

during one of his periods of intellectual perplexity he found that the only rope to hold fast by was the conviction, "it must be right to do right." The whole of Lord Acton's career might be summed up in a counterphrase, "it must be wrong to do wrong." It was this conviction, universally and unwaveringly applied, and combined with an unalterable faith in Christ, which gave unity to all his efforts, sustained him in his struggle with ecclesiastical authority, accounted for all his sympathies, and accentuated his antipathies, while it at once expanded and limited his interests. It is this that made his personality so much greater a gift to the world than any book which he might have written—had he cared less for the end and more for the process of historical knowledge.

He was interested in knowledge—that it might diminish prejudice and break down barriers. To a world in which the very bases of civilisation seemed to be dissolving he preached the need of directing ideals.

Artistic interests were not strong in him, and the decadent pursuit of culture as a mere luxury had no stronger enemy. Intellectual activity, apart from moral purpose, was anathema to Acton. He has been censured for bidding the student of his hundred best books to steel his mind against the charm of literary beauty and style. Yet he was right. His list of books was expressly framed to be a guide, not a pleasure; it was intended to supply the place of University direction to those who could not afford a college life, and it throws light upon the various strands that mingled in Acton and the historical, scientific, and political influences which formed his mind. He felt the danger that lurks in the charm of literary beauty and style, for he had both as a writer and a reader a strong taste for rhetoric, and he knew how young minds are apt to be enchained rather by the persuasive spell of the manner than the living thought beneath