1. Writing in the early years of the twentieth century, the Protestant German historian A.O. Meyer observed that the persecution of Elizabethan Catholics and the activities of the Catholic Mission in England "had never yet been treated from a strictly critical and historical point of view."[1] His work, *England and the Catholic Church under Elizabeth*, aimed at objectivity, and that the first such treatment should have come so late, and from a continental scholar, is not surprising, considering English attitudes towards the Roman Catholic Church in the nineteenth century. In particular between 1820 and 1870, English Protestants were confronted with events that had made the position of Catholics in the state contentious. Working-class immigration from Ireland had much increased the number of Catholics in England, the last of the Catholic Relief Acts had been passed in 1829, there had been successive waves of conversions to Catholicism between 1820 and 1865, the Catholic hierarchy had been restored in England amidst cries of "No Popery!" and "Papal Aggression" in 1850, the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill passed in reaction in 1851, and in 1870 the first Vatican Council had pronounced on the prerogatives of the papacy. In such an atmosphere, histories that dealt with the Elizabethan age, when the position of English Catholics had been an even more vexatious issue, were bound to encounter fixed ideas on the subject amongst their general readers, the vast majority of whom were Protestants.

2. Quite simply, many a mid-Victorian Protestant would have dismissed with scorn the very notion that Catholics had been "persecuted" under Elizabeth. Everyone knew that Mary Tudor had been the persecutor, Elizabeth the tolerant monarch. Yet under the laws Elizabeth's government had passed between 1559 and 1593, persecution was always a possibility for a Catholic, and at particular junctures was likely to become very real indeed.

3. The policy that was by degrees to put the individual Catholic's property, liberty of movement and of person, and life itself ever more at risk was set at the beginning of 1569 with the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity, which established the English Protestant national church under a Protestant queen and imposed Edward VI's Prayer Book as the sole medium of worship. Initially only ecclesiastical and secular officers of the realm were required to take the oath, vowing that the queen was the only supreme governor and forswearing all foreign authorities. In 1562 it was also required of all taking holy orders, members of the House of Commons, university graduates, schoolmasters and lawyers, as well as those who had held church office during any of the last three reigns, and anyone who celebrated or attended mass - in other words, Catholics in general. Penalties ranged from forfeiture of property to imprisonment to death.

4. The enforcement of these Acts became rigorous after the abortive Rising of the North in 1569 and the proclamation of Pius V's bull excommunicating Elizabeth in 1570, which was held by many to extend to her deposition as lawful sovereign, making the profession of Catholicism inevitably tainted with sedition. By 1571, the enactment of three new Penal Laws shows the growing identification in the official mind of Catholic dissent with treason. To question Elizabeth's right to be queen, to regard her as a heretic or as a usurper was treason, punishable by death. To receive or employ written or printed orders from Rome or its agents was also treasonable. Aiding any persons as did have such contacts with Rome was to be liable to loss of property, goods, chattels, and to imprisonment. All recusants were forbidden to leave the country, and those already abroad were required to return and conform to the Established Church within six months, or forfeit permanently all lands and goods.

5. Ten years later, the penalties and the number of persecutions increased, as the government sought to nullify the efforts of the Catholic Mission which began in 1580. The missionaries faced the death penalty, while those who aided them or concealed knowledge of their activities faced perpetual imprisonment. The crime of attending mass, which in earlier years had often been ignored when recusants sought out embassy chapels or services in private houses, was now punished by a year in prison and a fine of 100 marks. Catholics who missed Anglican service for more than one month were now to be fined 20 pounds per month, a sum calculated to ruin even the very wealthy. The laity, then, was under increasing pressure to conform, but the Penal Law of 1585 was specifically designed to rid England of Catholic priests. Those ordained abroad had to return within six months and take the oath of supremacy within two days of landing. Anyone knowing of a priest's whereabouts was bound to report it within twelve days or face a fine or imprisonment.

6. In 1593 the punitive measures against the Catholic laity still increased, as all those over sixteen who refused to attend
Anglican service or sought to dissuade another from doing so were to be jailed without bail until they conformed. To this was added further restriction on personal movements. In 1571 Catholics had been forbidden to travel abroad; by 1585 they had to stay ten miles from the queen's person; and now all over sixteen were to go to their homes and not move more than five miles beyond them without license or be liable to loss of goods, chattels, and property for life. The poorer sort of Catholics, who were without property over 20 marks, were ordered to leave the kingdom. To what extent such measures could be enforced was problematic, but over some thirty years, in which England had been threatened with invasions from abroad and insurrections in Ireland and Scotland, the legal penalties for professing Catholics had increased steadily in scope and severity.\[2\]

7. Amongst the great array of English historians in the period we are considering, two in particular endeavoured to treat the position of Catholics in Elizabethan England. Both John Lingard (1771-1851) and James A. Froude (1818-94) wrote at length on the reign of Elizabeth. Both, for different reasons, aimed at the Protestant reader, and both found a wide audience. Each sought to find and write the "truth" according to his lights.

8. Quite apart from his place in the mainstream of English historians, Froude is familiar to us today as the disciple-biographer of Carlyle. Lingard is less well-known. Educated at the Catholic seminary at Douay, he had sought refuge in England with others of the community in 1792 and been ordained in 1795. He was part of the new foundation at Ushaw until 1811 when he settled in the small village of Hornby near Lancaster to devote himself to his priestly duties and the writing of history. Despite Hornby's isolation, Lingard attracted a circle of literary friends, predominantly Whigs, drawn initially from the barristers and judges on the eastern circuit. He was closely allied with Charles Butler, leader of the Committee for Catholic Emancipation, and identified with the cisalpine element amongst the English Catholics.

9. Lingard set out his aim as an historian in the preface to his first major work, Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church (1806): "My object is truth; and in the pursuit of truth I have made it a religious duty to consult the original historians. Who would drink at the troubled waters when he may drink at the fountain head?"[3] His living in Hornby, however, meant that the fountain head was not to hand. He himself travelled to libraries and archives in Manchester and Liverpool, spent lengthy periods in Rome in 1817 and 1825, and depended for the other sources he needed on generous gifts from patrons and the assistance of scholars correspondent at home and abroad.[4] When he came to write his History of England from the First Invasion of the Romans to the Accession of William and Mary in 1688\(1819-30\), he continued to devote himself to the critical use of original sources and maintained his distrust of secondary writings. He was especially irritated by the errors and misrepresentations he believed he found in Hume, and he determined to challenge long-standing inaccuracies that in his view had established false interpretations of historical events. Lingard well knew that as a Roman Catholic priest he would meet with suspicion, and he sought by the manner of his presentation to avoid inflaming the very popular prejudices that he was bent on stamping out.

10. In the process Lingard managed to offend many of his conservative ultramontane co-religionists who predictably attacked his History because of his liberalism, his cisalpinism, and what they felt to be his over-propiatory approach to Protestants. To such attacks he could afford to be indifferent. He won the support of both Pius VII and Gregory XVI for his work. The Papal Secretary of State, Cardinal Consalvi, ordered that he have access to the Vatican manuscripts.[5] Lingard's aim was to produce a history that Protestants would actually read, and here the historian and the priest thought as one: if he could remove a reader's prejudices so that he would at least consider the facts put before him, then recognition of the truth would follow. The facts once known, the groundwork of conversion was laid.

11. Dealing with the reign of Elizabeth, as Lingard does in his sixth volume, was testing for an historian bent on demonstrating that a Roman Catholic priest could discover and disseminate what his researches had persuaded him to be the objective truth. The characters of Mary Stuart and of Elizabeth and the effects of the Penal Laws were all subjects on which engrained opinions were difficult to dislodge. Most controversial of all, however, was the nature and purpose of the Catholic Mission, especially the roles that particular Jesuits had played in it. Were Campian and his associates martyrs to their belief or malignants bent on handing England over to the rule of Spain and the yoke of Rome?

12. Recounting the history of Mary Stuart presented Lingard with little difficulty, for he could count on a general softness towards her among the general reading public, long since inclined to consider her in a sympathetic or even downright sentimental light. Lingard admires Mary Stuart and seeks to clear her of complicity in the murder of Darnley. He describes her marriage to Bothwell as “forced,” argues that the Casket Letters were forgeries, and produces a verbal portrait of the Scots queen whose vitality and hardiness in adversity would have appealed to many of his readers. Her adversary, Elizabeth, he handles with care. He often stresses her humanness, though pointing out that this mercy was often the child of policy. Her fame as a virgin queen is one he thinks scarcely justified by her amatory career, and her indecisiveness and parsimony are also stressed, but on the whole he avoids outright attack on the Good Queen Bess of popular imagination.
13. In 1850, near the end of his life, Lingard brought out a revised edition of his History. He could count now on a good reception, and so, ever pragmatic, he enlarged and strengthened his treatment of the Penal Laws. The Statute of 1569 he terms “barbarous.” If the potential bloodbath of Catholics was avoided in the event by the “humanity or policy of Elizabeth . . . the sword was still suspended over their heads by a single hair, which she could break at her pleasure, whenever she might be instigated by the suggestions of their enemies, or provoked by the real, or imputed misconduct of individuals of their community.”[6] The bills of 1571, he writes, made it “evident that the ministers sought the total extinction of the ancient faith” (VI: 121). On the 1580 persecutions he is equally forthright:

   All her subjects were required to submit to the superior judgment of their sovereign, and to practise that religious worship which she practised. Every other form of service, whether it were of Geneva in its evangelical purity or the mass with its supposed idolatry, was strictly forbidden; and both the Catholic and the Puritan were subject to the severest penalties if they presumed to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience. It must appear singular that so intolerant a system should be enforced by men who loudly condemned the proceedings of the last reign; but in its defence they alleged an argument founded on the distinction between internal and external worship. The queen, they said “would not dive into consciences.” Internally her subjects might believe, might worship as they pleased. All that she required was external conformity to the law. That she had a right to exact. If any man refused, the fault was his own; he suffered not for conscience sake, but for his obstinacy and his disobedience. That this miserable sophism should have satisfied the judgment of those who employed it, can hardly be credited, yet it was ostentatiously brought forward in proclamation, and was confidently urged by the English agents in their communication to foreign courts. (VI: 159-60)

Under this regime Puritans also suffered, some, as Lingard puts it, “dying martyrs to their religious principles,” but the Puritans’ sufferings, he claims, “bore no comparison with those of the Catholics” (VI: 163).

14. To this constant harassment and psychological pressure upon the laity was added the fear of their soon having no priests to serve them, for the government, with good reason, was confident that the Catholic priesthood would soon be extinct in England, and with it the Catholic worship. Lingard’s account of the Catholic Mission, by which William Allen sent almost one hundred missionaries from Douay and Rheims, begins with Cuthbert Mayne. The first missioner to be arrested under the penal statutes, he was charged with having obtained a bull from Rome, denying the queen’s supremacy, and saying mass at a house near Truro. Lingard’s comment is: “Of those offences no satisfactory evidence was offered, but the court informed the jury that where proof could not be procured, strong presumption might supply its place, and a verdict of guilty was accordingly returned.” He adds in a note that “the bull was merely a copy of a jubilee that Mayne said he had bought through curiosity at a shop,” but offers no comment on the other charges (VI: 163).

15. It is on his account of the trial and conviction of Campian, however, that Lingard’s defence of the missioners, and particularly of the Jesuits, stood or fell. Of all the long-established prejudices he sought to counter, the fear and hatred of the Jesuits were the strongest and most widely held. The received opinion was that they had been bent on handing Elizabeth’s England over to a Catholic government and the terrors of the Inquisition. Allen sought the order’s help in what Lingard at the outset terms “the dangers and the glory” of the Mission, and Robert Persons and Edmund Campian were selected to be the advance guard. “Their arrival awakened the suspicion of the queen and council; it was believed, or at least pretended, that they had come with the same traitorous object as Sanders, who in the preceding year had animated the insurgents in Ireland” (VI: 164). The ministers responded with the laws of 1581, designed to “defeat the devices of the pope, who had sent Jesuits into the realm to preach a corrupt doctrine, and to sow, under the cover of that doctrine, the seed of sedition” (VI: 164).

16. During the year in which Campian escaped his pursuers “Catholics had been exposed to severities of which they had previously no conception” (VI: 168). Lingard begins his description of Campian’s imprisonment with the claim that torture “common to most of the European nations . . . in England during the reign of Elizabeth was employed with the most wanton barbarity” (VI: 166). That said, he keeps his account of Campian’s ordeal low-key (VI: 165-67). Lingard roundly asserts:

   That the conspiracy with which these men were charged was a fiction cannot be doubted. They had come to England under a prohibition to take any part in secular concerns, and with the sole view of exercising the spiritual functions of the priesthood. This they deemed a sacred duty, and for this they generally risked their liberty and their lives. Even their principal accuser [Tyrrell] afterwards vindicated their innocence, and, in excuse for his own falsehood, alleged the terror that seized him when he was led to the foot of the rack and saw himself surrounded by the instruments of torture. (VI: 168)

He then proceeds to point out the crucial weakness in the position of some of the accused, and to offer his own opinion as to how reasonable men might have viewed the matter had the age been more tolerant (VI: 168-69).

17. Lingard’s History, published by a Protestant publisher, stirred up a good deal of interest, five hundred copies being sold within fifteen days of publication. Lingard himself believed that he had been to some extent successful in his pioneering
18. If Lingard had sought to undermine popular prejudices, Froude was bent on reinforcing them. When he first turned historian, his fortunes were at a low ebb. He had been required to resign his Oxford fellowship after the scandal of The Nemesis of Faith (1849) and had thought it pointless to pursue his recent appointment as headmaster of a school in Tasmania. Disowned by his archdeacon father, he was forced to rely largely on his own efforts to establish himself as a professional man of letters. After publishing historical essays in Fraser's and the Westminster Review, in 1853 he decided to "stick to history . . . one has substantial stuff between one's fingers to be molding, and not the slime and sea-sand ladders to the moon 'opinion'." The major fruit of this decision was his History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada (1856-70).

19. His biographer and friend, Herbert Paul, describes Froude at work: "Nine tenths of his authorities were in manuscript. They were in five languages. They filled nine hundred volumes. Excellent linguist though he was, Froude could hardly avoid falling into some errors . . . . He took interminable pains, he kept no secretary, he was his own copyist, and he was not a good proof-reader" (Paul 78-79). Then and later Froude was to be accused of frequent inaccuracies. Froude himself set forth his professed view of the historian's method:

The so-called certainties of history are but probabilities in varying degrees; and witnesses no longer survive to be cross-questioned; those readers and writers who judge of truth by their emotions can believe what they please. To assert that documents were forged, or that witnesses were tampered with, costs them no effort; they are saved the trouble of reflection by the ready-made assurance of their feelings.

The historian who is without confidence in these easy criteria of certainty can but try his evidence by such means as remain. He examines what is doubtful by the light of what is established, and offers at last the conclusion at which his own mind has arrived, not as the demonstrated facts either of logic or passions, but as something, which after a survey of the whole case appears to him to be nearest the truth.

20. His claimed approach then was judicial; his execution was that of an advocate passionately convinced of the case he presents. Reviewing the final volumes of the History in 1870, Henry Reeve sums up the impression the work conveys throughout. Froude is not concerned "to weigh evidence in the calm and even scales which determine the value of conflicting testimonies and contested facts. He is himself carried away by the passion of the age he is describing as strongly as though he had lived in it."

21. The result of this emotional involvement in his subject makes Froude's History so dramatic that despite its length, mass of detail, and obvious polemical intent, it is still splendidly readable. The theme he is burning to establish is that the Reformation was the great turning point in England's history, a crucial liberation of her people that led to her dominance in commerce and the expansion of her empire. The Church of Rome was an obstacle to progress, an outworn institution sapping England's strength, no longer "the expression of the true conviction of sensible men on the relation between themselves and heaven . . . not credible any more to men of active and original vigour of understanding . . . incredible then and ever more to the sane and healthy intelligence which in the long run commands the mind of the world" (VII: 9-10). Those who sought to maintain its dominion over the individual were themselves benighted agents of oppression! The influence of Carlyle is patent, and Froude presents the initiator of the English Reformation, Henry VIII, as a Carlylean Hero-King. Elizabeth, on the other hand, he considered an indecisive and reluctant protector of her father's great achievement.

22. Consequently, in his account of her reign, Froude identifies not with the queen but with Burleigh and "the young band of adventurers who had risked life and limb for Elizabeth in the bad times . . . now engaged all in the public service -- effective, brave, unscrupulous, ready to fight for England on shore . . . ready to rove the sea at their own cost, and sack the towns and plunder the gold ships of the enemies of truth" (VII: 158). In England's struggle with Spain and Rome, "Life and energy were on the side of the Queen" (X: 4). Froude writes of the pragmatic Philip of Spain with some respect, but he gives no quarter in his version of the sixteenth-century Roman Church, "given over to Jesuitism and the devil" (VIII: 548), whose mass "meant the stake and the rack, the gibbet, the inquisition dungeons, the devil enthroned upon the judgment seat of the world, with steel, cord, and fire to execute his sentences" (VIII: 548).

23. With Catholic laymen he is more discriminating, in 1588 distinguishing "moderate loyal Catholics" from the "disciples of the new school of Jesuital and the Tridentine Council . . . who acknowledge no sovereign on earth but the Pope of Rome, and no country but the so-called Church" (IX: 328-9). By 1570, "old-fashioned piety" had given way entirely to a "fanaticism which no longer showed itself in open and organized political opposition, but was not afraid of treason, rebellion or murder, which fraternised with foreign invaders, and was ready to sacrifice the interests of England to the interests of the Church" (X: 50). "The Catholic religion . . . was losing what of English freshness there lay in it, and was walking in the dark with its hand upon the poignard . . . . Mary Stuart was their only hope, and they were themselves
24. Had the experience of English Catholics under the Penal Laws justified this disaffection? Definitely not, for by 1570, Froude insisted, Elizabeth had a “fair claim” to her subjects’ loyalty. “The Catholics had not been permitted the open exercise of their religion, but there had been no inquisition, no meddling in private with the rights of conscience, no revenge for the Marian persecutions . . . . In fact, if not in theory, there had been substantial toleration” (IX: 564-5). When he comes to describe the increased severity of 1577, his tone is insouciant: “Circulars went round to compel Catholics to attend the English service. Mass books were hunted up, scoundrels who used bad language against the Queen were pilloried and lost their ears” (XI: 105-6). On the whole, Froude presents the Catholic laity as a group who, if they suffered, suffered justly for their stubborn disobedience. Most were traitors, either actually or potentially. The powerful, such as the Duke of Norfolk, for Froude an arrogant feudal lord hostile to the new commercial age, acted out of interest. Lesser folk were victims of the outworn tyrannical system they obstinately refused to abandon.

25. Rome's clergy, above all the Jesuits, are uniformly presented in the blackest terms. The Mission is the third part of a “Jesuit conspiracy” that also includes the invasion of Ireland and the activities in Scotland of Esme Stuart. Froude depends for this deduction on the testimony of Tyrrell and Ballard that Lingard had rejected, attributing Tyrrell's recantation to his “falling afterwards into the hands of the priests.” Allen “deliberately calculated” that the Church required martyrs (XI: 336), and he is represented as cynically dispatching to their death a group of naive enthusiasts (XI: 191-192).

26. Froude has Campian and Persons mounting an “invasion” (XI: 326), and there is nothing of the zealous innocent about either. Persons is “cool, clear-headed” (XI: 332), and the prudent choice to be in command. Campian is the “more shewy of the two” (XI: 332), and the choice of adjective reveals Froude's true view of Campian. He is too clever, too fond of display and adulation to fit Froude's concept of an English gentleman. And, indeed, we are soon told that “There must have been something at the bottom vulgar in Campian,” whom Froude quotes as having described the Protestant martyrs to his superior Mercuriano as “a few apostates and cobbler,” as opposed to the Catholic, “lords, knights of the old nobility, patterns of learning, piety and prudence, the flower of youth, noble matrons, and of the inferior sort innumerable, either martyred at once, or by consuming prisonment dying daily” (XI: 355).

27. Apart from his defence of torture as a necessary means to a worthy end (XI: 350-51), Froude's account of Campian's imprisonment and trial is restrained. The point he wishes to establish is not simply that Campian and his fellow accused were guilty as charged, but that Campian, for all his brilliance as a theologian, did not understand the vital issue: “They were charged with treason, not under the new statute, but that there might be no pretence of religious persecution, under the usual statute of Edward III. Campian's rejoinder was that "Our religion and our religion only is our crime" (XI: 379).

28. Froude then brings in his verdict on Campian: “It was precisely this which the priests were to learn, that laymen were fit to decide and would decide. The national life and independence of England turned upon it, and though all the learning of the clergy, from the beginning of time, might be on the Pope's side, it was to avail him nothing” (XI: 379). Still climbing these "slime and sea-sand ladders to the moon 'opinion'” that Froude was confident he himself had rejected, Campian, for all his learning, was in the historian's view yesterday's man, incapable of recognising the true nature of the English Reformation and its overwhelming strength as the liberation of the nation.

29. Froude's portrait of Mary Stuart need not delay us long. He sees her through the eyes of another of his heroic figures, John Knox. As the rallying point for an evil cause, she is anathema, and Froude's descriptions of her betray a distaste that seems almost pathological. She is the murderer of Darnley, "bold, restless, unscrupulous, ambitious" (all qualities that he had admiringly attributed to Elizabeth's band of adventurers), "whose dominant passion was revenge. . . . Hers was the panther's nature -- graceful, beautiful, malignant and untamed" (XII: 269). She is a false heroine, "the spurious chivalry of modern times assuming that she could not have been wicked because she was beautiful and a Queen" (XII: 40). His narrative of her execution is masterly, but ends on a note that must have offended many: "The coif fell off and the false plaits. The laboured vision vanished. The lady who had knelt before the block was in the maturity of grace and loveliness. The executioner, when he raised the head, as usual, to shew it to the crowd, exposed the withered features of a grizzled, wrinkled old woman" (XII: 361).

30. We are a long way here from Lingard's caution and his spare, temperate style. The difference in scale between Lingard's and Froude's treatments of the Elizabethan age makes comparing them difficult, as does the fact that by the time Froude was writing, far more documentation was available to him than Lingard could command. We find that Lingard sometimes skirts an issue, as in his discussion of Cuthbert Mayne, while Froude's perpetual loud intrusiveness is objectionable. Over all, then, perhaps Macaulay's judgment was reasonably balanced, when he wrote that Lingard's work was "not unhandsome, nor, for a Roman Catholic, unfair," and that in Froude's last volumes, "the partiality is ridiculous."[13]
31. Impartiality in matters of religion was not much to the fore in the English novel between 1820 and 1870, despite the oft-cited example of Scott [14] Protestant novelists' attitudes to Catholics ranged from the fair-mindedness of Grace Kennedy to the fervent bigotry of William Sewell. [15] The commonest form is the tale of contemporary domestic life in which the conversion of a central figure to or from Catholicism forms the major interest of the plot. Considering how many families had been disrupted by such decisions, this emphasis on the contemporary is not surprising. Post-Reformation historical novels with major Catholic characters are usually set in the eighteenth century, like Thackeray's Henry Esmond (1855) and Henry Kingsley's Ravenshoe (1868). Tales with significant Catholic characters that are set in Elizabethan times are rare, but there are at least three: Charles Kingsley's Westward Ho! (1855), Fanny Taylor's Tybome and Who Went Thither (1859), and Lady Georgiana Fullerton's Constance Sherwood: An Autobiography of the Sixteenth Century (1865). In these works the issues raised in Lingard's and Froude's histories were popularized.

32. Though they differed on both political and religious grounds, Charles Kingsley and his brother-in-law Froude shared the same enthusiastic determination to glorify Protestantism. Catholicism was despotism, Protestantism liberty. In public discourse Kingsley was more than a match for Froude in intemperate language. His 1849 article for Fraser's Magazine, "Why Should We Fear the Romish Priests?," argues that despite the number of conversions to Catholicism and the prospect of the restoration of the Catholic hierarchy in England, Englishmen had nothing to fear from either the institution or its priesthood:

   it is very difficult to understand how men can talk of Protestantism as the cause of liberty, humanity, God Himself, and yet in the same breath bewail it as lost and ruined. It is more difficult to understand how men can fancy that they are helping that cause by querulous and unmanly confessions of their own fancied weakness and divisions, and the unanimity and strength of the Romish priesthood. It is most difficult to understand how, of all the weapons to attack the so-redoubted priesthood, we should have been prone to cast contempt on ourselves -- ignorance and bigotry, illogicality, virulence and wanton imputation, unworthy of gentlemen, as well as Christians, till the scoffing world has very exclusively likened the No-Popery party to the cur-dog yelping at the heels of the wolf which he dares not touch. . . . It is really time to cease shrieking at the Romish priests and begin to know a little about them. [16]

33. Kingsley then proceeds to show just why his readers should recognise that priests are nothing to fear. They have effected no great work since the Council of Trent, "except fruitless persecutions." They have produced no man of genius since the sixteenth century. In the recent conversions, he asks, "Have we lost a single second-rate man even? One, indeed, [Newman] we have lost, first-rate in talents at least, but has he not in his later writings, given the very strongest proof that to become a Romish priest is to lose, ipso facto, whatever moral or intellectual life he might previously have had?" They have produced no literature, for all their authors show "that same fearful want of straightforward truth, that Jesuitry, which the mob may dread as a subtle poison, but which the philosopher considers as the deepest and surest symptom of moribund weakness. . . ." Nor is the priest a "subtle man of the world." He knows only "the darker side of men from the confessional," he is "cut off from all human sympathies and ambitions, even from the lowest of them all, money-making. . . ." (468). He is not threatening, but a figure of fun. This confident contempt for mid-Victorian Catholic clerics forms the basis for Kingsley's portrayals of Catholic priests, English and Spanish, in Westward Ho! Westward Ho! was written in Bideford in 1854. Froude was then close by in Battascombe and the two friends were deep in the records of the Elizabethan age. "I have been living with these Elizabethan books, among such grand, beautiful, silent men . . . ." Kingsley wrote to F. D. Maurice, but he was also passionately following the Crimean War: "I can fight with my pen still (I don't mean controversy -- I am sick of that . . .) but in writing books that will make others fight. This one is to be called Westward Ho!" [17] He knew that he was writing at top speed, but believed that he had "tried to obey the catechism, and even in a hurry to speak the truth always and be honest and kind to all" (433).

34. In recent times Westward Ho! has been described as "a thinly disguised recruiting tract for the Crimean War" (Wolff 282), and "one of the most belligerent and popular nationalist anti-Catholic statements of the Victorian period" (Morris 195-96). Neither of these judgments is meant to be flattering, but they would have pleased Kingsley well enough. He did want to stir Englishmen to see the Crimean War as a noble adventure, and for him belligerence, nationalism and anti-Catholicism had made his beloved Elizabethans what they were, and hence were fitting qualities in the gentlemen of his own day. It is easy to dismiss Kingsley as a jingoistic bully, choosing to ignore as we do so his courageous energy in social action and the patience and imaginativeness that shines through his letters, whether to friends or to strangers who had sought his counsel. Yet when we come to examine Westward Ho! can we find that in any sense Kingsley wrote "the truth" and was "honest and kind"?

35. In terms of his depiction of Catholic priests, English or Spanish, our answer must be "Not really." The Spanish clerics that the hero, Amyas Leigh, encounters in the Indies are all either knaves or fools, deceitful and themselves easily
when he was in truth "a fiend" (587). Does not repent fighting the Spanish, but "of hating even the worst of them" and imagining himself "an avenging angel" with cruelty and pride . . . and God has brought me low for it. . . . God will send no such fools as I upon His errands.

necessity. and so he returns to Bideford physically helpless, no longer the instinctive man of action, but turned in on himself of deaths of Frank and Rose.

we can accept as credible the unlooked-for final transformation of the hero. have had a tale that dealt with Catholics and Protestants in Elizabethan England in an intelligent, if polemical, way. Had Kingsley been interested in developing the initial contrast between Eustace and Amyas with any subtlety, we might

domestic treachery had developed into malign political action, Kingsley being of the same mind as Froude where the Eustace be.

can take only one step more in infamy, in Kingsley's view, and join the Jesuit order. Together at the stake, hand in hand, "both very bold and steadfast" in their martyrdom.

The Spaniard's jealousy and pride to destroy his faith in Rose. Rose with the Spanish officer, Don Guzman, and then insinuates himself into their happy home in Caracas, working on of the other young men, who form themselves into the Brotherhood of the Rose. Eustace first abets the elopement of Rose with the Spanish officer, Don Guzman, and then insinuates himself into their happy home in Caracas, working on the Spaniard's jealousy and pride to destroy his faith in Rose. When Frank is captured in an abortive attempt to "rescue" her, it is Eustace who ensures that both he and Rose are denounced to the Inquisition. They are burnt together at the stake, hand in hand, "both very bold and steadfast" in their martyrdom. Having sunk this low, Eustace can take only one step more in infamy, in Kingsley's view, and join the Jesuit order. Even then, Kingsley cannot leave Eustace be. We are told that he probably took part in the Babington Plot to free Mary Stuart, which would mean that his domestic treachery had developed into malign political action, Kingsley being of the same mind as Froude where the Scots queen is concerned.

Though handsome and able, Eustace is a physical coward, afraid of the powerful Amyas, who considers his cousin to be a "sort of harmless lunatic" in his scruples and soul-searching. Amyas does not need to search his soul, for he goes about "not even knowing whether he is good or not, but just doing the right thing without thinking about it, as simply as a little child, because the Spirit of God is with him" (53-54). Eustace, on the other hand, is "one trying to be good with all his might and main, according to certain approved methods and rules, which he has got by heart, and like a weak oarsman, feeling and lingering his spiritual muscles over all day, to see if they are growing" (53). He has been brought to this pass not because "he is a romanist, but because he has been educated by Jesuits" (54). Amyas has resisted most formal schooling, but grown up with four books at his bed's head: the Bible, the Prayer Book, Caxton's Mallory, and Las Casas' Devastation of the Indies.

Eustace may have been conceived as a complex character, but the later action of the episodic plot demands that he become a one-dimensional villain. Like the brothers, Amyas and Frank Leigh, and all the worthy youth of Bideford, Eustace is in love with Rose Salterne, but his unhealthy, guilt-ridden lust is contrasted with the chivalrous, "manly" love of the other young men, who form themselves into the Brotherhood of the Rose. Eustace first abets the elopement of Rose with the Spanish officer, Don Guzman, and then insinuates himself into their happy home in Caracas, working on the Spaniard's jealousy and pride to destroy his faith in Rose. When Frank is captured in an abortive attempt to "rescue" her, it is Eustace who ensures that both he and Rose are denounced to the Inquisition. They are burnt together at the stake, hand in hand, "both very bold and steadfast" in their martyrdom. Having sunk this low, Eustace can take only one step more in infamy, in Kingsley's view, and join the Jesuit order. Even then, Kingsley cannot leave Eustace be. We are told that he probably took part in the Babington Plot to free Mary Stuart, which would mean that his domestic treachery had developed into malign political action, Kingsley being of the same mind as Froude where the Scots queen is concerned.

Had Kingsley been interested in developing the initial contrast between Eustace and Amyas with any subtlety, we might have had a tale that dealt with Catholics and Protestants in Elizabethan England in an intelligent, if polemical, way. As it is, we have at best a roistering tale of derring-do on the Spanish Main. If it is "honest," or "kind," or "true," it is so only if we can accept as credible the unlooked-for final transformation of the hero. For more than half the action Amyas has been consumed by his primitive passion for revenge upon Don Guzman, whom he holds primarily responsible for the deaths of Frank and Rose. In the aftermath of the Armada engagement Amyas thinks to have his revenge at last, only to have Guzman's ship strike a reef and go down with all hands lost. In the same storm, Amyas is blinded by lightning, and so he returns to Bideford physically helpless, no longer the instinctive man of action, but turned in on himself of necessity. He has a kind of epiphany, recognising that he has been "wilful and proud and a blasphemer, and swollen with cruelty and pride . . . and God has brought me low for it. . . . God will send no such fools as I upon His errands." He does not repent fighting the Spanish, but "of hating even the worst of them" and imagining himself "an avenging angel" when he was in truth "a fiend" (587). This transformation has been brought about by his vision of the drowned Guzman:

And I saw him sitting in his cabin, like a valiant gentleman of Spain; and his officers sitting round him, with their swords upon the table, at the wine. And the prawns and the crayfish and the rockling, they swam in and out above their heads; but Don Guzman, he never heeded, but sat still, and drank his wine. Then he took a locket from his bosom; . . . and he said: "Here's the picture of my fair and true lady, drink to her, Senors all." Then he spoke to me . . . right up through the oar-weed and the sea: "We have had a fair quarrel, Senor; it is time to be friends once more. My wife and your brother have forgiven me, and so your honour takes no stain." And I answered, "We are friends . . . God has judged our quarrel, and not we." Then he said, "I sinned, and I am punished." And I said, "Senor, so am I." Then he held out his hand to me . . . and I stooped to take it, and awoke. (588)
40. The author of *Tyborne and Who Went Thither in the Days of Queen Elizabeth* (1859) was Fanny Taylor (1832-1900), who had gone to Scutari with Florence Nightingale and been so impressed by the faith of the Irish soldiers she had nursed that she had converted to the Roman Church. [20] *Tyborne* was her first novel, and like Lady Georgiana Fullerton's *Constance Sherwood* it was intended to present in a popular form the revised view of the history of the Catholics in the Elizabethan period that had begun with Lingard's work, and was being furthered by J. B. Morris and J. H. Pollen. Taylor drew on Richard Challoner's *Memoirs of Missionary Priests* (1741-42), telling us in her preface that she wished to produce a brief tale that would be "attractive, at least to the young." [21] Though her tone is over-pious for later taste, Taylor's choice of material is intelligent, focussing on two recusant families with close ties to a young mission priest. The novel is so slight, however, that character development is sketchy and the reader gains little real sense of the complex nature of the times the author seeks to depict.

41. In contrast, *Constance Sherwood* (1865) is a long novel by an experienced writer that gives a subtle and rich picture of the period 1565-85 through a great variety of characters, Protestant and Catholic. Lady Georgina Fullerton (1812-85), who had converted to Rome in 1846, was by the mid-sixties well-established as a novelist with the general public and highly regarded in Catholic intellectual circles. Acton and Simpson had sought to have her write a novel to appear in an early number of *The Rambler*, but she had refused. In 1864 she agreed to supply the first serial for the new, more conservative Catholic periodical, *The Month*, of which Taylor was the editor, and *Constance Sherwood* was the result. It is perhaps the finest work of this talented novelist, now almost forgotten. [22] Written at a time when English Catholics were faction-ridden and suspected in Protestant circles of being divided in their loyalties, *Constance Sherwood* shows the English Catholics under Elizabeth as a minority, subject to active persecution, whose members were frequently tempted to apostasy either through prudence or ambition. The novel purports to be the memoirs of Constance, a refugee recusant settled with her husband and children in Belgium. In recounting her past life from the standpoint of a serene middle-age, Constance tells not only her own story, but that of Anne Dacre. The resulting narrative presents the experiences of a private gentlewoman and of a great lady. Through the Sherwoods and the Rockwood family into which Constance marries, we see Catholic country gentry in an environment in which property, liberty and even lives are frequently at risk, and to conform to the established church seems simply to follow common sense. The contemporary vicissitudes of Anne Dacre, step-daughter to the Duke of Norfolk and wife to his son Philip Howard, make us keenly aware of the possibilities of both self-serving and self-sacrifice that surround the truly powerful, whose decisions affect not only the fortunes of a family, but the history of the realm.

42. The facts of Anne Dacre's life and the incidents that Fullerton invents or adapts from historical sources to make up the story of Constance provide the wealth of action and character the novel presents, while its unity derives in part from the parallels and contrasts that make an intertwined pattern of the two women's experiences. From a liking formed at a childhood meeting Anne and Constance develop a lasting attachment, sustained by letters and visits Constance makes to Anne during their girlhood and young womanhood. They are contrasted from the outset in that Anne, the great heiress, has even as a child learned circumspection, while Constance, the only child of a private gentleman, displays a confident spontaneity. These qualities prepare us for the lives each will lead, for until the moment when she returns to the Catholic faith, Anne remains the creature of those more powerful than she, while Constance enjoys a degree of personal freedom that actively tests and develops her character. Moreover, unlike Anne, Constance grows up in an atmosphere free of conflicts between family ambition and religious conviction, and so can serve as Anne's unswervingly non-conforming confidante.

43. The most exciting part of the story is set in the period of the Mission, when Fullerton brings the restrained account of Lingard to life. Catholic loyalty is suspect, priests make illegal landings by night, in country houses vestments are stored in ingenious ways, priests are concealed, caught by pursuivants, and the laity find opportunities for heroism. Alongside this picture of the enthusiasm of religious resistance, however, Fullerton gives the reader a clear sense of the various degrees of compromise, both religious and political, that enabled individual Catholics to lead peaceful, even successful, lives in difficult times. The story of Anne Dacre acquaints us first with the world in which feudal lords like Norfolk conspire against the upstart newly-powerful, and later with the rivalries at court, where her young husband jockeys for position as a favourite of the queen. Even in the country, the quiet lives of the non-political Sherwoods are inevitably affected by the actions of the great, and after the Rising of the North Constance and her father live in an atmosphere of possible betrayal. At length, warned that he will be charged with harbouring a priest, the widowed Mr. Sherwood takes this to be a sign that his own wish to be ordained is God's will, and he goes abroad, leaving Constance in her Uncle Congleton's house in London. Here she finds a mixture of worldly prudence and religious enthusiasm. Congleton has powerful friends in Walsingham and Hatton, and is determined at once to resist their pressure to conform and yet guard his family's security. His daughter Muriel, however, and Margaret Ward, a member of the household, are zealous in the extreme, with Mistress Ward praying every day of her life for martyrdom.
44. Basil Rookwood, whom Constance marries, is Fullerton's answer to Amyas Leigh. Warm-hearted and lively, he is the vehicle for Fullerton's protest that Catholic training can also produce the instinctively good, courageous man. Morally, Basil cannot put a foot wrong, but intellectually he is no match for his younger brother, Hubert. Hubert is Basil's rival for Constance's hand at a time when a younger son, if he conformed, could gain the family property, and this conflict and the return of Mr. Sherwood as a missionary priest set the stage for the adventures of the latter part of the book.

45. Fullerton draws some of her characters and events from Challoner, conflating and adapting with some freedom. She is scrupulous not to depict as martyrs any of her invented characters, nor does she deal with the sufferings of Campian, with whom Constance has no close connection. Instead, we are concerned with the imprisonment and eventual release of her father, the execution of her dear friends, Margaret Ward, Brian Lacy, the Swithin Wells, and Edmund Genings, priest, all drawn from history and all fully-realised characters in the novel. Her overall scheme makes Fullerton control the heroics of Basil, as well as the courage demonstrated by a number of characters. Neither the dangers they encounter nor the bravery they display are allowed to detract from the impact made by the savage execution of Edmund Genings, nor from the long ordeals of Philip Howard and Anne Dacre, poignant instances of the sufferings of the times.

46. This control extends to the heroine. Constance, clever, physically active, and imaginative, acts bravely on a number of occasions and has been sure that she would suffer anything rather than conform. Yet when she is briefly imprisoned after attending Campian's first London mass, her reactions to the foul condition of the prison and the coarse demeanour of the gaolers make her realize that she has not the uncommon virtue of a Margaret Ward. Moreover, in extremity she compromises principle to family feeling. Aided by Hubert, she gains access to the queen and petitions to have her captured father's sentence reduced to banishment, knowing as she does so that Elizabeth and Walsingham believe her to be betrothed not to the recusant Basil but to the conforming Hubert, now a rising man on Walsingham's staff.

47. Constance is destined to live out her life as a freely-practising Catholic abroad, no longer subject to such problems of conscience. The tensions and internal contradictions faced by those who were determined to survive at home are well summed up late in the novel when her Uncle Congleton speaks to Constance of the arrest of Margaret Ward, who had aided a condemned priest to escape from the Tower.[23]

48. Constance Sherwood is a prolonged exercise in memory, and as the heroine recalls the past she is conscious of a change in her formerly over-eager, over-confident nature, and attributes it to the nature of the times she has lived through, which she believes must produce

one of two frames of mind . . . angry passions . . . which turn a natural indignation into an unchristian hatred, and lead into plots and treasons, . . . or else . . . detached from the world, very quiet and given to prayers, ready to take at God's hand, and as from Him at men's also, sufferings of all kinds . . . more than even good people did in old time. (II: 22)

Hubert Rookwood is the exemplar of the first group, a man driven to anger by the forces of the times and by his awareness of their corruption of his nature. An able but frustrated younger son, he has been driven by ambition to associate himself with the ruling power, while his sensibility has been appalled by the accompanying necessity of condoning the activities of men like the vicious torturer Topcliffe. Fullerton's model for the second group is Philip Howard, once equally corrupted by the times.[24]

49. In Tyborne, Taylor had sought to edify young Catholic readers by popularising a chapter of their heritage. Fullerton had wider aims in Constance Sherwood. Her novel was at once designed to aid in the conversion of members of her own social class, through the examples of the Howards, and to achieve through fiction what Lingard had through history: the establishment of a new view of the Elizabethan Catholics in the Protestant mind. The breadth of her sympathy (even her pursuivants are human beings) and the respect she gave to all sort and conditions -- Puritans, recusants, temporisers and conformers -- should have made her succeed, had the times been right. The novel suffered from being written in a studied archaic language, a device that by 1865 had been over-used, but also because it was dismissed as merely an elaborate Catholic counter to the very popular Westward Ho!, as Newman's Callista had indeed been to Kingsley's Hypatia. That Constance Sherwood should have met this fate is unfortunate, for of the five texts we have been examining, this novel comes the closest to conveying the picture of Catholics in Elizabethan England that we find in the authoritative Meyer. The variety of experiences found in Constance Sherwood best sums up, too, the general atmosphere of the times as a later historian has described it:

"There are those who write as though all English Catholics faced an efficient, ruthless persecution based purely on religious bigotry, which made no distinction between one Catholic and another. Others, much taken with Elizabeth's alleged desire not to open windows into men's souls, write as if Elizabeth's government was entirely uninterested in the religious beliefs of her subjects unless they became active traitors. For once, the truth really does lie somewhere in the middle. The persecution was very real, and its long-range goal was the suppression of Catholicism per se, regardless of the political loyalty of any"
particular Catholic. The Catholic community was never confronted with an obvious choice between violent resistance to the government and oblivion. At each stage of the persecution, accommodation and evasion appeared a more plausible choice . . . .

Notes

1. Meyer (123).

2. For a listing of the Penal Laws, see Harran (1-19).

3. See Lingard (I: 20).


5. "Access" here is a relative term for Napoleon had had the manuscript collections removed to Paris, and they were returned to Rome only in 1817. When Lingard was working with them there the collections were in a confused state.


7. "Death of Dr. Lingard" The Times 25 July 1851. 3, c. 3.

8. His marriage to Charlotte Grenfell, Charles Kingsley's sister-in-law, had ensured him of an annual income of 400 pounds.


10. His most persistent detractor was E.A. Freeman, who kept up his attacks for twenty-five years.

11. See Froude (IX: 361-63).

12. See Reeve (2).

13. See Macaulay (V: 2).

14. Kenilworth, despite its Elizabethan setting, is not concerned with the Catholic issue, but The Monastery, set in the early part of the sixteenth century, reminds us that Scott’s Calvinist upbringing had indoctrinated him with the anti-Catholic bias of eighteenth-century Scotland. The spokesmen for the Catholic and Protestant positions, Father Eustace and Henry Warden, are both represented fairly, but Scott makes it clear nonetheless that the reader is to believe that the Protestant is right and the Catholic is wrong.

15. For discussions of such novels, see Wolff (27-110) and Morris (190-218).

16. See Kingsley (467).

17. See F.E. Kingsley (Charles Kingsley 1.432).

18. See Kingsley (Westward Ho! 60).


20. Taylor’s first book was Eastern Hospitals and English Nurses (1857), a call for reform. She is later known as Mother Magdalen Taylor, first Superior of The Poor Servants of the Mother of God, an order she had co-founded with her friend, Lady Georgina Fullerton.

21. See Taylor (vii).

22. Lady Georgiana Fullerton (1812-85) was the daughter of Granville Leveson Gower, first Earl Granville, and his wife Harriet Cavendish, daughter of the fifth Duke of Devonshire. Her brother, the second Earl Granville, was Foreign Minister under Gladstone. She published nine novels between 1844 and 1869, all of which sold well in Britain and the United States. On the combined orders of her husband, her confessor, and her physician she then ceased to write fiction and restricted herself to translations and saints’ lives. Active in philanthropy and outspoken on political matters, she was a figure to reckon with.

23. Fullerton (2: 52-3).

24. Philip Howard spent ten years in the Tower in strict seclusion and debilitating conditions. He died either from poison or harsh treatment. His wife had never been permitted to see him, and he died entirely alone. Fullerton’s account in Constance Sherwood conforms to the view accepted at the Ordinary Process in 1874 in the cause of the English martyrs and confessors, at which Fullerton was one of the principal witnesses.
25. See Pritchard (39-40). It should be noted that Pritchard presents a much less favorable view of Philip Howard than does Fullerton.

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