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THE EFFECTS, INFLUENCE AND LEGACY OF THE REFORMATION ON SCOTTISH HISTORY

by
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

We live in an era when a great deal of effort is expended on analysing current events in the light of historical development. If media coverage in the UK is anything to go by, then history is suddenly a respectable conversation topic. Specialist museums and re-enactment societies continue to bear testimony to this strange fascination. Indeed, the old adage that only the victors record history is being constantly challenged in the light of archaeological excavations, our concept of what happened in a bygone age often radically altered by their findings.

In many countries, religion and history are inextricably linked. Perhaps this is especially so in Europe. The spread of Christendom in the early centuries AD was such that the larger part of the then known world belonged to what might loosely be described as a commonwealth, with the Pope recognised by many as its spiritual monarch. As Christianity quickly became the dominant religion, positions within the Church were highly sought after. Those who attained such lofty grandeur became commensurately wealthy and powerful. The decision-making process at the highest level was not outside their domain.

It was into this kind of background, coupled with the discovery of new worlds, old manuscripts and the invention of the printing press that a spiritual awakening began to take shape that would ultimately lead to a variety of expressions of religious reformation throughout Europe and beyond. The pioneering efforts of Calvin, Luther, Zwingli and others wrought significant changes on the society of their day. The Protestant movement, as it became known, took a substantial grip on a small country that was at the time living in the shadow of both England and France (Renwick, 1960). The effects of the Reformation on Scotland are often overlooked by those pre-occupied with events elsewhere. In so doing, much is lost to the truly enquiring mind.

One has only to pick up any book covering the sixteenth-century Reformation in Europe to discover the limited attention given to its effects on Scotland. As a native Scot, I ignorantly (and perhaps misguidedly) assumed that, given the proximity of my homeland with England and the similar impact of the Reformation on both countries, the history books would reflect this in something approaching equal measure. Unfortunately, my attention was drawn instead to the dearth of knowledge available in

comparison with that in circulation for not only England, but also Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

Over the centuries, many aspects of Scottish Church history have been largely overlooked. It has been encouraging, however, to discover the few treasures that are available on the subject, most notably the works of John Knox (1982; Muir, 1929). More recent authors to have penned commendable contributions include Cheyne (1999), Donaldson (1960), Nicholl (1960), Smellie, (1962) and Wilson (2000). It would appear that the Scottish Reformation directly affected the way both the state and Church operated, to such an extent that a culture was gradually developed that produced some quite brilliant intellectual minds and a socio-political system that is the envy of many throughout Europe. The central question of this work, therefore, is: "How may one determine the effects, influence and legacy of the European Reformation in Scottish history?"

The questions that naturally arise from this problem are:

- What was the ecclesiological, political and social condition of the nation of Scotland immediately prior to the Reformation?
- What impact did the Reformation have on the nation of Scotland?
- What were the immediate ecclesiological, political and social consequences of the Reformation in Scotland?
- What have been the most significant ramifications of the Reformation in Scottish Church, political and social history to the present day?

The main aim of this dissertation is to determine in what ways some of the radical developments in Scottish history from the sixteenth century onwards might be attributed to the European Reformation.

The objectives of this study must be seen in their relationship to the aim. In so doing, I intend to approach the subject from four angles:

i) To examine the ecclesiological, political and social condition of the nation of Scotland immediately prior to the Reformation (Duke, 1937; Foster, 1975).

ii) To identify the impact of the Reformation on the nation of Scotland and whether this was restricted to purely Church-related matters (M^{c}Millan, 1931; Reid, 1960).

iii) To assess the immediate consequences of the Reformation on Scottish Church, political and social aspects, (Mackie, 1962).

iv) To trace the development of some of the significant ramifications of the Reformation in Scottish Church, political and social history to the present day (Donnachie & Hewitt, eds, 1990).

The central theoretical argument of this study is that, although the dramatic effects of the Scottish Reformation upon Church and nation alike are often either underestimated or overlooked, its legacy continues to bear fruit to this day.

This theological study will employ historical literary research, an analysis of appropriate literary contributions and historiographic methods employed, and an examination and evaluation of contemporary historical and theological documents to address each of the enumerated research questions. Given that my personal background might be classified as that of the Reformed tradition, and as a native Scot, it must be acknowledged that my innermost sympathies lie with the Protestant movement, particularly in my homeland. In order to avoid excessive prejudice, therefore, I propose to give balanced recognition to sources of information that are not written exclusively by those of a Reformed persuasion.

2.0 THE ECCLESIOLOGICAL, POLITICAL & SOCIAL CONDITION OF SCOTLAND PRIOR TO THE REFORMATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Baker's *Dictionary of Theology*, historically "the Reformation refers to the renewal of the Church in the sixteenth century by revitalisation from its source in the word" (Harrison *et al*, eds, 1960: 439). Some commentators would also assert that this event marked the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of modern times (eg Schaff, 2004). Although the Reformation began as a spiritual force, it could reasonably be argued that those countries most affected by it were also impacted both politically and socially.

A cursory glance at Scottish history in the three centuries leading up to the Reformation might suggest that the people had not yet advanced beyond a primitive tribal system. Closer examination reveals that Scotland had a monarchy, a Church and a system of government that were very nationalistic in outlook, which may have evolved from the Wars of Independence with its near neighbour, England. It is my intention in this chapter to look at the ecclesiological, political and social conditions within the country in the late fifteenth and early to mid sixteenth century, which immediately precludes the effects of the Reformation in my homeland. In so doing, I hope to determine in what ways these conditions sowed the seeds that gave birth to the Reformation in Scotland (Lindsay, 1953: 274, 275).

2.2 THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH PRIOR TO THE REFORMATION

In order to gain an appreciation of the status of the Church leading up to the Reformation, it may be helpful at this time to mention that the office bearers in Scotland were divided into two classes: the seculars, who ranged from the highest dignitaries down to the humblest clerics; and the regulars, comprising of monks, canons and friars, who lived in monasteries or convents and came under the rule of one of the religious orders. Where the writings of contemporary historians, poets, reformers and even Church councils condemn the various abuses within the Church as a whole, there are few allegations made by these parties against the regular clergy, who on occasion were described as being "respectable but dull" (cf Donaldson, 1960: 36; Fleming, 1960: 1).

2.2.1 The Struggle for Supremacy

Ecclesia Scotanica (ie the Church of Scotland) did not have a complete organisational hierarchy until 1472. It was at this time that Patrick Graham procured a bull from Pope Sixtus II creating St Andrews as the metropolitan see for all the dioceses of the kingdom of Scotland. Graham was made Archbishop of St Andrews, which immediately caused protests within Scotland from bishops who did not wish to see their existing independence curtailed. This development had deprived the bishops of the right to annually elect the president of the Provincial Council, thus preventing them from being nominated as chief Bishop of Scotland for a year. (The Provincial Councils in Scotland were unique, as the thirteenth-century Pope Honorius had granted their meeting together without requiring an archbishop or papal representative to convene them.) Furthermore, they were aggrieved that the Archbishop had been entrusted to levy a tax on their benefices for a war against the Turks (see Duke, 1937: 122, 123; Burleigh, 1960: 89; Watt, 2000: 43, 44).

The bishops also took offence that Patrick Graham obtained this bull without their knowledge. Their campaign against him was so successful that Graham, the first Archbishop of Scotland, appears to have suffered a mental breakdown under the strain and was deposed from his see in January 1478. Moreover, the Bishop of Aberdeen won exemption for his see from the jurisdiction of St Andrews for the duration of his lifetime. Provincial Councils became a major casualty of this contention between bishops with the result that more than sixty years would elapse before a Council met again. Thus began a period of challenge to the Archbishop in which some bishops obtained exemption from the Archbishop of St Andrews' authority, which culminated in the raising of the see of Glasgow to metropolitan status in 1492 (Macewen, 1915: 352; Watt, 2000: 168).

Having two metropolitan sees does not appear to have diminished the rivalries between the higher clergy. On a visit to Glasgow in 1545, a dispute arose between the two archbishops (Beaton of St Andrews and Dunbar of Glasgow) as to who should be afforded precedence on a procession through the church. As the procession progressed, both parties determined that their archbishop's crozier should be at the head, which led to a brawl of which Knox has left the following record:

At the choir door of Glasgow kirk begins striving betwixt the two cross-bearers... To the ground go both the crosses. And then began non little fray, but yet a merry game; for gowns were rent, tippets were torn, crowns were broken and side-gowns might have been seen wantonly wag from the one wall to the other... How merrily ever this be written, it was bitter mirth to the Cardinal and his court.

(Knox, 1905: 63.)

2.2.2 Opportunity without Obligation

The vast wealth of the pre-Reformation Church caused it to be coveted by kings, nobles and even ambitious members of the clergy. The patronage (or 'commendum') system, introduced to Scotland in the twelfth century, enabled unqualified individuals to access these revenues without the need to take up residence in the benefice to which they had been appointed. This abuse in making appointments may be attributed to the fact that orders were never practised in the Scottish Church. Being a member of the male species became the main criteria required for candidates seeking appointments to these benefices. Frequently, the successful applicants were not ordained and babes, infants or illegitimate sons were regularly allocated to such positions. In order to meet the spiritual needs of the congregations, it became common practice to hire a clergyman to perform these duties, often on wages that were inadequate. Closely allied with this exploitation was the system of pluralism in which a man was allowed to hold more than one office. A bishop might, therefore, find himself in the fortunate position of receiving remuneration from one or more abbeys, in addition to his own episcopal revenues (see Watson, 1933: 61, 64; Renwick, 1960: 20, 21).

As the patronage system expanded, the revenue from almost ninety per cent of the parish churches in 1560 was being diverted to the religious houses, cathedral chapters, collegiate churches and universities, leaving only a slender residue for local use. Very few of the parish vicars had a living wage and many church buildings were falling into disrepair due to lack of resources. This negligence did not go unnoticed by the local population, who had to endure services in churches that did not have watertight roofs or windows and often lacked the necessary apparatus for performing worship. The vicar was not a leading person in the community, being more concerned with ministering the sacraments than preaching. Very few had received formal education, though their harsh treatment of the poor and obduracy in collecting death dues were known throughout the

realm. No doubt there were some parish priests who faithfully imparted the essentials of Christianity in a quiet and simple way, but according to Donaldson: "the fact remains that contemporaries of every school of thought were seriously exercised about the intellectual and moral standards of the parish clergy" (Donaldson, 1965: 135).

David Fleming has observed that "the ecclesiastical property before the Reformation had been estimated at nearly equal to one-half of the kingdom" (1960: 3). It seems hardly surprising, then, that Scottish nobles endeavoured to put their sons in possession of these lands. Their motives were predominantly covetous; seldom, if ever, for the spiritual welfare of the people involved. Over a period of time, these appointments to principal Church offices led to a steady erosion of morals within the whole organisation. In a letter written to Cardinal Beaton in 1540, Archibald Hay commented:

> *"I declare I often wonder what the Bishops were thinking about when they admitted such men to the handling of the Lord's body, who scarcely know the alphabet... It is intolerable that the entrance to the Church should lie open to all without selection, and that some entrants should bring with them utter ignorance, others a false pretence of knowledge, some a mind corrupted by the greatest sins."*
>
> (in Watson, 1933: 65.)

2.2.3 Further Examples of Clerical Decadence

The observance of celibacy was not rigidly enjoined until the Lateran Council of 1139, though its enforcement in Scotland was not altogether successful. In many instances, where the benefice had become hereditary, the effect of this ruling was not so much to restore the clerical character of those in possession, but rather converted the clergymen into lay families who retained the land for their own personal use. Thomas Chrystall (Abbot of Kinloss from 1504 to 1529) successfully pursued a series of lawsuits against persons who had robbed the monastery of its rights and endeavoured to raise the morals of all clergy under his supervision. This was in sharp contrast with the behaviour of Cardinal David Beaton (Archbishop of St Andrews until his murder in 1546), who indulged in concubinage on a grand scale by fathering no fewer than twenty illegitimate children, many of whom were supported by rich church livings (cf MacGeorge, 1890: 22, 23; Burleigh, 1960: 61; Magnusson, 2001: 325).

The way in which churches had been allocated to abbeys/monasteries became another area of dispute between bishops. Although Scotland encompassed the diocesan structure as modelled in other western European countries, endowments and bequests that were traditionally made by the nobility and royalty to particular religious houses did not take demographics into consideration. Kelso Abbey, for example, though located in the Scottish borders, held certain churches within the dioceses of both St Andrews (Central Scotland) and Glasgow (Western Scotland). Revenue that may otherwise have been payable to the local incumbents was thus diverted to the Bishop of Kelso. Subjection of each church to its bishop was acknowledged by annual fixed payments towards the upkeep of the diocesan establishment known as the 'synodal'. Tithes that were due to the local bishop were also occasionally diverted to a bishop from another region, because the church concerned may have come under the jurisdiction of a monastic house remote from the area (Macewen, 1915: 211; Burleigh, 1960: 102).

From the time of the Wars of Independence to the Reformation, bishops were amongst the most influential subjects in the kingdom, attaining such highly prestigious government offices as chancellor (eg Cameron of Glasgow in the fifteenth century). From 1424, bishops were the chief buttresses of the crown. These included Kennedy of St Andrews, Elphistone of Aberdeen, Forman of Moray and the Beatons (also of St Andrews), who were particularly vociferous in their support of the king. As law and order gradually permeated through the country, a parliament evolved in which important bishops, abbots and priors formed one of three estates known as the clergy or spiritual estate. It would appear that the trappings of court life caused many of the superior orders of the clergy to succumb to the temptations associated with rich living. Teaching and preaching were particularly ignored and the higher clergy contended with each other for court favour (Watson, 1933: 107; Duke, 1937: 277; Burleigh, 1960: 95, 98, 160). In a warning letter to James V in 1528, Friar Seton lamented the manner in which the prelates neglected their duties.

As the period of the Reformation approached, the state of religion in Scotland had become so deplorable that even supporters of the papacy called for action to be taken to amend matters. A general Convention and Provincial Court, which met in the Blackfriars Church at Edinburgh on the 27th November 1549, prefaced their statutes with a remarkable confession. It reported that the root cause of the troubles and heresies that affected the Church were the corruption, profane lewdness and gross ignorance of

churchmen of almost all ranks. It enjoined the clergy to put away their concubines, to dismiss from their houses the children born to them in concubinage, not to promote their sons to benefices, nor to enrich their daughters with dowries from the patrimony of the Church. Prelates were also admonished not to keep in their households manifest drunkards, gamblers, brawlers, buffoons, blasphemers, nor profane swearers (MacGeorge, 1890: 24).

In the dispensation of justice, bishops discharged a function of great importance. As landowners, both they and the abbots had the same civil jurisdiction as was granted by the Crown to temporal lords. Bishops also claimed the right to deal with all 'spiritual' matters and to exercise discipline over their own clergy. Amongst such spiritual matters were included all pleas that could be regarded as in any sense religious: matrimonial suits, questions of illegitimacy, dowry and the interpretation of wills, cases of slander and of contracts ratified by oath, besides disputes as to tithes, dues and Church properties. The discipline of the clergy rested upon the idea that in all his conduct a priest was subject only to his ecclesiastical superior and in no case could he be summoned to a civil court. Disputes between priests and laymen upon any subject were, therefore, settled by Episcopal authority. The jurisdiction of the Church courts were recognised and respected by the state and when ecclesiastical sentences were resisted by individuals, churchmen looked to the state and the royal courts to help them with their enforcement. It would appear that these courts – known as Consistories – were the only organised judiciaries in Scotland to be presided over by educated lawyers, their efficiency and diligence enabling an extension of their powers by James IV (M^{ac}George, 1890: 15-19; Macewen, 1915: 211, 212).

2.2.4 Seeds of Hope amongst Weeds of Despair

Education played a major part in the spread and unity of the Church of Rome. Many schools were founded with the noble aim of providing for the welfare of the people; it also afforded the opportunity to recruit boys and young men to the ranks of the clergy. The Church regarded itself as sole patron and custodian when it came to education, with monasteries, abbeys and other religious houses being ideal seats of learning before the founding of the Scottish universities. Prior to the erection of St Andrews University in 1411, many Scottish students eager to satisfy their enquiring minds beyond what was available to them in their homeland found themselves wandering the campuses of

continental Europe. Students were thus exposed to intellectual movements, the ideals of which would eventually sow the seeds of the Reformation of the Scottish Church in 1560 (Walsh, 1874: 225, 232; Stewart, 1927: 40; Lindsay, 1953: 276).

In 1231, the first group of friars arrived at Berwick. Their intention had been to go into the communities to preach the gospel and heal the sick. Moreover, their lack of property meant that they were to depend on the goodwill of those to whom they ministered for support. The most important distinction between monks and friars was that, whereas the former were primarily contemplative and spent a significant proportion of their lives in and around the monastery, the latter were essentially travelling preachers. Some of these friars became more settled, however, after their order was permitted the use of property held in trust by the pope in 1279. Although they were small in number, possibly not exceeding sixty in the country at any one time, they commended themselves to the religiously-minded laymen and churchmen by virtue of their energy, adaptability and preaching skills. They received gifts for their maintenance and were often entrusted to distribute alms to the poor (Duke, 1937: 96, 97; Burleigh, 1960: 74-76).

As other orders of friars settled in the country, the local Church authorities generally undermined the positive image previously engendered, perceiving them to be a rival and financial threat. In one case, a group of friars had erected a church and cemetery in a parish in Roxburgh. The monks at the existing church feared that their income would be under threat and brought a complaint to the Bishop of Glasgow. Rivalries also existed amongst the orders of friars and attempts to unite them met only with fierce objections from those involved. In some areas immediately prior to the Reformation, the poor did not hold the friars in particularly high esteem because, although they professed poverty, their comparatively comfortable lifestyle was considered both hypocritical and a paradox when viewed against the landscape of other more genuine needs (Donaldson, 1965: 138)

Overall, the image of the friars was similar to that of theologians and preachers: their moral standards were high and their fidelity to their obligations, including the rule of poverty, made them outstanding among the religious orders. When Lutheran teachings started to spread in Scotland, the Dominican friars were very sympathetic to the principles, as they had recently undergone a reformation within their own order. By contrast, however, the Franciscans were more traditional in outlook and opposed the

reforming ideals. It would appear that the orders of the friars were divided over the need for reform and whilst the Dominicans were found among the ranks of the persecuted, the Franciscans were at the forefront of the persecutors (Duke, 1937: 151, 152).

There were parts of the church system that still had considerable vitality and retained the attachment of a good many people. In the burghs, both guilds and individuals were still endowing chaplains to serve at the numerous altars in the town churches. Collegiate churches were usually established by a rich patron, their purpose being to sing masses for the founder, his family, friends and heirs in perpetuity. In addition, daily services may have been held, though on a much smaller scale than those at cathedrals. In essence, collegiate churches were private chapels belonging to local magnates (Burleigh, 1960: 79-81).

2.2.5 A Fertile Ground

During this period, the importation of Lutheran books and Bibles translated into the English language enabled the literate to identify sharp contrasts between what they were reading and their experience at parish level. Tradition and ceremony were now being seen to have no Scriptural warrant. The doctrine of purgatory and the issuing of indulgences gradually came to be seen as unscrupulous means of raising money. Patrick Hamilton, one of the early martyrs in Scotland, wrote a treatise in which he expounded that justification was not by works but by faith. Although such thinking was also being talked of throughout Europe at this time, it was certainly not greeted with favour within the Church of Rome. It is interesting to note, however, that Hamilton made no direct assault on either the Pope or the priesthood, which might suggest that there was no imminent threat of a Church split (Macewen, 1915: 418; M^{c}Millan, 1931: 31, 32).

The doctrinal position of the Scottish Church at this time can be assessed through the publication of *'The Catechism of John Hamilton'*. Printed in the vernacular, this manual gives an exposition on the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Seven Sacraments, the Lord's Prayer and the Ave Maria. Further Romish practices and doctrines, such as Transubstantiation, the use of iconic images in worship, the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, the validity or otherwise of prayers for the dead, the intercessory work of the saints in Heaven and the existence of Purgatory were mentioned in a tone that was intentionally persuasive and conciliatory. Like his

namesake, it would appear that John Hamilton sought to address these issues within a framework of Church unity. There was certainly no criticism of the Pope's role or function as Supreme Head of the Church on Earth (see Duke, 1937: 197, 198).

Both of these documents were written by prominent individuals who might otherwise be considered as representing the traditional perspective. This would seem to imply that there was a general belief from those in authority that the Church could be reformed from within, thus averting the painful process of division that was taking place elsewhere, particularly in the German states.

2.3 THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN SCOTLAND PRIOR TO THE REFORMATION

From 1424 to the Battle of Flodden Field in 1513, Scotland had been ruled by five kings. Having spent eighteen years in captivity in England, James I ascended the throne in 1424 at the age of thirty. He wasted no time in trying to secure his position. Sweeping legislation was passed at the first meeting of parliament, which included the forfeiture of lands as punishment for rebels against the king's peace. A 5% tax was also levied on lands and goods, with export duties being imposed on horses, herring and wool. The crown also reserved the revenue from custom duties and burgh rents. The king had learned about taxation as a means of increasing the royal revenue from his imprisonment in England and such measures were very unpopular throughout the realm (Duke, 1937: 111; Magnusson, 2001: 238).

2.3.1 Church and State – A Marriage of Inconvenience

In order for a bishop to be appointed, the prospective candidate had to be nominated for approval, usually by his own clergy. The pope and king were required to endorse the selection. In order to divert some of the Church's wealth back towards the royal coffers, it became common for kings to propose their own candidates to these positions, which did not often meet with the pope's approval. As there was no archbishop available to consecrate them (until almost the end of the fifteenth century at least), potential candidates would travel to the papal see to obtain favour for the vacancy back in Scotland. An accompanying fee usually swayed the decision, though Scotland was impoverished through the Wars of Independence with England and could ill afford the costs incurred in securing these appointments. In the interest of national economy,

James I passed various acts of parliament forbidding the export of money from the country and created a new offence – the crime of 'barratrie' – the purchasing of benefices for money (Duke, 1937: 113, 114).

A compromise was reached in the patronage matter through a local dispute that had a direct bearing on papal authority. Bishops believed that they had the right to dispose of their personal property by bequest. In Scotland, the authorities argued that the acquisitions of these bishops should lapse to the Crown upon their death. This issue was brought before James II, who renounced his claim to the property in 1449-50. However, the ensuing Act that permitted bishops to dispose of their estates also authorised the king to dispose of all benefices during an episcopal vacancy and to administer the real estate of the see. The Act was extended in 1488 to cover cases in which the pope 'reserved' appointments. This undermined the authority of the pope in Scotland insofar as the bishops agreed that the king had precedence in nomination/selection of bishops over the pope (Macewen, 1915: 342, 343; Watt, 2000: 161, 162).

2.3.2 Uneasy Lies the Head that Wears the Crown

As a nation, Scotland extended and consolidated her borders to their current boundaries with the acquisition of the Orkney and Shetland islands from the king of Denmark/Norway in 1469. Although this transfer was agreed on paper, the locals maintained strong links and loyalty to their Danish counterparts until well into the sixteenth century. The western coast and islands of Scotland were almost lawless; throughout the reigns of James I to James IV there was intermittent conflict in which the crown tried to subjugate the 'lords of the isles' to their rule. Although the struggle ended in 1497 after almost seventy years of hostility, establishing and maintaining royal rule was never going to be easy. An Act of Parliament in 1503 describes these people as "a people almost gone wild for lack and fault of justice" (in Burleigh, 1960: 45). In 1518, a writer by the name of John Major labelled them "the wild Scots who prefer war to peace and whose violence can scarcely be curbed" (in Macewen, 1915: 359).

The untimely death of James I at the hands of an assassin in 1437 plunged Scotland into a period of a long minority. Frustratingly, every succeeding reign up to the Reformation would also begin in this way. The implications for the nation were dire as a succession of barons and feudal lords competed for control of the country by attaining the position

of Regent. Indeed, James II, III and V were all abducted by nobles who hoped to secure their positions by controlling and influencing the child king. A series of bitter feuds ensued and – on reaching maturity – each of these kings had to reassert their authority by subduing their erstwhile captors and supporters (see Magnusson, 2001: 252-302).

Scotland was a vassal state of England from the time of King Edward I until the successful completion of the Wars of Independence in 1329. Unfortunately, the conclusion of this war did not bring lasting peace to the border region between both countries. Lawless bands that swore allegiance to no king or country spread terror throughout the area by attacking farms and plundering crops and livestock. Fighting would break out intermittently between both countries, which amounted to not much more than postulating principally from the Scottish king in an effort to deter the English from invading. It was hoped that the marriage of James IV of Scotland to Margaret Tudor of England – the sister of Henry VIII – in August 1503 would improve relations between the two countries, which was reflected by the signing of the Treaty of Perpetual Peace in 1502 (Burleigh, 1960: 47; Magnusson, 2001: 279, 280).

International events conspired to ensure that this peace would not last, however. In 1511, Henry VIII of England brought his country into a 'holy league' against France, which was formed by Spain, Venice and Pope Julius II. King Louis XII of France prevailed upon King James IV of Scotland to renew the 'auld alliance' between their respective countries, in which they would come to each other's assistance should either be attacked. This alliance was activated when hostilities broke out between England and France in May 1513. In a show of support, James IV loaned the French the newly-built Scottish naval fleet and launched a landward invasion of England that resulted in a crushing defeat of the Scots and the death of their king at Flodden Field in September 1513 (Houston & Knox, eds, 2002: 173, 174).

Scotland was once again plunged into a minority, with James V being crowned king on 21st September 1513 at the age of barely seventeen months. His personal rule began in 1528 and it was not long before confrontation with England beckoned. Henry VIII's divorce from his Spanish wife, Catharine of Aragon, and subsequent split from the Church of Rome in 1534 left England isolated. Anxious to secure his northern border, Henry negotiated a treaty of Perpetual Peace with Scotland in 1534 and followed this up with strenuous efforts to persuade his nephew to follow his example in breaking from

Rome. James' failure to attend a meeting with Henry at York in 1541 convinced the English monarch that further diplomatic efforts would prove futile. When war broke out between France and the 'holy' Roman Empire in 1542, Henry joined forces against France. With Scotland's chief allies in Europe otherwise engaged, Henry quickly seized the opportunity to invade (Magnusson, 2001: 298, 310, 311).

The battle of Solway Moss in 1542 was to be a turning point in Anglo-Scottish relations. The immediate consequence of this latest Scottish defeat was the death of James V, who died a broken man a matter of days after the event. Significantly, James left no male heir to the throne, only a week-old daughter named Mary. The country was also divided into two quite distinct and irreconcilable parties: those who supported closer links with England and the new Protestant faith, and those who wished to remain devoted to the old faith and alliance with France. Henry VIII released many of the Scottish lords previously captured at Solway Moss on condition that they would promote English interests in Scotland. This included them actively striving to secure a contract of marriage between the infant Mary and Henry's son, Edward. When such plans failed to materialise, Henry declared war on Scotland and embarked upon a brutal campaign that brought desolation to the borders and south-east Scotland in an effort to force the Scots to give up their child Queen. Scottish resolve was enhanced rather than diminished, however, and they steadfastly hung on until relief eventually came via the landing of a French army in Scotland in 1548 (Duke, 1937: 163, 164).

2.3.3 Strategically Placed to Exert International Influence

Throughout the Middle Ages, England and France were at odds with each other and the geographical location of Scotland made her a strategic ally to be courted by France. Following the signing of the 'Auld Alliance', Scotland obtained access to European diplomatic circles, which provided a platform from which the Scots could seek further allies against English aggression. In return, France had access to a military power that until its defeat at Humbleton Hill in 1402 posed a significant threat to England's northern borders. Thereafter, Scotland's most visible contribution to French interests was the despatch of large groups of mercenaries to France to assist in resisting what was a real threat of conquest from England (Houston & Knox, eds, 2002: 172, 173).

The marriage of James I to a princess from the house of Burgundy (ie Belgium) in 1449 enabled Scottish merchants to develop trading links with the continent, particularly the Low Countries. As the Burgundy's became more prominent players in European politics, they sought to cultivate a strong relationship with England in order to keep their French neighbour's military ambitions in check. This, in turn, placed Scotland in a dilemma, whereby strict adherence to the 'Auld Alliance' with France could jeopardise trading links in Burgundy. Conversely, denouncing the treaty could leave Scotland isolated and exposed to English aggression. It would appear that for much of the fifteenth century Scotland prevaricated over this issue which, coupled with her inability to pose a significant military threat to England, saw her usefulness to France and other European nations substantially wane (Magnusson, 2001: 255).

James V turned down a marriage proposal for Henry VIII's daughter, Mary Tudor, looking instead to France for a suitable bride. His union with Marie de Guise in 1538 brought the country under the influence of one of the most powerful noble families in Europe. The Guise family – who later gained notoriety by their involvement in the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre in 1572 – were determined to secure the country as a staunch Roman Catholic ally against the spread of Lutheran teaching. In this matter they were most successful, as James received a papal benediction for his steadfastness to the Church and the title 'Defender of the Christian faith', of which the English monarchs were no longer deemed worthy (Macewen, 1915: 358; Burleigh, 1960: 189).

2.3.4 The Rise and Fall of Cardinal Beaton

Aware that England's pending split with Rome could profit him personally, James V persuaded the pope to impose an annual levy on the Scottish clergy (£10 000 Scots) under the pretext of establishing a college of justice. In return, James was expected to demonstrate his determination to stamp out heresy within his realm. In March 1541, legislation was passed that tied Scotland to the old faith, which included resisting the enemies of the catholic faith and forbidding persons from questioning the pope's authority. These Acts reflected the strong stance taken by the Church against heretics, particularly under the direction of Cardinal David Beaton, who from his appointment in 1538 until his murder in 1546 embarked upon a brutal campaign to rid the nation of alleged heretics (Fleming, 1960: 16; Donaldson, 1965: 46).

Cardinal Beaton's policy to maintain alignment with France may have been moulded by his education at Orleans, commencing his political career at the French court and acting as ambassador to France on seven different occasions between 1533 and 1542. During his reign, James V relied heavily on the support of Beaton and the clergy, having largely alienated the support of many nobles by a ruthless campaign to establish his authority, especially in the borders and highlands. The king's dependence on his counsellor was such that in 1541 he wrote a letter to the pope, in which he pleaded that Beaton be allowed to stay in Scotland and not reassigned to papal duties in Europe. Unfortunately, the Cardinal's private life was flagrantly immoral and, although James threatened to introduce stringent clerical reform, there does not appear to be any evidence of his threat being carried out (Macewen, 1915: 430-433; Cameron, 1993: 65, 66).

Believed by many of the lords to have been the architect of the policies that led to the defeat at Solway Moss, Beaton was accused of forging the king's will, which intimated that he should be Regent of Scotland. This was followed by a period in confinement, during which an Act of Parliament was passed in 1543 making it lawful to read the Bible in the vulgar tongue, English or Scottish. The clerical estate protested against this Act but, without the indomitable Beaton to lead them, was unsuccessful in their opposition. On his return to power in 1543, Beaton cancelled a marriage treaty with England on behalf of the infant Queen Mary that led to two English invasions of Scotland. He also carried out the prosecution of heretics, including the popular evangelist George Wishart who was burned at the stake in March 1546. This act sealed the Cardinal's fate, however, and shortly afterwards he was assassinated by a group that included those who sympathised with the teachings of Wishart and those that had quarrelled with the Regent (Donaldson, 1965: 64; Herron, 1985: 24).

2.3.5 French Ties Reinforced and then Relaxed

Beaton was succeeded as Regent by the Earl of Arran, who had Protestant sympathies. These views did not halt English aggression towards Scotland, however, and the influence of Marie de Guise led to the French taking a more active role in protecting Scotland. This culminated in the Princess Mary being sent to France, a marriage contract being concluded between her and the Dauphin Francis and a French army being sent with the remit to eject English forces from Scotland. This was achieved in 1550 by

the signing of the Treaty of Boulogne and English troops withdrew from Scotland (Burleigh, 1960: 130, 131; Cameron, 1993: 551)

English troops had now been replaced by French counterparts, who garrisoned at strategic points throughout the border regions and central Scotland. Marie de Guise strengthened her political position in 1554 by becoming Regent of Scotland. Although a staunch Roman Catholic, Marie de Guise showed toleration towards Protestants within Scotland. This may have been due to a combination of factors, including the potential threat of invasion from England, pressure from France to woo them into co-operation in war against England, and needing the Protestant lord's approval for the proposed marriage between Mary and the Dauphin, which took place on the 24th April 1558. French advisors also rose to prominence within government, which irked many Scottish nobles who increasingly felt their positions threatened by the Queen Regent's policy of greater integration with France. Consequently, an increasing number of influential people in Scotland began to believe that a union of the Franco-Scottish crowns would culminate in Scotland becoming little more than a satellite state of Catholic France (Renwick, 1960: 47-69; Houston & Knox, eds, 2002: 175).

The ascension of Mary Tudor to the English throne in 1553 once more embroiled Scotland in international politics. Mary Tudor had married Philip of Spain. When war broke out between France and Spain, England could, therefore, be counted on to aid the Spanish cause. The king of France in turn invoked the Queen Regent of Scotland to declare war on England in 1557. Although the Regent wasted no time in seconding this appeal, it met with much less enthusiasm from the Scottish lords, who refused to lead their forces across the border in a sacrifice for the interests of France. This stubborn refusal prompted Marie de Guise to rely increasingly on her French advisors, which provoked a commensurate decrease in popularity with the people (Duke, 1937: 209; Fleming, 1960: 27).

2.3.6 Rekindling the Fire of Faith

By posting his theses against indulgences on a church door at Wittenburg in November 1517, Martin Luther unintentionally became a principal character in what would later be known as the Reformation. The martyrdom of Patrick Hamilton, a nobleman with royal

lineage and a willing adherent to the new teaching, brought the alleged new doctrines to light, as Knox observed:

> *Almost within the whole realm there was none found who began not to enquire; wherefore was Master Patrick Hamilton burned? And when his Articles were rehearsed, question was held if such Articles... were necessary to be believed under pain of damnation. And so within a short space many began to call in doubt that which they held for certain.*
>
> (Knox, 1905: 8.)

The Protestant cause in Scotland could not be ignored by the state. Attempts to suppress this movement by persecution led to the murder of Cardinal Beaton in his castle at St Andrews. French forces eventually crushed a Protestant rebellion against the government in 1547 after an appeal to England for help failed to materialise. Most of the insurgents were taken as galley slaves by the French navy, including John Knox, the future leader of the reformers. Although the Protestant cause had suffered a severe setback with the loss of so many prominent leaders, its doctrines continued to be widely circulated. In 1557, a group of gentlemen subscribed to a Covenant, in which they promised to assist and defend each other in maintaining and spreading the word of God. This was the foundation of an organisation that would take the lead in promoting the Protestant cause in Scotland and pose a threat to the designs of the Queen Regent, her advisors and clergy in securing closer links and possibly union with France. Two opposing parties now officially existed: those who wished to maintain the old ways and those who actively sought reform (Lindsay, 1953: 290, 291; Wilson, 2000: 27, 31).

2.4 SCOTTISH SOCIAL CONDITIONS PRE-REFORMATION

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Scottish society was in the process of dramtic change. The king had obtained allegiance from around a hundred noble families, who retained their land rights in exchange for military support in time of need, free hospitality to the monarch and attendance at court when called upon. This tenure was known as 'wardholding' and – in theory at least – it meant that each noble's estate could revert to the king upon his death. In practice, however, it was possible for a living heir to retain both title and tenure if some form of financial contribution was made to the royal coffers. This system was Norman in origin and was strongly adhered to, particularly in the highlands of Scotland (see Smout, 1972: 126, 127).

Widespread outbreaks of pestilence and plague were common features in most of Europe from the fourteenth to sixteenth century. Despite its remoteness from mainland Europe, Scotland was not spared from these outbursts. The population went into rapid decline from the first outbreak of the Black Death in 1349 and did not show any significant signs of arrest until around 1500. It has been estimated that the population of Scotland at the time of the Reformation was around half a million people, Edinburgh being the most prominent city with around thirty thousand inhabitants (Smout, 1972: 151, 152; Dickinson, 1977: 221). (By way of comparison, England's population at this time was approximately two and a half million.) It may be reasonably argued, therefore, that this regression severely hampered Scotland's military capabilities which, in turn, would diminish their political worth to other European nations, particularly France.

2.4.1 Swelling the Coffers of the Rich at the Expense of the Poor

Both crown and church needed to raise money. In an effort to improve the potential income of both, therefore, James IV introduced parliamentary acts to promote what was known as 'feu-fermes'. The old system involved the tenants paying for a lease that was usually renewable every five years. This did not encourage the leaseholder to invest in structural or land improvements when another tenant was likely to benefit from such an investment when renewals were due. Income was also rather erratic as rents were only paid every five years. Under the new system, tenants would make a one off deposit payment known as a 'grassum', followed by an annual rent (ie the 'feu-duty'), which would entitle them to a perpetual heritable occupation (Brown, 1904: 77; Dickinson, 1977: 254, 255).

This new scheme was beyond the financial means of many of the peasant farmers. However, many of the nobility, merchants and lawyers from the court office seized the opportunity to obtain land that only required monetary payments and not military obligations. This created a new class of people known as the lairds, who in time could be utilised by the crown to keep the ambitions of some of the more factitious nobles in check. In some of the remote areas, it was more difficult to implement this system and both church and crown reduced the 'grassum' and 'feu-duties' in order to promote the practice. This land was obtained by some of the peasants, who became known as the 'bonnet lairds' as they worked the land that they paid rent on. The other two classes (ie nobles and lairds) did not work on the land (Smout, 1972: 128).

In addition to these landowners were the peasants, who perhaps accounted for almost three quarters of the population in the early sixteenth century. Some of this group 'possessed' a hut, a yard and a small amount of land, which they could work together with the right to graze their few animals on the moor. They paid for the right to live there by working an agreed number of days on the lands of the nobles or lairds. The larger part of this group was landless labourers who would receive payment in a combination of money and kind in exchange for their labours (Smout, 1972: 135, 136).

Another social group in existence at this time was what were commonly referred to as 'beggars'. This was a sizable minority of whom it was estimated made up around a fifth of the population. It would be reasonable to assume that the increasing population, coupled with the displacement of poorer people from the more fashionable and lucrative 'feu-ferme' arrangements, contributed significantly to the numbers within this group. By the sixteenth century, it would appear that these vagrants fell into two broad categories: the helpless victims of old age, illness or disability, who could apply to become a 'king's beggar' and thus be entitled to some charitable help from the parish church; and the able-bodied idle vagabonds, who were to be punished for their indolence (Brown, 1904: 66).

Those perceived as being idle included pipers, fiddlers, songsters, jugglers, fortunetellers, storytellers, vagabond scholars from universities who did not possess a begging license and sailors who claimed that they had been shipwrecked without possessing a certificate of consent that verified their claim. They would intrude at weddings and funerals, harass Privy Councillors, beg on the streets and on occasion turn to threats and crime. Various statutes were passed to address the problem of beggars in the years leading up to the Reformation. One such decree in 1535 made every parish responsible for its own poor, with subsequent amendments setting out punishments to be meted to those who were deemed fit and idle (Smout, 1972: 74, 84).

Some contemporary historians have suggested that the idle vagabonds referred to at this time were comparable to the unemployed of society today (see Houston & Whyte, eds, 1989: 200). They further suggest that a combination of factors led to the formation of this social group, including their eviction to make way for feu-farmers and constant movement to escape pestilence and search for food when harvests failed. Some of these

groups may have travelled as families and thus be regarded as a serious threat to other farmers in remote rural areas should they turn from begging to extortion.

Historically, the care of the poor had been seen as being one of the main functions of the Church. Gordon Donaldson comments that life:

> ... *in sixteenth-century Scotland life was so precarious for the mass of the people that there were always many who were on or near the level of poverty or even starvation, and the numerous paupers are often alluded to in legislation and in contemporary writings.*
>
> (Donaldson, 1965: 138.)

Moreover, there is little surviving evidence to suggest that the care of the needy at this time was a serious concern for many ecclesiastical institutions. This would not have gone unnoticed by the poor, who bitterly resented the lifestyles of comparative comfort being enjoyed by many of the clergy, despite their profession of poverty.

2.4.2 A Means to a Taxing End

From the twelfth century on, the kings of Scotland tried to encourage the development of merchant communities, chiefly because they realised the potential for accumulating revenue through taxes and custom duties. Royal burghs were established, initially within close proximity to one of the king's castles where trade could be conducted in relative safety. Inducements were sometimes given to encourage people to settle in the town and this usually involved a one-year period in which no rent was paid to enable the newcomer to build his home and establish his business. By living in the burgh for over a year, the burgess thereby attained a certain level of independence and self-sufficiency (Dickinson, 1977: 107; Nicholl, 1979: 61).

At the outset, persons entering into the burgh were elected by other citizens to form an increasing merchant trading class. The burgess paid his taxes to the king and church, traded goods, farmed, participated in town duties such as policing and occasionally took up arms in the king's cause. The inhabitants of the burghs dealt with movable goods, which made them potential targets for attack. The burghs thus became built-up areas that were good defensive positions and the people therein developed into close-knit communities. Indeed, courts evolved to deal with specific trade issues unique to this group. Gradually, the burghs obtained national recognition and prestige by having their

own seals, which were often used to bind the community's approval to some national treaties. This merchant class increased in power and wealth and jealously guarded their privileges from other groups (Brown, 1904: 141; Dickinson, 1977: 106-109).

These burghs attracted another group of people to the towns. From 1450 onwards, craftsmen began to organise themselves into guilds in order to promote and protect their members' interests against competition from unqualified individuals. Members of craft guilds were obliged to have successfully completed an apprenticeship, which could last up to thirteen years including a period of probation. Initially, the goods produced by these tradesmen could only be sold or exchanged at local business premises, foreign trade being the monopoly of the merchants. As the artisans became more numerous and organised, the next step was to gain recognition and ultimately representation on the burgh councils, which were almost exclusively comprised of merchants. Resentment built up between both parties, which peaked at the time of the Reformation and in its immediate aftermath (Smout, 1972: 160, 162).

2.4.3 A Woman's Work

Although the establishment of burghs helped to increase trade with other countries, the Scottish economy was predominantly agrarian, the role of women being vitally important to the community. Modern media representations of women at this time often portray them as being dutiful wives who stayed at home to rear the family, cook meals and carry out general domestic chores. There is evidence to suggest, however, that married females in rural communities often assisted in other tasks such as making clothes, cutting peat, assisting with the harvest, spreading manure and cleaning barns and stables. In the rural economy, at least, it appears that having a fit and able-bodied wife was beneficial when seeking employment (Houston & Whyte, eds, 1989: 120-122).

In the developing towns, there were ample employment opportunities for servants who were willing to cater for the needs of the merchants and craftsmen. It has been suggested that many of these servants were female and single (see Houston & Whyte, eds, 1989: 132, 139). In 1530, Edinburgh town council ordered that, unless specifically licensed to the contrary, only married women should be allowed to rent premises and conduct business. This was done to deter single female servants from saving sufficient funds to enable them to leave their employers and set up their own business in competition.

2.4.5 Religion as a Social Experience

Prior to the Reformation, Scotland had in excess of one hundred holy days, including the Sabbath, Christmas and Easter. Most of the guilds also had their own saint's day in which the guild(s) concerned participated in a procession, laid on a play at their own expense, persuaded their members to take on character roles and pay musicians for services rendered throughout the day. These processions and plays had the added advantage of promoting each guild's standing in the local community (Todd, 2002: 186, 187).

Christmas, Easter and New Year's Eve were allocated as holidays for school children. At these times, there was music, dancing and guising, in which people donned costumes and masks. Carol singing was popular at Christmas and men and women often dressed in each other's clothing as they paraded through the town. Bonfires were also lit at Midsummer and St Peter's Eve. Although animal bones had traditionally been burned to dispel evil from the air, such events became social occasions at which the more prosperous householders would provide food and drink for their less fortunate neighbours and take part in a common celebration (Todd, 2002, 190-192).

In medieval times, life expectancy was fairly short by today's standards in the West. Comparatively few lived beyond the age of thirty-five years and so death and what lay beyond were of great interest to many people. Individuals were very superstitious and believed that pilgrimages to certain places may have benefits to them in both this life and the age to come. Visits to water wells and springs were especially favoured, this possibly a legacy from early Christian times in which missionaries blessed the wells. Healing properties were, therefore, associated with them and the fact that there were in excess of six hundred of them in Scotland at the beginning of the sixteenth century testifies to their popularity as sites of pilgrimage (Houston & Whyte, eds, 1989: 126; Todd, 2002: 204-208).

The parish church was not only the centre of religious life in the towns in which they existed, but also served as the hub of the citizens' social, civic and political life. Some steeples were adorned with a dovecote and their commanding elevation meant they were often utilised by night watchmen on fire watch. The church building was also an ideal meeting place at which both public and private business was conducted. By the time of

the Reformation some of the merchants and traders from the more important towns had erected toll booths or town halls to conduct their business. It was not uncommon, however, for public messengers to make proclamations at the church doors when services were being conducted (Brown, 1904: 96-98).

Public entertainment was also becoming more popular, with town councils providing musicians at the public's expense. Plays were performed regularly, the annual frolic of Robin Hood and Little John on the first day of May being especially popular. Anyone could participate and this community experience, coupled with the fact that the day ended with the partakers getting drunk, possibly added to the event's success. Indoors, cards, backgammon and dice were common pastimes in both taverns and private houses, whereas tennis, football, golf and horse racing were popular outdoor activities. Group activities throughout the country were focused on baptisms, weddings and funerals, at all of which alcoholic consumption held a central role (Brown, 1904: 164-166).

2.4.5 The Cost of Vocation

Parish revenues had been steadily diverted to cathedrals, bishoprics or collegiate churches, and this peaked prior to the Reformation with almost nine out of ten churches having their revenue diverted in this way. At a local level this meant that churches were falling into disrepair. Vicars were appointed on very low stipends and often resorted to dubious means in order to exact payments from their parishioners. Some took on secondary employment, whilst others refused to bury the poor until they had received the customary payment of 'cow and cloth' as death dues. Sacraments would similarly be withheld until a suitable offering had been made. The vocation often attracted unsuitable candidates, some of whom came to the altar worse the wear for drink and whose personal life was "extremely licentious and scandalous" (Smout, 1972: 52).

With income being diverted away from the parish churches, there was little money available for the relief of the poor and repairs to buildings. The morals of the clergy became the object of satire with Sir David Lindsay's play, *'Ane Pleasant Satyre of the Three Estaitis'*, being the most celebrated of contemporary writings. It seems hardly surprising, therefore, that church attendances were significantly reduced and those who made the effort treated the surroundings and ceremonies with abject irreverence. At this time, quarrels within the confines of the church were not uncommon. Professor P Hume

Brown has especially noted that attendees at a Provincial Council in 1552 complained of many who had:

> ... *fallen into the habit of hearing mass irreverently and impiously, or who jest or behave scurrilously in church in time of sermon, or who presume at such times to make mockery or engage in profane bargainings in church porches or church yards.*
>
> (Brown, 1904: 98.)

2.4.6 Education as a Passport to Social Awareness

The first known education Act in Scotland was passed in 1496 during the reign of James IV. Accordingly, all burgesses and freeholders of substance were required to send their eldest sons to school at the age of eight or nine. They were to remain there until they perfected Latin, after which a further three years were to be spent studying the arts and jury, with the noble intention of equipping the realm with sheriffs or judges who could administer justice without partiality. Failure to comply with this Act could attract a £20 fine. The poor were not excluded from the right to education as grants were given, sometimes from the royal exchequer to pay for their education (Stewart, 1927: 4, 5).

As merchants and mariners moved from port to port, they thus became familiar with the new doctrines and controversies sweeping Europe. They eagerly communicated the latest news to enthusiastic audiences at home. Although the Act of 1496 enabled many of the developing middle classes to read openly, books that were perceived as heretical – such as the writings of Martin Luther and William Tynedale's Bible – were being smuggled into the country on a grand scale. This was considered such a menace that an Act of Parliament was passed in 1535 that threatened confiscation of goods and ships together with the imprisonment of the ships' owners (Knox, 1905: 17; Duke, 1937: 132).

Education was given a further boost in 1542 by the passing of another law that permitted the Bible to be read in the vernacular. The importance of this Act should not be underestimated as it provided a much-needed impetus for the common people to learn and acquire knowledge. Prior to this, Latin was the language of education; now it was possible to read books – principally the Bible – in English or Scottish. By reading the Scriptures, the cultured classes of Scotland could see at first hand glaring deficiencies within the Church. Thanks to the invention of the printing press, other

literature began to be circulated that exposed these failings (Stewart, 1927: 5, 6; Renwick, 1960: 52, 53).

2.5 SUMMARY

In this section I have tried to ascertain the conditions in Scotland prior to the Reformation in an attempt to determine the key contributory factors towards this event. Externally, rivalry between France and England ultimately divided the nobles of Scotland into two quite distinct parties. It also paved the way for many incursions into Scotland by invading English armies which, in turn, led to the stationing of a French army for the protection of the country. The wealth of the Church was being diverted from the parish to abbeys and cathedrals which, in many cases, were under the stewardship of men of low moral standards. The cure of souls and relief of the poor were not being met at a local level and vicars alienated their parishioners' support by their irreligious life, some of which was undertaken to supplement their meagre stipends.

Society as a whole was becoming increasingly more complex. The burgess was developing into two distinct groups: the merchants and the craftsmen who, by virtue of their contact with Europe and their learning, endeavoured to promote their own interests and canvass for their voice to be heard regarding how the country was run. Furthermore, as they became more knowledgeable in the Scriptures, they began to produce literature that challenged the legitimacy of the way in which the established Church handled its affairs. The poor made up a significant minority at this time, though they were largely neglected within society. Moreover, their customary champion – the Church – had been seen to neglect them, thus creating a class of underprivileged people who would be sympathetic to anyone who would actively promote their cause.

3.0 THE IMPACT OF THE REFORMATION ON SCOTLAND

3.1 INTRODUCTION

On 11th May 1559, John Knox preached a typically fiery sermon "vehement against idolatry" at the church of St John in Perth. Following this discourse, a mob that Knox later referred to as "the rascal multitude" damaged the ornaments in the church. The assembled rabble then marched upon the religious houses of the Grey- and Blackfriars and the Carthusian monastery, where they proceeded to ransack and destroy the buildings. The infuriated queen regent, Marie de Guise, ordered troops to muster at Stirling, whence they were to march upon Perth and punish the offending preacher and burgesses. In response to this threat, Knox and his friends sought assistance from Protestant sympathisers, principally nobles and lairds from the Lowlands. On arrival at Perth, the queen regent was surprised to find that the army of "the Faithful Congregation of Christ Jesus in Scotland" comprised not only of the heretics, but also nobles, lairds, political and personal enemies (Knox, 1905: 149-153; Smout, 1972: 49). This incident marked the beginning of a sequence of events that would culminate in the Scottish Reformation. People from all walks of society contributed towards creating a climate that was conducive to change, as we shall see.

3.2 THE EFFECTS OF THE REFORMATION ON THE CHURCH IN SCOTLAND

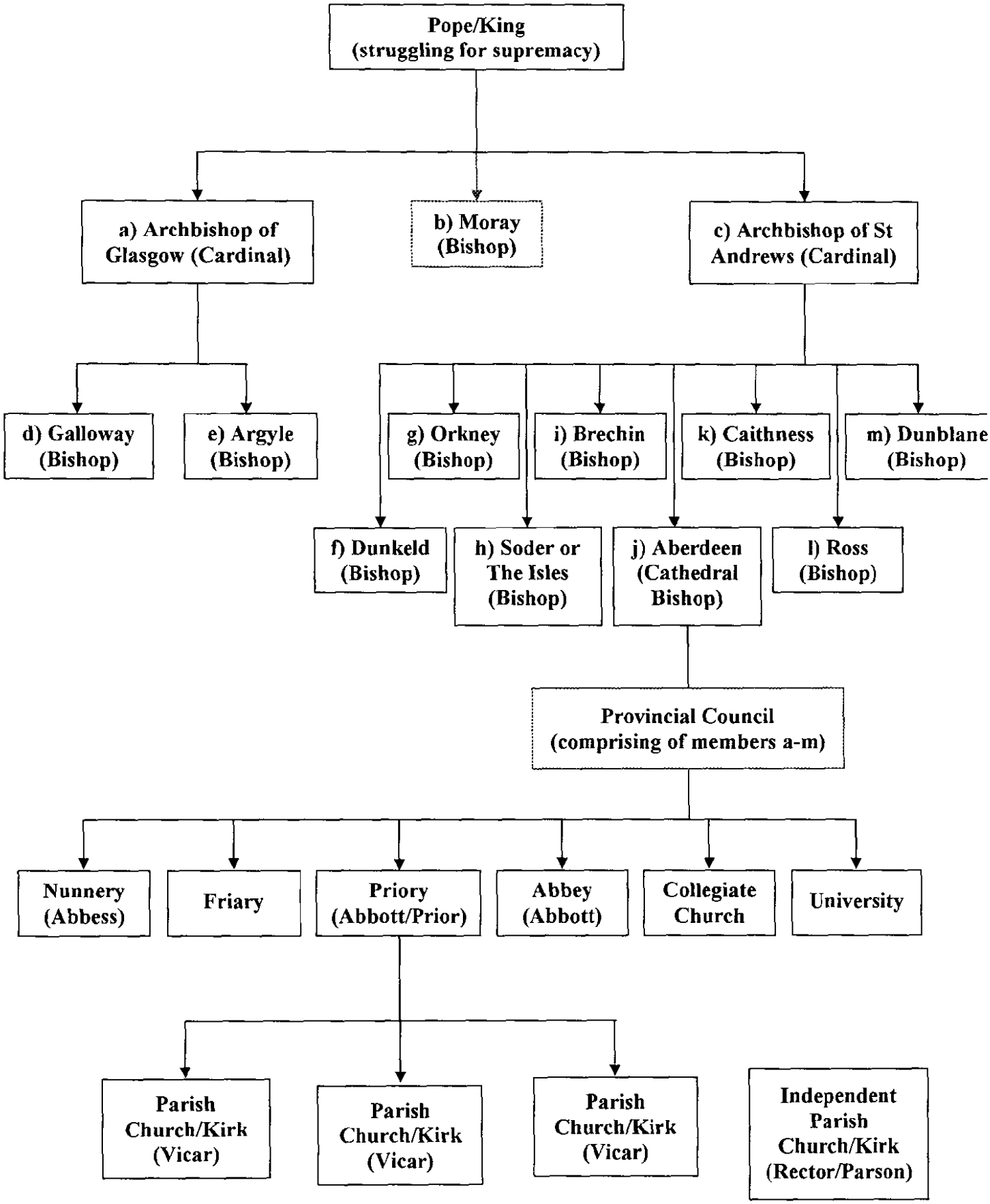
3.2.1 Church Structure

By 1559, the Scottish Church appeared to be organised in accordance with a sound hierarchical structure. There were aspects of this system, however, that made the Scottish Church unique in Western Christendom. The organisation of the Church in Scotland can be viewed in figure 1, with the sections shown in red indicating key differences when compared with other Roman Catholic administrations in Europe. Although the factitious rivalry that had previously existed between the archbishops of Glasgow and St Andrews had diminished, a further dispute broke out between St Andrews and Moray over the bishop of the latter, James Hepburn, being granted exemption from the jurisdiction of the archbishop of the former (see Duke, 1937: 263-269; Watt, 2000: 170).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the higher clergy had traditionally received their position after petitioning the Pope and paying him a fee. Over a period of time, however, the kings of Scotland had replaced the Pope in making such choices and this, in conjunction with the Patronage system, ensured that many of the higher clergy so appointed were not necessarily suitably qualified (Renwick, 1960: 20, 21).

Prior to the elevation of St Andrews to metropolitan status, Provincial Councils had met to discuss and agree upon national religious policy. These meetings were suspended from 1470 until 1535, when they were reconvened to discuss the royal request for taxation from the clergy to support a proposed College of justice. The Councils continued to meet thereafter and, although they came under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of St Andrews, it would appear that the attendees were free to voice their personal opinions (Watt, 2000: 171).

Figure 1: Ecclesiastical Structure at the Beginning of 1559



3.2.2 The Provincial Council

John Hamilton became primate of Scotland in 1549. He wasted no time in summoning a meeting of the Provincial Council, principally to address the perceived threat of Lutheranism, which was gaining momentum in no small measure because of:

> ... *the corruption of morals and profane lewdness of life in churchmen of almost all ranks, together with the crass ignorance of literature and of all the liberal arts.*
>
> (Renwick, 1960: 19)

A further gathering in 1550 condemned Adam Wallace as a heretic and ordered that he be burnt at the stake. In 1552, the group noted that the statutes they had passed three years earlier had not been implemented and should now be instigated as a matter of urgency. Furthermore, it was agreed that a book known as '*Hamilton's Catechism*' should be published and that the parish clergy should read it to their congregations each Sunday. Written in the vulgar tongue and in the Scottish dialect, it today stands as testimony to the beliefs of the Roman Church in Scotland prior to the Reformation. The Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer are mingled with Transubstantiation and the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, and are explained in a conciliatory fashion. Interestingly, there is no reference to the Pope, which may suggest that the book was designed to lure Lutheran sympathisers back into the mainstream (cf Burleigh, 1960: 132; Duke, 1937: 197, 198).

The convention of 1559 proved to be the last gathering before the Reformation and was convened at the request of Marie de Guise to discuss the religious grievances reported by Protestant supporters. The Council passed thirty-four statutes to address problems within the Church. These included certain rulings to reform the morals and manners of the clergy, minimum stipends for the parish vicars, repairs to church buildings and to promote the preaching of sermons. Mortuary dues were no longer to be taken from the poor and tithes were to be taken at the beginning of the year to temper complaints that the sacraments were being sold at Easter. The members' last act was to appoint another date to meet, but the overthrow of the established Church in 1560 meant that this never took place (Fleming, 1960: 36-40).

3.2.3 The Enigmatic Hamilton

John Hamilton was primate of Scotland in the decade prior to Reformation. From what is known of his policies and personal life it would not be unreasonable to describe him as something of an enigma. It was the influence of his half brother, the Earl of Arran (Regent of Scotland 1543-1554), that enabled Hamilton to become Archbishop of St Andrews. John Knox had originally regarded him as a supporter of reform and had hoped that he "would occupy the pulpit, and truly preach Jesus Christ" (1905: 40). However, he became a confidant of Cardinal David Beaton and aligned his support to maintaining the Franco-Scottish alliance (Burleigh, 1960: 131)

This apparent shift in policy may be explained by the Hamilton family's blood ties to the royal lineage. The Earl of Arran was next in line to the throne should the infant Princess Mary die and thereby became Regent of Scotland. Archbishop Hamilton was the Earl's half brother, the product of an extra-marital relationship between the Earl's father and a gentlewoman of Ayrshire. It would be to the mutual benefit of both the Earl and the Archbishop to support each other in maintaining their respective positions, arguably the most powerful in the country at this time (Renwick, 1960: 36, 47).

Hamilton appeared to be a keen supporter of improving the education of the clergy. In 1552, obtained authorisation from Pope Julius III to significantly increase the teaching staff at St Mary's College, St Andrews. The object of this expansion was to:

> ... *train up the candidates for the Church as expert wranglers, and ready speakers on every point of theological speculation, as well as to prepare them by strict discipline for conducting themselves with exemplary decorum, both in their private capacities and in their public ministrations*
>
> (Hewat, 1920: 340.)

Students applying for placements at the University were required to sit three public examinations, whereby they were to demonstrate that they were sufficiently grounded in the principles of sacred erudition. Successful candidates would embark on a six-year course that would prepare them to undertake the most important duties in the Church. As patron and Chancellor of the University, Hamilton had the power of final approval in all nominations to the teaching positions. His authority was such that by the time of the Reformation five of the nine professors in residence were his own blood relatives. The reason behind such a strategy is, of course, open to conjecture. If, however, it was to

secure reliable allies in the preservation of the Roman Catholic faith in the face of increasing opposition, then it utterly failed. The College was established with the noble intention of producing zealous defenders of the Roman Catholic faith. Perhaps ironically, when the Reformation occurred, St Mary's College almost exclusively joined the ranks of the Reformers. Moreover, at the first General Assembly of the Reformed Church, the College provided the largest group of people to be recommended for ministerial and tutorial duties (Hewat, 1920: 341).

Unfortunately Hamilton's personal lifestyle and those of most of his ecclesiastical colleagues failed to meet the ideals that they were trying to impose upon the rest of the clergy. Five of the seven highest dignitaries who attended the Provincial Council of 1549 were men of notorious reputation. Without strong and exemplar leadership, it proved a difficult challenge to implement significant moral change throughout the Scottish Church. Hamilton, for example, was known to have kept a mistress by the name of Semple, whom his supporters claimed he had married prior to entering holy orders. Having one mistress provided ample opportunity for the reformers to vilify his character and thereby undermine the appropriateness of his leadership. In 1559, John Winram and five other church dignitaries sympathetic to the Protestant cause were nominated to examine and admonish the private conduct of Hamilton and the Archbishop of Glasgow. It was not long before Winram defected to the reforming cause. Why he left the Church of Rome remains uncertain, though perhaps being able to examine its moral laxity at such close quarters was a contributory factor (see Duke, 1937: 195; Hewat, 1920: 181, 182).

An early act of Archbishop Hamilton in his role as primate was to approve the martyrdom of Adam Wallace in 1550. There then followed a period of toleration, dialogue and compromise to prevent the church from falling further in public opinion. This culminated in a proposal that the reformers be allowed to secretly baptise and pray in the vernacular, provided that they accept the Mass, the doctrine of purgatory, prayers to the saints, and sanctioned the clergy's right to retain possession of their revenues. This proposal was rejected and a stalemate ensued. The church authorities resorted once more to persecution, which began with Hamilton writing a letter to the Earl of Argyll requesting the dismissal of a 'heretic' preacher, John Douglas. The Earl declined the request, however, opting instead to offer protection to the preacher (Duke, 1937: 212-214).

Attention was then turned to a more helpless victim, a decrepit eighty-two year old parish priest by the name of Walter Myln. Myln was arrested in April 1558 for allegedly breaking the vow of celibacy (he had apparently fallen into disfavour with the authorities for marrying). The pitiful sight of his pending death so affected the local populace that they refused to supply the requisite materials needed for his burning. The Archbishop himself had to supply the rope for securing Myln to the stake and his minnions were forced to carry out the act, which served only to embolden the reformers to preach more openly and was a key point in turning the people against the established Church (Duke, 1937: 212-214).

3.2.4 Clergy Under Orders

The topmost positions within the Scottish Church were still held in the main by unqualified individuals who prioritised their private concerns above those of their diocese or monastery. Many appointees showed little interest in the areas that provided them with their living income. In effect, this meant that the clergy under orders had to continue to manage on limited resources. It was from amongst this level of priests and monks, however, that the first leaders and martyrs for the Protestant cause evolved, including Patrick Hamilton, George Wishart, Henry Forrest and Walter Myln. Alexander Alne (better known in Europe as Alesius), Gavin Logie and George Buchanan were other clergymen who fled the country to avoid persecution from their own church for adhering to so-called 'heretical' beliefs (Renwick, 1960: 20-27).

Within this tier of clergy were the monks and nuns who lived in the abbeys, monasteries and nunneries, and the Augustinian canons, Franciscan, Dominican and Carmelite friars, who generally tended to work and live in the burghs. Although few in number, the nunneries did not enjoy a favourable reputation. Indeed Sir David Lyndsay, a contemporary poet, described how Chastity, in search of a suitable home at a nunnery, could only find one convent, at Sciennes outside Edinburgh, where the nuns lived virtuous lives. This view was substantiated by a report sent by a cardinal to Pope Pious IV in 1556, in which their nefarious lifestyle was colourfully described (Macewen, 1915: 444; Smout, 1972: 50, 51).

A monk's life within the cloister walls was going through a period of transition. In the border region, most of the larger abbeys had been all but destroyed by the English

during the period of 'the Rough Wooing'. The manner by which revenues were being drawn to support non-religious patrons meant that there was insufficient funding to begin restoration work to these buildings. Furthermore, as the towns prospered under commercial expansion, the significance of the monastery as an economic institution waned. By the 1550s, the monks had thus declined in number, becoming increasingly reclusive and apparently content to live off the tithes of the people. It is quite astonishing that when the Reformation occurred, this group scarcely made any notable contribution to the event (cf Brown, 1904: 185, 186; Smout, 1972: 51).

The friars and other mendicant orders that lived and worked in the burghs, however, were in the front line at the Reformation. Their contact with the laity, especially in the ports where returning mariners were kept up to date with religious events in Europe, ensured that they were regularly exposed to the arguments surrounding the Reformation debate. There can be little wonder, therefore, that the friars and their brethren became active participants in the events immediately prior to and during the Reformation (Dickinson, 1977: 318; Smout, 1972: 51).

3.2.5 The Parish Clergy

The scandalous underpayments made to the secular clergy were discussed at the Provincial Council of 1559, and resulted in their annual income being raised from around £6 to almost £15 per annum. Although a welcome increase, this was still substantially less than the average living wage. By comparison, a professional man working in Scotland at that time could earn in the region of £80 to £100 per annum, thus dissuading the educated class from joining the ranks of the parish priest. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the vocation attracted the ill educated, whose imperfect administration of the sacraments did not induce due reverence from the congregations. Moreover, the registers of birth from that period suggest that those entrusted with ecclesiastical responsibilities favoured more carnal than intellectual pastimes (Donaldson, 1960: 41, 42).

Although statutes had been passed requiring repairs to be carried out on parish churches and provision made for the poor, there is little evidence that sufficient sums of money were allocated to meet these needs. The local priest had little enough money to provide for himself and his concubine(s), let alone embark upon rebuilding projects that in the

case of the borders would involve the rebuilding of many church buildings destroyed by successive invading English armies. Indeed, a report on the re-roofing of the church at Ayton, situated on the main east coast route into Scotland, concluded that the locals' "fear of the Englishmen" was the major factor considered in choosing the roofing material of turf and thatch (Dickinson, 1977: 325; Donaldson, 1960: 45).

By being deprived of a living wage and adequate funding to support the parish ministry, parish priests were forced consider other means of supplementing their income. Some exacted payments from their parishioners for providing services that had previously involved a free will offering which, in turn, placed a heavy burden on those affected, especially the peasantry who could ill afford such costs. In addition, it was not uncommon for people to be excommunicated from the local church. This was known as 'cursing' and involved the use of vulgar and offensive language, which was designed to terrify the offenders. There can be little wonder, therefore, that the resident clergy were held in such low esteem (Fleming, 1960: 4-8).

3.2.6 The Church's Reaction to John Knox

John Knox had begun his ministry as a preacher at the castle of St Andrews in 1547. He was held captive as a galley slave when the castle fell to a combined siege from government and French troops. On being released, Knox spent some time ministering in England, Frankfurt, Geneva and Dieppe, and became well versed in the reformed principles developed by John Calvin. He returned to Scotland in 1557 and encouraged prominent Protestant sympathisers not to attend Mass, but rather to meet separately and have communion together. He then began to travel widely, administering the Lord's Supper in people's homes. Alarmed by his success, the church authorities summoned him to Edinburgh to appear before an ecclesiastical court. Under normal circumstances, such a summons might encourage the offender to beat a hasty retreat. Knox, however, turned up for the trial with an entourage of supporters. Taken unawares by his arrival, the clergy cancelled the trial and made themselves scarce, thus enabling Knox to preach in the capital city. When he was subsequently called to Geneva, the clerical authorities took advantage of his absence by condemning him as a heretic (Wilson, 2000: 50-53).

Knox returned to Scotland on 2nd May 1559 and began preaching at Dundee and Perth. On hearing of his homecoming, the church authorities declared that he was an outlaw

and resolved to subdue the reforming movement. After a standoff between both parties at Perth, Knox journeyed to St Andrews in the company of some of his followers and, despite threats from Archbishop Hamilton that he would welcome the reformer with a twelve-gun salute that would alight on his nose, preached reformation doctrine at the city cathedral. Outraged by this, Hamilton made haste to the queen regent to demand that action be taken against the heretics. Although there was further confrontation, a treaty was agreed and the country entered a period that was mockingly termed the 'phony war'. Knox continued preaching the gospel message throughout Scotland. At the same time, the church welcomed the arrival of the Bishop of Amiens and some doctors from the Sorbonne, whose mission was to counteract the teachings of the Protestant preachers. Their impact in refuting Knox's teachings are difficult to ascertain as, shortly after their arrival, the political situation deteriorated to such an extent that open warfare broke out between the opposing parties, thus bringing the crown to the frontline in the fight against Reformation (Duke, 1937: 229, 236).

3.2.7 Doctrinal Controversies

John Knox returned to Scotland strongly influenced by the doctrinal persuasions of Jean Calvin. As such, he effectively became the unofficial spokesperson for those doctrines in his homeland. Because Knox held to the Reformed view of the sovereignty of God, he wasted no diplomacy on what he regarded to be the ungodly authority of the pope. With the firm conviction that he was an ambassador for truth, Knox wrote a letter to the Queen Regent requesting that she support the Reformation in Scotland, thereby hoping to remove the Church from the State interference. At a private meeting in Edinburgh, some prominent and influential individuals were persuaded not to attend Mass, thus sowing the initial seeds of what was to become the Church of Scotland (Herron, 1985: 25; Wilson, 2000: 50, 146).

Knox also spoke out against the practice of iconic idolatry, insisting that the new churches should dispense with all images, relics and statues of so-called 'saints'. Contrary to the stance of the Church of Rome, which promoted the acknowledgment of seven sacraments, Knox and his growing band of followers would only admit to two being instituted by Jesus: baptism and communion. Moreover, the Romish teaching of transubstantiation in relation to the Lord's Supper was strongly refuted in favour of the symbolism associated with the bread and the wine, the administration of which should

be conducted by lawful ministers and in a manner stripped of the ceremony, ritual and pomp that had previously dominated the event (Knox, 1905: 356-358).

3.3 HOW THE REFORMATION INFLUENCED POLITICAL AND SOVEREIGN RULE IN SCOTLAND

3.3.1 Scotland's Strategic Importance to France

Mary Tudor, Queen of England, married Philip II of Spain, and soon after embroiled England in a war between Spain and France. Henri II, intent on binding the Scots more closely to France, induced the Earl of Arran to resign his governorship in favour of Marie de Guise (James V's widow), compensating him with the French Duchy of Chatelherault. The new regent's task was a difficult one: to keep the Scots united in hostility to England and, if possible, to bring them into France's war. Mary Tudor's severe persecution of Protestants in England caused many to flee abroad and Marie de Guise, perceiving an opportunity to undermine the English crown, welcomed some of these 'heretics' into Scotland. Moreover, negotiations for the proposed marriage of Princess Mary to the Dauphin of France were at an advanced stage and Marie de Guise needed to maintain the support of the lords who were sympathetic to the Protestant cause in order to bring a successful conclusion to proceedings (Burleigh, 1960: 133; Renwick, 1960: 68).

As regent, Marie de Guise sought to strengthen French influence in Scotland. Able French advisors arrived in Scotland, whom she promoted to offices of State, and an army of some six thousand experienced French troops garrisoned key Scottish fortresses. Military experts were also appointed and plans drawn up for the invasion of England in 1556. The nobility were reluctant to participate in this action and after consultation they confronted the French commander (Monsieur D'Oysel), making their refusal to support an attack on English soil known (Dickinson, 1977: 336, 337; Knox, 1905: 122).

3.3.2 Peace Beckons in Western Europe

The marriage of Princess Mary to the Dauphin of France in April 1558 was followed in November in the same year by the ascension of Elizabeth to the English throne after the

death of Mary Tudor. Spain and France set aside their differences and signed the treaty of Cateau Cambresis in 1559, their mutual agreement being to crush Protestantism. French interests ensured that Scotland was included in these negotiations, to which England was also a party, despite her cultivating a more moderate attitude towards Protestantism. It would appear that the diplomatic efforts of Marie de Guise had been most successful to this point. Her daughter, Mary, had married the Dauphin of France, English troops had been ejected from the country and threats of further invasion of both France and Scotland had receded by virtue of the garrisoning of French troops (Burleigh, 1960: 133).

With France no longer in military danger, King Henri II now turned his attention towards rooting out the Protestant movement within his realm. In Scotland, Marie de Guise pursued a similar strategy, no doubt encouraged by her powerful relatives in France. John Knox was not slow to detect a change in the regent's attitude:

> *Suddenly, it became certain that we were deceived in our opinion, and abused by her craft... She began to spew forth, and disclose the latent venom of her double heart. She began to frown, and to look forwardly upon all such as she knew to favour the Evangel of Jesus Christ... She appeared altogether altered, insomuch that her countenance and acts did declare the venom of her heart.*
>
> (Knox, 1905: 146.)

Hitherto, Marie had shown herself to be an astute diplomat in the religious matters. Although she was known to be a Roman Catholic, she was neither fanatical in her faith nor fervent in persecuting those who were seeking to reform the Church. Bizarrely, however, it seems that Scottish reliance on French protection from the threat of English aggression contributed in no small measure to the success of the Reformation in Scotland. Many of the powerful nobles were unhappy at the number of French advisors being promoted to important offices of state and feared that their country would ultimately become a province of France. The population at large were also becoming disenchanted with the behaviour of the French soldiers, who were now being regarded as an army of occupation rather than one of liberation. At the same time, the Reformers began to be seen as the party of patriotism and liberty who opposed foreign occupation, and their popularity soared after the queen regent raised taxes to help pay for the upkeep of the French army and the construction and maintenance of military fortifications (Donaldson, 1965: 85; Magnusson, 2001: 334, 335).

3.3.3 The Conflict Begins

In February 1559, Marie de Guise issued a proclamation threatening to put to death those who disturbed church services, interfered with the priests in the performance of their duties or ate flesh during lent. A further declaration a month later forbade preaching and the unauthorised administration of the sacraments. Some preachers ignored these decrees and were summoned by the regent. Supporters beseeched Marie to try the preachers only if they proclaimed false doctrine, but were dismissed with: "In despite of you and of your ministers both, they shall be banished out of Scotland, albeit they preached as truly as ever did St Paul" (Duke, 1937: 224). Further appeals to uphold pledges made were met with a similarly haughty reply (Knox, 1905: 146, 147).

The offenders were summoned to appear before the authorities at Stirling in May and a large body of unarmed followers accompanied the preachers. In order to allay fears of revolt, the large body remained outside Stirling while a smaller group made petition with the regent. Marie agreed to postpone the trial of the preachers and the group of Reformers dispersed, believing that they had secured the liberty of their colleagues. However, on the 10th May the preachers were outlawed in their absence. On the following day, John Knox preached a sermon at Perth on idolatry, which incited many of the locals to ransack the city's religious houses. The authorities could not ignore this outrage and Marie de Guise marched her French army on Perth, determined to make an example of these Protestants to the rest of the nation (Duke, 1937: 226, 227; Knox, 1905: 147, 148).

On arriving at Perth, the royal troops were surprised to find a large army arrayed against them. After some negotiation the queen regent was allowed entry into Perth unopposed, conditional upon no punishment being meted out to anyone suspected of involvement in the recent riot, no garrison being stationed there and the townspeople having the right to choose their own form of worship. Some of these provisions were quickly broken, however, which led to a handful of powerful lords – including the Earl of Argyll and Lord James Stewart, half brother to the Princess Mary – abandoning the service of the queen regent and lending their support to the Reformers. Marie de Guise was now almost totally dependent on the French and, in the face of increasing support for the insurgents, withdrew to Dunbar Castle via Edinburgh (Burleigh, 1960: 144).

3.3.4 The Auld Enemy Brings Freedom

The deteriorating situation in Scotland was being observed carefully by England. The recently enthroned Queen Elizabeth had been restoring the Protestant faith and was acutely aware that a French victory in Scotland could jeopardise her position as ruler of England. France did not acknowledge Elizabeth's claim to the throne; in their eyes she was an illegitimate child of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, whose marriage had been the catalyst for papal disapproval and the English split from Rome. Henri II of France increased pressure by proclaiming that his son Francis and his daughter-in-law Mary (later Queen of Scots) were the veritable king and queen of England (Weir, 2003: 17, 18).

In Scotland, the fortunes of the Reformers fluctuated from a position of strength to one of vulnerability. The queen regent had the luxury of being in control of a well-trained professional army that was gradually being reinforced by troops from France. The congregations of the Lord, on the other hand, relied heavily upon a militia army that could only remain in the field for short periods as they had domestic duties to perform, such as harvesting. Marie de Guise could afford to wait, therefore, until the rebel army dispersed before going on the offensive, a ploy that was used to full effect. The Protestant lords knew that their cause could not succeed without English support. Elizabeth was reluctant to commit troops to a rebellion in order to usurp a fellow monarch, perceiving that such an action might encourage Romish supporters in the North of England to rebel against her (Renwick, 1960: 80-82).

Any thoughts of a peaceful settlement to the worsening crisis were shattered on 23rd October 1559, when the Reformers formally announced the suspension of the regency from Marie de Guise. The rebellion had to be crushed. In November, the queen regent's French troops went on the offensive and quickly recaptured Edinburgh and Stirling. They then headed towards St Andrews and in their progress laid much of the countryside to waste. The Reformation movement was in grave danger of being crushed and yet John Knox continued to encourage the brethren that salvation was at hand. In January 1560, the arrival of an English naval fleet blockaded the Firth of Forth, thus preventing the French army from receiving provisions by sea. The French withdrew to the port of Leith, where a combined Anglo-Scottish army besieged them. Marie de

Guise had been given refuge in Edinburgh castle, where the garrison commander, Lord Erskine, maintained a position of impartiality (Fleming, 1960: 68-82).

Strenuous efforts were made to bring a peaceful solution to the siege of Leith. It soon became apparent, however, that the negotiations entered into were solely for the purpose of buying time until French reinforcements arrived to relieve the blockade. Negotiations for ending the conflict were brought about by a combination of factors. Queen Elizabeth had not been very enthusiastic about the enterprise and was concerned at both the financial cost and the English casualties. The French had problems with the Protestant Huguenots at home, which limited the number of troops they could send to Scotland, and a fleet en route to assist the conflict had to return home after being caught up in a fierce sea tempest. The lords were worried that a prolonged war may lead to an unsatisfactory settlement (Fleming, 1960: 92-96; Renwick, 1960: 86).

Marie de Guise became seriously ill and passed away on 11th June 1560. Within two weeks of her death, peace negotiations had begun and were concluded on 6th July. Commissioners from England and France met to resolve the differences between the three contending parties and eventually signed the Treaty of Edinburgh. Terms of the treaty included Mary and Francis of France refraining from using the English coat of arms, French troops dismantling their fortifications before leaving Scotland, no Frenchman was to be allowed to hold any important office within the kingdom and a general amnesty was granted to all who had been involved in the conflict. A council of twelve was to be appointed to govern the country in the absence of Mary. Three days after signing this accord, the French commissioners informed Catherine de Medici (Mary's mother-in-law) that they would have never agreed to the conditions had the plight of the garrison in Leith not been so precarious (Duke, 1937: 244).

Perhaps surprisingly, no settlement on the matter of religion in Scotland was agreed at these negotiations. This was to be decided by the Scots themselves and a further provision of the treaty enabled a Parliament to be summoned, with the principal aim of dealing with the affairs of the nation. The Commission for this proposed convention was to be sent from the king and queen in France and was to be as lawful as any other meeting of Parliament called for by a reigning monarch (Dickinson, 1977: 343; Duke, 1937: 244, 245).

3.3.5 Victory at Last?

Parliament gathered on 1st August 1560 and attracted a large number of the lesser lords who were entitled to vote on proceedings. One of the first resolutions passed was the abolition of the authority and jurisdiction of the pope. The celebration of Mass was forbidden and a document outlining the doctrine of the Protestant faith in Scotland, known as the *Confession of Faith*, was approved. *The Book of Discipline* was also presented to the parliament for approval, wherein the structure, financing and function of the Church was discussed, though no definitive conclusions were reached. John Knox wryly commented that "others, perceiving their carnal liberty and worldly commodity somewhat to be impaired by its provisions, grudged, insomuch that the name of *The Book of Discipline* became odious to them" (1905: 217). Some of the more prominent nobles coveted the lands and incomes of the now redundant Roman Catholic Church. Mary (queen of Scots) never ratified the Treaty of Edinburgh or the enactments of the 1560 Parliament, which led to more difficulties over religion on her return to Scotland (Burleigh, 1960: 175, 176).

After the death of her husband, Francis, Mary was encouraged by her mother-in-law (ie Catherine de Medici) to return to Scotland. Two parties of nobles visited her in France. A group led by the Earl of Huntly urged Mary to arrive at Aberdeen, where the Catholic faith would be restored by armed force. Her half-brother, Lord James Stuart, led the second group and agreed to allow Mary to celebrate the Mass in private, conditional upon her not interfering with the new Protestant Church. Mary agreed to the offer of compromise and arrived in Scotland to a rousing reception from the local populace at Leith on 19th August 1561. She quickly exercised her right to enjoy Mass: on 23rd August, Lord Stuart and some supporters had to physically prevent opponents from disrupting the service. The following day, Mary issued her first royal proclamation stating that a final order would shortly be made on the matter of religion, thereby forbidding anyone from interfering with the current religion within the realm or with her servants in the practice of theirs (Magnusson, 2001, 345, 346: Weir, 2003: 24, 25)

3.3.6 Mary Queen of Scots

John Knox compared the toleration of the Mass as more fearful to him than if more than ten thousand armed men had landed in the country intent upon destroying the new

religion. He was summoned to an audience with the queen, at which they – perhaps predictably – clashed on the matter of religion. Under the guidance of her half-brother, however, Mary governed the country wisely, and displayed no public partiality towards fellow Catholics. Indeed, some priests were imprisoned for celebrating Mass publicly. Moreover, she agreed to permit a third of the income from the old churches' benefices be distributed between the crown and the Protestant Kirk (Magnusson, 2001: 347).

It was not religion, but Mary's marriage to Lord Henry Darnley on 29th July 1565 that sowed the seeds of her downfall. Darnley was unpopular amongst the nobility and Lord Stuart, perhaps fearing that his position of influence may become compromised, refused to attend the wedding. The queen outlawed him. Stuart and other leading Protestant nobles sought refuge in England following an unsuccessful coup, after which Mary began to rely more heavily on the advice of David Rizzio, an Italian court musician. It was rumoured that Rizzio was in the service of the pope and was having an affair with the queen. The queen's immature and ambitious husband had not yet received the crown matrimonial because of his unpredictable behaviour and was persuaded to take part in a plot to kill Rizzio. His murder was carried out in full view of Mary, who was pregnant at the time. Mary was imprisoned, but managed to escape to Dunbar castle, where she rallied the support of Lord Bothwell and others to reclaim her crown, exiling many of the lords suspected of being involved in the plot. Some leading nobles, including Lord Stuart, were granted pardons and returned to Scotland (Magnusson, 2001: 353-355).

Although publicly showing tolerance and some support for the Protestant Church, Mary had privately entered into correspondence with the pope and other leading Catholic dignitaries outlining her intention to restore the Catholic faith in Scotland. She had received funds and offers of military support from Charles IX of France. Her husband, in an attempt to raise his own profile and claim to the crown matrimonial, also sent letters to leading Catholics in Europe claiming that Mary had no intention of restoring the ancient church. In fact, Darnley's relationship with Mary had so deteriorated that the queen looked into possible avenues for being granted a divorce. A group of leading nobles met at Craigmillar castle and plotted to oust the lord from his lofty position, which resulted in his murder (Renwick, 1960: 134-136; Weir, 2003: 149, 150, 172-174)

Lord Bothwell was immediately blamed for Darnley's death and rumours spread that the queen was also implicated in the foul deed. As a member of the Privy Council, Mary

allowed Bothwell to arrange his own trial and he was subsequently acquitted of all charges. Mary's later 'abduction' by Bothwell in April 1567 and her resultant marriage to him was not well received by the public. Her army was defeated at Carberry Hill and Mary abdicated in favour of her son, James VI. Lord Stuart became regent of Scotland and a meeting of Parliament on 15th December 1567 ratified once more the Acts of 1560, abolishing the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland (Renwick, 1960: 152-154).

3.4 HOW THE SCOTTISH PEOPLE WERE AFFECTED BY THE REFORMATION

3.4.1 A Noble Cause?

For the Reformation to have any hope of success in Scotland it was imperative that a number of nobles be persuaded to support the movement. The first written evidence of such endorsement is found in a 'band' or covenant dated 3rd December 1557. This followed a discourse between John Knox and some nobles, whom Knox urged to use their privileged position in order to deliver their brethren from the bondage of Rome. The lords swore to promote the preaching of the "most blessed Word of God" and to defend any threat from any power that would rail against them with their lives. A short time later, some lords began to establish a church structure and elders were appointed to exhort their brethren. The organisation became known as *The Privy Kirk* (Donnachie & Hewitt, eds, 1990: 48; Fleming, 1960: 31, 32).

There can be little doubt that some of the lords were earnest in their faith. The Earl of Argyll, for example, took John Douglas under his protection and caused him to preach publicly in his house. On his deathbed, Argyll instructed his son to follow in Douglas' steps. Others, however, had more worldly reasons for lending their support. Marie de Guise's promotion of French staff to high government offices had led to some prominent lords – especially Argyll, Morton and Arran – to believe that they had been overlooked in affairs of the state (Knox, 1905: 132).

In 1558, a number of the lords and barons who desired reform petitioned the queen regent on matters pertaining to the failings of the Catholic Church. Although little visible progress was made, such a move did demonstrate an increasing level of support for the reforming movement amongst the noble classes. Indeed, some lords openly

associated with reforming preachers, even allowing them into their own households, thereby encouraging a more visible profile. Stimulated by this, Paul Methven began to preach openly in Dundee, Angus and Fife, and John Willock went to Edinburgh to encourage the brethren there (Dickinson, 1977: 337, 338; Fleming, 1960: 32, 33).

3.4.2 The Road to Rebellion

On 1st January 1559, a placard was found at the gates of all the friars' homes. This document, which became known as '*The Beggars Summands*', accused the friars of misusing alms and properties that had been provided for the relief of the poor. They were instructed to leave their houses so that the rightful owners might take ownership of them. The friars were given until 12th May to comply, after which the poor would forcefully evict them "with the help of God and assistance of His Saints on earth" (Duke, 1937: 218). Although the authors of this article are not known, it was certainly not posted by the alleged beneficiaries. What is certain, however, is that the reforming movement was now sufficiently organised to have carried out such a coordinated action.

Some of the lesser lairds who were less affluent than the court nobles were aggrieved with the current economic situation. They were currently paying tithes to a clergy who were, by all accounts, exceedingly wealthy. Taxes were also being levied to support the preservation of French troops in the country and this social group detested having to contribute to what was increasingly being perceived as the maintenance of an occupation army. Their grievances were compounded by the fact that the more influential nobles were able to place their kinsmen in church offices, thus diverting some of the wealth into their own estates. Both groupings were also concerned that Marie de Guise seemed determined to make Scotland a province of France (Smout, 1972: 56).

When Marie de Guise's toleration towards the Protestant preachers was exhausted, she summoned some of them to Stirling. A body of lords and lairds determined to accompany them on their journey in a clearly visible show of support, which was a particularly courageous step for them to take as they were seen to be acting against the expressed wishes of the acting monarch. The queen regent made promises to the reformers that she quickly broke and this alienated more of the nobility. The lords ultimately deposed the regent and set up a council to oversee the running of the country

in the absence of the true monarchs, Francis and Mary. With English help, the French army was forced to leave the country and, under the terms of the Treaty of Edinburgh, the lords were able to summon a Parliament to deal with pressing national matters (Duke, 1937: 226, 244, 245).

3.4.3 The Lords Seek to Promote Their Own Interests

At this gathering, the lords ratified the confession of faith and abolished the jurisdiction of the pope over Scotland. The outward workings of the Reformed Church were contained in *The Book of Discipline*, though Parliament would not ratify its contents. Some of the more prominent nobles coveted the lands and incomes from the now redundant Roman Church and were reluctant to see their revenues diverted to the supporting of ministers, education and the relief of the poor (Burleigh, 1960: 175, 176).

Following this meeting of Parliament, a delegation was sent to England proposing that Queen Elizabeth marry Lord Chatelherault's son, the Earl of Arran. The delegation reminded the English that Arran was the heir presumptive to the Scottish throne and that a marriage would unite both countries. Although the proposal was declined, it indicated that some of the lords had no desire to see their queen (Mary) return from France. Moreover, the lords' actions under Mary's reign were less than godly or honourable. Prominent lords had been exiled following the 'Chaseabout Raid', when some nobles rebelled against the forthcoming marriage between Mary and Lord Darnley. Some were also implicated in the murders of David Rizzio and Lord Darnley, whilst most rebelled against their queen following her marriage to Lord Bothwell. When Mary abdicated, the country descended into civil war. It would seem that the majority of nobles were more concerned with their titles and position than the furthering of God's kingdom (Dickinson, 1977: 347; Weir, 2003: 78, 106, 172).

3.4.4 The Burgess and Merchant Classes

Immediately prior to the Reformation, a long running feud had been fought by the merchant and craft guilds in the burghs over marketing rights. The craftsmen eventually won the right to sell their products directly to the customer instead of via the merchant guild and also succeeded in being able to expand their selling base to some other districts. In spite of this success, however, the craftsmen remained relative paupers in

comparison to their merchant counterparts. The main attraction of being a member of a craft guild lay not in the potential of great wealth and riches, but rather in the provision that the organisation made against poverty. The guild collected regularly from its members and distributed this money to distressed member families, ran alms houses and hired out 'mortcloth' to enable a deceased member to be buried decently. Traditionally, some of these duties had been the responsibility of the parish church. The need for others to make such provision, however, implies that in recent times the Church had largely failed in meeting the social needs of its parishioners (Smout, 1972: 163).

When they were originally founded, the monasteries of Scotland were dynamic institutions where land was cultivated and trade routes established. As burghs developed, they thereby entered into direct competition with the Church on certain trade routes, with some being particularly resentful regarding the liberties from taxation enjoyed by the religious houses. In the course of time, the burghs established themselves as genuine trade centres and it appears that the monastic houses ceased to produce goods for commerce. Thereafter, the clergy were content to become parasites living off the labours of others, ultimately being maintained at public expense. The craft guilds were especially unhappy, as they were obliged to contribute towards the funding of parish ceremonial expenses (Brown, 1904: 185-187).

The merchants had become the dominant group in every burgh. By developing trade links with other European countries, they had become quite wealthy and were obtaining information first hand on major developments overseas. They were also a valuable source of income for the monarchy in time of need and, in exchange for their financial support, received advantageous trading rights and a degree of autonomy in the running of their burgh. Burghs still had to pay monetary levies to the Church, including tithes on produce and taxes on personal earnings, which proved difficult to assess in for which there was no predictable norm. Indeed, one fisherman expressed his anger at the tithe being imposed on him by ordering his staff to throw every tenth fish that was caught back into the sea, whence the local bishop was invited to collect the tithe (Macewen, 1915: 217, 218). So-called 'voluntary' contributions had also become compulsory on special occasions such as Christmas, Easter and saints' feast days. Sailors and merchants travelling abroad heard the 'new' doctrine preached and returned home to lend their voice in support of the Reformation against the perceived greed of the Church. Knox himself attributed the spreading of the knowledge of God chiefly to

"merchants and mariners, who frequenting other countries heard the true doctrine affirmed, and the vanity of the papistical religion openly rebuked" (Knox, 1905: 16, 17).

The more successful merchants had liquid assets, which enabled them to purchase land and become lairds. This, in turn, allowed them to become part of the landed gentry with its associated benefits of being able to attend meetings of the three estates of Parliament. As a more educated class, the combination of the importing of allegedly 'heretical' books and being permitted by an Act of Parliament to read the Bible in the vulgar tongue provoked the merchants to ask probing questions, like the need for Mass, the invocation of the Virgin Mary, the spiritual validity of pilgrimages, the doctrine of purgatory, etc. The poor, ill-educated parish priest could not provide adequate answers and thus an increasing number of the burgesses began to embrace the Bible and not the traditions of the Catholic Church (Smout, 1972: 55, 159).

The burgh structure enabled representatives to meet together to discuss and agree any action to be taken to promote their interests nationally. Indeed, they were granted representation at some meetings of Parliament at which financial and tax issues were discussed in order to represent the welfare of their members. Their contribution to the Reformation cannot be underestimated as their traditions of secrecy and cooperation between the different burgesses made these towns an ideal environment in which to sustain a cellular church organisation (Smout, 1972: 55).

3.4.5 Rural Areas

The farming community was gradually replacing the peasant farmer with a new social class, the '*feu-fermes*' (ie lairds). Although peasant workers were still needed to perform manual labour, the land was owned and managed by successful merchants or lawyers. Under the education Act of 1496, these lairds and their burgess counterparts were required to send their eldest sons to school until they were "competently founded and [had] perfect Latin" (Stewart, 1927: 4). It is difficult to ascertain what percentage of these lairds supported the reformers, though it is clear that those who did so were actively involved in the key events. Indeed, at the first meeting of Parliament following the Treaty of Edinburgh, a large number of lairds attended who were determined to vote in support of the Reformed Church. Though some questioned their presence and right to

vote, an appeal to an earlier decree of James I resulted in them being given a 'free' vote (Dickinson, 1977: 254, 255).

Although the *Confession of Faith* had been ratified, it proved impossible for the Estates to pass *The Book of Discipline*. The nobles and lairds refused to voluntarily deliver themselves into the hands of such a powerful priesthood; but neither could they regard Knox's grand scheme for education as anything but a pious fantasy, especially in view of the fact that they controlled the purse strings of the proposed revenue to support such a scheme. Whilst the lairds are to be commended for their support of the Reformation, their failure to ratify *The Book of Discipline* has left them open to criticism that such support may have motivated by self-interest (Muir, 1929: 220-227).

3.4.6 The Poor

There were, however, those lower in the social scale of whom economic motives were an incentive to revolution. The towns possessed a concentration of poor individuals, who had arrived from the countryside in search of food, work and alms. Some were possibly on the level of starvation. Even before reforming preachers spoke about the apparent dichotomy between 'apolistic' poverty and 'prelatical' wealth, the poor could not have been well disposed towards the clergy. They perceived themselves in competition with the friars who, though professing poverty, were actually quite comfortably disposed (Donaldson, 1965: 138).

In such circumstances, it was not difficult for a fiery preacher to incite a congregation to the point of becoming a tumultuous mob, which would then loot the local church, friary or religious building and destroy all 'idols' found therein. A John Knox sermon at Perth provided just such an occasion and this was quickly followed by similar riots at Dundee, Scone, Stirling, Linlithgow and Edinburgh. It would appear that these tempests were not synchronised and probably did not pose a major military threat to the authorities. The fact that they were so widespread, however, may have given Marie de Guise and her supporters some cause for concern on how to restore order when faced with what could be seen as a popular uprising (Knox, 1905: 149; Smout, 1972: 55).

When the Catholic Church was finally overthrown, it was hoped that the poor would be catered for by the Reformed Church. *The Book of Discipline* contained a section that

allowed for such a provision, though it was careful to distinguish between poor and idle. It was the duty of the Kirk to meet the needs of the parish needy. This was almost impossible to carry out in practice, as the meeting of Parliament did not furnish any means of funding for the newly established church. This, in turn, meant that many of the clergy relied upon financial and other assistance from sympathetic supporters. In the immediate aftermath of the Reformation, there was little that could be done to help the poor (Knox, 1905: 375, 376).

3.4.7 Reformation in the Pulpit?

Towards the end of 1560 and into the following year, the old order had been constitutionally replaced by a new Church. Many parish churches had been damaged by invasion and neglect, a significant portion of the population having become indifferent to the ministrations of the kirkmen. Evidence of the Reformation movement enjoying some favour from within the Catholic Church can be found in the fact that almost a quarter of its clergy joining the reformed ranks. Many parishes, particularly in the north of Scotland, however, were without a minister for some years. Indeed, congregations in most rural areas had to suffice with sharing ministers and appointing readers who would read Scriptures to the people (Burleigh, 1960: 173; Smout, 1972: 69, 71).

The most visible sign of change in those parish churches that had not been damaged would most likely have been the removal of 'idolatrous' images from their buildings. Religion had been essentially a mystical experience, with the celebration of Mass in particular creating an atmosphere that appealed to the senses in order to elicit an appropriate response from the congregation. Most guilds provided and maintained altars to their own patron saint, and on the designated day members would lead a procession into the church. In some cases, a pageant or play would also be performed. These proceedings had as much to do with corporate identity and social standing as they had to the promotion of the saint being celebrated (Dickinson, 1977: 298; Todd, 2002: 1, 326).

Although never ratified by Parliament, *The Book of Discipline* became the foundation upon which the Reformed Church hoped to develop. By so doing, all forms of idolatry were condemned and abolished as being unscriptural, including all holy days except the Lord's Day. This was probably welcomed in most quarters, as their imposition was onerous on the population (there were around fifty holy days a year in Scotland). It also

relieved some of the burgess guilds of the costs and time incurred in preparing for their particular saint's day (Knox, 1905: 366).

The wording of the Act of Parliament abolishing the mass in 1560 suggests that many churches had already been reformed. A key phrase in the narrative states that: "notwithstanding the reformation already made, there are some of the Pope's Kirk who stubbornly persevere in their wicked idolatry," thus implying that many of the Catholic ceremonies had been discarded before Parliament had moved on the matter. It would be reasonable to assume, therefore, that this work had been carried out in the major burgh towns that had supported Reformation, but was probably not implemented in more rural areas, particularly in the highlands where there had traditionally been a chronic shortage of clergy. The precarious finances of the Kirk would ensure that many parish churches in rural areas would remain vacant for some time (Renwick, 1960: 114, 115; Smout, 1972: 72, 73).

3.5 SUMMARY

By looking at the relative positions of Church, State and people it is noticeable that a variety of factors combined to ensure the initial success of the Reformation in Scotland. The queen regent sought to secure permanent ties with France, but the methods employed to achieve this isolated her from her own nobility. They, in turn, felt threatened by the regent's increasing reliance on French advisors. The leading nobles, who initially joined the ranks of the Reformers, are to be commended for their courage, though it would appear that later adherents were more concerned with personal ambitions than furthering the cause. The Church was struggling to maintain its position and the fact that it publicly supported the French party did not endear it to the populace. Moreover, the Church was seen to be neglecting its pastoral duties, particularly towards the poor, though some of the reasons for this were admittedly out with their control. The burgesses were more educated and represented the most dynamic social group of the time, being familiar with topical events by virtue of their contact with other European countries and access to Parliament. It could even be argued that this group were the prime movers in developing the Reformed Church. All of these diverse groups had to be brought together. This was achieved by the single-minded determination and courage of John Knox, who was arguably one of the dominant figures of the Reformation in Scotland.

4.0 THE IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES OF THE REFORMATION ON SCOTLAND

4.1 INTRODUCTION

After the triumph of the Reformers over the French-backed hopes of maintaining Catholicism as the dominant religion in Scotland, Parliament met to discuss how they might develop this popular uprising into the beginning of a new era for the country. One of the first topics for debate produced an Act abolishing the recognition of papal authority. *The Confession of Faith* was also ratified, though the *Book of Discipline* failed to attract unanimous approval. The Scots were on the verge of a new dawn, being free of any obligation towards the Roman Church and – initially, at least – monarchical intervention. It is my intention in this chapter to examine how the Reformation progressed from 1560 through the reign of King James VI. In so doing, I will attempt to determine the policy and structure of the new Church in order to ascertain how closely their ideals measured up to the vision set out in the *Book of Discipline*.

4.2 WHAT TYPE OF CHURCH STRUCTURE EMERGED FROM THE STRUGGLE?

4.2.1 The Book of Discipline

Under the terms of the Treaty of Edinburgh, a Scottish Parliament met on 1st August 1560 to discuss matters of national interest. One of its first actions was to lay the foundations for the new religion. *The Confession of Faith*, a document based on the orthodox Genevan model, outlined the doctrine of the Reformed Scottish Church and was approved. Just over three weeks later, Parliament an Act whereby it refused to acknowledge papal claims to supreme authority in religious matters and virtually outlawed those who continued to attend Mass (see Muir, 1929: 216, 217). Parliament also requested that a blueprint relating to the organisation and discipline of the new Church be drawn up.

When Parliament reconvened on the following New Year's Day, the *Book of Discipline* was discussed at great length, often acrimoniously. It comprised of nine sections, three of which related to the doctrine of the Church, whilst the remainder gave a more

detailed description of how these principles were to be applied. With the exception of monastic finances, the wealth of the old Church was to be automatically transferred to the new body. Rents and 'feu' duties were to be used for the upkeep of the universities and the newly created office of superintendent, whilst remaining tithes were to be used to pay ministers, relieve the poor and help to fund educational needs (cf Donnachie & Hewitt, eds, 1990: 23, 24; Knox, 1905: 217).

Congregations were also granted the right to choose their own minister, who would be assisted in his duties by elders, to be appointed annually. Elders had two important functions: they were to assist their local minister in matters of discipline and they were obliged to prepare an annual report on the clergy for presentation to the superintendent. The office of superintendent involved travelling around a geographical area with the authority to establish churches, appoint ministers, preach, ascertain the level of provision offered to the poor, determine the educational needs of the young and oversee certain matters of discipline. To temporarily address the dearth of trained ministers, readers were appointed to read the Scriptures to read the Scriptures to those congregations most affected by such a shortage. By demonstrating their suitable candidacy, readers might in time progress to the position of exhorter or maybe even train for the ministry (see Knox, 1905: 371-374).

The Church was also to exercise educational authority over elementary schools, secondary schools and universities. Each parish would have an elementary school, at which attendance was compulsory irrespective of financial status. Promising students were compelled to progress through to secondary school and university so that they could fulfil their potential and thereby be of benefit to society. Poor relief was also regarded as the responsibility of the Church. Although vague on how this could be satisfactorily addressed, a distinction was made between the genuine poor and idle vagabonds. The respective spheres of Church and State were clearly defined for punishing lawbreakers, with all capital offences coming under the jurisdiction of the secular authorities, whilst drunkenness, gluttony, fornication and similar transgressions would be dealt with by the Church. Scales of punishment were outlined that culminated in excommunication for those who would not repent (Muir, 1929: 220-227).

It proved impossible for the Estates to pass the *Book of Discipline*. The nobles and lairds were unwilling to deliver themselves into the hands of such a powerful

priesthood. Neither could they regard as anything but a "devout imagination" Knox's grandiose scheme for education. Although it was to be financially supported by ecclesiastical revenues, those monies were already in the pockets of the nobility. The authors of the *Book of Discipline* were forced to concede this disagreeable fact and their desperate appeals to the lords fell on deaf ears. Nevertheless, the Reformers managed to employ its principles if not its written code (Muir, 1929: 227)

4.2.2 Church Structure to 1578

The Book of Discipline also made reference to the gathering of a 'Council of the whole Kirk'. This first gathering is believed to have taken place on the 20th December 1560, comprising of representatives from the nobility, barons and lairds, together with members of the Church. These delegates were known as the 'godly magistrates' who, during the reign of Mary Queen of Scots, formed a powerful ecclesiastical group. The regent Morton, who rose to power during the minority of James VI, believed that the authority enjoyed by what was then known as the General Assembly should be curbed. Scotland was in the hands of a godly Protestant prince and, as regent, Morton sought to place the Church back under the authority of the monarch (or until his own ascension, the regent). This was the beginning of a conflict that would rage between Crown and Church until the early part of the eighteenth century, when the General Assembly was finally granted the right to manage the affairs of the Church without interference from the State (Burleigh, 1960: 166; Herron, ed, 1985: 28, 29).

This first meeting of the General Assembly comprised six ministers and thirty-six elders, which appointed readers to read Scripture to congregations not served by a minister. As a temporary measure, ten superintendents were also nominated to supervise the reforming work throughout the country, though only five of these were ever appointed. A small number of bishops who had converted to the Reformed faith took on the role of superintendent in their diocese. The fledgling Church, therefore, had a group of people who were superior to ministers in legislative, judicial and administrative functions. They had the right to attend General Assemblies and the power to admit ministers to a congregation. Superintendents were paid a higher salary than ministers, which may have added substantially to the Church's financial burden. Indeed, later General Assemblies preferred to appoint commissioners or temporary visitors to exercise such oversight (Donaldson, 1960: 56-58; Renwick, 1960: 111).

At its inception, the Reformed Church in Scotland had no formal means of funding, most of the available revenues being retained by the Catholic clergy and nobles who had family in key positions within the old church structure. Queen Mary introduced a system known as 'the third of benefices', whereby one third of the revenue from the old Church should be collected and divided equally between the State and the new Church. This system did not work very effectively until the beginning of Morton's regency in 1572 when its administration became more openly accountable.

At a meeting of the General Assembly in 1572, an attempt was made to solve the vexed question of how to finance the Church. This gathering became known as 'the Concordant of Leith'. It decided that income from the benefices of the two archbishoprics and bishoprics would continue to be paid to existing incumbents until the king reached the age of majority. As other benefices became vacant, the Church was permitted to appoint their own representatives to these positions, which enabled them to acquire more income thus easing their financial plight. The position of bishop was re-engaged, but on the understanding that any implied authority was not to exceed that of the superintendents. This compromise enabled the Church to acquire certain buildings and other revenue. Moreover, the spiritual estate of Parliament was restored, though at the time of the agreement the Church did not envisage bishops taking up these positions in government (Burleigh, 1960: 192, 193; Foster, 1975: 8).

Many of these bishops were appointed by the regent Morton, and were critically known as the 'tulchan bishops', a reference to the fact that part of the revenue obtained by them was diverted to subsidise the rents and pensions of Morton's friends. Although none of these bishops rose to prominence, they were subject to the jurisdiction of the General Assembly. This compromise arrangement seemed to operate satisfactorily as Knox, in a letter to the General Assembly in 1572, urged "that all bishoprics vacant may be presented... according to the order taken at Leith". Further evidence to support the co-existence of superintendents and bishops can be found in the minutes of the General Assembly of 1574 where complaints were made to the regent regarding undue delay in appointing bishops to vacant bishoprics (M^{ac}George, 1890: 50, 51; Burleigh, 1960: 194, 195).

It is particularly noteworthy that almost two years before the Reformation arrived in Scotland, there is a record of the 'minister and elders' of St Andrews meeting and

exercising judicial functions as a court of the Reformed Church. This suggests that some churches were well organised at local level prior to the overthrow of Catholicism. Furthermore, Acts of Parliament granting them recognition and power to operate within their locality were passed retrospectively. These local courts comprised of ministers and elders, who often included the local magistrate, and they were granted authority to preside over a wide range of local issues. This basic unit of church structure was called the Kirk Session (Kernohan, 1985: 72, 73).

The Session comprised the minister and a group of lay elders, who were drawn from most social classes within the locality. The more prominent local dignitaries tended to outnumber the lower classes, which possibly allowed them to dominate proceedings initially. Meetings took place weekly in most areas, though there are records of some Sessions meeting up to four times a week in the larger towns. Their function was to deal with ecclesiastical administration and moral discipline. Decisions were made on such matters as sexual offences, drunkenness, quarrelling, doctrinal error and the breaching of the Sabbath. Town bailies and magistrates were often also elders, which tended to obscure the distinction between secular and church authority. Indeed, it was not uncommon for the person pronouncing sentence at the Kirk Session to then enforce it as part of their civil duties (Todd, 2002: 8-11).

As an administrative body, the Kirk Session also managed poor relief, regulated education, oversaw marriages, baptisms and burials; dispensed parochial finances; supervised the maintenance of the Church; administered catechism and examination; declared fasts and feasts; represented the Church in assessing and appointing ministers, and liaised with other church bodies. The Session was highly visible at local level, enjoying powerful support as they brought a tier of law and order into communities that had previously lacked either the favour or inclination of the secular courts to deal with minor disputes. In the aftermath of the Reformation, Kirk Sessions quickly became established in burgh and urban areas, particularly in central Scotland. The more conservative northern parts, however, took longer to accept the Sessions. This may have been due to a combination of the shortage of trained ministers and having to overcome local linguistic difficulties – ie Gaelic (Cheyne, 1999: 66).

4.2.3 Andrew Melville and the Second Book of Discipline

Andrew Melville had attended St Andrews University before completing his studies at Paris and Geneva. He obtained a position at the private College of Geneva in 1568, which brought him under the influence of Theodore Beza. Returning to Scotland in 1574, his role as Principal allowed him to he play a major part in reorganising the University of Glasgow. His privileged position also enabled Melville to attract a powerful group of younger ministers who were similarly committed to further ecclesiastical change. The General Assembly of 1574 declared that its meeting was not only comprised of ministers, but also of the whole members of the Kirk professing Christ. In effect, representatives from a wide cross-section of Scottish society attended the Assembly (Donnachie & Hewitt, eds, 2001: 227; Foster, 1975: 119).

Melville had attended the 1575 General Assembly and was appointed onto a committee that was reviewing Church polity. This committee produced the *Second Book of Discipline*, which reiterated many of the proposals identified by its predecessor. It also contained several new demands, not least of which was its insistence upon ecclesiastical autonomy. Whilst the king, his commissioners, the lords and commissioners from the burghs were still welcome to attend to listen and reason, they were thereafter denude of any voting powers (M'Crie, 1856: 51, 52).

The parity of ministers was not to be violated and, in order to achieve this, it was proposed to remove the position of superintendent and bishop. Instead, regional committees of ministers known as presbyteries would be responsible for the oversight of the Church, the hope being to establish fifty presbyteries throughout the country. Moreover, ecclesiastical persons were not to be permitted to hold office in the civil government and the system of lay patronage was to be abolished. What became known as the doctrine of the 'two kingdoms' was thereby firmly asserted. The Church was to have sole control over all ecclesiastical affairs, though its ministers had the right to make pronouncements from the pulpit on civil policy without being answerable to the secular authorities (Donaldson, 1965: 149).

In this *Second Book of Discipline*, the Church laid claim to all revenues that had formerly been amassed by the first one. These monies would be collected by deacons, who would be responsible for redistributing the money towards the ministry, the poor

and schools. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this proposal was widely regarded as too radical to be implemented at the time. The Church's claim to be master of her own affairs would ultimately bring it into direct conflict with future kings, who believed that they reigned by divine right. Similarly, the lords, who formed a powerful body in Parliament, were unlikely to impoverish themselves by handing over properties and revenues from the old Church that they had come to own. Nevertheless, the Church held firm to the plans proposed in this book and actively sought to implement its measures whenever the opportunity arose (Donnachie & Hewitt, eds, 1990: 24).

Meetings of the General Assembly from 1575 onwards debated the powers, roles and authority of bishops within the Church. Agreement was finally reached that a bishop was expected to take control of a congregation as part of his core duties. Furthermore, bishops were to be addressed as minister in an attempt to ensure parity of office within the ministry. When vacancies arose, the local chapters were forbidden from electing a new bishop, such appointments being the sole domain of the General Assembly. Finally, in 1580, the General Assembly declared the office of bishop to be devoid of biblical warrant and, therefore, declared it invalid. By 1596, matters of church oversight had largely been replaced by the recently organised presbyteries, as we shall see (M'Crie, 1856: 52-54; Foster, 1975: 9).

An Act of Parliament in 1592, popularly known as the Charter of the Church, formally recognised the Church's structure as outlined in the *Second Book of Discipline*. The presbytery thereby legally became the newest – and, therefore, also most vulnerable – structure of the Reformed Church. Its principal role was to oversee the examination and admittance of ministers. It usually met once a month to deliberate on serious disciplinary cases. However, an 'exercise', which can best be described as a Bible study session, and theological disputations also formed part of the proceedings. Members of the presbytery were expected to visit the various parishes within their boundary, examining the minister and elders for their diligence. Potential candidates for a vacant parish were usually nominated by the presbytery for the congregation's approval. Church records and the maintenance of church buildings were also meticulously scrutinised (M^{ac}George, 1890: 60; Cheyne, 1999: 66, 67).

Further acts empowered presbyteries to prevent fairs and markets being held on Sundays, punish Sabbath breakers and preside judiciously over a variety of social

misdemeanours. There were a number of significant advantages in establishing presbyteries in place of bishops. As each was a unified body, their function was not restrictively hampered by the temporary absence of just one member. Their establishment within a locality also ensured a more efficient local ecclesiastical order than that provided by a bishop, not to mention their relative inexpense. Perhaps most importantly, however, was the sense of security in numbers; because presbyteries were comprised of groups of people, they were less likely to be manipulated, threatened or enticed by the secular authorities. Indeed, such was their success that the firm establishment of presbyteries throughout the country was arguably one of the major early accomplishments of the Reformed Church in Scotland (Mitchinson, 1970: 137; Smout, 1972: 59).

Synods were also established and were expected to meet twice a year. They were comprised of a minister and elder from each parish within the area covered by the Synod. The superintendents were nominated as moderators of this committee. Each synod would meet to consider reports from the presbyteries and arbitrate in matters of dispute. In such matters, the Synods were to be regarded as the final court of appeal, their decisions binding on all parties brought before them. Although the Synod was set up to function in a similar way to its Roman Catholic counterpart, it would appear that the effectiveness of Kirk Sessions and presbyteries in dealing with local issues minimised the necessity for their involvement in such cases (Kernohan, 1985: 68).

Andrew Melville had taken on the mantle as leader of the Reformed Church after the death of John Knox. His unwavering determination to establish a Church free from interference from secular authorities and the monarchy ultimately resulted in him being exiled in 1611, after a period of confinement in the Tower of London. Although James VI restored a form of bishops to the Church, it could be argued that their impact on enforcing the royal prerogative in ecclesiastical matters was somewhat limited. The Articles of Perth were James' only attempt at liturgical change. Although they were officially approved, the generally hostile reception they received ensured that they were never rigorously enforced. All in all, the structure of the Reformed Church was firmly established in Scotland, thanks chiefly to the visionary determination of Andrew Melville (Foster, 1975: 109, 110; Donnachie & Hewitt, eds, 2001: 227, 228).

4.2.4 Questions of Doctrine

It must be noted that the structural developments that were instigated at this time were not sought for their own sake, but as an expression of the doctrinal conviction of those who implemented them. The first Parliament to convene following the Reformation took the unusual step of agreeing to discuss and sanction the Scottish *Confession of Faith*, which presented the doctrine for the newly reformed Church. To a modern reader this may seem irregular, but those involved in this momentous event were keen to have their faith acknowledged publicly in order to defray any potential charges of heresy from their enemies both at home and abroad. The *Confession* comprised of twenty five articles, twelve of which were in accordance with the basic doctrines of the Church of Rome, including those relating to the nature of God and the mystery of Christ (Muir, 1929: 216).

Divergence occurred, however, when describing how some were elected to everlasting salvation and others ordained as vessels of wrath, without reference being made to their respective merits or vices. Thus, an individual played no effective part in their own salvation, having no choice in being saved or damned. It was entirely and exclusively due to the incomprehensible mercy of God. As mentioned earlier, only two sacraments were recognised as legitimate – baptism and the Lord's Supper (see **3.2.7**). Moreover, it was considered blasphemy to claim that Scripture derives its authority from the Church, rather than intrinsically so as the revealed Word of God (Burleigh, 1960: 157).

4.3 HOW DID THE SOVEREIGN AND STATE RESPOND TO THESE CHANGES?

4.3.1 The Policy of Mary Queen of Scots

When Mary discovered that the Catholic faith had been effectively outlawed and the Mass abolished in Scotland, she expressed her displeasure to the English ambassador at Paris thus: "My subjects... do their duty in nothing, I am their sovereign, but they take me not so. They must be taught to know their duties" (in Weir, 2003: 21). She returned to Scotland in August 1561 as queen. Within days of her arrival, she incited a riot by privately celebrating the Mass, which caused Catholic leaders throughout Europe to anticipate the beginning of the end for Protestantism in her realm. However, the fact that

there was no Scottish representation at the Council of Trent in December 1564 led Pope Pious IV to suggest that Mary would not promote the Catholic cause without pressure being applied to do so. His suspicions were almost immediately confirmed when Mary approved an Act of Parliament to use some of the former Catholic Church's revenues to finance the Protestant Kirk.

Mary's determination to marry the Lord Darnley in 1565, despite the counsel of some of the most senior Protestant nobles to the contrary, led to some refusing to attend the wedding. As a result, they were summarily outlawed and forced to seek refuge in England. Mary sent representation to the Pope pleading for assistance against the rebels, promising to reintroduce the Catholic faith in return, for which she secured sixty thousand crowns to finance the operation. Although successful in the campaign, Mary lost the support of some of the most capable advisors in the country and began to rely more heavily on a court musician by the name of David Rizzio. This, combined no doubt with her refusal to bestow the crown matrimonial upon her increasingly petulant husband, led to Darnley's involvement in the assassination of Rizzio in full view of the queen, who was then confined to Holyrood Palace (Mitchinson, 1974: 129, 130).

Mary escaped to Dunbar castle, whence she cultivated the support of the Earl of Bothwell to have her position on the throne restored. Some of the most prominent lords who had previously been outlawed were permitted to return to court, their Protestant sympathies sufficiently influencing Mary to prevent the arrival of a Papal legate in 1566. Correspondence between foreign statesmen at the time implied that Mary would never be able to restore Catholicism until six of these lords were executed, suggesting perhaps that Mary was still privately seeking support from other Catholic nations, though unwilling to meet the demands. Her position was also seriously undermined when it emerged that her husband had been suggesting to foreign ambassadors that Mary had no intention of overthrowing the Reformed Church (Magnusson, 2001: 354, 355).

It has been suggested that further concessions to the Kirk arose more from a desire to enlist the support of the Protestant nobility to dissolve the unhappy marriage to Darnley than out of genuine piety for the new faith. Lord Darnley's subsequent murder and Mary's refusal to distance herself from one of the major suspects, the Earl of Bothwell, turned the population against her. Upon Bothwell's acquittal, Mary unadvisedly married

him, which led to open revolt and Mary was imprisoned. She abdicated on 23rd July 1567, leaving the country in a minority reign, the future king James being just over a year old (Burleigh, 1960: 187, 188).

4.3.2 The Minority Reign of King James VI

Mary's renouncement of the throne left her half-brother, the Earl of Moray, as regent. It was an appointment that proved unpopular with some lords, who believed that they had been personally overlooked. Under Moray's stewardship, Parliament met in December 1567 to re-affirm the previous Acts of 1560, thus officially recognising the Protestant religion. Adherence to the Confession of Faith was made the criterion for everyone holding office under the Crown or who taught in school and universities. Furthermore, a Coronation Oath was devised, which effectively bound the monarch to maintain the Kirk and root out heretics. Unfortunately, the *Book of Discipline* was not ratified, though the Church was granted first claim on the 'tax of thirds' placed on the old clergy's benefices. Also, on the occasion of parsonages and vicarages becoming vacant, the Reformers were to submit their candidates for examination and approval by the area superintendent or commissioner. In due course, Reformed ministers would take possession of the buildings and tithes associated with the area (M^{ac}George, 1890: 28).

Mary's escape to England and cooling of relations with the Earl of Bothwell enabled her to draw sympathy and support from some of the lords in Scotland. The assassination of Moray in 1570 by a rival faction led to civil war involving two parties, one that supported the deposed Queen Mary and the other that favoured her son, James VI. Moray was replaced by the Earl of Lennox, who was killed during a skirmish at Stirling on 3rd September 1571. John Erskine was regent for a brief period until his death from natural causes, upon which the Earl of Morton became regent in 1572. Both sides appealed for English support and Queen Elizabeth's allegiance was torn between the two parties. Bizarrely perhaps, it was the St Bartholomew's Eve massacre in France on 24th August 1572 that finally convinced Elizabeth to intervene in Scotland on behalf of its king. The conflict was brought to a decisive end in May 1573, thanks to English help in capturing Edinburgh castle (Renwick, 1960: 165, 166; Mitchinson, 1974: 132-134).

Under Morton's regency stability was restored to Scotland and a number of Acts of Parliament were passed in support of the Reformed Church. Holders of existing

benefices were obliged to subscribe to the Confession of Faith or be deprived of their revenues. The position of bishop was reintroduced in 1572 with the tacit approval of John Knox, conditional upon their authority not exceeding that of the superintendent. The Crown retained the right to nominate candidates for the position of bishop for approval by the Protestant Church. It soon became clear, however, that some of these appointments were made for the financial benefit of Morton, who obtained large pensions for his friends from their benefices (Foster, 1975: 8; 148).

As a child, James VI was entrusted to the tutelage of George Buchanan, the classical scholar and Protestant leader. It was Buchanan's intention to influence the monarch in such a way that he might become a supporter of Reformed doctrine. Although successful in meeting the future king's educational needs, he proved less productive in persuading the young James to fully accept the principles associated with the Reformation. Buchanan maintained that monarchs remained legally accountable for their actions and those who broke the law could be subjected to its penalties, even if that meant the death sentence. He did so, of course, in an attempt to justify the overthrow of Queen Mary (James' mother). It is difficult to determine whether James agreed with Buchanan, though his future association with Esme Stewart may have persuaded him to lean towards the idea of an absolute monarchy (Magnusson, 2001: 383, 384).

Esme Stewart, a cousin of James VI, arrived in Scotland in 1579 from the French court. The thirteen-year-old king's kindly disposition towards Stewart soon culminated in him being created Earl of Lennox, a decision that upset many in the Protestant ranks who believed him to be a papal agent sent to instigate plots to restore the Pope's authority in Scotland. Lennox became a close confidant of the king, thereby undermining Morton's position of power. He advised the king to regard the Scottish clergy as seditious disturbers of the peace. An adventurer by the name of James Stewart (no relation) also rose to prominence at this time. It was his influence that saw Morton imprisoned and finally executed in June 1581 for his part in the murder of Lord Darnley (King James' father). Fifteen months later, some lords, fearing the increasing influence being exerted over James by alleged Catholic sympathisers, abducted the sixteen-year-old king in what became known as the 'Ruthven raid'. James was held captive for ten months with James Stewart, during which time the Earl of Lennox was forced to leave the country. The General Assembly of the Church defended this treacherous act on the basis that it

had delivered "the true religion... from evident and certain dangers" (Willson, 1966: 37). James managed to escape in June 1583 and took on the full mantle of kingship.

4.3.3 The Rule of James VI

On his return to power, James VI had some of the main participants in the Ruthven raid executed for treason. This was followed in May 1584 by Parliament passing the Black Acts, under which bishops were restored as members of the three estates, the king was declared supreme over all persons, failure to comply with his authority became a treasonable offence, all convocations not specifically licensed by the king were thereby unlawful, the chief jurisdiction of the Church was the domain of the bishops, and there were to be no slanderous speeches, private or public, to the reproach of king or council. Andrew Melville, who had become the intellectual leader of the clergy following the death of John Knox, prudently took refuge in England while James was venting his anger at the Church's support of the Ruthven raid (Heron, ed, 1985: 30, 31).

Maintaining the kingdom, however, proved to be most difficult. James' imprisoned mother tried to persuade him to join forces with Catholic supporters in Scotland to overthrow England's Elizabeth. Queen Elizabeth, meanwhile, sought to obtain James' friendship by offering financial support (James was always short of money due to the inefficient tax system in Scotland) and implying that he might become her successor to the English crown. Foreign powers also intimated their support in exchange for his allegiance to the Catholic cause against Queen Elizabeth, whilst at home, some high ranking Protestant supporters were displeased by the king's Church policy. Finally, Esme Stewart, the Earl of Lennox and close confidant of James, was most unpopular with all the previously mentioned groups (Mitchinson, 1974: 149, 150).

The murder of a Protestant lord by a Catholic noble brought matters to the surface. Allegations of James Stewart's involvement in the murder increased the pressure on the king to have him removed from office. This was further increased when the banished lords entered Scotland from England, though Queen Elizabeth later apologised for their intrusion, claiming they had lost their way en route to Germany. The lords offered homage to James, however, which he readily accepted as a token of at least some support (Herron, ed, 1985: 30, 31).

As a concession to the Church, James compromised on the issue of Episcopacy versus Presbyterianism. Prior to the convening of the Church's General Assembly in 1586, James brought together a number of moderate ministers to discuss ecclesiastical polity. After much debate, the General Assembly approved this concession, which suggests that a significant number of Protestants, especially in the conservative north of the country, did not find the concept of bishops particularly objectionable. Those appointed were to act in an administrative capacity with the advisory input of a committee of ministers. They were also subject to the auspices of the General Assembly (cf M'Crie, 1856: 128, 129; Donaldson, 1965: 198, 199).

The following year Parliament passed the Act of Annexation, which appropriated to the Crown the landed properties of bishoprics, abbeys and other prelacies, with the exception of properties already erected into temporal lordships. This measure paved the way for the abolition of episcopacy as it virtually removed bishops from their right to sit in national judicature, a privilege that had been founded on their landed possessions. It seems unusual, however, that having passed legislation to re-establish bishops, James shortly afterwards permitted a further Act that threatened their existence. A combination of factors may have been responsible, not least of which was the king's reluctance to increase taxation in order to improve the Crown's finances. Furthermore, by annexing this land, a future potential source of revenue had been removed from the hands of the Church (Burleigh, 1960: 203).

A Protestant lord, the Earl of Moray, was murdered in 1592 by the Catholic Earl of Huntly. Although James had no great liking for Moray, Protestant outrage forced him to take action. In June of that year, Parliament ratified what is now known as the 'Golden Act', in which most of the principles relating to the organisation and structure of the Church as outlined out in the *Second Book of Discipline* were approved. Bishops and judges appointed under the 'Black Acts' had their ecclesiastical powers revoked. However, the king reserved to right to select the date and location for convening meetings of the General Assembly. Some Catholic lords were exiled but were later allowed to return, an action that was strongly criticised by the Church (M'Crie, 1856: 147, 148).

The euphoria of having succeeded in removing the power of bishops from the Church did not last for long. The General Assembly that gathered in March 1596 censured the

royal throne for its sins, whilst Andrew Melville also clashed with James over the jurisdiction of the monarchy and Church. Moreover, a St Andrews minister by the name of James Black refused to appear before the Privy Council on charges that he had declared that "all kings are devils' children". As this case persisted, a riot erupted in Edinburgh on 17th December while the king was meeting in the Tolbooth. Although order was quickly restored, the ministers who were in attendance at the General Assembly and the people of Edinburgh were held jointly responsible for the tumult, some of whom were consequently warded in Edinburgh castle. This proved to be a turning point in James' reign, whence he seized the initiative to embark upon a policy to restore episcopacy in Scotland (Willson, 1966: 123, 124).

James summoned a series of General Assemblies in the following years, choosing locations further north to encourage greater representation from the more conservative clergy in those regions. Commissioners who were more sympathetic to the monarchy were also appointed to the General Assembly. Between 1597 and 1602 James continued to influence appointments, which enabled him to push through the re-establishment of bishops. Indeed, eleven commissioners so appointed during this time would later become bishops. An Act of Parliament was also passed in 1597 enabling bishops to be appointed to the old dioceses so that they could attend meetings of Parliament as one of the three estates. James was careful at this time to emphasise their civil contribution so as to distract attention from any ecclesiastical concerns. Further parliamentary Acts saw the restoration of lands to the bishops, thus granting them civil jurisdiction similar to that enjoyed by the Roman Catholic clergy prior to the Reformation (Foster, 1975: 15-18).

The ascension of James to the English throne following the death of Queen Elizabeth in 1603 did not dampen his determination to bring the Scottish Church under his control. Within two years, the leadership Church of Scotland suffered a major setback with the imprisonment of many of their more radical leaders, some of whom were imprisoned in London after being invited south to reason with the king. Taking full advantage of their vulnerable position, James succeeded in persuading the General Assembly at Linlithgow in 1606 to consent to bishops being appointed as moderators of synods. He also managed to restore the Royal Prerogative, thereby declaring himself supreme over all persons and causes. In the years that followed, Parliament passed further Acts adding to the episcopal functions of bishops so that by 1609 a diocesan system similar to pre-

Reformation times was again in use. Although these measures were not generally well received, it soon became apparent to some within the Reformed Church that these bishops could inadvertently aid their own efficiency and well being – particularly from a financial standpoint (cf Donaldson, 1965: 205; Foster, 1975: 20).

James now turned his attention to liturgical reform. The king wished to bring the form of worship in Scotland into alignment with that of some other Protestant countries. The most controversial of his proposals was the plan to introduce kneeling at Communion. Both ministers and laymen saw this as being reminiscent of the Mass. Consequently, the General Assembly rejected these Articles at their convention in 1617, which so infuriated the king that he summoned another Assembly at Perth the following year. There were five Articles presented at this meeting, all dealt with collectively and without open discussion. A majority of clergy approved of the Articles, though not without considerable pressure being exerted by the king to ensure a favourable outcome. Parliament ratified these proposals in 1621 on the clear understanding that James would desist from further innovations (see Donnachie & Hewitt, eds, 1990: 73).

James died in 1625 to be succeeded by his son, Charles. In his lifetime, James proudly proclaimed that he had ruled Scotland with a pen, whereas others could not do so with a sword. Throughout his reign, he maintained a vigorous campaign to retain the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings, a philosophy that brought him into constant conflict with the newly Reformed Church. James firmly believed that whatever he decreed was God's will for the nation. This belief was also held by his Stewart successors, bringing the Church of Scotland into dispute with the monarchy until the ascension of William of Orange to the English throne in 1689 (Herron, ed, 1985: 16, 17).

4.4 DID THE PEOPLE OF SCOTLAND BENEFIT FROM THIS EXPERIENCE?

4.4.1 Reformation in the Pulpit

The people of Scotland were aware that a momentous step had been taken in 1560 with the overthrow of French influence in the kingdom. In many parts of the country, however, the immediate consequence of this act was the removal of those parish priests who refused to join the ranks of the Reformers. Churches had iconic images removed,

altars that had been dedicated to the various craft guilds were replaced, the Mass and its associated paraphernalia were abolished in favour of a more simple form of communion, processions that involved the carrying of idolatrous statues were banned in an attempt to prevent the invoking of saints to act as intermediaries, and festivals, feast days and pilgrimages were all declared abhorrent. Many of these activities had been an integral part of the daily routine for the ordinary parishioner, and so it seems reasonable to assume that their removal would have caused consternation in some quarters (Wormald, 1981: 118).

At the outset, the Reformers were faced with a chronic shortage of trained ministers and funding. Their evangelistic zeal was such, however, that it soon led to the appointment of readers and exhorters at where there was a parish vacancy. The bulk of the population was illiterate, so the Word of God became a legitimate tool to encourage learning. Two services were to be held on a Sunday to be followed by a time of catechising and examination, by which the individual's knowledge of basic doctrine was tested. The local populace were all expected to attend. If the people were not prepared to be taught from the Scriptures, then how could they expect to know the standard by which they should live as godly citizens? (Lynch, 1992: 198, 199).

As a memory aid to encourage people to learn doctrine, metrical Psalms were introduced, which were to be sung before and after each sermon. A cantor or precentor was appointed to sing the Psalm one line at a time to be repeated by the congregation. Singing was unaccompanied as the Reformers 'counted as ceremonial' the distraction of musical instruments, which they believed would serve only to obscure the word of God. In an attempt to further minimise was inattentiveness, it was deemed necessary to bar babies and young children from attending services. Indeed, during service time children were to be kept indoors lest their playing disturb the parishioners. This posed a particular problem at baptismal services at which the baptisand was an infant, a difficulty that some parishes overcame by keeping the baby concerned "holden in some secret place till the preaching [was] ended" (Todd, 2002: 71).

By now, the Mass had been abolished to be was replaced by Communion. Initially, this was an annual event of such significance that every adult in the community was expected to participate. Forthcoming Communion was advertised two to three weeks in advance from the pulpit and visitations were carried out amongst the congregation by

members of the Kirk Session to determine a person's worthiness to partake in the service. Adolescent children were also examined and, if successful, also allowed to take communion. Admission tickets were issued to those entitled to attend. Some parishes issued small lead tokens, which were often forged to meet the public demand. Tokens were issued a day or more in advance of the service and the bearer could display it at will, thus indicating their spiritual inclusion. Not being able to partake in Communion effectively meant exclusion from the community (Henderson, 1951: 76-79).

4.4.2 Penalties and Provision

Kirk Sessions were quickly established in the larger towns. This group were granted authority to deal with a wide range of both social and ecclesiastical issues. Initially, the members of the session had responsibility to actively 'encourage' all members of a congregation to attend church on Sunday. Records were kept of absentees, who would subsequently be required to account for their non-attendance before the Kirk Session or its nominees. Often, during the preaching of the sermon two elders were appointed to search the locality in an effort to locate absentees. They were authorised to enter people's homes to search for those that may be hiding. Fines could be issued on the spot and it was not uncommon for the town bailie to accompany the elders to assist in collecting the money. Childbirth, illness, vocation (such as fishing), caring for small children, unusual distance from church and severe weather conditions were among the few legitimate reasons for non presence at sermon time (Todd, 2002: 32-35).

This enforcement process naturally contributed to a large percentage of the local population attending services. Being present in body did not mean, however, that one was present in mind. Some people would arrive late and leave early, leading to doors being locked to prevent latecomers entering and attendees leaving before the end of the sermon. People also slept through the sermon, so beadles were appointed who would use a stick to pull back shawls covering the heads of suspected sleepers to ascertain their level of response. It was not unknown for youths to sit in the gallery or rafters and drop small pebbles onto the heads of those whom they thought were dozing. Some parishioners attended in a drunken condition and disturbed the service by heckling or even vomiting. The bringing of pets to church was also a distraction. The Scoonie Kirk Session took the drastic step of ordering the removal and killing of any dog brought to church. Having become quite used to attending a service as mere spectators, it was a

radical shift to find this new system being implemented that instilled discipline (Henderson, 1951: 175, 176).

Those caught in the act of or constrained to confess to a particular sin were traditionally required to undergo a form of penance, which would usually be a very public affair. Offenders were obliged to wear appropriate apparel to reflect their sin. Because some of those previously involved were deemed to make too light of the ceremony, it became common practice to summon the penitents to a meeting the day before Sunday sermon, where the minister would stress the urgency of the proceedings. What to wear, where to position oneself, which door to enter and exit by, where to sit and what to say were also covered in detail. A modern reader might be excused for thinking that the process of penance was stage managed for maximum impact on the audience. Most churches had a seat of repentance in full view of the congregation where the sinners would sit. Serious crimes might demand the imposition of a custodial sentence, during which time the offender would be required to make repentance repeatedly (Smout, 1972: 75-77).

It would appear that the act of making penance was far from being a sombre event in which the sinner asked forgiveness on their knees before the congregation. Indeed, such occasions were often more of a public attraction than was a routine church service in which a dry sermon could last for up to two hours. Many found it an ideal opportunity to keep up with the local gossip as penitents recounted their drunken brawling, domestic arguments and sexual escapades. Whether it was a calculated move on behalf of the church authorities to conduct this titillating part of the service at the end of the sermon is open to question. However, it was not unusual for members of the public to eavesdrop on the allegedly 'private' hearing of the recalcitrant before the Kirk Session. It has even been recorded that the parish of Newburn ordered that "persons found standing near the windows or doors... to hearken to what was said... should pay 6s 8d [ie 33p]" (in Todd, 2002: 163).

Thankfully, the Kirk Session performed other functions that would impact the community in a positive manner on, not least of which was its newly granted judicial rights to deal with minor social offences. At this time, Scotland was a violent country. Quarrels were commonplace and these would often result in feuds. In Scottish culture, a feud was the mechanism by which a dispute was brought to an end, usually in favour of the more powerful or wealthy party. Courts were rarely brought in to arbitrate, as its

representatives were unfamiliar with the individuals involved and ill-equipped to ensure their judgments were implemented. Indeed, records for the Lothian official's court for the 1540s show that only one case out of over two hundred initiated went to arbitration (see Houston & Knox, eds, 2002: 223, 224).

By contrast, records from many of the Kirk Sessions provide evidence that they provided an effective parochial mechanism for conflict resolution. Disputes were brought before a group of elders who had good local knowledge and were thus familiar with the people involved. When arbitrating, they identified areas in which both parties were at fault and reached agreement with them on their 'guilt'. The reconciliation process would culminate in both parties and witnesses meeting in a public place clearly visible to the neighbourhood, usually the actual scene of the original dispute. The offender(s) were then made to apologise publicly, which brought humiliation and accountability before the community. Any future disorder would thus be regarded as an offence against both the neighbourhood and the other party. Both parties also took an oath not to offend in future, having been made fully aware of the financial and penal implications of such a breach (Todd, 2002: 231, 249, 250).

The perceived success of this service can be gauged in a number of ways. People were quite prepared to bring their cases before the Session in the full knowledge that they would be required to pay a penalty for their part in the dispute, thus affecting their already impoverished state. There was also a sharp decline in the use of traditional arbitration courts such as those established by craft guilds and fraternities. The service provided was nominally free unless the parties involved were found to be at fault, though the fines imposed were sufficiently flexible to allow for the individuals' level of ability to pay; offenders could often pay by instalments. Monies levied from disputes were invariably used to supplement the coffers of the poor relief. Moreover, the service was easily accessible and more likely to arrive at a resolution that was mutually acceptable to the feuding groups. The community thus took responsibility at local level for maintaining law and order and it is clear that this self-policing contributed in no small way to making society more peaceable (Todd, 2002: 258, 263).

To the Reformers, the family was to be a facsimile of the house of God. This perception was not new, though the manner by which measures were implemented locally to support godly families were more visible in their enforcement. Through the Kirk

Session people had access to a local court that would all too readily become involved in family quarrels, particularly cases involving adultery, fornication and other sexual misdemeanours. On a more positive note, it was now possible for victims of spousal and other domestic abuse to seek protection and assistance. Cases of child abuse or neglect were investigated and absent fathers tracked down in order to exact monies for child support. Abandoned wives were also given aid, orphaned children placed with foster parents and single fathers provided with nurses to look after infant children during working hours. This combination of penalising the guilty and making provision for innocent victims resulted in a large number of common people seeking help (Todd, 2002: 265, 266).

Although the local church leadership became known for introducing a basic form of welfare provision, it appears that their original intention for such direct intervention was to establish godly households. Houses were visited, families observed and individuals examined on doctrinal fortitude. It soon became apparent, however, that ill-fed children, abused spouses, neglected elderly, single parents and other groups were less inclined to comply with the ideals set out for the Christian family. Continuing visits coupled with social provision provided a highly visible example of Christian values being demonstrated. In some households where the male was absent, women were given the role of spiritual head of the family, which was a revolutionary approach at the time. Although difficult to measure accurately, it seems such a system had some positive effect on the attitudes and values of all concerned (Todd, 2002: 313, 314).

4.4.3 Irreverent Pastimes

Although the authorities had abolished saints' days and other festivals associated with Catholicism, it would appear that the population were less enthusiastic in complying with this decree. Indeed, the 1595 gathering of the General Assembly found that:

> *Superstition and idolatry maintained, which utters itself in keeping of festival days and bonfires, pilgrimages, singing of carols at Yule... profanation of the Sabbath, and specially in field time and harvest... a great number of idle persons without lawful calling, as pipers, fiddlers, songsters, strange beggars, living in harlotry and having their children unbaptised, without any kind of repairing to the word.*
>
> (Todd, 2002: 185.)

The association of crafts guilds proved to be particularly obstinate by continuing to celebrate certain holy-day processions, arguing that adherence to such prohibition would mean a loss of prestige for the individual member and the corporate status for the guild within the town. Schoolchildren and university students were another group accustomed to treating festive and certain other religious days as public holidays. At one school at Aberdeen in 1604, the boys took control of their school in protest against the abolition of the Christmas celebrations. It seems that the people of Aberdeen prevailed in maintaining Christmas as a holiday. Indeed, records for the Kirk Session in 1642 state that the prohibition of Christmas was unusual (cf Wormald, 1992: 136, 137).

The traditional lighting of bonfires at Midsummer and St Peter's Eve may originally have been to burn the bones of small animals in an attempt to ward off evil spirits. It had become a popular social occasion, however, at which the more affluent lit fires at their gates and provided food for their less prosperous neighbours. These gatherings were very popular and persisted well into the seventeenth century. Attending profane plays was another popular pastime. In 1578, the Church was able to persuade the regent to influence the Privy Council to abolish all allegedly 'insolent' plays, though the ban proved more difficult to enforce than to implement. Those caught attending or participating in such plays could face stern measures, the most extreme being seizure of the offenders' goods. Fines were usually imposed and there is some evidence to suggest that this became an accepted practice due to the number of repeat offenders recorded in some Kirk Session documents. Indeed, the General Assembly eventually consented to the performance of "other plays, including profane" provided there were no Sabbath performances (see Todd, 2002: 183-224).

The May Midsummer Day fairs attracted many visitors to the towns, who frequently joined in the revelry. These were traditionally held on Sabbath days and thus competed with the Sunday service for patrons. It would appear that Church attendance sharply declined on these days and some of those noted as absent were prominent elders whose function it was to dissuade the congregation from such festivities. In 1622, some young women of high social standing, determined to attend the fair without the embarrassment of having to appear before the Kirk Session for their misdemeanour, enquired about the feasibility of being able to pay a fine in advance of attending the fair. The elders concerned agreed to this request, thus setting a precedent that became an accepted

practice in many parts of Scotland until well into the seventeenth century (Todd, 2002: 209, 210).

4.5 SUMMARY

In the immediate aftermath of the Reformation its leaders had to overcome a chronic shortage of trained ministers. Although difficult to measure, it seems that the temporary measure of appointing superintendents, readers and exhorters had a positive effect on communicating the Word of God to the people. The appointment of Kirk Sessions that empowered local people to become involved in the mediation of social policy also gave the Church a reputation for administering justice fairly, which contributed to the establishment of law and order in many communities. Initially, the Reformed Church in Scotland had been denied access to the revenues from its Catholic predecessor. In spite of limited funds, however, the leadership embarked upon implementing the ideals set out in the Books of Discipline, which eventually enabled the Church to become the focal point in the local community. Some also believed in an ecclesiastical system that had the right to admonish the monarch if their policies were at variance with that of the Church. A power struggle thus ensued, the catalyst of which was the dispute between King James VI and Andrew Melville, though it would last almost a hundred years before it was settled to the satisfaction of the Church.

5.0 WHAT LEGACY HAS THE REFORMATION LEFT ON SCOTLAND TODAY?

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Over four and a half centuries have now elapsed since the Reformation took place in Scotland. The Church that emerged was instrumental in opposing what it perceived to be interference from the monarchy on religious matters. It regarded the Word of God as the standard upon which policies and doctrine were to be based. Since that time, Church and State have often been in dispute over national policy, which has occasionally led to violence. Despite the fact that both Books of Discipline were rejected by Parliament, not only was Church structure and policy based on their findings, but also many individual believers sought to put their ideals into practice. It is perhaps noteworthy that in both books the Church also claimed responsibility for poor relief and a programme of education for all.

In this chapter, I propose to consider the ecclesiological, political and social conditions within Scotland today. The objective in so doing is to determine whether the ideals established by the Reformers relating to Church policy and structure are still in evidence. We will look at the relationship that exists between the Church in Scotland and a State that comprises of a British Parliament that meets in London and what effects the introduction of an apparently subordinate Scottish Parliament has had since it was first convened in 1997. Finally, I would like to identify what social benefits currently enjoyed by the people of Scotland may be attributed – directly or otherwise – to the policies of the Reformers and their immediate successors.

5.2 THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH IN SCOTLAND TODAY

5.2.1 National Church Structure

As the Reformed Church became more established, so a different organisational structure developed. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland meets annually for a whole week. This convention attracts almost a thousand delegates, more commonly referred to as commissioners, who are comprised principally of ministers and elders from the Church of Scotland. The General Assembly has the authority to

initiate laws that will effectively determine the *modus operandi* of the Church of Scotland. Delegates discuss motions that are presented on a wide range of issues, some of which may involve considerably diverse opinions being aired. In such cases, a democratic vote will be taken by those in attendance with all decisions reached by the Assembly being recorded and publicised as the official view of the Church. It would appear that such a process remains faithful to that set out by the early Reformers. Those in authority also acknowledge that policies agreed upon at the Assembly may not be fully supported by all members of the congregations, but is representative of the majority of its members (Blount, 2005).

The demographics of Scotland have changed almost beyond recognition over the last four hundred and fifty years. Public transport has improved considerably with the invention of the steam engine, motor car and aeroplane having dramatically eased the movement of the population. Moreover, the revolution in communication technology has increased the pressure on governments, businesses and other organisations to respond quickly and effectively to enquiries that come via the medium of television, which frequently transmits live to a worldwide audience. Hence, knowledgeable personnel are now nominated to act as media liaison spokespersons.

Although the General Assembly meets formally only once a year, it was acknowledged that representative committees needed to be established in order to organise and administer a wide range of functions. The Council of Assembly was formed, therefore, with the authority to take any necessary administrative decisions between meetings of the General Assembly. The Council also has responsibility for overseeing the running of a variety of sub-committees that are responsible for supervising specific project areas. According to information passed to me during a recent personal interview with the Scottish Parliamentary Officer for Ecumenical Relations, Graham Blount, these now include the Boards of Church and Society, Mission and Development, Ministries, Social Care, Support Services, and World Mission (Blount, 2005).

Synods were established as another Church court with the remit to act as arbiters in disputes that may have arisen at Presbytery level. Thus, anyone unhappy with a decision made by a Presbytery could take their grievance to the Synod. Not all Synodal judgments were universally accepted, however, in which case an appeal would be heard by the General Assembly. The Assembly was recognised as the highest ecclesiastical

court in the country, its authority being such as to render all its decisions as effectively binding. Consequently, the importance of the Synod as a mediating body gradually diminished until it was formally abolished in the late 1980s as surplus to functional necessity (Blount, 2005).

Today, churches are still grouped together regionally to form presbyteries. The presbytery is the middle court of appeal for all matters that have previously been dealt with by Kirk Sessions, whilst also "having the power to review decisions made at congregational meetings". There are currently forty-eight such presbyteries, each comprising a group of ministers and elders from the local churches within their geographic location. Most will meet on an almost monthly basis and will supervise the ministers, Kirk Sessions and congregations. Between meetings, business is carried out by committees appointed by the members of the presbytery (see www.churchofscotland.org/servingscotland/presbyteries.htm)

Members of the presbytery (ie presbyters) are also required to carry out visitations to examine the spiritual well-being of each congregation. In order to ensure as far as possible compliance with Church law, all congregations are required to be visited once in every five-year period. Previously referred to as the *quinquennial visitation*, they are now known simply as the *presbytery visit*, during which opportunity is given to encourage and advise the minister and congregation. If necessary, attention can also be drawn to any activities observed that may not, in the opinion of the visitors, be in accordance with Church doctrine and law.

The presbytery is responsible for nominating its own commissioners to attend the annual convention of the General Assembly. Potential changes to Church law are also passed down to them by the General Assembly for consideration under the 1697 Barrier Act. At least half of the presbyteries must approve the proposed legislation before it can be forwarded to the next Assembly to be passed as an Act. This is to prevent sudden major changes being made to important areas of Church life. It would appear that this tier of Church government has continued to function in much the same way since the Reformation.

5.2.2 At Local Level

For the majority of communities throughout Scotland, the Parish Church is arguably their most visible landmark. Since the time of the Reformation, parish boundaries have changed to meet increasing city populations, growth of urban areas, development of new towns and an overall population expansion of around five hundred per cent. Conversely, those attending Church services have fallen from a high point of forty six per cent of the populace in 1956 to a mere twelve per cent at the turn of the millennium. However, "in the 2001 national census, 42% of Scots identified themselves as 'Church of Scotland' by religion" (see www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_of_Scotland).

In the immediate aftermath of the Reformation, the Parish Church was ascribed additional duties to that of simply preaching the gospel. These included being actively involved in local government, education and social services within the parish borders. Today the Church's secular enterprise is maintained by private individuals and forum groups who have a particular interest in these fields. As such, their influence is persuasive rather than authoritative (Kernohan, 1985: 69).

Although some of the duties carried out at local level have become the domain of the state, however, it would appear that the structure of the Parish Church remains relatively unchanged. There are around twelve hundred congregations served by a total of somewhere in the region of fourteen hundred active ministers. This helps to fulfil one of the visions of the early Reformers, which was to see each congregation served by a suitably qualified person. The minister is supported in his duties by elders, who may be appointed either by the congregation or by the local Kirk Session. The Kirk Session is the lowest court of the Church and is comprised of the minister and elders. The size of the Session is usually determined by the needs of the congregation; perhaps three to four in a small congregation and up to one hundred in a large city or suburban Church (see www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_of_Scotland).

The chairperson of each Kirk Session is known as the Moderator, a role usually performed by the minister of the congregation. Nowadays, the principal function of the Kirk Session is to ensure that any Acts passed by the General Assembly are adhered to; to administer discipline where necessary; to superintend the religious and moral condition of the Parish; to maintain all relevant records such as communion, baptisms

and transference of members; to supervise Sunday schools and congregational organisation; and to appoint the organist and Church Officer. Very rarely does the Kirk Session intrude on matters of a non-spiritual nature. Instead, other boards or committees are formed to manage such affairs as financial arrangements of the church and building maintenance. Attendance at meetings of the Session is generally open to the public, except in such cases where the outcome might thereby be seriously prejudiced (Blount, 2005).

Elders within the Church of Scotland have a vitally important pastoral role. As such, the position of elder is regarded as one requiring a special commitment. Although an elder may resign their position, it is usually regarded as one of permanence. In extreme circumstances, however, an elder may be removed from office following disciplinary action for conduct that is found to be at variance with the Church's current Acts or policies. It must also be noted that an elder will not automatically qualify for membership of a Kirk Session at another Parish Church if they move into another area. In such cases, the decision rests with the Kirk Session of the congregation they have joined. Any member of a congregation is eligible for election as an elder provided they meet the minimum age eighteen years (Kernohan, 1985: 107).

The position of elder in the Church of Scotland is no longer the sole domain of the male gender. In response to the emergence of equal opportunities for women in the workplace, senior management and political arena, the General Assembly passed Act XXVIII in 1966 – Eligibility of Women for the Eldership. Although open to possible misrepresentation, it seems that the introduction of this legislation was intended to elucidate the position of the Church over the appointment of elders. In an attempt to bring further clarity to the issue, the General Assembly made a statement in 1991 to the effect that the Act does not suggest that women should be appointed as elders at every congregation, but simply that they not be discounted on the grounds of their gender. Kirk Sessions are also allowed the same liberty (see www.churchofscotland.org.uk/servingscotland/womeninkirk.htm).

At Parish Church level a suitably qualified minister who has been called to the 'ministry of Word and sacrament' is appointed. Today, a minister's main responsibilities include:

- the celebration of the sacraments;
- preaching;
- chairing meetings of the Kirk Session;
- conducting funerals and giving pastoral care; and
- conducting weddings.

Because there are no special ranks or orders amongst ministers, all are regarded as equal. A minister is usually ordained once appointed to a Parish Church or other specialist post, such as full-time hospital or industrial chaplain. Once in post, a minister will be secure in that position unless the Presbytery decides there are sufficient grounds of default to suggest otherwise. These could include moral, doctrinal or practical issues. Such a protocol is designed to protect ministers from vengeful dismissal due to personal disfavour or private disagreement with members of the congregation (Kernohan, 1985: 73, 74).

5.3 WHAT IS THE CURRENT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND STATE IN SCOTLAND?

5.3.1 An Independent Church?

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, the Reformed Church made strenuous efforts to maintain the right to operate without interference from secular authorities on spiritual matters (see **4.2.3**). However, successive rulers of Scotland believed in their right to govern by 'divine rule'. This conviction led to an almost perpetual clash between the sovereign and the Church leaders over this issue. The bitter feud was settled in the Church's favour following the ascension to the English throne of King William III in 1689. Four significant pieces of legislation were passed by Parliament within the following year, which – according to Alec Cheyne – established in law the foundations of the modern Church of Scotland (1999: 60):

i) the abolition of prelacy;

ii) the repealing of the Assertory Act of 1669, which contained the claim that 'His majesty has the supreme authority over all persons and in all causes ecclesiastical within this kingdom (of Scotland)';

iii) the restoration of ministers who had been ejected from their parishes in 1662 to their former positions; and

iv) the establishing of Presbyterianism as the only valid form of Church government in Scotland.

A further important Act was passed in 1707, when the respective governing bodies of Scotland and England were about to converge under the historic Treaty of Union. Known as the Act of Security, its terms confirmed that it is:

> ... *reasonable and necessary that the true Protestant religion, as presently professed within this kingdom, with the worship, discipline, and government of the Church, should be effectually and unalterably secured.*
>
> (M^{ac}George, 1890: 37.)

It soon became obvious that the transference of political authority from Edinburgh to Westminster meant that the Church in Scotland became dependent on the goodwill of a legislature of whom the majority had no affiliation with a Presbyterian Church system. The predominantly English Parliament wasted little time in displaying either its ignorance of or its contempt for the workings of the Scottish Church when it passed the Toleration Act in 1712. The terms of this Act enabled the Episcopal clergy in Scotland to use the liturgy of the Church of England, thus authorising worship that was not fully in accordance with the practice of the established Church of Scotland. It also posed a threat to the Presbyterians' disciplinary system as Episcopalians were free from the jurisdiction of the Kirk Session, thus weakening the influence of the Church over civil authorities to support its disciplinary measures. The power of the monarchy was now being eclipsed by a Parliamentary system that was becoming increasingly involved in matters of State, many of which had traditionally been within the jurisdiction of the Church (see Devine, 1999: 86).

The Reformed Church of Scotland had also vehemently opposed the Patronage system, whereby the Crown had the right to appoint ministers over a Kirk. This facility was temporarily abolished in 1649 when a radical Presbyterian group came to power, but was restored by King Charles II in 1661 under the terms of the Recissory Act that also reintroduced bishops to the Church. Almost a quarter of the clergy in Scotland were removed from office for refusing to comply with this Act, though they continued to minister to their congregations in the many open fields of the countryside. Parliament sought to impose stern preventative measures against these clergymen. The ensuing uprisings were violently and ruthlessly suppressed, with ministers outlawed and hunted

down by government troops in what has subsequently become known as the "killing time" (Donnachie & Hewitt, eds, 1990: 147, 148).

Another Act of Parliament passed in 1690, known as the Revolution Settlement, established a system that allowed local landowners – in cooperation with elders – the right to present a candidate (in most cases a fully qualified nominee) for the position of minister. In 1712, an unsympathetic English-dominated Parliament restored the Patronage system in Scotland, which was a constant source of trouble within the Church of Scotland. Indeed, by the time the Act was repealed in 1874 it had led to three major secessions within the Church, including the Great Disruption of 1843 where forty per cent of the Kirk's members left to form the Free Church of Scotland (cf Cheyne, 1999: 64; Devine, 1999: 285).

The passing of the Church of Scotland Act in 1921 paved the way for a union of the Church of Scotland with the Free Church of Scotland some eight years later. The Act contains a number of Declaratory Articles, none of which create a new doctrinal position so much as reaffirm the long held beliefs of the Church of Scotland, including its perceived spiritual independence and freedom from state control. Re-united, the Church could truly claim to be a national Church "representative of the faith of the Scottish people" (Herron, 1985: 9). The Kirk's success in retaining its spiritual autonomy was emphasised in a report made by the Church and Nation Committee to the 1989 General Assembly, which stated that "unique among all British institutions, the Church of Scotland alone is a body lying [outside] the authority of the British state and government of its own affairs". This creates a distinctive situation for the reigning monarch in Britain, who is acknowledged as 'supreme governor' over the Church of England, but regarded as only a member of the Church of Scotland (Blount, 2002: 5).

5.3.2 More Recent Times

In 1979, the Scottish electorate was given opportunity to vote for devolution. An amendment to the previous legislation required that forty per cent of those eligible to vote would have to register a 'yes' for devolution to be implemented, thus demanding almost two thirds of actual voters to indicate such a preference in any turnout below seventy per cent. Although there was a majority for devolution in votes cast, statistically this amounted to thirty three per cent of registered voters. At the following General

Election a new Conservative government was elected under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher, whose political aspirations proved hugely unpopular in Scotland. Over the course of the successive terms of office, the Conservative vote in Scotland virtually collapsed. At this time, a group of prominent Scots representing a broad section of society (including leading members of the Church) formed the Campaign for a Scottish Assembly. They produced a document titled '*The Claim of Right*', which proposed the argument in favour of the establishment of a Scottish assembly. The Church of Scotland, the General Assembly of which had been widely regarded as almost synonymous with a Scottish Parliament, was broadly supportive of some form of devolution. Indeed, the 1989 report to the General Assembly was the most influential contribution from the Church towards the debate for a Scottish Parliament (Pittock, 2003: 281, 282).

The General Election of 1997 saw the Conservative party not only being defeated by the Labour party, but also suffering the humiliation of having no seats in Wales or Scotland. The new government introduced legislation providing for a Scottish Parliament and on 11th September a referendum took place, the result of which was a resounding 'yes' vote of almost three to one. Almost symbolically, in July 1999 the Queen opened the Scottish Parliament at its temporary headquarters in the General Assembly of the Kirk's debating chamber on the Mound in Edinburgh. Perhaps significantly, the new Parliament's first debate centred on a proposal to begin each week's proceedings with prayer. After some deliberation and debate with the Church of Scotland and other churches, Parliament agreed to instigate a 'Time for Reflection' at the commencement of each parliamentary week. This involves four minutes of readings, reflection and prayer led by representatives of Scotland's faith communities. A member of the Scottish Parliament, who is also an elder in the Kirk, has described this time as "proportional praying" (Pittock, 2003: 287-289).

With the establishment of this new Parliament, the Church sought to determine the finer points of their working relationship with it. A primary concern was whether the new constitutional arrangements would still safeguard the spiritual independence of the Church under the Church of Scotland Act of 1921. Although government sources affirmed that there were no plans to review this Act, clarification was sought as to the precise status of the 1921 Act and under whose jurisdiction it rightly belonged.

Following a series of consultations, the Church was satisfied that there were no plans to amend their position as identified in the 1921 Act (M°Gillivray, 2005: 8, 9).

Because consideration needed to be given to the working relationship between the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Parliament, the Church approved the appointment of a Parliamentary officer in 1998. The intention was that the officer's task would be to facilitate the views of the Church within the Parliamentary context in a liaison/mediatory capacity. Other denominations were also encouraged to take advantage of the facilities and services provided by what is now known as the Scottish Parliamentary Churches' Office. Those involved in this work do not envisage their role as representing a pressure group so much as enabling those who wish to keep Scottish MPs informed on the Church's (not necessarily the Church of Scotland's) moral and ethical stance on a wide range of issues (Blount, 2005).

Although Scotland now has its own Parliament, it remains part of the United Kingdom. As such, continues to elect Members of Parliament who sit regularly at the House of Commons in London and, therefore, contribute to debates and vote on Acts of Parliament that – if passed – will impact on the whole of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. From the Treaty of Union in 1707 to the present day, the Church of Scotland has maintained contact with these Scottish Members of Parliament. Although modern technology makes communication over long distances problem free, the Church of Scotland values developing face-to-face relationships with the elected government representatives. This is achieved on an annual basis through a delegation from the Church visiting London and meeting with the Scottish MPs on a political party basis. The Church has also established ecclesiastical links with the Methodist Church in England, which enables it to be kept abreast of current and possible future developments that may be of particular interest or relevance.

The United Kingdom is a member state of the European Union. As the European Parliament passes legislation that is applicable throughout its member states, the Church of Scotland believes that some form of representation at the European Parliament's headquarters in Brussels would be beneficial. This has led to the partial funding of a member of staff, in conjunction with some other denominations, who works and is based in Brussels (Blount, 2005).

Church statistics for the period ending 31st December 2000 recorded that there were 607,714 communicant members in the Church of Scotland (see www.churchofscotland.org.uk/boards/pracproc/pracproc.htm). This represents almost ten per cent of the total population in Scotland and makes the Church of Scotland the third largest Church in the UK. Aware of the voting potential of this grouping, certain Members of Parliament must surely take their concerns into account when making policy decisions.

5.4 WHAT PRESENT-DAY SOCIAL BENEFITS MIGHT BE DIRECTLY ATTRIBUTED TO THE REFORMATION IN SCOTLAND?

5.4.1 Law and Order

As mentioned in earlier chapters (eg **1.0; 4.4.2**), the Reformed Church played a significant role in the development of Scottish society. This was especially so in the key areas of caring for the poor, establishing a valid education system and encouraging moral discipline. The Kirk Sessions acted as arbitrators in many cases of disputes and even administered justice over a wide range of offences. Although the number of civil courts throughout the country was on the increase, in the immediate aftermath of the Scottish Reformation access to them was both difficult and expensive for the majority of the population. Indeed, it might even be argued that the success of the Church's courts in administering justice at local level contributed in no small measure to bringing law and order to many communities. Moreover, this achievement may also have helped to enable the civil authorities in establishing their own law courts, which locally worked in harness with the Kirk Session courts in the first instance. In the course of time, the state became less willing to support Church excommunication with civil penalties. After 1712 the crime of lesser excommunication (ie the denial of communion) could not be referred to the local sheriff for judicial action. The Toleration Act also removed some social groups from the Church's sphere of influence, thus hindering efforts to exercise discipline (Devine, 1999: 86).

From 1707 onwards, the *Presbyterian Form of Process* further restricted the Kirk Session's jurisdiction. In essence, it was thence only possible to bring those to account where there was external evidence that a 'sin' had been committed. Perhaps unsurprisingly, by the 1750s most cases brought before Kirk Sessions involved offences

of a sexual nature. The fracturing of the established Church further undermined any efforts to maintain discipline through Kirk Sessions. So much so, in fact, that by the middle of the nineteenth century the Church of Scotland discouraged the practice of public discipline altogether. Although the Kirk Session of today appears to have a limited disciplinary scope over the community, its contribution to a society that generally embraces law and order should not be underestimated (Devine, 1999: 86, 87).

5.4.2 Doctrine

In 1649, the Church of Scotland adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith, which was essentially Calvinistic in tone. The Union of Parliaments in 1707, however, heralded a succession of attacks upon Scotland's religious establishment from both North and South of the border. Mischief makers from England were attempting to impose episcopacy on the Scottish Church, whilst some groups within Scotland began to question the doctrine of predestination. The Church's response was to require that all ministers and office bearers sign a statement declaring their allegiance to the Westminster Confession. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a number of ecclesiastical scholars challenged this Confessional standard on the basis that it seemed to promote compulsory measures within the context of religion. Furthermore, some were ill at ease with the level of authority being afforded the Confession declaring that ultimate adherence should be to the Holy Scriptures and not a brief human interpretation of key doctrine (Cheyne, 1999: 22, 23, 71).

In common with what took place elsewhere, the Church of Scotland did suffer a division through what became known as the Great Disruption. This event was brought about a result of secular courts seeking to be involved in and passing judgment on the appointment of ministers to vacant parishes. Such practice was challenged by local congregations who desired the right to select their own minister, which had been one of the ideals of the early Reformers. Legal opposition brought matters to a head and a significant minority of ministers and congregation members left the Church rather than accept judgments from civil authorities on what they perceived to be essentially spiritual matters. In the course of time these issues between secular and spiritual authority were resolved, but by then the damage had been done. Reconciliation of those churches affected was not possible until the Declaratory statements were approved, allowing a more relaxed approach to the interpretation of the Confession of Westminster

with particular regard to predestination (Burleigh, 1960: 344-351). The doctrinal position of the Church of Scotland since that time remains largely unchanged.

5.4.3 Education

Traditionally, the Church has strongly supported education in Scotland. Indeed, at the time of the Reformation it was generally accepted that education was under the stewardship of the Church. In the course of time, however, schooling throughout Scotland came under the stewardship of a variety of organisations. Although the Church of Scotland remained dominant in this area, other bodies were also beginning to establish schools. Irish immigrants settling in Scotland were founding Roman Catholic schools, as were local burghs. The Great Disruption of 1843 divided the Church of Scotland and led to the establishment of rival churches and schools (Pittock, 2003: 236, 237). Concerned at the fragmented condition of education throughout the country, the State intervened by passing the Education Act of 1872. This Act transferred elementary education in Scotland from ecclesiastical control to lay boards under direction from the State. The Act also stipulated that religious instruction be given at such hours that it would not interrupt or interfere with secular education. Moreover, children were at liberty to withdraw from religious education without losing any part of their secular teaching (Stewart, 1927: 114, 115). Education was now no longer the sole domain of the Church.

Today, the Church of Scotland is keen to maintain its contact with schools in order that it might continue to promote religious education. Geographically there is a parish church within the locality of almost every primary school in Scotland. The minister usually works in schools with permission from the head teacher. Secondary schools generally have larger catchments areas, drawing pupils from a number of primary schools. Ministers from more than one parish church may co-operate in providing a spiritual service, their respective roles varying from school to school. They may, for example, act as a spiritual advisor to a given year group or they may have responsibility for a specific group from their induction at secondary school until they leave (Blount, 2005).

There are also a few independent schools in Scotland. Some of these employ a student chaplain, who may also be entrusted with responsibility for the spiritual well-being of

the members of staff. Acknowledging the fact that modern universities are almost communities within a neighbourhood, the Church of Scotland employs eight full-time chaplains to minister exclusively to this group. They each have a wide-ranging role that includes social and spiritual welfare, counselling, befriending, visiting the sick and dealing with people who have emotional or financial difficulties (see www.churchofscotland.org.uk/boards/nationalmission/unichaplaincy.htm)

The Church in Scotland continues to be active in promoting religious education through Sunday schools, youth events, activities and clubs. There are also connections with young people who belong to uniformed organisations such as the Boys' and Girls' Brigade, which retains the strongest links with the Scottish Church having being founded by a member of a small Glasgow church mission. Many secondary schools, colleges and universities welcome the involvement of the Christian Union, whilst members from the Church of Scotland have co-operated with those of other denominations to encourage evangelism amongst the students (Kernohan, 1985: 82, 83).

The Church of Scotland's Education Committee was formed in 1825 and continues to advise the government on its position regarding proposed educational policy. In conjunction with other denominations, the group also helps to promote religious and moral education in schools. With the approval of the General Assembly, representatives attend meetings of the Committee in each of Scotland's thirty-two local authorities, with a further delegate being allowed to participate in the meetings of the General Teaching Council for Scotland. In this way, despite no longer exercising sole responsibility, the Church retains a strong interest in promoting education in Scotland, which was one of the primary concerns of the early Reformers (see www.churchofscotland.org.uk/boards/education/education.htm)

5.4.4 Welfare Provision

The *First Book of Discipline* instructed each Kirk to provide for its own poor, at the same time differentiating between idle beggars and those unable to sustain themselves. However, this system of provision gradually became ineffectual, largely due to population growth and industrialisation. As a result of the vast migration of people to the Central Lowlands in search of employment, local parishes in the growing towns were increasingly unable to cater for this rapid expansion in the population as there was

no recognised provision for able bodied persons who were unemployed. Social facilities such as workhouses and hospitals were almost overwhelmed by this increasing demand on their resources. The authorities were also concerned by their incapacity to maintain law and order in parts of these growing cities (Donnachie & Hewitt, eds, 2001: 257-259).

In no small part due to the Great Depression of 1843, a Royal Commission was established to review the poor relief system. The outcome of this report led to the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1845, which effectively passed responsibility for poor relief to elected boards set up by the State. Although the Church continued to be involved in this process, subsequent legislation transferred more jurisdiction to other governing bodies. The focus of poor relief also changed, as it was recognised that able-bodied people may occasionally become poor due to circumstances outside of their control, such as unusually high levels of unemployment in the industrialised towns and cities during times of depression (Donnachie & Hewitt, eds, 2001: 259).

By the twentieth century, reforming governments had introduced the provision of school meals, medical inspection for school children and old age pensions. All of these were ultimately incorporated into the great Welfare State after 1945, thus severely restricting the Church's direct involvement in policy decisions on welfare provision. Although the State retains principal responsibility for social care, however, this has not prevented the Church of Scotland from offering some input. Its Board of Social Responsibility, for example, seeks to present Christian perspectives on a wide range of current affairs, including euthanasia, human sexuality, the proposed decriminalisation of certain drugs, human cloning and begging. The Board of Social Responsibility is the largest voluntary social work agency in Scotland, employing over sixteen hundred people. Many care projects are managed by this organisation, such as helping the elderly, providing counselling services and help for the homeless, and assisting people with dementia, mental health difficulties and addiction problems, (see www.churchofscotland.org.uk/boards/socialresp/srservices.htm).

A significant number of senior members of the UK government, having recognised that faith groups make a valid contribution to social projects within their own communities, have encouraged their participation in neighbourhood renewal strategies (see Blair, 2001). This is also echoed in some of the findings of the Church of Scotland's strategic

vision document, entitled '*A Church Without Walls*', which identifies the challenges facing congregations who are seeking to develop relational processes within their own locality. The Church of Scotland's conclusion was reached after commissioning a research study to be conducted by Glasgow University to assess the contribution made by its congregations to neighbourhood renewal (Church of Scotland, 2001).

This research found that thirty per cent of congregation members are actively engaged in supporting other voluntary organisations. Of these, almost half were office bearers, thus suggesting that church members play a prominent role in the local community infrastructure. From a corporate perspective, it was also acknowledged that congregations provide practical support to local and voluntary sector organisations, especially in deprived and urban settings. Such help includes the provision of meeting places, supplying staff or volunteers and offering financial assistance. Two thirds of congregations are also involved in furnishing direct services and facilities to local enterprises such as educational, cultural and health services, with children's clubs, crèches and day care for the elderly being the most prominent activities. Moreover, a quarter of congregations indicated that they are involved in a range of self-help and personal growth activities, with pre-school clubs, addiction and parental support groups being the most common to benefit from their concern. Perhaps surprisingly, few congregations offer training services, though this may reflect the strong state education system that is now firmly established in Scotland. However, twenty six per cent of congregations are committed to helping those in their locality with immediate needs, such as the homeless, with some taking the initiative to provide food, shelter or temporary accommodation. Although the findings of this research suggests a modest contribution on the part of church congregations and individual members, its value must be seen in the context of the fact that it is largely non-church members who enjoy such benevolence (Flint, 2002).

The Church of Scotland is well placed to offer assistance in a wide range of local and national policy initiatives. Renovation of premises would no doubt further enable facilities to be utilised by other organisations, thus positively reinforcing the Church's role at the heart of local initiatives. In order to accomplish this, partnerships may need to be established with other enterprises that might precipitate extra investment into Church facilities and projects. In seeking more social integration through such partnerships, however, the Church needs to first of all identify its core values to

prospective associates, lest it subsequently finds itself faced with ethical/moral dilemmas that some aforethought might have otherwise avoided (Flint, 2002).

5.5 SUMMARY

Since the Reformation, the Church of Scotland has persistently sought to remain true to the ideals of its founding fathers. As such, the structure of the Church today is not too dissimilar to that envisaged by the early Reformers. Presbyteries, Kirk Sessions and the General Assembly continue to operate, with the Synod being the only church court to be abolished. Churches also still serve geographical areas known as parishes, whilst the methods employed to appoint ministers and elders are little changed from those foreseen by John Knox and his supporters. Although the judicial powers of the Church's courts in administering justice has diminished, this reflects more on the increasing role of the State justice system in dealing with secular misdemeanors.

The Church of Scotland has faced many tribulations with successive monarchs and Parliaments, who have tried with varying degrees of success to exercise control over its organisation and function. Overall, the Church met with some successful in retaining its spiritual independence from secular authority. This relative autonomy has allowed the Church to speak out on certain issues where others may not have been prepared to jeopardise the security of their office. The Church also continues to be engaged in a range of projects that are for the benefit of the local community. Many such activities involve co-operating with other denominations and secular organisations, which suggests that the Church of Scotland retains its commitment to providing for the needy. Although no longer directly involved in the provision of education for children at schools, colleges and universities, the Church is still keen to maintain some contact in order to provide for the spiritual well-being of those attending.

6.0 CONCLUSION

At the very outset of this dissertation, I posited the central question: "How may one determine the effects, influence and legacy of the European Reformation in Scottish history?" (see p2). Other questions that naturally from this were proposed as:

- What was the ecclesiological, political and social condition of the nation of Scotland immediately prior to the Reformation?
- What impact did the Reformation have on the nation of Scotland?
- What were the immediate ecclesiological, political and social consequences of the Reformation in Scotland?
- What have been the most significant ramifications of the Reformation in Scottish Church, political and social history to the present day?

The evidence relating to each of these questions has been analysed and presented in successive chapters of the work. In chapter two, we investigated the conditions in Scotland prior to the Reformation. South of the border, Henry VIII had broken England's allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church, an action that led to sporadic though bitter conflicts with both Scotland and France. The Scottish nobles were thus unsure of where their loyalties should be placed. As a direct relative of the powerful de Guise family and with support from leading elements of the Scottish Church, the Queen Regent was able to negotiate for a French army to be stationed in Scotland. A new social class was emerging at this time comprising of merchants and craftsmen. This group had regular contact with many of Europe's major trading cities and was familiar with the apparently 'new' doctrines being propagated by the Continent's leading Reformers. The merchants had been especially active in smuggling Bibles and so-called 'heretical' pamphlets into Scotland. Although many of this class were genuine in their Reformed beliefs, it must also be acknowledged that there were those amongst their number who supported the ideals of reform out of their sense of injustice at the Church's unfair trading advantages. The poor made up a significant minority within this society, which had traditionally received support from the Church. Immediately prior to the Reformation, however, they had become disenchanted with the Church's policy of directing funds to abbeys and cathedrals instead of to poor relief.

The impact of the Reformation on the nation of Scotland was examined in chapter three. Increasing French influence in Scotland had convinced a significant number of nobles that their country's future lay in an alliance with England. The population at large was also becoming progressively sceptical that their French allies' motives were anything but self-centred. Moreover, the Queen Regent and the established Church were persecuting those whose loyalty to the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church was in question. It would take a strong leader to unite all the disaffected parties in opposition to the Queen Regent and her French advisors. Fortunately, John Knox came to the fore and, with the help of the English, freed Scotland from French control. This resulted in a momentous meeting of Parliament, which formally abolished the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland and approved the newly formed Church of Scotland.

The immediate consequences of the Reformation in Scotland were studied in chapter four. The recently established Church of Scotland had many barriers to overcome. Denied access to the funds of the former Roman Catholic Church, its leaders proved to be quite innovative in meeting a wide range of problems. The appointment of readers and exhorters helped to alleviate the initial shortage of trained ministers. Under the direction of respected locals appointed as elders, provincial courts brought a simple justice system to the common people. The Church was also actively involved in promoting education and welfare provision, which placed it at the heart of the parochial community. Nationally, the Church campaigned ceaselessly to retain its spiritual independence from secular authorities.

In chapter five, I have sought to evaluate the long-term ramifications of the Reformation in Scottish history and whether the Church of Scotland has remained true to its forebears' ideals. By preserving a modicum of autonomy, the Church has ultimately been successful in this regard. From an organisational perspective, it remains remarkably similar to that of its inception, the Synodal court being the only apparent casualty of time. The authority of the Church's courts in administering justice has diminished considerably, as has its control over education in Scotland. Welfare provision is also now by the State, though the Church does still retain a strong voluntary presence in providing for the poor and needy. However, a declining membership coupled with an erosion of both its judicial powers and jurisdictional responsibilities has forced the Church of Scotland to re-evaluate its role in the community. This has resulted in the Church undertaking a project whereby it is seeking to reconnect with the populace

through local initiatives that bring congregation members to the people, rather than waiting for the people to come to the Church.

During the course of my research I have made a number of fascinating discoveries, not least of which is the impression that a unique set of circumstances existed in Scotland in the middle of the sixteenth century that enabled diverse groups to unite in the common goal of overthrowing the establishment. The zeal of the Reformers in promoting education made a significant contribution towards establishing a system that would ultimately produce some of the leading contributors to the industrial revolution, science and the arts. The seeds of the current welfare system in Scotland were also sown by the Church, which made strenuous efforts to assist the genuinely poor at Parish level and provided nursing and child-minding services, thus enabling widowers to return to the workplace with their dignity in tact.

From the time of the Scottish Reformation to this present day the doctrine adopted by the Church of Scotland has remained relatively unchanged. Schisms within the Church were usually attributed to political or monarchical interference in ecclesiastical affairs. It would also appear that, despite the original intention of seeking to formulate a document of doctrinal unity, almost became an instrument of division. For a time, it seemed that adherence to the precepts contained therein became the defining test for ministry. So much so, in fact, that the Scriptures were in danger of becoming subordinate to the Confessions. Had this continued unchallenged, then it would not be unreasonable to assume that further statutes would have found their initiation in human intellect that would have effectively replicated the very situation that the Reformers had fought so aggressively to dispense with.

It was also a surprise to learn that the Church had been instrumental in establishing and maintaining a system of law and order that was obviously so efficient for many years. Its success can be gauged by the various cases recorded by the vast number of Kirk Sessions, in which local people were willing to participate with full knowledge of the potential consequences they may have faced for their part in any dispute. Local elders also took an active role in settling domestic quarrels and brought those guilty of civil violence to account. It is perhaps significant that, although the Church's official involvement in many of these matters has been curtailed, government bodies are beginning to recognise that the Church's unique position in the community makes it an

ideal vehicle for meeting needs that are currently beyond the reach of existing welfare organisations. It is my conviction, therefore, that the values and principles pioneered by the early Reformers and implemented by the Church of Scotland have made a significant contribution to the ongoing development of modern Scotland.

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