many aspects that could be considered, this paper will be limited to the First Book of Discipline. This document appeared in the year 1560 as a result of the proclamation of Parliament which set aside the Church of Rome and established the Reformed Church.

C. Subject Justified

The First Book of Discipline was an important instrument of government in the life of the new Church. It is considered the original constitution of the Reformed Church; the Book draws a portrait of what the reformers wished to do for the nation. Included in it is a description of the government of the new Church, an outline of a complete system of education, and a statement concerning the distribution of the wealth of the old Roman Church. The contents throw light on the conditions of the times and the motives and aims of the reformers. A study of its parts and the place it occupied in the Scotch Reformation should throw light on what took place during those dramatic years of Scottish history.

D. Method of Procedure

In Chapter One an examination will be made of the life of Scotland prior to the year 1560 to determine the need for reformation. Economic conditions, political developments

and the religious conditions of the country will be noted. The development of Reformed doctrine will also be discussed.

The first part of Chapter Two will contain a description of that period of history which produced the First Book of Discipline and of the life of John Knox, the primary contributor to the Book. The bulk of the chapter will be a first-hand study of the Book of Discipline itself.

Chapter Three will contain an examination of the effects of the Book with special emphasis upon the Reformation period. Particular attention will be given to the issue of Church patrimony, Knox's scheme of education, and the modifications that took place in Church polity.

E. Sources of Data

Most of the sources of data will be histories of recognized Scotch historians plus biographies of the Scotch reformers and their works.

The major source to be used is a copy of the original First Book of Discipline published in 1621. Actual copies of this Book are evidently scarce, since the copy used is in the rare book room of the New York Public Library on Forty-Second Street in Manhattan.

The chief sources for the events leading up to the writing of the First Book of Discipline will be the works of standard Scotch historians such as John Burton, Hume Brown and Thomas Mc'Crie. For the results of the First

Book of Discipline the main sources will be Kistler's article in the Scottish History Review, "John Knox's Services to Education," and Janet MacGregor's doctorate thesis, "The Scotch Presbyterian Polity." Both these works are scholarly, well-documented and authoritative in their respective fields.

CHAPTER I
POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS
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A. Introduction

In order to ascertain the significance of the First Book of Discipline and to properly understand what contributions the Scotch Reformation as a whole made, it is necessary to examine the conditions within the nation prior to the reform movement. One might well ask: Was a Book of Discipline needed? Did Scotland really require a reformation? What were the needs? It would be proper, then, in this first chapter to see if there really was a need at all for the changes in Christian practice that took place in the nation during the latter part of the sixteenth century and most of the seventeenth century. So Chapter One will be an examination of the life of Scotland before the year 1560.

B. Political Developments in Scotland

Much of the later political history of Scotland previous to 1560 is the account of a struggle between French Roman Catholic influences and English Protestant influences to dominate the country. Scotland was never under the domination of the Roman Empire and was inhabited by scattered clans of Picts, Scots, etc. Under the kingship of David I (1124-1153)

the land was unified and enjoyed a golden age until the death of King Alexander III (1286).¹ The years 1296-1460 find the nation thrown into almost continuous warfare and consequent poverty.² Nostestein says:

In those days there was no law in Scotland, but the great man oppressed the poor man, and the whole kingdom was one den of thieves ... justice was sent into banishment, beyond the kingdom's bounds.³

Finally James IV (1488-1513) was able to assert the power of the crown over the barons and win a peace with England through marriage with a daughter of Henry VII. Under his reign commercial prosperity returned and a powerful navy was built. It seemed to James that an European alliance, which included England, was organizing to destroy France, the traditional ally of Scotland. Against the advice of his counselors he went to war against England to help France and was killed in the Battle of Flodden in September, 1513. The disaster at Flodden Field destroyed a large segment of the nobility of Scotland and it was at least a century before the nation regained the prosperity she had had under James IV. The Battle of Flodden Field was also a disaster to Scotland because the heir to the throne was only an infant and there was no immediate continuous line of succession.⁴

Margaret, the wife of James IV and mother of the

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1. Wallace Nostestein: Scot in History, p. 105.
2. Robert Rait and George Pryde: Scotland, p. 35.
3. Nostestein, op. cit., p. 60.
4. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 20, p. 153.

infant James V, married the Duke of Angus, who governed the Kingdom until 1528. Young James escaped from those holding him captive and married two French women, the first dying as a bride. James V who came to the throne in about 1528 was encouraged by Henry VIII of England to throw off the yoke of the Roman Church and obtain the spoil of many monasteries. Young James V saw the need for reforming the clergy of the Roman Church in Scotland, but did not adhere to Protestant doctrines and did not approve of Henry VIII's violent methods.¹

Henry VIII continued to try to persuade James V to break off from alliance with France which was predominantly Roman Catholic, and to stand in opposition to Cardinal Beaton, the head of the Roman Party in Scotland. James refused to do this, and likewise refused to be drawn into various traps Henry VIII set for him. So Henry VIII went to war with him. James V was not supported by the Scotch nobility, who called this a "French War," but was supported by the Roman Church and Cardinal Beaton who supplied him with troops. His army was routed by the English at the Battle of Solway Moss, November, 1542. James V himself died a few days later leaving a daughter who was only six days old as heir. She was to be Mary Queen of Scots. McCrie observes concerning Henry VIII that his motives for renouncing subjection to the Pope were, to say the least, highly suspicious.² Rait and Pryde state

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1. Ibid.

2. Thomas Mc'Crie: Lives of the Reformers, p. 29.

concerning the Scottish nobles in 1542 that they were not devout Protestants; "their eyes were fixed on the spoils of the Church."¹

The Earl of Arran who was known to be inclined to the Reformed doctrines was appointed regent in 1542 in defiance of the Roman Cardinal Beaton. However, because of Henry VIII's attempt to kidnap the infant Mary Queen of Scots and because of the English raid upon southern Scotland under the leadership of the Duke of Somerset, the Earl of Arran and Cardinal Beaton became reconciled and Scotland was drawn back into the arms of Roman Catholic France.²

In reaction against the burning of a heretic, a group of extremists in 1546 murdered Cardinal Beaton and then shut themselves up in the almost impregnable Castle of St. Andrews. Those who shut themselves up in the castle were later joined by a number of men of rank and education who had little to do with the murder of the Cardinal, but who were seeking refuge from Beaton, among whom was John Knox. The defenders of the castle daily looked to Protestant England for help, but instead a French fleet arrived and the Regent Earl of Arran with French aid was able to capture the castle.³ Knox himself was made a French galley slave for a year and a half until freed by the English Duke of Somerset.

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1. Robert Rait and George Pryde: Scotland, p. 35.
2. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 20, p. 154.
3. Ibid.

The English Duke of Somerset continued his raids on southern Scotland attempting to divide Scotland and France. The Scotch Regent Arran negotiated a marriage between Mary, the future Queen of Scots and next heir to the throne, and an heir of the French throne, thus further binding Scotland to a Roman Catholic country.

By this time France was becoming too powerful a nation to treat Scotland as an equal ally, desiring rather to make this country a province of France. The French bribed the Earl of Arran to resign as regent and placed Mary of Guise, the widow of James V on the throne. She voluntarily became an agent of French foreign policy. Thus the Scotch suddenly found a French woman on their throne, surrounded by French advisors, employing French soldiers, and following French policies. The Scottish people resented French domination and anti-French feeling was further encouraged by the growth of the Reformed doctrines.¹

In 1557 the Scotch Protestants formed a league which they called the "Lords of the Congregation." They were very much encouraged by a visit of John Knox who until this time had been in exile in Geneva, studying under John Calvin. A revolt against the French alliance and the Roman Church was hastened by events in England. In 1553 Elizabeth

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1. Ibid.

had come to the English throne. The French Roman Catholic King Francis II considered Elizabeth an illegitimate child and was proceeding to see that the Scotch regent, Roman Catholic Mary of Guise, was placed upon the throne of England. Thus it was to Elizabeth's advantage to assist the "Lords of the Congregation" against the Roman Scotch Regent. The Scotch Protestant "Lords of the Congregations" invited help from Elizabeth, announced deposition of Mary of Guise as ruler in 1559, but were driven into the Castle of St. Andrews by the occupying French troops. This time an English fleet arrived, which rescued the besieged Protestants, among whom¹ was John Knox, and overthrew the Roman Catholic regime.

One might well ask at this point how much of true religion was behind all the political alliances and struggles. One can see from the above that as long as Scotland was allied with France as she had been for centuries, she remained under the domination of Roman Catholicism, but the moment Protestant England stepped into the affairs of Scotland the supremacy of Protestantism was assured. Section F of this chapter will show, however, that the Reformation was not simply the result of political manoeuvring but came, rather, as the climax to the gradual spread of reformed doctrines and the valiant testimony of the men who gave their entire lives to the proclamation of the reformed message.

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1. Rosalie O. Masson: A Short History of Scotland the Nation, p. 207.

C. The Character of the Scotch People

In the year 1385 French troops were sent to the country to help expel the English. The observation of the French was that "never had they seen such wicked people, nor such ignorant hypocrites, and traitors."¹ This is no doubt a rather exaggerated statement and yet Wallace M~~o~~testein says of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries: "Nothing is clearer than that morals in Scotland, as in some other nations, were in a low state. Even marriage was less than sacrosanct."²

He also mentions other traits that were more commendable. Hospitality was a part of the code of the highlanders. "In 1498 Pedro de Ayala had called the Scots partial and hospitable to foreigners."³ They were an emotional people. Scotch narratives were full of scenes of weeping. The Scots were superstitious, with witches, fairies, and brownies a part of their daily living.⁴ Curiosity was another definite trait. M~~o~~testein writes:

Here we may recognize the modern Scot who talks to one on railway trains and asks questions, often personal questions, which the travelers unused to Scotland might resent.⁵

Finally, however, M~~o~~testein points out that in contrast to nations on the continent and England few lives of

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1. William L. Mathieson: Politics and Religion in Scotland, Vol. 1, p. 17.
2. M~~o~~testein, op. cit., p. 105.
3. Ibid., p. 75.
4. Ibid., p. 78.
5. Ibid., p. 82.

Scotch saints were written. Religious literature does not seem to have been in vogue in the land north of Britain before the Reformation. The medieval Scot did not choose his¹ heroes from among the saints.

D. Economic Conditions in Scotland

Apparently conflicting reports are given concerning the economic life of the nation. Brown says: "One thing that struck a French traveler in 1551 was that every day the country was becoming richer and more prosperous."² Again, the report of a Spanish agent emphasizes the prosperity of the country in his travels. The foreigner was impressed by the Edinburgh houses and their furniture and by the abundance of food.³ It is reported that during the later Middle Ages (1296-1460) the country was able to "wage almost continuous warfare, to pay (in part) heavy ransoms, to build, or rebuild, great religious houses, cathedrals and other churches, royal places..."⁴

In contrast to these observations there are also reports of conditions that do not portray prosperous times. The historian Hume Brown mentions that the landlords would not rent their lands for more than a few years at a time,

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1. Ibid., p. 106.
2. Hume P. Brown: A Short History of Scotland, p. 345.
3. Rait and Pryde, op. cit., p. 35.
4. Ibid., p. 33.

and at the end of the time they would turn out the tenants. As a result the farmers did not take good care of the land and only allowed it to deteriorate.¹ He also mentions that the country was much the same as it was in the year 1153 when David I had established the medieval feudal system. There were three classes of people - the greater and lesser barons,² the free tenants, and the serfs in the country. Again, he mentions that the towns were surrounded by walls and dikes which were not in good condition. The interior of the towns was much the same as in the Middle Ages - the streets no cleaner, the swine going back and forth as they pleased, no better lighting. It was not even safe to go out of doors³ after dark.

E. The Roman Church in Scotland

The original question raised in the introduction of this chapter, "Was a reformation really needed?" now needs to be considered. A very general picture of the Scottish people has been given, together with a sketch of the political history of the country showing the part which international affairs played in religious developments. Now a specific look at the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland before 1560 should reveal the need for the Reformation.

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1. Brown, op. cit., p. 347.
2. Ibid., p. 77.
3. Ibid., p. 349.

"The state of religion in Scotland immediately¹ before the Reformation was deplorable in the extreme," states Thomas Mc'Crie. He continues by saying:

Owing to the distance of this country from Rome, it was the more easy for the clergy to keep up on the minds of the people a superstitious veneration of the Papal power.²

1. The Early Scottish Church

Hetherington traces the original pure Church of Scotland from Roman times until the 12th century. He traces it through seemingly continual persecution from the hands of invading Norsemen, Englishmen from the south and the corrupting influences of the Roman Church, beginning with Augustine who was sent to England by Pope Gregory in the sixth century. He indicated that their headquarters were on the Island of Iona and described them as having "simplicity of forms, and purity of doctrine, taking the word of God as their sole rule and guide in both."³

It is difficult to know how much credence to attribute to the accuracy of Hetherington's statements about them because he seems to draw parallels between the ancient Culdees and the present Reformed Church of Scotland. He says:

It was, in short, manifestly the same institution which ultimately became the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, a parish minister, with his session of elders...⁴

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1. McCrie, op. cit., p. 4.
2. Hetherington, op. cit., pp. 11-15.
3. McCrie, op. cit., p. 4.
4. Hetherington, op. cit., p. 11.

It should be observed that the Church of Rome itself was not the same church in the sixth century as it was in the fifteenth. No doubt the Culdees made up the original pure Church of Scotland, which gradually was transformed into the Roman Catholic Church of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It should be noted that Mc'Crie says the original Culdees opposed transubstantiation, penance, confessional, worship of saints, etc.¹

2. Power and Wealth of the Pre-Reformation Church

It can hardly be doubted that the Church was wealthy and, therefore, materially powerful in the nation. Hume Brown states that "more than a third of all the wealth in the country was in the hands of the clergy."² He goes on to indicate that the bishops and abbots did not give the poor what was their due, but compelled them to make gifts to the Church with the threat of refusing baptism or marriage ceremonies if they did not comply.³ Dr. Mc'Crie feels that "full half the wealth of the nation belonged to the clergy."⁴ Brown quotes a French traveler as stating that the clergy were richer⁵ than the nobles - "which we know to have been the case" he adds. Ronnie, a secular historian, gives suggestions of the wealth and position of the Church. He says:

The wealth of the superior clergy induced even women of good families to live with them in a species of licensed

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1. Ibid., p. 16.
2. Brown, op. cit., p. 320.
3. Ibid., p. 32.
4. Mc'Crie, op. cit., p. 23.
5. Brown, op. cit., p. 345.

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concubinage.

James V's natural children were appointed to the five richest monasteries in Scotland ... the great nobles had come to regard the abbeys as a provision for their younger sons.²

3. Worship in the Church

Mathieson, who actually seems to be prejudiced a bit against Protestantism, says of the worship before 1560:

Public worship had degenerated into a mere round of mechanical ceremonies ... utterly unintelligible to the hearers. The parishioners seldom troubled to attend and the scanty congregation indulged in laughter and noisy talk, or loitered for traffic or past time at the church porch. Women were allowed to use even conventual churches as a market for their linen.³

Dr. McCrie who was a devout Protestant confirms what Mathieson states: "The religious services were mumbled over in a dead language, which many of the priests did not understand, and some of them could hardly read."⁴

Except on a few festival days, the places of worship in many parts of the country served as "sanctuaries for malefactors, places of traffic or resorts for past time."⁵

4. Doctrines of the Church

Since the Catholic Church was a part of the Church of Rome it would naturally adhere to those doctrines held by the Roman Catholic Church at that time. Dr. Mc'Crie says of

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1. Ibid., p. 28.
2. Ibid., p. 29.
3. Mathieson, op. cit., p. 24.
4. Mc'Crie, op. cit., p. 24.
5. Ibid.

the teachings:

The sacrifice of the mass was represented as procuring forgiveness of sins to the living and the dead ... the consciences of men ... were (drawn) to a ... reliance upon priestly absolutions, papal pardons and voluntary penance ... They were taught that if they regularly said their "aves" and "Credos," confessed themselves to a priest, purchased a mass, went on pilgrimages to the shrine of some celebrated saint ... their salvation was infallibly secured in due time.¹

Other doctrines held were the adoration of saints, veneration of relics, and the Virgin Mary. Salvation could not be found outside of the Church of Rome.²

5. The Lives of the Clergy

As one reads the sources on the Pre-Reformation Church of Scotland, one is struck by the uniformity of the comments made concerning the lives of those in authority - comments which come from Protestant, secular, and Catholic writers and sources.

a. The Protestant Estimate

From the professedly Protestant sources are found comments like these from Dr. McCrie:

The lives of the clergy exempted from secular jurisdiction and corrupted by wealth and idleness were become a scandal to religion, and an outrage to decency.³

While they professed chastity and (were prohibited) from contracting lawful wedlock, the bishops set the example of the most shameless profligacy before the inferior clergy.⁴

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1. Ibid., p. 25.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 24

4. Ibid.

b. The Secular Estimate

From acknowledged "neutral" or secular sources the following comments are found. Hume Brown writes:

Many of the clergy ... lived such bad lives and were so ignorant that they were quite unfit to be ministers of religion and were the laughing stock of the people.¹

Sir David Lindsay, layman and man of the world, wrote theatrical plays and comedies and satires on the clergy showing James V and the nobility the "ignorance, wickedness and profuseness that was among the clergy."²

c. The Roman Catholic Estimate

Roman Catholic sources give witness to the same condition. Ninian Winzet, a defender of the Roman Catholic Church at the time of the Reformation, testified to the "ignorance and ill character of the priesthood and condemns them as dumb dogs."³ A provincial council of the Roman Church in Scotland in 1549 declared that one of the troubles of the Church was the corrupt manners and profane lewdness of ecclesiastical persons of almost all ranks.⁴

6. The Church's Relation to the People

The Church had almost lost its hold on the people. In the towns among the handicraft and trading classes there was a growing body of intelligent opinion. The Church was losing out among this group as well as in the country. Ec-

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1. Brown, op. cit., p. 320.

2. John Row: The History of the Reformation of the Kirk of Scotland, p. 104.

3. Noptestein, op. cit., p. 104.

4. Ibid., p. 105.

clesiastical censure had fallen into disrepute.¹ The average Scotsman who had to struggle and toil for a bare existence "took no pleasure in gazing at a clergy that had grown fat in what seemed an easy institutional life."² There was hardly any preaching. Mathieson says:

The neglect of preaching was indeed a glaring anomalism for it impressed on the laity the fact that they paid dearly for a Church which gave them nothing in return.³

Poor tenants were evicted from the Church lands to make room for others who could afford to pay higher rents. Those in arrears were debarred from the communion. Mc'Crie observes that the Pre-Reformation Church seemed to have made no more impression upon the people as a whole "than it has upon savages who never heard of it."⁴

7. The Church and Education

Education in Scotland was under the supervision of the Church and this was one area where conditions were not quite so bad.

a. Secondary Education

A sincere effort seems to have been made to establish secondary schools throughout the country. In 1496 the first state legislation for the establishment of compulsory education was passed, but as Strong observes "like so many

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1. Ibid., p. 106.
2. Ibid., p. 105.
3. Mathieson, op.cit., p. 24.
4. Mc'Crie, op. cit., p. xiii.

enactments on education this seems to have been more honored¹ in the breach than in the observance."

Near the time of the Reformation the influence of the Renaissance was bringing into Scotland the desire to learn and especially in the towns there were rising generations who could read and write. To understand the schooling in the first half of the sixteenth century one needs to be clear on certain points which Strong brings out:

- (1) All pervading and dominating influence of the Church in matters of education.
- (2) Universal recognition of Latin as an indispensable element in learning
- (3) Influence of ancient Trivium (Grammar, Dialectic, and Rhetoric) and Quadrivium (Music, Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy) in determining the scope of the studies.²

b. Higher Education

In the fifteenth century the three outstanding universities of Scotland were founded. The system of universities which spread over northern Europe was an outgrowth of the Scholastic movement and its influence was felt in Scotland. Their purpose was extension of the Catholic faith,³ promotion of virtue, cultivation of understanding.

The University of St. Andrews was founded in 1411; the University of Glasgow in 1451 and the University of Aberdeen

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1. John Strong: A History of Secondary Education in Scotland, p. 32.
2. Ibid., p. 37.

in 1494. Each school was well located and as a whole they made a big contribution to the learning and culture of all Europe.¹

F. The Growth of Reformation Doctrine

1. The Lollards

In the early part of the 15th century James I (1424-1437) warned the Roman Catholic bishops to beware of the activities of the Lollards and to punish them. The Lollards were followers of John Wycliffe of England, the "morning star of the Reformation."² John Resley, a disciple of Wycliffe, was burned to death in 1407.³ Paul Crow, a follower of John Huss of Bohemia, was burned in 1432, and by the middle of the fifteenth century Lollardry had won a foothold in Scotland.⁴

2. Culdees

Hetherington believes that in some areas the doctrines of the Culdees were still known.⁵ Reference to this movement has been made in Section E of this chapter.

3. Luther

Early in the 1520's Lutheran tracts were coming over in the ships from the Low Countries.⁶ In 1525 an act

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1. Motestein, op. cit., p. 103.
2. Hetherington, op. cit., p. 22.
3. Ibid.
4. Motestein, op. cit., p. 103.
5. Hetherington, op. cit., p. 22.
6. Motestein, op. cit., p. 103.

of parliament was required to prohibit "the importation of all such writings and also forbidding all public disputation¹ about the heresies of Luther." Mason states:

And now a curious change was creeping through the mental atmosphere of Scotland. It was like the shudder and whisper among the trees that herald dawn even before the first streak of light shows in the eastern sky. Was it dawn?²

4. Patrick Hamilton

One of the greatest impetuses to the advancement of the Reformation in Scotland before 1560 was given by a young man by the name of Patrick Hamilton. Of noble birth, brilliant and attractive, his friends saw for him a tremendous future in the service of the Church. He was consecrated by his relatives as an infant, and while hardly able to walk the abbacy of Ferne was conferred upon him. In the year 1526 he himself resolved to investigate the Reformed doctrines. He went to the University of Wittenberg and became friendly there with Luther and Melanchthon. He then traveled to the University of Marbourg to obtain instruction under Francis Lambert. The more he learned, the more he desired to return to Scotland and share with his people what he had learned under the Protestant Reformers in Germany. When he returned to Scotland the eyes of all were upon him because of his learning, high birth, gentleness and youthfulness. His teachings were listened to with deep interest and were spread throughout

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1. Hetherington, op. cit., p. 24.
2. Masson, op. cit., p. 176.

the country. He was burned at the stake as a heretic in 1528 by the Roman Catholic clergy.¹ Masson states that James Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews and head of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, had no vision of the Church effecting its own reformation from within. He believed in burning heretics as a method of defending the Church from heresy.² The last words of Hamilton as the flames were enveloping his body were: "How long, O Lord, shall darkness cover this realm? How long wilt thou suffer this tyranny of man? Lord Jesus receive my spirit."³

The burning of Hamilton had the very opposite effect to that which was anticipated. It was thought that his death would be an example to deter others from embracing Reformed views. Instead people began to discuss the issues involved in his death. Thereby he accomplished by his martyrdom what he could not in his life.⁴ The deep impression of his martyrdom upon the popular mind was further increased by the fearful death of Friar Campbell who had ridiculed Hamilton at the stake. The Friar soon went almost out of his mind and died "in the utmost horror of mind, with the last appeal of the martyr ringing in his ears."⁵ Nostestein says: "The

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1. Hetherington, op. cit., pp. 24-25.
2. Masson, op. cit., p. 177.
3. Hetherington, op. cit., p. 26.
4. Mc'Crie, op. cit., p. 11.
5. Ibid.

burning of Patrick Hamilton at St. Andrews in 1528 for heresy did what the burning of heretics usually did, spread the heresy."¹

5. George Wishart

The burning of another heretic, George Wishart, in 1542 made a deep impression upon John Knox who was a follower of his and also resulted in the murder of Cardinal Beaton in revenge.² John Knox makes the following statement concerning Wishart: "A man of such grace as before him was never heard within this realm and are rare yet to be found in any man, notwithstanding this great light of God that since his days has shined upon us."³

6. Lords of the Congregation

Rait and Pryde point out that at this stage in the year 1542 the opposition to the Church on the part of the nobles was not due to Protestant convictions, though reformed doctrines had made some headway in Scotland, but because "their eyes were fixed upon the spoils of the church."⁴ On the other hand, when the nobles formed the "Lords of the Congregation" to oppose the Roman Catholic hierarchy and regency in 1559, religion ... was the real point at issue ... and religious zeal had so far overcome the ancient enmity to England that the Protestants invited Elizabeth of England to

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1. Motestein, op. cit., p. 103.

2. Mc'Crie, op. cit., p. 27.

3. James Stalker: John Knox - His Ideas and Ideals, p. 17.

4. Rait and Pryde, op. cit., p. 40.

accept the realm under her protection.¹

7. Somerset's Bibles

The factor that seemed to have enhanced the Protestant cause during these years were the cart-loads of Bibles that were brought in by the English Duke of Somerset during his raids upon southern Scotland, attempting to divert Scotland from France. Rait and Pryde say that "the cart-loads of Bibles which the English invaders are recorded to have brought with them gave a fresh impetus to Scottish Protestantism."² The Encyclopaedia Britannica states concerning the forming of the "Lords of the Congregation" against the occupying French:

Anti-French feeling was stimulated by the growth of Reformed doctrines, which had been spread by the cart-loads of Bibles that Somerset is recorded to have brought with him.³

G. Summary

A review has been made of the life of Scotland before the year 1560.

Conflicting reports of prosperity and backwardness are given on the economic conditions of the people. The people as a whole were extremely immoral and yet had a variety of commendable traits.

The political history of Scotland is the story of

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1. Ibid., pp. 43-44.

2. Ibid., p. 42.

3. Encyclopaedia Britannica, vol. 20, p. 154.

her alliances with Roman Catholic France and the gradual wooing of Protestant England until the alliance with France was broken and Scotland became Protestant. There can be traced a gradual growth of Protestant feeling for generations before 1560 through the influence of writings from without and the witness of martyrs from within.

The Roman Church was in a condition that warranted Reformation. The Church of Rome had corrupted the early pure Culdees, had acquired almost half the wealth of the land, yet their only influence on the people was adverse and corrupting, except perhaps in the matter of education. Its doctrines were far from Scriptural, its worship services were a mockery and the lives of the clergy, most of whom could not read, were full of debauchery.

So slowly but surely the influence of evangelical truth was making headway, while the established Roman Church sought to suppress it.

CHAPTER II
THE FIRST BOOK OF DISCIPLINE, ITS
PREPARATION AND COMPOSITION

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A. Introduction

The religious life of Scotland evidenced real need for a reformation. In this chapter a survey will be made of the times surrounding the birth of the First Book of Discipline in and around the year 1560. Attention will be given to John Knox, the chief composer of the First Book of Discipline. An examination will then be made of the contents of the Book itself.

B. Description of the Times around the Year 1560

The Reformation concerns one more than any other period in Scottish history. It required a hundred and fifty years to thoroughly Presbyterianize the nation; yet, because the old Church had been losing ground for so long, it was possible for an official change to a well developed Protestantism to be made very quickly.¹

The old Roman Church was not overthrown by an act of Parliament or by the activities of Knox and the Protestants; it had already collapsed internally, having little

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1. Moteststein, op. cit., p. 103.

held on the people and possessing little, if any, spiritual life. The Act of Parliament in 1560 did not so much overthrow the old Church as it did remove the debris. The Roman Church had been kept in power only by economic, political, and military forces, and when these were overthrown, it simply disappeared. For over a hundred years the Evangelical message had gradually been presented to a people who knew nothing of its spiritual truths. It was several generations, however, after 1560 before the nation was truly reformed morally.

Nostestein says: "The collapse of the old church had really preceded the establishment of the new kirk," and goes on to say that

Even when we realize (this fact), we find ourselves a little surprised that the Reformation was accomplished so quickly and with so little violence. Even with the exceptions ... the actual changeover from Catholicism was less like a storm than a tide. The tidal character of the change is more amazing when we remember that the Reformation was accomplished by a group of minorities ... It was as if the supporters of the Old Roman Church had little will to resist the innovation.¹

Mathieson observes:

Apart from political causes there can be no question that the Roman Church in Scotland fell rather from internal weakness than from the assaults of heresy.²

The condition of the common people themselves, according to one source, caused them to turn from the old faith to that which promised something better. "In such

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1. Ibid., p. 109.

2. Mathieson, op. cit., p. 20.

a time," says Nostestein, "the common people readily embraced a religion that promised change."¹

McCrie points out, however, without denying that many who took part in the Reformation did so with greedy motives, and without denying that such secular causes as the revival of learning, invention of the printing press, and events in the political realm (especially those which concerned relations with Protestant England and Catholic France) played a major role, that the real cause for the reformation of religion was the revival that took place in the lives of men. He continues by stating that the men who preached the Reformed doctrines were all men of deep piety who had prayed fervently and studied the Scriptures earnestly.² He says:

It was the preaching of the pure gospel by the Reformers, and especially the great doctrine of justification by faith through the righteousness of Christ, that gave its death blow to the papal system.³

Since the Scotch people were awakening to a revulsion to the old system with its moral degradation, it is small wonder, according to Masson, that the "austerity of the heretic preachers found ready acceptance" and that "their sincerity and zeal aroused spiritual fervor."⁴

While there can be little doubt that the major

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1. Nostestein, op. cit., p. 112.
2. McCrie, op. cit., p. 7.
3. Ibid.
4. Masson, op. cit., p. 176.

factor in effecting the return of the Scottish Church to Scriptural doctrines was the reading and preaching of the Scriptures themselves, it might be well to keep in mind the words of McCrie who says that if the reformers had not received the support of the civil power, humanly speaking the "infant reformation would have been strangled at its birth."¹

A number of observations should be made at this point concerning the way in which God was working to plant His truth in the hearts of the Scotch people.

1. A hunger was created by the oppressive methods and practices of the old Roman Church.
2. The importation of the Scriptures through the Lollards and the Duke of Somerset and the smuggling in of Tyndale's translation played a vital role not only in the transference of peoples' thinking to Reformed theology but also in the conversion of the hearts of many to a personal acceptance of Jesus Christ.
3. The martyrdom of such men as Hamilton and Wishart was seed for the growth of the new Reformed Church.
4. The favorable influence of those in political places in the government of England under Elizabeth and the Lords of the Congregation in Scotland provided a freedom in which the Reformation could grow.

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1. McCrie, op. cit., p. 8.

5. The leadership of John Knox, who came to Scotland at a crucial moment in 1558 to encourage the Protestants, will be mentioned later.

6. One basic observation that should be made is that the Reformation of Scotland was not the work of one man or of one generation but was a movement behind which the Holy Spirit was moving over a period of several generations gradually bringing a fundamental change into the life of the country, transforming it into a genuinely Christian nation.

All of Europe was anxiously watching the struggles that were going on in Scotland between the years 1559 and 1567. Lindsay says:

The years 1559 to 1567 were the most critical in the whole history of the Reformation. The existence of the Protestantism of all Europe was involved in the struggle in Scotland.¹

True, the Roman Catholic Church had been banned from the country in 1560 but Mary Queen of Scots, a devoted Roman Catholic, sat upon the throne and the struggle was to continue in debates and manoeuvrings between her and John Knox.²

"The question was," writes Lindsay, "would the new nation accept the Reformed religion or would the reaction triumph?"³ If Scotland were Roman Catholic it was almost inevitable that the English crown would fall into

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1. Thomas M. Lindsay: A History of the Reformation, p. 294.

2. Ibid., p. 295.

3. Ibid.

the hands of a Roman Catholic Queen who would also be Queen of Scotland. If England fell to the Romanist Church, the whole of Protestantism in France, the Low Countries and all of Europe would come close to being annihilated. If, however, Scotland continued to adhere to the Reformed faith, Protestant England would be safe and the Reformation on the continent would be secure.¹

Concerning this view, Lindsay says:

So thought the politicians, secular and ecclesiastical, in Rome and Geneva, in Paris, Madrid and in London. The European situation had been summed up by Cecil (Prime Minister of England under Elizabeth), "The Emperor (of Spain) is aiming at the sovereignty of Europe, which he cannot obtain without the suppression of the Reformed religion, and, unless he crushes England, he cannot crush the Reformation."²

After the English fleet had arrived, freeing John Knox and the beleaguered Lords of the Congregation from the Castle of St. Andrews, a great thanksgiving service was held in St. Giles. Then the Protestants drew up a petition to Parliament requesting that a settlement of the religious question of the country be made by a declaration that the official Church of Scotland was the Reformed Church.³ Parliament, in turn, requested a Confession of Faith, which John Knox and five others produced in four days. Knox was well-qualified for this kind of work, having had experience in helping to draw up the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church

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1. Ibid., p. 295.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 300.

of England and in drawing up a creed for his English congregation in Geneva. This Confession was superseded a century later by the Westminster Confession of Faith, a document which was not contradictory to Knox's Confession, but clearer, more logical, learned and comprehensive.¹

Parliament ratified Knox's Confessions and approved the document as containing "hailsome and sound doctrine, grounded upon the infallible truth of God's word."² Seven days later on August 24, 1560 Parliament declared that the Pope no longer had any authority over the Church of Scotland. It overruled all previous Acts of Parliament which were contradictory to the Confession of Faith. It forbade the saying or hearing of the mass under penalty of punishment. The second offense was punishable by banishment and the third by death.³

Parliament then requested that a Constitution for the new church be drawn up. This work was committed to the same group that had drawn up the Confession of Faith. It is with this document - the First Book of Discipline - that this paper is mainly concerned. A third document, The Book of Common Order, was drawn up to give instruction in the mode and purpose of the order of public worship.⁴

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1. Stalker, op. cit., pp. 20-23.
2. Lindsay, op. cit., p. 300.
3. Ibid., pp. 300-301.
4. Ibid., p. 301.

C. John Knox - His Preparation and Qualifications
for Leadership in the Scottish Church

Little is known of Knox's early life. It is believed that he was born around the year 1505 in Scotland. In 1522 he entered the University of Glasgow, but very little is known of him from this date on to the year 1546. Information concerning his entry into the priesthood or concerning his conversion is not available. It was in the year 1547 that Knox, a follower of George Wishart who was burned at the stake, first came into the public eye. After the murder of Cardinal Beaton in revenge for Wishart's martyrdom, Knox, who had had nothing to do with the murder, fled with his pupils into the Castle of St. Andrews where those who were guilty of the murder and others were holding out.¹ After the castle had been captured by a French fleet which had come to help the government put down the insurgents, Knox was exiled and spent the next year and a half as a galley slave in a French ship. He says little about this experience, but it was unquestionably an experience that God used to prepare him for his future work. It did teach him to pray. He writes:

Trouble and fear are very spurs to prayer, for, when man, compassed about with vehement calamities and vexed with continual solicitude, having by help of man no hope of deliverance ... doeth call to God for comfort and

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1. Stalker, op. cit., pp. 2-29.

help, such prayer ascendeth to God's presence and returneth not in vain.¹

Through the intervention of the English Duke of Somerset, Knox was freed, and in February of 1549 he is found preaching in England. Archbishop Cranmer did not hesitate to use foreigners such as Knox to occupy pulpits and chairs of teachers in the Church of England. Knox rose to be one of the six chaplains to Edward VI, the King of England, and in this position had the opportunity of helping in the compilation of the Book of Common Prayer and in the formulation of the Thirty-Nine Articles. In July of 1553 Edward VI (successor to Henry VIII) died and "Bloody" Mary, a Roman Catholic came to the throne, and after a few months a severe persecution of the Protestants forced Knox to flee to the continent.²

He ministered to the English in exile at Frankfurt for about a year and then went to Geneva, the home of John Calvin and the birth place of the Reformed half of the Reformation. Returning to Scotland for a brief visit in September of 1555, he found that the Reformation doctrines had made tremendous strides in his absence. He was amazed at the reception of the people, for they looked to him as a leader and many showed interest in evangelical truth.³

He writes:

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1. Ibid., p. 30.
2. Ibid., pp. 30-38.
3. Ibid., pp. 38-42.

I ... beheld the fervent thirst of my brethren, night and day sobbing and groaning for the bread of life. If I had not seen it with mine eyes in my own country I could not have believed it.¹

His visit to Scotland was a tremendous uplift to the whole Reformed movement, but after two months he received a summons to return to Geneva, where he labored for three more years as pastor of the English congregation there. In these tranquil years in Geneva he had time to think and meditate. The moral character of the city itself served as an inspiration of what could be done in Scotland.² He writes:

I neither fear nor am ashamed to say that Geneva is the most perfect school of Christ that ever was in the earth since the days of the Apostles. In other places I confess Christ to be truly preached, but manners and religion so truly reformed I have not yet seen in any other place.³

Calvin's system of discipline had converted Geneva into what many people thought of as a city of God on earth. The eyes of the ministers and magistrates were upon every detail of life, and once a week they met together to help each other discover their own failings. Andrew Lang feels that such discipline was satisfactory for a city like Geneva in the midst of spiritual quickening but that to apply it to a whole nation was not wise. He says that "the results were a hundred and twenty-nine years of unrest, civil war and persecution."⁴

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1. Ibid., p. 42.

2. Ibid., pp. 47-49.

3. John Knox: Works, Vol. 4, p. 225.

4. Andrew Lang: John Knox and the Reformation, pp. 72-73.

In Geneva Knox enjoyed the fellowship of scholarly Christian leaders; among his fellow-ministers were Calvin, Theodore Beza, Farel, Peter Viret and Vico of Naples. In his English congregation there were numerous scholars and ministerial students who were to play a major role in England after their return from exile. Miles Coverdale, translator of the Bible, Thomas Benthon, an outstanding Hebrew scholar, and James Pilkington, later Bishop of Durham, were¹ among the members of his congregation.

Knox returned to Scotland in the critical year of 1559 - the year in which the Queen summoned the Protestants before her to give an account of themselves. In the Civil War that ensued it was Knox who was the inspiration and encouragement to the Protestants when the tide was against them. The war was not prolonged, however, because of the² death of the Queen in 1560.

Through this brief sketch of the life of John Knox it is possible to see why it was fitting that he be chosen to take the lead in the composition of the First Book of Discipline. A number of preparatory experiences can be detected in the various stages of his life:

1. In many ways throughout the first forty-two years of his life Knox gained first-hand knowledge of the false doctrines and evil practices of the Roman Church and of the damage it

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1. Henry Cowan: John Knox - The Hero of the Scottish Reformation, pp. 141-142.
2. Stalker, op. cit., pp. 54-60.

was doing to his native land. He became thoroughly familiar with that institution which needed to be replaced, and no doubt did much thinking about what was needed to replace it.

2. The year and a half spent as a galley slave was quite obviously a time of rich spiritual growth which served as real preparation for events to come.

3. The five years in England were spent under the statesmanlike leadership of Archbishop Cranmer and provided Knox with opportunity to gain experience for his work on the Scottish Book of Discipline by enabling him to share in the compilation of the English Prayer Book and the Thirty-Nine Articles.

4. The discipline and moral purity of the city of Geneva inspired Knox with a vision of what could be done for Scotland in this realm. His mind was thoroughly imbued with the doctrines of Calvin, and the standards of education of the Genevan reformer, again, undoubtedly revealed possibilities for Scotland. Through his years in Geneva and in England, Knox must have received keen insights into the workings of international affairs and their relation to the Reformation struggle through his contact with men like Beza and others.

These various experiences served as preparation, then, for the activities in which Knox was to engage upon his return to Scotland in 1559 until the day he died in 1572. Not the least of these activities was the role he played in the composition of the First Book of Discipline.

D. The First Book of Discipline

The Book of Common Order was concerned with an expression of man's faith toward God, while the First Book of Discipline was concerned with an expression of man's duty to his fellow man.¹ It is this latter book that will be taken up at this time.

The First Book of Discipline is divided into nine "heads." They are: a. doctrine, b. sacraments, c. idolatry, d. election of ministers, e. distribution of possessions and rents of church, f. patrimony, g. discipline, h. elders and deacons, i. policy of the kirk.

The Book opens with a Preface which contains an address to the members of Parliament who had requested a written record of Reformed doctrine. Included in the Preface is a plea to the Parliament to judge the contents of the Book completely by the Scriptures - not accepting anything that was not in the Scriptures and not changing anything unless its error could be proven by the Scriptures.

1. The First Head-Of Doctrine

The body of the Book of Discipline begins with a strong, clear, positive statement as to the preaching of the Christian gospel. The opening sentence sets the tone for the entire Book:

Seeing that Christ Jesus is he whom God the Father has

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1. Ibid., p. 225.

commanded only to be heard and followed of his sheep, we judge it necessary that his Gospel be truly and openly preached in every church and assembly of this realm, and that all doctrine repugnant to the same be utterly repressed as damnable to man's salvation.¹

In explaining what is meant by the gospel, the authors refer to the Scriptures - both the Old and the New Testaments. The following statement further reveals the authority in which the Scriptures were held:

We affirm that all Scripture inspired of God is profitable to instruct, to reprove and to exhort. In which books of Old and New Testaments we affirm that all things necessary for the instruction of the Church, and to make the man of God perfect, is contained and sufficiently expressed.²

Concerning what is contrary doctrine the authors point directly to the beliefs and systems of the Roman Church that are out of harmony with God's Word - vows of chastity, forswearing of marriage, prayer for the dead, keeping of feast days of saints. A very strong feeling of repugnance for the whole Roman system is expressed in the following statement:

We judge them utterly to be abolished from this realm, affirming further that the obstinate maintainers and teachers of such abominations ought not to escape the punishment of the Civil Magistrate.³

2. The Second Head - Of Sacraments

There are two sacraments which are ordained in the Scriptures - Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The sacraments

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1. The First Book of Discipline, p. 24.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 25.

were to be administered in the language of the people who were to be instructed beforehand as to their significance. The order of the ministration of the sacraments was to be the same as it was in the city of Geneva.¹

In Baptism only water was to be used, not the oil, fat, wax or spittle that was used by the Roman Church - all of which were contrary to the teachings of Christ. Nothing is mentioned concerning the form of baptism although baptism by sprinkling was ordained by the Westminster Assembly a hundred years later.

Sitting at a table was suggested for the observance of the Lord's Supper, since this was what was done by Christ and His disciples. The minister was to break the bread and distribute it to those next to him who in turn were to distribute it to the others. While the elements were being passed the minister was to read passages of Scripture pertaining to the death of our Lord. The mass is condemned in strong language:

For as concerning the damnable error of the Papists who dare defraud the common people of the one part of that holy Sacrament ... we suppose their error to be manifest, that it needs no confutation.²

3. The Third Head - Touching the Abolishing of Idolatry

No type of idolatry was to be tolerated in the land. All monkeries, nunneries and abbeys were to be "utterly suppressed." Knox and his co-workers felt that wher

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1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p. 26.

ever idolatry was maintained or permitted where it could¹
be suppressed, there God's wrath would reign.

The charge of ruthless destruction of all monasteries and places of religious and cultural significance has often been made against Knox and the Scottish reformers. Rait and Pryde observe:

Much of the decorative work (on church buildings) was destroyed at the Reformation, but the old fallacy which attributed to the same revolution ... the dilapidation of the buildings themselves is no longer held by serious students. Lack of upkeep, faulty original planning, and poor repair work, ravages of a severe climate, English invasions, sheer neglect ... but of actual Protestant destruction of abbeys, cathedrals and churches there was exceedingly little.²

Knox's preaching often resulted in a number of people ruthlessly tearing down idols and statues much as Carlstadt had done in Wittenberg. In this connection Hume Brown observes: "Knox did not approve of these doings and he called those engaged in them 'the rascal multitude,' but it was impossible to stop them."³

The extreme abhorrence of the Scottish reformers for all forms of idolatry can only be understood in the light of the poverty and darkness in which the people lived under the Roman Church before the Reformation.

4. The Fourth Head - Concerning Ministers and Their Lawful Election.

No man was to be able to preach or administer the

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1. Ibid.

2. Rait and Pryde, op. cit., p. 44.

3. Brown, op. cit., p. 322.

sacraments until he had been duly called, examined, and admitted to the ministry. The prospective minister was to be examined in life and manners, in knowledge and doctrine. He was to preach a sermon before a group of ministers and elders interpreting some passage of Scripture, and under questioning be able to demonstrate his ability to refute the errors of the Romanist and other heresies. If he proved himself adequate at this point, he was then to go before a prospective congregation and preach, giving confession to his beliefs in justification, the office of Christ, the sacraments and all those points that had been corrupted¹ by the Pre-Reformation Church.

Each congregation was to elect its own pastor. Admitting that qualified ministers were relatively scarce, the writers of the Book of Discipline did not feel that this scarcity was any excuse for placing unqualified men in the pulpits. They felt that if a church was destitute of a minister it would diligently search for one, while if it had a "vain shadow" the people would remain content, thinking² they had a minister when really they did not.

For churches that did not have a minister, the office of reader was established. The reader was a leading lay person who would get up and read the prayers and the Scriptures. While he was encouraged to say a few words on

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1. The First Book of Discipline, pp. 27-28.

2. Ibid., pp. 27-30.

his own concerning the passage of Scripture, he was not allowed to administer the sacraments.¹

5. The Fifth Head - Concerning the Provisions for the Ministry and the Distribution of the Rents and Possessions Justly Appertaining to the Church

Each minister was to be provided with enough food, and so forth, as to support him and his family adequately. Enough was to be provided so that while the minister would never be rich he would not have to worry about where his next meal was coming from. The Book states:

We judge therefore that every minister have sufficient whereupon to keep a house, and be sustained honestly in all things necessary as well for keeping of his house and clothes ... fuel, books.²

The minister's children were to have the same opportunities for gaining an education and learning a trade that the other children had. The Book states:

We require not so much for ourselves (ministers) or for any that appertain to us, as that we do it for the increase of virtue and learning, and for the profit of posterity to come.³

The condition of the Reformed clergy was certainly in great contrast to that of the Pre-Reformation clergy with its wealth and power.

There were two other categories of people that the patrimony of the church was to provide for - the poor and the teachers.

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1. Ibid., pp. 30-32.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 33.

Each area was to care for the poor within its own bounds. For those who were able to work but remained content to be idle beggars the Reformers had no use, feeling that they ought to be punished by the Civil Magistrate, but for the widow, the orphan, the aged, and the lame, provision should be made. The poor were to return to their home towns where they were to be cared for. Beggars who were able bodied were to be compelled to work.¹ This is, again, in contrast to the Pre-Reformation Church which debarred those not able to pay rent from communion and removed their land from them.

a. The Head of the Superintendents

The nation was to be divided into ten districts with a superintendent in charge of each district. The superintendent was not a third order above the elders and ministers but was subject to the latter's censure and discipline. Their office was probably comparable to what is the district superintendent of the Methodist Church today. So that they would not become like the rich, idle bishops of the Pre-Reformation Church, the superintendents were to visit regularly the different congregations in their districts, not spending more than twenty days in any one place. They were to preach three times a week and not remain in the town of their residence more than three or four months at

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1. Ibid., pp. 34-35.

the most before making their rounds.

These superintendents were to be responsible for the planning and erection of new places of worship, especially where the Reformed faith had not yet taken hold, for the appointing of ministers, and for the examination of the life, diligence and faithfulness of both the ministers¹ and their congregations. The Book of Discipline also states:

They must further consider how the poor be provided, how the youth be instructed. They must admonish where admonition needeth ... and they must note such crimes as be heinous, that by the censure of the kirk the same be corrected.²

The superintendents were to be subject to the discipline of the ministers and elders of their districts if they were negligent in visiting or preaching or guilty of personal misdemeanor.³

b. For the Schools

A powerful plea was entered for the importance and necessity of schools. The Book states:

Seeing that God has determined that His Kirk here on earth shall not be taught by angels, but by men, and seeing that men are born ignorant of God, and of godliness ... of necessity it is that your Honors be most careful for the virtuous education, and godly upbringing of the youth of this realm.⁴

Just as the Church had been in charge of what little

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1. Ibid., pp. 35-39.
2. Ibid., p. 37.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 40.

education there was before the Reformation, so now the Reformed Church took charge of the educational system. The First Book of Discipline included what has been considered a remarkable program of education for the entire country. The purpose of education was to equip the people to know the truths of the Scriptures and the Church. The Book states:

For as the youth must succeed to us, so we ought to be careful that they have knowledge and erudition to profit and comfort that which ought to be most dear to us, to wit, the kirk and spouse of our Lord Jesus Christ.¹

They devised a system of graded schools which began at the elementary school level and continued on through the Universities. There were four major divisions: 1. Elementary School - to age eight, 2. Grammar School - to age twelve, 3. College or Higher Grammar School - to age sixteen, 4. University - completed at age twenty-four.²

(1) Elementary School

A basic schooling of two years was thought sufficient to teach a child the basic rudiments of religion - the Ten Commandments, Apostles' Creed, sacraments, person and work of Christ, and so forth. Particularly in the uplands away from the towns this was the limit of the possible education of many. In these remote places the minister or the reader was encouraged to catechize the children.³

(2) Grammar School

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., pp. 40-41.
3. Ibid.

In every town of any reputation there was to be a school master connected with each church. The school master was to be able to teach both grammar and Latin and was appointed by the church.¹

(3) College

In every notable town, especially in the towns of the superintendents, a college was to be erected where the arts of rhetoric, logic and the tongues were to be taught. The teacher was to receive a regular salary.²

(4) University

There were three main Universities, each centrally located, that were holdovers from the Pre-Reformation days. There was the University of St. Andrews, the University of Glasgow and the University of Aberdeen. The University of St. Andrews had three colleges while the ones at Glasgow and Aberdeen had two each. There were at least two chairs in each college.³ The curriculum was mapped out in detail.

In the first college there was a three year course in the arts; dialectics was studied during the first year, mathematics during the second and natural philosophy during the third. All students were required to take these subjects and to show evidence of having spent their time well before going further. The student graduated from this college at the end of three years in philosophy. The medical student,

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1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 59.

however, could continue for five more years and graduate in¹
medicine.

In the second college the student would take one year of moral philosophy (ethics, economics, politics), and having completed this successfully could continue four more years² and graduate in law.

The divinity student would spend one year in the second college studying moral philosophy. He apparently worked on Greek and Hebrew at this time also. When he had successfully completed his work in moral philosophy and Greek and Hebrew he was eligible to enter the third college where, after spending five years studying the Old and New³ Testaments, he graduated in divinity.

Each pupil was to go as far in school as he was qualified to go; at the end of Grammar School and College he was examined to see if he were eligible for further education. If he were not, he was to be taught some handicraft or trade with which he could make a living, provided he had been grounded in the basic knowledge of the Christian faith. All the youth of the land was required to go to school. The poor were to be financially assisted, while the parents of the rich were⁴ to finance the education of their own children. And so

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1. John Strong: History of Secondary Education in Scotland, p. 59.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. First Book of Discipline, pp. 40-41.

the rich and the poor were to go to school together, each having equal opportunity to advance. The schools were to be regularly inspected by the local minister, elders and leading men of the town who examined the pupils as to their progress.¹

John Strong says that, taken in detail, no part of the educational system of the First Book of Discipline was original - that its merit lay in the "thoroughness, comprehensiveness, vigorous purpose" with which the authors presented the idea of national instruction as an organized whole.² He lists the main educational principles of the system as follows:

- (1) National system
- (2) Graded from the primary to the university levels
- (3) All schools periodically examined
- (4) Promotion dependent upon successful effort
- (5) Provision made for the education of poor but worthy students³

According to Strong, "a system based purely upon secular teaching was perhaps unthinkable to those earnest men,"⁴ and Stalker observes that:

The whole sketch which is detailed and well informed in every direction is accompanied with a running comment on the desirability of learning for its own sake and its utility to the commonwealth.⁵

6. The Sixth Head - Of the Rents and Patrimony of the Church

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1. Ibid., p. 41.
2. Strong, op. cit., p. 61.
3. Ibid., p. 66.
4. Ibid., p. 61.
5. Stalker, op. cit., p. 244.

This Sixth Head, in which the reformers expressed their concern for the poor of the nation, is one of the most Christian of all the sections of the First Book of Discipline. The attitude of the reformers is, again, in stark contrast to that of the leaders of the Pre-Reformation Church. The following is a quotation:

We must crave of your Honours in the name of the eternal God and of His Son Christ Jesus that you have respect to your peer brethren, the Labourers and Manurers of the ground; who by the cruel beasts the Papists have before been oppressed, that their life to them has been dolorous and bitter. If you will have God author and approver of this reformation, you must not follow their foot-steps, but you must have compassion on your brethren, appointing them to pay reasonable teinds, that they may find some benefit of Christ Jesus now preached unto them.¹

The writers called to the attention of the members of Parliament who had requested that the First Book of Discipline be drawn up the fact that some of the land owners were treating the poor as badly as they had been treated under the Pre-Reformation Church. The Book advocated that the rents and patrimony of the old Church be used to help the poor and to pay an adequate salary to teachers and ministers. The authors wished to make clear that they were not speaking for their own benefit, but "in favor of the Labourers defrauded and oppressed by the priest ... pained with hunger ... compelled to pay that which he ought not."²

More will be mentioned later concerning the barons and the patrimony of the old Church.

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1. The First Book of Discipline, p. 47.
2. Ibid., p. 48.

7. The Seventh Head - Of Ecclesiastical Discipline

The reformers thought that just as a nation cannot long endure without the law and law enforcement, so the Church of Christ could not be brought to purity unless it too had a system of discipline covering those areas not under the jurisdiction of the civil authorities. Such crimes as blasphemy, adultery, murder and perjury, all punishable by death, were to be handled by the civil powers. Offences like drunkenness, excessiveness in eating and dress, fornication, oppression of the poor and licentious living were, however, to be handled by the Church. All peoples of the realm from all walks of life were to be subject to the discipline of the Church - rulers and subjects, preachers and laborers alike.¹

It was felt that the process of discipline should be slow and discreet, but that after a person had been excommunicated, the utmost severity was to follow. Before excommunication, when the discipline was to be "circumspect," the following steps were recommended:

a. If the offense was known only to a few, the offender was to be privately admonished to alter his habits. If the offender appeared unconcerned, then he was to be admonished by the minister.

b. If the offense was public, like brawling, drunkenness,

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1. Ibid., pp. 50-54.

or fighting, then the offender was to be brought before the minister, elders and deacons where his sin was to be made public. If the person concerned showed signs of true repentance, then on an appointed day the opportunity was given to him to acknowledge his repentance before the whole congregation and for them to receive him as one who is sorry for his past deeds.

c. If, when the offender appeared before the minister, he appeared stubborn and unrepentant, he was to be strongly admonished as to the dangerous state he was in.

d. If he remained unrepentant, the crimes of the offender, but not his name, were to be brought before the congregation that they might have special prayer for him.

e. If the offender still remained unrepentant, then he himself was to be brought before the congregation to see what action should be taken. Request was also made for those closest to the offender to travel with him to try to bring him to himself.

f. On the third Sunday, if the offender appeared repentant of his crime and of his long period of unrepentance, he was to be accepted by the Church. If, however, he was still unrepentant, he was to be excommunicated.

After an individual had been excommunicated, no one except his family was allowed to speak to him in eating, selling, buying or in any other contact. The notice of excommunication was to be published throughout the whole

realm so that no one would be ignorant of the offense. The children of the excommunicated person could not be baptized.¹

If persons committed crimes which were supposed to be handled by the civil authorities but were not apprehended by the civil authorities, it was the duty of the Church to step in. As the Book of Discipline puts it:

Because the accursed Papistry has brought in such confusion into the world, that neither was virtue rightly praised, neither yet vice fervently punished, the kirk of God is compelled to draw the sword.²

This was not intended to give the power of physical punishment to the Church, but rather the power of excommunication over those whom the civil authorities failed to apprehend.

8. The Eighth Head - Touching the Election of Elders and Deacons

The Book of Discipline states:

Men of best knowledge in God's word and honest life, men faithful and of most honest conversation that can be found in the kirk, must be nominated to be in election. 3

The elders were to be responsible for the spiritual welfare of the Church, especially in matters of discipline. The Deacons were to be responsible for the financial matters of the Church, receiving the rents from the old Church, and gathering and distributing the alms.

9. The Ninth Head - Concerning the Policy of the Kirk

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1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p. 50.

3. Ibid., p. 55.

By the "policies" of the kirk were meant those matters which promoted its spiritual welfare. There were some practices which were considered absolutely indispensable to the work of the church and without which there would be no visible witness to the existence of a true church. Such practices included the true preaching of the Word, the right administration of the sacraments, public prayers, instruction in religion and the maintenance of discipline.

It was recommended that baptism be performed on Sunday, the Lord's Supper be celebrated four times a year, and that there be services of Scripture reading and preaching¹ in the towns and villages on days in addition to Sunday.

a. For Prophesying or Interpreting of the Scriptures

All interpretation which was in disagreement with the basic tenets of the faith and in open contradiction to the Bible were to be rejected. It was the interpreter's responsibility to "open up the mind of the Holy Spirit" on a particular text. After the interpreter had finished his exposition the minister and others were to assemble together to discuss that which had been expounded. Any who had the gifts of interpreting or contributing talent could be² drafted.

b. Of Marriage

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1. Ibid., pp. 57-60.
2. Ibid., pp. 60-62.

Neither a man nor a woman could contract marriage privately without the consent of their parents. The man had to be at least fourteen years of age and the woman twelve. The writers expressed their conviction that God's hand was behind the joining of two hearts in the following words:

The work of God we call, when two hearts without filthiness before committed, are so joined, and both require and are content to live together in that holy bond of matrimony.¹

The marriage ceremony was to be performed in public and the marriage tie not to be broken except on the grounds of adultery. The person guilty of adultery was to be put to death by the civil authorities - a practice the writers believed to be in accord with the Word of God. Concerning the death penalty the Book states:

For in the fear of God we signify unto your Honours, that whosoever persuades you that you may pardon where God commanded death deceives your souls and provokes you to offend God's majesty.²

c. Of Burial

In reaction against the superstition centering around Roman Catholic burials, the writers of the Book of Discipline felt that there ought not to be any singing or reading at Reformed burials, but only a sermon, if anything,³ for the benefit of the hearers.

d. For Reparation of the Kirk

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1. Ibid., pp. 62-65.
2. Ibid., p. 65.
3. Ibid., pp. 65-66.

This section pertains to the building used for worship. Each building was to have doors, glass windows that could close and keep the rain out, a bell to call the people to worship, a pulpit, a basin for baptizing and a table for communion.¹

e. Of Punishment of False Leaders

The reformers asked Parliament for "punishment of those that profane the Sacraments and contemne the word of God, and do presume to minister them not being thereto lawfully called."²

10. Conclusion

Thus have we in these few heads offered unto you your Honours our judgment according as we were commanded, touching the reformation of things, which heretofore have altogether been abused in this cursed Papistry... Our judgment alude to the generations following for a movement and witness of how lovingly God called you and this nation to repentance... God the father of our Lord Jesus Christ by the power of his Holy Spirit so illuminate your hearts ... and so strengthen you ... that boldly you may punish vice and maintain virtue within this realm, to the praise of his holy name, to the comfort and assurance of your own conscience and to the consolation and the good example of the posterity following. Amen.³

With these words the leaders of the Reformation concluded the First Book of Discipline.

E. Summary

A study of the First Book of Discipline has been

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1. Ibid., p. 66.
2. Ibid., pp. 67-68.

made together with a summary of the times in which it was composed and of the life of John Knox as it influenced the character of the Book. By an act of legislation Parliament officially invalidated the decadent Roman Church, and asked for a Confession of Faith, Book of Worship, and Book of Discipline. John Knox, the major contributor to the Book of Discipline, had been prepared for his task by his experience as a priest in the Roman Church in Scotland, by the hardships he knew as a galley slave, through his contribution to the Confessions of England, and the time he had spent studying under John Calvin in Geneva.

The First Book of Discipline deals with the "worldly" problems that the new Kirk of Scotland faced; detailed directions were prescribed for the election of officers and ministers and for the consolidation of the Kirk through the supervision of superintendents. An elaborate system of compulsory education was proposed. Provision was made for the patrimony of the old Church to be used to pay the salaries of the ministers, give financial aid to the poor scholar, and generally assist the needy. Views on the authority of the Scriptures, the sacraments, discipline, marriage and burial were also included.

CHAPTER III

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE FIRST BOOK OF DISCIPLINE

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A. Introduction

Having studied the conditions that existed in Scotland before the Reformation, the nature of the times around 1560, and the contents of the First Book of Discipline, this last chapter will be an analysis of the contributions of the Book to the Reformation years following 1560, with occasional reference to contributions of a more lasting nature. Particular attention will be given to the matter of the patrimony of the old Roman Church, the influence of the system of education, and church polity.

B. The Issue of the Patrimony of the Roman Church

The Book of Discipline was probably accepted by the General Assembly in January of 1561. There is no record of this in the minutes of this General Assembly, but as Henry Cowen says:

It may be assumed that the Book of Discipline then received the Church's approval (for it is a fact that at the ensuing Assembly of May, 1561 the document is twice referred to as an ecclesiastical authority.¹

Its reception by Parliament, however, was quite

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1. Henry Cowen: John Knox, p. 250.

different. The factor that raised opposition was the distribution of the patrimony of the old Roman Church. In the Book of Discipline the Reformation leaders expressed their desire that the patrimony be used for the paying of ministers' salaries, the advancement of education, and the paying of the poor. These ideas could find no favor with the landowners, who gazed upon the remnants of the old Church with greedy eyes. A number of the nobles did subscribe to the Book of Discipline, but there is evidence that even some of these did so with the knowledge that there would never be sufficient votes for Parliament to adopt it.¹ Lindsay says:

The presence of this chapter (on the disbursement of the patrimony of the Church) prevented the book from being accepted by the Estates ... The barons, greater and lesser, who sat there had in too many cases appropriated the patrimony of the Kirk to their own private uses and were unwilling to sign a document that condemned their conduct. The Book of Discipline approved by the General Assembly and signed by a large number of the nobles and burgesses never received the legal sanction accorded to the Confession.²

J. H. Burton states that the Protestant nobles and lairds were ready to accept all denunciations of the Anti-Christ and Popish idolatry and that they did not hesitate to accept the Calvinistic doctrines of the new faith. They adopted the Confession of Faith at once. The Book of Discipline, however, affected practice as well as faith.³

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1. Ibid., p. 251.

2. Lindsay, op. cit., pp. 305-306.

3. J. H. Burton: History of Scotland, Vol. 4, p. 187.

Knox observed:

Some approved it (Book of Discipline) and willed the same had been set forth by a law. Others perceiving their carnal liberty and worldly commodity somewhat to be impaired, thereby grudged, insomuch that the name of the Book of Discipline became odious unto them ... some had greedily gripped to the possessions of the Kirk ... There were none within the realm more unmerciful to the poor ministers than were they which had greatest rents of the churches.¹

The Protestant clergy made the mistake of assuming that the zeal with which their lay brethren helped them remove the old Church was actually the fruit of religious fervor and they expected them to turn the patrimony over to the Reformed Church. The landlords, however, without attempting to hide their base selfishness, called the expectations of the ministers "a fond imagination."²

Cowen states:

It must in fairness (to the land owners) be stated that such land owners pleaded that the Church property had been bestowed by their own forefathers largely in return for the promise of masses for the dead, which they were now taught to regard as profitless and blasphemous services.³

The trouble over the spoils of the old Church increased. The landlords, to a great extent, had acquired the Church properties nearest them by simple annexation, with the result that most of the wealth of the old Church had fallen into the hands of the landlords, and the clergy

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1. Ibid., p. 188.

2. Ibid., p. 193.

3. Cowen: op. cit., p. 252.

of both the new and the old churches were almost starving. The General Assembly lodged a well-justified appeal with the Privy Council, which eventually, but not until sometime later, arrived at a decision concerning the division of the spoils.

The government decided that a third of the wealth was to be divided between the Crown and the Kirk, and that the remaining two-thirds was to be used to sustain the clergy of the old Roman Church as long as any members of that clergy remained alive. Most of the two-thirds, in actual practice, however, remained in the hands of the land holders - a fact which at least guaranteed that these land holders would not return to Roman Catholicism. Of the first third, which amounted to about 70,000 pounds a year, the Reformed Church actually received a base of 25,000 pounds for all religious and educational purposes. This amount was just a little more than one-eighth of the¹ income of the old Church.

It should be added that in addition to determining the spoils of the old Church, the government also confirmed the Acts of 1560 against the Church of Rome, and declared the Reformed Church, as at the time established, to be the true Kirk to which Parliament assured its freedom, jurisdiction and authority.²

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1. Agnes MacKenzie: The Scotland of Queen Mary and the Religious Wars, p. 117.
2. Janet MacGregor: Scottish Presbyterian Polity, p. 98.

C. Contributions to Education

The failure of Parliament to ratify the First Book of Discipline and the subsequent failure of the Privy Council to appropriate enough money for the Reformed Church from the patrimony of the old Church greatly handicapped the carrying out of Knox's plan of education as it was found in the First Book of Discipline. Milton Kistler says:

Had this money been appropriated to the schools, Knox's scheme of education could have been carried out. Scotland would have, then, in the Sixteenth Century had a plan of education which would have reached the foundation of her national life and character - a plan which would have enabled the nation to realize its full possibilities, and who shall say how different Scotland and the world would have been.¹

Kistler also quotes Principle Lee who expresses much the same idea:

If Parliament had adopted it ... no country in the world would have been so well supplied as Scotland with the means of extending a liberal education to every man, capable of intellectual improvement. This magnificent system was never accepted formally as the law of the land though it received the support and signature of many of the Privy Council and was adopted by the General Assembly in 1562. Many of the nobles would not support the Book of Discipline because they would have to give up their share of the Church patrimony.²

The nobles' refusal to adopt the Book did not keep the spirit of the education system from spreading, however. It furnished an inspiring ideal which awakened the

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1. Milton Kistler: John Knox's Services to Education, p. 113.
2. Ibid., p. 109.

people to a great deal of enthusiasm. Lindsay says:

Their scheme, owing to the greed of the barons, ... was little more than a devout imagination; but it laid hold on the mind of Scotland and the lack of endowment was more than compensated by the craving of the people for education.¹

And so, though it was never officially adopted, Knox's program of education has served as an inspiration and a guide to the Scottish people down through the years. John Glasse states:

It is well ... that our old men should dream such dreams, for they help posterity to see visions, and this ideal of Knox has moved like a pillar of fire before the people of Scotland.²

Lord Gustave Percy also praises Knox's system of education. He says:

It prescribed for the most culturally backward nation in western Europe the first program of universal compulsory education.³

And Kistler adds:

We insist that Knox's great service to the cause of education in his native land was to furnish his countrymen with lofty ideals in education, and nations, like individuals, rise much higher when so inspired.⁴

Neither John Knox, his fellow reformers, nor the people, however, ceased their labors in behalf of education when the Book of Discipline was rejected and the patrimony of the Church divided. As Kistler says:

The failure of the Parliament to pass his educational

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1. Lindsay, op. cit., p. 307.

2. John Glasse: John Knox, A Criticism and an Appreciation, p. 91.

3. Lord Gustave Percy: John Knox, p. 378.

4. Kistler, op. cit., p. 113.

bill only seemed to arouse Knox to greater enthusiasm and stronger efforts to secure to the people their rights. He appealed to them and they responded with an earnestness which compelled not only the Church but Parliament to act.¹

Time and time again the Kirk appealed to the barons to recover the property that they had acquired from the old Church. According to Kistler:

In 1572 the Kirk requested the regent and council to inform the nobility in the outrageous using of the patrimony of the Kirk to the great hurt of the schools. Both before and after this, petitions to the same effect were prepared. The Church did the best she could under the conditions.²

Kistler goes on to say:

These constant appeals having little effect, the Church did not fail to contribute, as liberally as her poor exchequer would allow, to the payment of teachers and the education of poor scholars. The ecclesiastical records are full of acts of charity - showing zeal and devotion. In later years (one) can trace sincere earnest efforts to improve the condition of the schools and the want of funds diminishing the force of these efforts, especially in the highlands.³

No country in the world can show an equal zeal in the promotion of education especially during the time from the Reformation to the union of England and Scotland in 1707.⁴

At this point it would be well to note some of the events which marked the development of education - the inspiration for which can probably be traced back to the First Book of Discipline. In 1563 and again in 1571 the

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1. Ibid., p. 110.
2. Ibid., p. 114.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 110.

General Assembly granted permission for the planting of schools in Moray, Bnaff, Inverness and the counties adjacent. In 1563 the General Assembly appropriated funds to help certain underprivileged students. In 1641 it asked Parliament to erect and maintain grammar schools in all towns of any size.

Kistler says:

Nothing shows more powerfully the earnestness of the people than the efforts made through the Church to secure a fraction of the patrimony for benefit of the schools. When they could not do this the instances of personal sacrifices of teachers and people made in order that the children might enjoy the advantages of education are heroic.¹

Kistler also says that the system of parochial schools that was instituted by King James in 1696 was inspired by John Knox's efforts at public education. The system provided for a school master who was to be appointed by the minister in every parish.² This law was supplanted in 1872 by a compulsory education law which also, according to Kistler, had its basis in Knox's thinking on education as he expressed it in the First Book of Discipline. The beginnings of compulsory education can be traced in scattered localities at many points in Scotland's history. In 1628 the town council of Cupar ordained that "all neighbors of the burgh ... present their bairns to the school." Thirty-six years later the same town council regarded compulsory

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1. Kistler, op. cit., p. 110.

2. Ibid., p.111.

education as a fact and fined anyone who did not send his children to school.¹ In 1637 in Prebes all the inhabitants who had children able to go to school were ordered to take them, and in 1653 these people promised to take their male children to school within forty-eight hours.²

Kistler feels that Knox's desire for qualified men to visit the schools to examine the teachers and pupils may have influenced the beginning of such a system in 1595 when the General Assembly had someone from every Presbytery visit and reform the grammar schools in the towns. Another act which was passed in 1645 ordained that all grammar schools be visited at least once a year. High schools were visited regularly, too. In 1567 the General Assembly decreed that visitors were to examine professors as to their soundness in the faith, ability to teach, and honesty of character.³ Kistler states: "From that time on teaching has been considered an honorable calling and the entrance to it has been guarded by examinations."⁴

Andrew Melville, Knox's successor as leader of the Reformed Church, reorganized and strengthened the Scotch universities. Instead of adhering to the rotating system, he adopted Knox's principle of assigning each subject to a special teacher.⁵

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1. Ibid., p. 112.
2. Ibid., p. 113.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Strong, op. cit., p. 81.

In drawing an overall picture of the influence of Knox's system of education on Scotland, Kistler says:

He laid the foundations of that national popular education which has made Scotland so intelligent at home and carried Scotsmen with honor abroad into all the countries under heaven... His lofty educational ideals and his labors to realize them have affected the very foundations of the national life and character.¹

Although the First Book of Discipline, and with it Knox's system of education, was rejected by Parliament due to the greed of the barons for the patrimony of the old Church, and though there was, consequently, considerable delay in setting up any kind of educational system, Kistler still feels that nearly all of Knox's proposals were adopted sooner or later.²

It probably can be said that much of the desire of the Scotch Presbyterians for a high standard of education as they settled in America can be attributed to the influence of John Knox. As they spread the gospel over the earth, the Scott's love for education has borne fruit in the building of schools and an insistence upon an educated clergy.

And so the truth in John Glassey's statement - "Men should dream such dreams, for they help posterity to see visions" - has been illustrated.

D. Contributions in Church Polity

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1. Kistler, op. cit., p. 105.

2. Ibid., p. 111.

The Church of 1560 was a missionary Church; it had experience in the field of church government only on the congregational level, and there were numerous places within its jurisdiction that had neither church nor pastor. The Privy Council suddenly decided to require that the reformers set up a detailed outline of church polity that would be put in practice over the entire nation. It was not long before the missionary Church became a national Church, and the constitutional part of the First Book of Discipline soon proved inadequate.¹ MacGregor says:

After Knox's return to Scotland, the Reformed Church received its earliest constitution in the First Book of Discipline of 1560 ... Between 1560 and 1574 the attempt was made to apply the principles of this Book of Discipline in the government of the Scottish Reformed congregations. During these years the inadequacy of this hastily compiled constitution became apparent, in spite of fuller definition of its institutions in the "Acts of the General Assembly."²

The constitutional history of the Scotch Church in the sixteenth century subsequent to the year 1560 is divided into two periods. From 1560 to 1574 the Scotch Church was governed, as far as it was possible, on the basis of the constitution drawn up by Knox and his colleagues, while from 1575 to 1592 the Church leaders were remaking the polity so as to make it fit the conditions of a national Church and yet avoid the evils of episcopacy.³

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1. MacGregor, op. cit., p. xviii.
2. Ibid., p. xix.
3. Ibid., p. 65.

Janet MacGregor says:

That the Church regarded the principles of 1560 as their main guide during the earlier years is clear from the records of the General Assembly. In 1562 the Book of Discipline and the Order of the Election of Superintendents were referred to as the authority for matters pertaining to relations between ministers and superintendents... In 1570 those requiring information as to the jurisdiction of a superintendent were referred to the Book of Discipline. In 1571, again, a dispute as to the jurisdiction of a superintendent was referred to the directions of the Book of Discipline, and in 1572 it was ordained that every Province should be possessed of the extracts from the Book of Discipline relating to superintendents. In 1574 the conditions of the commissions issued to commissioners from the General Assembly to visit certain districts were defined in terms of the Book of Discipline.¹

The part of the Book of Discipline concerning the superintendents was later abolished. The reformers had intended that this office be a temporary one. The big job of the superintendents was to plant and establish new churches, and when the missionary Church became a national Church, there remained little need for this kind of thing. The actual responsibilities of the office, however, began to grow, since the superintendent acted as liaison between local congregations and between the local congregation and the General Assembly. MacGregor says:

The Superintendent was competent to deal with troublesome ministers, readers, and exhorters by suspending them from office until the matter could be settled by the General Assembly.²

The office of superintendent grew to be close

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1. Ibid., p. 65.

2. Ibid., p. 83.

to that of bishop, and thus interfered with the Presbyterian principle of the parity of ministers and gave the Crown an opportunity to try to push episcopacy on the Reformed Church. The superintendent differed from a bishop in that he did not belong to a third order above the ministers and¹ elders.

The Earl of Moray, successor to Queen Mary and first professing Protestant on the Scotch throne, devised the scheme of turning the superintendents into bishops and so manipulating the hierarchy of the Reformed Church as to bring the patrimony of the Roman Catholic Church nominally into the hands of the Reformed Church. His ultimate intention, however, was to drain the bulk of the ecclesiastical revenues into the pockets of the Crown and the nobles. The General Assembly protested vigorously, and thus was begun a struggle that was to last for decades between the Crown which desired an episcopal form of church government so that it could control the Church and the Reformed² Church which felt that Jesus Christ was its only head.

And so, since the initial job of the superintendents was pretty well completed, and since their other duties and powers were expanding until they were much like bishops, and since the Crown was attempting to force episcopacy on the

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1. Stalker, op. cit., p. 238.

2. MacGregor, op. cit., pp. 99-100.

Reformed Church through the office of superintendent, the office was removed in the Second Book of Discipline and replaced by the Court of the Presbytery.

Janet MacGregor says: " The Court of the Presbytery was built up from the experience gained in the working of the office of superintendent, " and goes on to state:

The First Book of Discipline had taken a survey of the whole duties and activities of the Church that was springing up. The Second Book of Discipline concerned itself with the constitution of the Church, and with the changes in the first outline, which the circumstances of the time called for. The two chief reforms consisted in the dropping of the office of superintendent, and in the institution of the new court of the Presbytery.¹

Another factor that led to the establishment of the Court of the Presbytery was the highly successful system of Church courts that had been developed between 1560 and 1574. MacGregor observes:

During the period 1560 to 1574 there was no development of the Scottish Church polity which restricted the democratic spirit, which Knox had introduced into it... The Scottish system of Church courts... were found to perform their many functions with such success and modesty as justified the Church in transferring the functions of the superintendents in the Second Book of Discipline²

Andrew Meville began to draw up the Second Book of Discipline, which was adopted in 1581 by the General Assembly, thus replacing the First Book of Discipline as

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1. Ibid., p. 108.
2. Ibid., p. 96.

the constitution of the Reformed Church. The Second Book of Discipline was officially ratified by the Scotch Parliament, with the exception of the section which dealt with the claims of the Reformed Church on the patrimony of the long defunct Roman Catholic Church.¹

The following observations can be made concerning the lay officers of the Church:

1. Elders

Janet MacGregor says:

As regards the function of the Scottish elders, their positions had been so carefully enumerated in 1560 that the only later additions needed were such injunctions as would enable them to fit into the developing system of internal organization.²

2. Deacons

There were no modifications observable in the office of deacon between the years 1560 and 1574.

3. Readers

In 1581 the General Assembly abolished this office by forbidding any new admissions to it.³

E. Summary

An examination has been made of the part that the First Book of Discipline played in the life of the Reformation and in the life of Scotland following the

.

1. Ibid., pp. 107-108.
2. Ibid., p. 91.
3. Ibid., p. 122.

Reformation. This Book was rejected by Parliament on the issue of the division of the patrimony of the old Roman Church. The Reformed Church had desired it in part for the advancement of education, but the barons acquired most of it for their own use. In spite of this initial setback, the educational system of John Knox as found in the First Book of Discipline has been an inspiration to many succeeding generations and has had a great influence in molding the whole educational program of Scotland.

The First Book of Discipline was the constitution of a Church that had not yet developed into a national Church. Consequently, changes had to be made, the chief one being the abolishment of the office of superintendent and the establishment of the Court of the Presbytery in the Second Book of Discipline in 1581. The office of reader was also abolished.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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A. Summary

Conditions in Scotland prior to 1560 revealed a definite need for a reformation in the religious life of the nation. The country was backward and the people extremely poor, while the Roman Church owned half the wealth of the land. The clergy lived in ease, led scandalous lives, and being ignorant themselves, kept the people in spiritual darkness.

At this same time, however, through groups such as the Lollards and the followers of Wycliffe, martyrs such as Hamilton, and secular leaders such as the Duke of Somerset, Evangelical truth was gradually making headway. Finally, a group of Scotch nobles banded themselves together into what was known as the "Lords of the Congregation" and in 1560 invited John Knox, who was in exile in Geneva, to come and lead their country into the Reformed faith. In this same year Parliament officially invalidated the Roman Catholic Church and proclaimed the Reformed Church to be the official Church of the land.

Parliament requested that Knox and his colleagues draw up a statement covering the worship, beliefs and government of the Reformed Church. One of these statements was the First Book of Discipline, the first constitution of the

Reformed Church of Scotland. Its chief author, John Knox, was well prepared to write such a document, having had much experience as a Reformed minister in England and Geneva, and having spent time as a Catholic priest and as a galley slave.

The First Book of Discipline prescribed directions for the election of officers and ministers and provided for superintendents to give leadership in the consolidation of the Kirk. An elaborate system of compulsory education was proposed, and it was further suggested that the patrimony of the old Church be used by the Reformed Church to pay the salaries of ministers, subsidize the program of education, and assist the poor. Sections on the authority of the Scriptures, the sacraments, discipline, marriage and burial were also included.

It was the stand taken by the reformers on the division of the patrimony of the Catholic Church that led Parliament to reject the First Book of Discipline. The barons had acquired most of the patrimony for their own use. In spite of this initial setback, however, the educational system of John Knox has proved to be an inspiration to many generations, and his influence in the molding of the educational system of Scotland has been great.

The First Book of Discipline was the constitution of a Church that had not yet developed into a national Church, and it was necessary, therefore, that changes be made. The

chief of these changes consisted in the abolishment of the office of superintendent which had grown into something dangerously close to a bishopric. This office was replaced by the Court of the Presbytery in the Second Book of Discipline in 1581. This latter document superseded the First Book of Discipline and was ratified by Parliament in 1592.

B. Conclusion

A number of significant conclusions can be drawn from the material that has been studied:

1. The Roman Catholic Church before 1560 was badly in need of a reform movement.
2. The Roman Catholic Church was not actually overthrown by Parliament in 1560 or by the Reformed Church, for it had already collapsed internally. The Reformed Church merely removed the debris.
3. The Scotch Reformation was not accomplished by the efforts of one man, nor by an act of Parliament, but was, rather, the result of the working of the Spirit of God over a period of several generations - a working which gradually effected a basic moral change in the life of the country.
4. John Knox was prepared in a unique way for leadership in the Reformation.
5. The motives of the reformers concerning the disbursement of the wealth of the old Church were thoroughly Christian. They desired to use this wealth to pay their ministers, help

the poor and further education.

6. The motives of the clergy of the Reformed Church in regard to finances were in direct contrast to those of the Roman clergy. The clergy of the Roman Church lived in luxurious idleness while the people lived in poverty; the clergy of the Reformed Church desired to use the Church's wealth for the poor and for education.

7. His zeal for education and his contributions to education are aspects of the life of John Knox that are not generally known and are usually not connected with him.

8. Humanly speaking, without the help of the secular powers, the Scotch Reformation could not have been brought about.

9. The motives of the secular powers, however, were not always of the highest order. Many of the barons, for example, were more interested in obtaining the wealth of the Church for themselves than in using it for education.

10. Although officially rejected by Parliament, the First Book of Discipline did make a rich contribution to the life of Scotland.

a. Its educational system has served as an inspiration and challenge to Scotch people to this day.

b. Its forms of Church polity were carried out on more or less an experimental basis during the formative days of the Scotch Reformed Church and served as the basis for the Church polity that consequently was formulated.

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