

are called times of reformation, because Judaism then yielded to Christianity, and religion was remodelled; the old scaffolding, temporarily employed, was removed, and forth came the new religion, as a temple bright and beautiful to behold. In like manner was Protestantism a remodelling of the Church, her restoration to primitive times and usages, and her re-casting into the mould of Paul's Epistle to the Romans in preference to the Church of Rome. This it is needful to keep in view, as sometimes you are asked: "Where was your Church before the Reformation? Was it not Romanist then?" And your reply should be: "By the reformation was the Church brought back to primitive doctrine and worship; but she is older than that event—as old as the New Testament itself. The reformation only restored her; she had been foul, and was then cleansed; the coin was obliterated, and had then to be re-impresed; the document illegible, and had then to be re-written; the building decayed, and had then to be repaired. There was a reformation of primitive doctrine and of worship, so that the Church of Christ and every true branch of it, is older than what the Church of Rome would allow, yea, older than what that Church herself is, as old as the Epistle to the Romans and the Acts of the Apostles. Next, this Reformation was a *revival of religion*. It was not a political affair, although it upset States and changed civil politics; it was not the achievement of human learning, although the Reformers were learned men; nor was it the triumph of the sword, although kings and princes took up arms in its behalf; nor yet the purchase of money nor the fruit of power, although these were ranked on its side: but it was *the triumph of the truth*. By the preaching of the Reformers and the publication of the Scriptures, was the victory won whose fruits we and our children now enjoy. Luther's preaching shook Germany, and his theses alarmed the Colleges, while his addresses before the Emperor drew off a great part of his fatherland; Knox, again, lightened Scotland, and Queen Mary and her nobles trembled before the rough Reformer, and our mother country was in a blaze; England, too, received the light, and her nobles and commons, not without a struggle, joined the cause. Thus was the Reformation accomplished, which, like a goodly tree, has increased, and whose roots are struck deeper year by year into the minds and hearts of people and nations, for, unlike the Upas, this tree is bound to propagate and to extend.

Now it was no policy of the Reformers to proceed at once to extremities. What Luther desired, was, reform *within* the Church herself. The doctrines of grace and the right of private judgment he insisted upon; but when these were denied, then he went the whole length of freedom from the Pope's supremacy and the Church's infallibility, a confession of faith was adopted, and the name Protest-

ant assumed by the followers of the new religion, because they protested against the errors and the power of the Church of Rome. The following are a sample of these errors: "Masses, images, adoration of the Virgin, invocation of saints, purgatory, tradition, the Bible and prayers in an unknown tongue, and the infallibility of the head of that Church." Against those you protest if you belong to the Reformed Church, and you declare these to be so deadly and so fundamental errors that you can hold no communion with her, therefore have you come out and reformed. But some would call our separation a "schism," and our belief a "heresy." Now, to take an analogous case: If the tribes of Israel and of Judah could not hold together because of idolatry (and that is a deadly and contagious vice), and if the Almighty declared to Rehoboam, "this revolt is of me," then their separation was clearly lawful. So I think that when there could be no inward reform, then there must be outward separation. The errors that divided were of so deadly a nature that they could not be healed; all attempts at reform within had failed;—then, no other course was open but to "come out and be separate." Clearly, on the ground of the protest, separation was lawful. "Come out of Babylon, or partake of her plagues." Hence this is a *warrantable separation*, but no *sinful schism*; nor are we "heretics" by remaining Protestants and abandoning "mother Church." On the contrary, we but protest against her corruptions, but adopt the Apostles' creed and the inspired Scriptures, and we adhere to no other truth but what Churches purer and older than that of Rome have followed, viz.: "the pure and whole doctrine of God's word, and the right of examining and interpreting for ourselves the Word,"—things which were and are denied within the pale of that Church. Bear these things in mind, then, when you are challenged for continuing Protestants.

Now, on this occasion it would be unparadonable of me not to direct your attention to the benefits accruing from the Reformation, for there is a coldness in the heart of the country, and an insensibility to our obligations to that event. But verily this should not be, for it is the magna charta of liberty, the battle-field of freedom, and the birthright of hope. Does a Briton forget Waterloo? or an American the year of Independence? And should Protestants forget the Reformation, or the year 1560, when our Church, like an ark, was floated on the waters, to brave the battle and the breeze—as goodly a vessel as ever was launched, and which, in the language of the present Dr. McCrie, "may yet be destined to lead the van among the Churches of the Reformation"? It were ungrateful so to do;—therefore let me call your attention, in the sequel, to the benefits flowing from that memorable event, in the hope, on the one hand, of exciting your minds to gratitude to that God whose hand was so strikingly