

# The Church of Mary Tudor

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## Editors' Introduction

The historiography of the Marian Church, like that of the reign as a whole, has been not so much chequered as stereotyped. In the long perspective of history, the most important thing about the Catholic restoration was that it was aborted by Mary's death without heirs of her body, in November 1558. It took about 20 years for the decisiveness of that outcome to become apparent, and much longer before Protestants ceased to worry about Catholic conspiracies, or Catholics to dream of a reversal of fortune.<sup>1</sup> For at least two centuries the historiography was straightforwardly polemical. To John Foxe, struggling in Elizabeth's reign to give the new Protestant establishment credibility, Mary had been the hapless and deluded victim of a sacerdotal conspiracy. To Nicholas Harpsfield she had been the model of a godly ruler, undermined and frustrated by the foul machinations of heretics.<sup>2</sup> Because the Protestant establishment eventually took root, myths of the pre- and non-Roman origins of British Christianity took root along with it, and because Pius V effectively declared war on Elizabeth in 1570, the Roman Church began to be associated, first with rebellion and assassination, and then with foreign invasion and the threat of 'arbitrary government'. By 1600 Protestantism had become an entrenched aspect of England's national identity, and the historiography of Mary's reign had settled into the pattern which it would retain almost to the present. To the majority who defended the establishment, Mary was at best the victim of Spanish manipulation, at worst a wicked tyrant who had tried to defy the 'manifest destiny' of a Protestant realm. To those who sought to justify her actions, on the other hand, she presented a hardly less formidable problem. How could so resolute a defender of God's truth have been so cruelly abandoned?

To say that she had thereafter a 'loser's press' is to state the obvious, but it is more important to notice how tenacious both traditions have been, long outlasting the conflicts which gave them real relevance. When the ninth and last of the old editions of John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* was published in 1684, it was still a piece of occasional propaganda with

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<sup>1</sup> See particularly John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community, 1570–1850* (London, 1975), 11–77.

<sup>2</sup> *Dialogi Sex contra Summi Pontificatus ... ab Alano Copo Anglo* [Nicholas Harpsfield] *editi*, 1566.

a contemporary political resonance; but the same could hardly be said of the bitter dispute between S.R. Maitland, the librarian of Lambeth, and the editors which accompanied the next major edition in 1837.<sup>3</sup> The polarity between John Strype and Charles Dodd in the early eighteenth century was hardly greater than that between John Lingard and J.A. Froude in the middle of the nineteenth, or that between Philip Hughes and Geoffrey Dickens in the middle of the twentieth. At the centre of these divisions lay and lies the Marian persecutions.

To John Foxe, the campaign to root out Protestantism by force and fire was the wicked murdering of the saints of God; to Nicholas Harpsfield or Robert Parsons, the infliction of just punishment for crimes against the law, English law as well as the law of the Church.<sup>4</sup> To the derivatives of Foxe which appeared at regular intervals in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the slaughter was the inevitable result of allowing foreign papists to run the country. For Geoffrey Dickens, the persecutions were the sign of a regime utterly out of touch with political reality, as well as with human decency, a sign of 'the madness of a system which could burn a virtuous human being for his inability to accept a metaphysical theory'.<sup>5</sup> To Philip Hughes, the majority of the victims were in any case radicals who would have been equally readily dispatched by any contemporary government, Catholic or Protestant. All these judgements were coloured by confessional allegiance, and until the early twentieth century conflicting interpretations were often linked to explicitly denominational agendas. Such sectarian contests are no longer considered a respectable use of history, but they have proved a remarkably resilient if sometimes subterranean influence on the historiography of the Reformation, and of the Marian episode in particular.

But if the Marian regime has always been most vulnerable to criticism on the strength of the burning of Protestants, negative judgements based on analogies with the queen's own unhappy life and personality have run those based on persecution a close second. Pollard's judgement on the ultimate 'sterility' of the regime and all its outcomes has proved if anything a more insidious historiographical influence, because less obviously religiously *parti pris*.<sup>6</sup> If the time has come to abandon

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<sup>3</sup> Andrew Penny, 'John Foxe, Evangelicalism and the Oxford Movement', in D. Loades, ed., *John Foxe: An Historical Perspective* (Aldershot, 1999), 182–237.

<sup>4</sup> It has to be remembered that parliament in 1555 revived the early fifteenth-century statute *De Heretico Comburendo*, which had been repealed by Edward VI. This made heresy a statutory offence, and not simply an ecclesiastical one.

<sup>5</sup> A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (London, 1964), 271.

<sup>6</sup> Expressed and elaborated in *The History of England from the Accession of Edward VI to the death of Elizabeth* (London, 1913).

denominational agendas, it is also essential that we attempt to appraise the policies and achievements of the 1550s without the benefit of hindsight. We know that Mary was to die young and childless in 1558, and that Elizabeth was to reign for 45 years. Neither eventuality could have been predicted in Marian England, yet we are prone to judge the policies of Mary's government, ecclesiastical and secular, as if she and her servants should or could have known that they had only five years to achieve their objectives. Recent scholarship, it is true, has changed the agenda in many ways. We no longer believe that the traditional Church was deeply and widely unpopular by 1547, or that significant numbers of people were simply waiting for Edward's council to sweep it away. Nor do we believe that Mary made herself so unpopular that the entire country greeted Elizabeth's accession with a huge sigh of relief. Measured against the upheavals and religious violence of Edward's reign, or the contradictions and uncertainties of religious policy in Elizabeth's early years, the Marian Church no longer looks so straightforwardly ineffectual.<sup>7</sup> And, as a flood of recent work on Foxe makes clear, not least Patrick Collinson's chapter in this book, it is no longer so obvious that John Foxe was always right about the popularity, the godliness or even the orthodox Protestantism of all his martyrs.<sup>8</sup> On the contrary, we know that persecution might be the product of local score-settling as well as of official policy, and that there was often grass-roots support for draconian measures against unpopular Protestant activists. Mary herself was hugely popular in 1553, not least because she stood for traditional religion; and there was considerable pastoral inventiveness in the restored Catholic Church, an impressive episcopate and an efficient ecclesiastical machine.

However, amid so much revision, certain historiographical landmarks have not moved, and that also needs to be recognized. The queen's marriage was unpopular at all levels of society; the persecution itself, whatever its local endorsements, was unprecedented in its scale and severity, and in many places seems to have been alienating even to Catholics and conformists. The event would prove that there was no lay party in the parliament of 1559 committed enough, or at any rate strong enough to prevent Elizabeth from abolishing the whole Marian achievement. What is now needed, therefore, is not so much a self-

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. D. MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (London, 1999); and N. Jones, *The Birth of the Elizabethan Age: England in the 1560s* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993).

<sup>8</sup> See Chapter 11, this volume; also John King, 'Fiction and Fact in Foxe's Book of Martyrs', in D. Loades, ed., *John Foxe and the English Reformation* (Aldershot, 1997), 12–35.

conscious attempt to abandon old sectarian or historiographical agendas, as a fresh attempt to locate the events of 1553–58 in the cultural context to which they belong. The fairest comparison is not with the Elizabethan Church, which had such a long run, but with the Edwardian, which was of similar duration. Given its radical (and, in much of England, unpopular) nature, the Edwardian achievement was remarkable; but Mary overturned it in a matter of weeks.<sup>9</sup> Then, starting from a Henrician base, which was not always sympathetic, she reconstructed an orthodox Catholic Church in an even shorter space of time than Edward had, a success which should not be obscured by the fact that it was itself to prove short-lived. How deep-rooted that success would have proved is hard to say, for historians in the nature of things are mostly concerned with externals, and counterfactual speculation about how events could or should have been managed differently is of limited use as a historical tool. Whereof we cannot speak, thereof we must be silent. The Marian Church cared passionately about orthodoxy but, as with the Edwardian or Elizabethan regimes, we have little direct evidence for Mary's and Cardinal Pole's success in converting – or recovering – hearts and minds. What the mass of people believed remains and is likely to remain elusive. We are on surer ground in assessing what they were persuaded or constrained to accept, how they behaved, and the impact of politics and political culture on their behaviour.

But we are in any case coming to appreciate more fully the value of public behaviour as an indicator of political and religious success. Historians were once by and large dismissive of the apparently endless succession of Marian processions and pageants chronicled by Henry Machyn, seeing in them evidence of the superficial obsession of the Marian regime with the enforcement of mere externals, a sort of ritual fiddling while London burned. Henry Machyn, our main source for this London pageantry, was a conservative with a distaste for heretical notions, but hardly a doctrinal zealot – he chronicled 'godly' official religious events in the reigns of Edward and Elizabeth as well as those commanded by Mary,<sup>10</sup> 'never made an explicitly dogmatic or doctrinal statement' and, for all his conservatism, admitted scarcely a hint of disapproval into his descriptions of the quite different public face of Edwardian or Elizabethan worship. It would be hard to tell from his sparse and factual narrative whether or not he had any sympathy with

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<sup>9</sup> D. Loades, *The Reign of Mary Tudor* (London, 1991), 96–128. E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (New Haven, 1992), pp. 524–64.

<sup>10</sup> See Chapter 10. J.G. Nichols, ed. *The Diary of Henry Machyn* (Camden Society, 1848).

those who followed Thomas Wyatt, or suffered at Smithfield. Machyn was not a man to espouse lost causes, or to stick his head above the parapet. He was, in short, a very typical London citizen, and Professor Gibbs's study here should remind us that we are not looking at a country divided into predefined camps of Catholics and Protestants, no matter what proportions we assign to them, but rather at communities caught in unprecedented religious flux, concerned to obey the law, to protect their identity and to manage their lives in difficult times.<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless, as Professor Gibbs's essay makes clear, Machyn's 'celebratory' response to such ceremonial Marian 'representations of the regime' should not be dismissed as superficial or unimportant. Machyn, far more than the defiant adherents of the tiny London Protestant underground congregations, was indeed a representative citizen, whose life was bound up with and articulated by the civic pageantry of London, a pageantry which in Mary's reign seems to have blended seamlessly back into the pageantry of the old Church. On the evidence of Machyn's chronicle, the Marian regime's concern to rebuild the ritual life of London was a mark of shrewd engagement with the concerns and tastes of the citizens of the capital, not of unreal distance from them. Communities, both urban and rural, were defined by their rituals, and to attack or reject those rituals was in Tudor England considered both revolutionary and anti-social. In Elizabeth's reign this kind of conservatism would appear unhelpful to theologically committed ideologues, Catholic and Protestant alike, because it both hindered the more drastic changes which reforming Protestants wished to make, and obscured the theological principles upon which recusant Catholic clergy sought to persuade the people to abandon a schismatic or heretical conformity. Under Mary, however, ceremonial reconstruction along traditional lines was probably one of the regime's strongest popular cards.

This collection of essays does not claim to be the comprehensive rewriting of the history of the Marian Church which some have called for, but it is a modest step in that direction. There is no single agenda, except that of trying to get the story right. The contributors do not necessarily agree with each other, or with the editors, and the essays cover what we hope are some of the most central concerns of the Marian Church from a number of different angles. Thus the centrality of the sacraments, and particularly of the Mass, to the devotional life and self-identity of the Church is the subject not only of Dr Wooding's study of Marian writing about the Eucharist, but of Dr Wizeman's examination

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<sup>11</sup> Nichols, *The Diary of Henry Machyn*.



of the works of Thomas Watson: it looms large, too, in David Loades's account of the queen's personal faith. Careful readers of all three essays, however, will detect marked differences of emphasis and perception in exploring this common theme.<sup>12</sup>

Several of the essays reconsider, on the whole favourably, the objectives and competence of Cardinal Pole, whose English career, while escaping the obloquy that has surrounded the actions of the queen he so much revered, has by and large been damned with faint praise. Although he influenced the first year of the reign only indirectly, the priorities of Reginald Pole as cardinal legate and as Archbishop of Canterbury are central to any understanding of the Marian Church as a whole. Professor Mayer's essay represents a significant reappraisal of Pole's effectiveness as legate, based upon a careful examination of the processes which he controlled.<sup>13</sup> Pole may have been thought unworldly, both at the time and since, but his use of both judicial and administrative methods to achieve his ends were, Mayer argues, worthy of a skilled politician and of a committed and alert Counter-Reformation prelate. As Professor Cross shows, he was also the driving force behind the conversion of the universities, both of them heavily penetrated by Protestantism during the previous reign. According to her, his legatine visitations proved a 'watershed' in converting both centres, and especially Oxford, into the strongholds of Catholic learning which were to cause so much trouble to Elizabeth.<sup>14</sup> Pole's concern with the orthodoxy of the universities should not surprise: one of his central strategies, in fact, was the provision of adequate theological education for the clergy, as the foundation of a revived Catholic practice for the laity. Like Thomas More, whose writings supplied the Marian Church with much of its apologetic and polemical armoury, Pole was deeply distrustful of the explosion of religious debate which the reformation had stimulated, and which had led to drastic challenges to the teaching authority of the Church and to the standing of its clergy. Pole recognized the urgent need to instruct the laity in the Catholic faith, and his legatine synod took vigorous and imaginative steps to secure an educated preaching episcopate and parish clergy, and to provide a supply of orthodox printed catechetical and homiletic material for the use of priests unable to generate their own. But though he had a sophisticated humanist appreciation of the value of the Bible and of preaching, Pole condemned undirected Bible-reading and sermon-gadding, especially when the preachers were unauthorized, or worse, of questionable

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<sup>12</sup> See Chapters 8, 9 and Introduction, this volume.

<sup>13</sup> See Chapter 5.

<sup>14</sup> See Chapter 2.

orthodoxy, and when, as he believed was often the case in London, the listeners were more interested in novelty or entertainment than in conversion of the heart. In line with the Council of Trent's teaching on the value of tradition, the restoration of the faith was for him and his coadjutors an endeavour in which sacramental discipline was deemed to be just as important as Bible-reading or preaching.<sup>15</sup> Sound belief was impossible without sound practice, because it was in humble and receptive participation in the Sacraments and sacramentals of the Church, and in obedience to her teaching, that true faith was embodied and manifest.

These reservations have been widely held by historians to have blinded Pole to the urgency of providing Catholic preaching and preachers, and of re-educating the Tudor laity in Catholic orthodoxy. He has been accused of nourishing a complacent conviction that all that was needed to reverse the Reformation was the reimposition of external cult. Eamon Duffy here re-examines this assumption. He argues that the belief that Pole distrusted and discouraged preaching is based on a misreading of his correspondence with Bartolomé Carranza. In fact, Pole believed preaching to be the principal duty of bishops and priests, and insisted on the centrality to his own strategy and that of the Church at large not only of regular and frequent preaching, but also of printed catechetical and polemical writings, which were essential to undo the havoc inflicted by a generation of Protestant preaching and pamphleteering. His own English sermons reveal a topicality and engagement with current events and controversies, and a polemical directness and clarity, startlingly at odds with the received historiography.<sup>16</sup>

The Marian Church thus had more features of strength than it has been generally given credit for. Thomas Watson was probably its ablest pastoral and theological writer, but he was by no means the only one. Pastoral and polemical concerns are here explored in Professor Duffy's analysis of Pole's St Andrew's Day sermon, Dr Wizeman's study of Watson's writings and Dr Wooding's exploration of the diversity of forms in which the Marian Church presented the centrality of the Eucharist. Dr Wizeman's demonstration that Watson made use of the decrees of Trent<sup>17</sup> and Dr John Edwards's exploration of the influence of Spanish theologians, above all Bartolomeo Carranza, on the Marian Church, anchor these English concerns firmly within the wider context of the early stages of the

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<sup>15</sup> See Chapter 6, this volume; also Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 543–54.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* For a more traditional view of Pole's priorities, see Loades, *The Reign of Mary I*, 297–8.

<sup>17</sup> See Chapter 9.

European Counter Reformation.<sup>18</sup> As all these essays suggest, the conclusion drawn several years ago by Jennifer Loach, that the clergy of the Marian restoration took their responsibilities seriously in respect of a flock which had been without orthodox guidance for more than a generation, looks increasingly secure.<sup>19</sup> Whether they were as successful in converting the heretic or convincing the sceptic as they were in strengthening the faith of the sympathetic is a different and perhaps unanswerable question, but it is clear that the sympathetic were in a large majority.

Having said that, the extent both of Nicodemism, the merely external conformity of secretly convinced Protestants, and of more genuine changes of heart in a period of religious upheaval and flux, is unquantifiable, and Professor Houlbrooke's study of Norwich should warn us against making facile assumptions. Norwich was perhaps unusual in having its leading Edwardian preacher submit so decisively and apparently sincerely, but he was probably a more representative figure than the many more resolute resisters who feature in the pages of Foxe. As in other cities, Norwich's leading citizens conformed, more or less rapidly, in 1553 no less than in 1547 or 1559. On this evidence alone, one should no more conclude that such reversals reflected zealous Catholicism than that they were the mark of committed heresy.<sup>20</sup> Just as the events of 1553–54 appear to have tipped many waverers into conformity, and demoralized many more resolute Protestants with the conviction that their efforts had been inadequate in the sight of God, so the reversals of 1558–59 must have had a similar impact on many conservatives. Only the most zealous on both sides treated these setbacks as calls to labour more earnestly 'under the cross'. Loyalty to the Crown, and perhaps a certain fatalism, were to prove more decisive determinants of general behaviour than theological commitment or devotional conservatism. No one here has assessed the impact of either war or influenza upon the attitudes of ordinary people, but they form a background which should not be ignored. A generation accustomed (and taught) to interpret Divine favour by reading the signs of prosperity and adversity may well have begun to wonder about Mary and her policies. Staunch partisans like Miles Huggarde might attribute England's misfortunes in 1558 to the ingratitude of wicked heretics, but it is unlikely that the population at large saw it that way.<sup>21</sup> It was the

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<sup>18</sup> See Chapter 7.

<sup>19</sup> J. Loach, 'The Marian Establishment and the Printing Press', *English Historical Review*, 101 (1986), 135–48.

<sup>20</sup> See Chapter 4. On Nicodemites in general, see Andrew Pettegree, 'Nicodemism and the English Reformation', in *Marian Protestantism: Six Studies* (Aldershot, 1996), 86–117.

<sup>21</sup> Miles Huggarde [Hogarde], *The Displayinge of the Protestauntes* (London, 1556).

queen who was unfortunate; a situation doubtless more likely to be attributed to her fondness for Spaniards than to her devotion to the Mass, but harvest failure, epidemic disease and the loss of Calais undoubtedly reduced morale in the summer of 1558. That, of course, was not the fault of the Church. However, a determined stand by a resolutely Catholic laity, both in the City and in parliament, could have changed the shape of the Elizabethan settlement drastically. It did not come, not because most were secret Protestants 'wishing for [their] Elizabeth', but in part at least because of the clouds of depression and uncertainty which accompanied Mary's death.

In November 1558 both committed Protestants and committed Roman Catholics were probably small minorities. Though most people were conservative, happy enough with the Marian Church's restoration of the old religion, they were not necessarily equally supportive of the hierarchy's firm but cautious papalism, and certainly less so of the regime's Spanish entanglements. In the event most proved fatalistic; willing to accommodate themselves to whatever the new queen and parliament might now decree. That, of course, was not the same thing as enthusiasm, and Elizabeth's council knew for years that it was skating on thin ice. That was why the queen was so reluctant to force issues, or to allow Protestant zealots to pursue those who celebrated clandestine Masses. The fact is that we do not know what most people thought of the state of the Church in November 1558; we only know what they did about it. In parliament only the attitude of Mary's bishops distinguished the defence of the Catholic establishment in 1559 from the defence of the Protestant establishment in 1553. And whatever the popularity of Mary's Catholic restoration, in the country at large, if we can count the Wyatt rebellion as even partly religious in inspiration, until 1569 there was actually more overt resistance to Mary than there was to Elizabeth.<sup>22</sup> Such ambivalences are perhaps to be expected among the laity: it is more surprising to discover an ambivalence, or at any rate flexibility, even at the highest levels of the Church. Although Mary's treatment of her leading episcopal opponents was both drastic and high

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Sir Thomas Smith (admittedly a Protestant) wrote: 'God did so punish the realm with quartan agues, and with other long and new sicknesses, that in the last two years of the reign of Queen Mary, so many of her subjects were made away, what with the execution of sword and fire, what by sickness, that the third part of the men of England were consumed.' This sort of exaggeration, perpetuated by Foxe, passed into national mythology, but it was not altogether invented.

<sup>22</sup> M.R. Thorpe, 'Religion and the Rebellion of Sir Thomas Wyatt', *Church History*, 47, 4 (1978). The rebellion of 1569 (the 'Northern earls') was certainly religious in its inspiration, but was complicated by having two separate agendas, one papalist, one merely conservative.

profile, a surprising number of those bishops who had accepted the Edwardian settlement continued to serve her. These were men whose episcopal orders went back to before 1550 (no one consecrated under the new ordinal of that year was considered validly ordained), and most had conformed to the Protestant establishment reluctantly. Nevertheless they had so conformed, and it was not until the last two years of the reign that even a majority of the bench were men of the queen's own choosing. To what extent this blunted the efforts of Pole and Stephen Gardiner (himself, of course, compromised by his Henrician conformity) is hard to say. Many of these inherited Henrician and Edwardine conformists were administrators rather than spiritual leaders, and they were effective in that mode, but if anything up to 50 per cent of the episcopal team were effectively civil servants, so it would be surprising if the call to faith was not compromised.<sup>23</sup> By the end of the reign, however, the overhauled bench was a highly respectable body, committed to the Roman allegiance no less than to traditional theology, as their refusal to serve under Elizabeth would demonstrate. It had been an uphill task to achieve that degree of firmness and unanimity. Nevertheless, the transformation in less than five years of the Marian episcopate along lines laid down in the decrees of Pole's legate synod was by any reckoning a notable achievement, one of the earliest and most effective renovations of a national episcopate anywhere in Counter-Reformation Europe.<sup>24</sup>

One of the least explored features of the Marian Church was Spanish influence. Despite the high profile of Philip and his entourage in general assessments of the reign, Dr John Edwards argues here that the presence of influential Spanish ecclesiastics was a far greater factor in the Marian religious restoration than has generally been appreciated. Not only were there numerous Spanish chaplains and confessors at court, but some of them, like Bartolomé Carranza, were men of distinction and real intellectual and strategic influence. A few were placed in university chairs or cathedral prebends, but most would have been unknown to the rank and file, whether clerical or lay.<sup>25</sup> It is consequently a mistake to suppose that the English court was untouched by the theology and intellectual priorities of the Counter Reformation. Whatever Pole's earlier reservations about the Tridentine decree on Justification, by the time of his legate mission he had come to terms with it, and in theologians like Carranza, de Soto and Villagarcia he found congenial

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<sup>23</sup> See Chapter 1, this volume.

<sup>24</sup> T.F. Mayer, *Reginald Pole: Prince and Prophet* (Yale, 2002). See also Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 527–37.

<sup>25</sup> See Chapter 7.

friends and allies in the fight against ignorance and bewilderment, to say nothing of heresy. To most people, however, Spanish influence did not mean foreign prelates in senior ecclesiastical office, Dominican friars reviving Thomism in the universities or drafting Erasmian catechisms, or even preaching less than comprehensible sermons. Spain meant unpopular war and the contaminating presence of the servants and hangers-on of Philip's courtiers. However critical for the intellectual reconstruction of the Marian Church Spanish clerical participation may have been, this secular presence was a handicap, and was far more keenly felt. Tudor propaganda had long ago succeeded in branding the papacy as a foreign intruder, but that had not noticeably diminished enthusiasm for the 'Old Religion'. Indeed it was Protestantism which was the alien force, associated as it was with the German and Swiss theologians who had sought refuge in England under Edward. Under Mary the seed of a different perception was planted. Stephen Gardiner had seen the danger, which was the main reason why he had taken the risk of trying to restore the papal jurisdiction before Philip's arrival, a move which the emperor's agents successfully aborted, with Mary's help.<sup>26</sup> In the event the papacy returned in Philip's wake, and largely as a result of his efforts. This was good for Habsburg influence in Rome, but not necessarily in the best interests of those who were trying to undo the effects of a generation of Protestant and anti-papal propaganda in England. Ironically, Pole himself had exerted all his influence in an unsuccessful attempt to prevent the Spanish marriage, and its anticipated association of Catholicism with the Habsburgs. Whether opposition to the marriage was in any real sense a Protestant conspiracy scarcely matters. The government chose to present it in that light, and consequently gave its religious opponents the credit for fronting a movement of popular 'patriotism'. Too much should not be made of this shift in Mary's reign itself, but it did help in the long run to drive a wedge between the old religion (which was popular) and the papal/Spanish association (which was not). For most of his reign over England, Philip and Pope Paul IV were at daggers drawn, but that fact did nothing to disperse the mists of prejudice which were beginning to arise, and on which Elizabethan Protestant polemicists would capitalize. None of this might have mattered if Mary had not died when everything was going wrong, but as it was, the association of Spain with disaster helped to make Elizabeth's settlement (which in religious terms satisfied almost nobody except the queen) sufficiently acceptable to survive.

Most of the Spanish clergy who exerted influence over the course of

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<sup>26</sup> J. Loach, *Parliament and the Crown in the Reign of Mary Tudor* (Oxford, 1986), 91–104.

the Marian restoration were friars, but the role of the religious life in Marian England is another problematic area. Mary in fact founded or re-established more religious communities than any other English monarch in history, but the handful of houses which resulted were of course a drop in the ocean by comparison with the vastly greater numbers dissolved in Henry's reign.<sup>27</sup> Pole, as is well known, was much preoccupied by the recovery of monastic property, but he told the courtiers, lawyers and alderman who listened to his St Andrew's Day sermon in 1557 that the restoration of the parishes was a more urgent priority than the rebuilding of monasteries. It is hard to disagree with him, but once again he has been criticized for pursuing his priorities. Famously, he declined an offer of assistance from Ignatius Loyola, but instead sought a Cassinese Benedictine presence, which in the event did not materialize. His Italian career in fact suggests that he highly valued both the older orders of monks and friars, and newer creations like the Theatines and Jesuits, but the place of the religious life in his order of priorities for the longer term of the Marian restoration remains an unanswered question.

In this context the fortunes of the one major house to be re-erected during the reign, the Abbey of Westminster, examined here by Dr Knighton, are instructive but perhaps not decisive.<sup>28</sup> Westminster was technically a new creation, but it carried much of the baggage of the old abbey, and the community included many of those who had been secularized between 1536 and 1540. Abbot Feckenham was a key figure in the Marian establishment, and his community was both large and vigorous, its vigour reflected in the surprising number of young novices it attracted, one of whom was to carry the English monastic tradition forward into the next century. Westminster Abbey played a conspicuous role in the ceremonial life of Marian London, but given the enormity of the task of restoration in the parishes, it should perhaps be viewed more as a symbol of the long-term intentions of the Marian Church than a key aspect of its immediate programme. Nevertheless, the queen took all her new foundations seriously enough to endow them (substantially in the case of Westminster) and to remember them in her will.<sup>29</sup> If the restored church had had more time to gather momentum they might well have

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<sup>27</sup> Altogether six religious houses were established. Apart from the Benedictines at Westminster, there were Observant Franciscans at Greenwich, Carthusians at Sheen, Dominicans at St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield, Bridgettines at Syon and Dominicanesses at King's Langley. The knights of St John were also revived, both in England and Ireland. The total cost to the Crown was somewhat in excess of £3000 a year.

<sup>28</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>29</sup> The text of Mary's will is reproduced as Appendix III to D. Loades, *Mary Tudor: A Life* (Oxford, 1989), 370–83.

become important. In the event, it was the Jesuits, kept for whatever reasons at arm's length by Pole, rather than the older orders whom he favoured, who would make the major 'religious' contribution to the formation and perpetuation of recusant Catholicism.

This book is about Catholics, and not about Protestants, but given the priority which the queen particularly gave to the elimination of heresy, it is fitting that one of the essays should be specifically about the persecution. Kent was a county which saw more burnings than anywhere except London. It was a region with a long tradition of dissent, and Professor Collinson carefully scrapes away the whitewash liberally applied by John Foxe to reveal a very miscellaneous collection of victims.<sup>30</sup> It is clear that many of them were not the orthodox Edwardian Protestants which the martyrologist wished to present, and that he frequently massaged the evidence of their real beliefs. However, it does not necessarily follow, as Philip Hughes suggested, that most of these radicals would have been done away with by any sixteenth-century government. Edward's council had burned just two heretics in six years. In Kent alone the Marian authorities executed somewhere between 50 and 70 in a rather shorter time. Nor did anyone, not even Robert Persons, deny that these men and women had died for their religious beliefs. It is unlikely that contemporaries found such events as horrifying as we do, and it is therefore a mistake to project modern revulsion at the idea of torture and execution for sincerely held convictions into the sensibilities of Tudor England. Nevertheless, Professor Collinson suggests here that the 'black legend' of Bloody Mary was more than a matter of Elizabethan propagandist 'spin', and that enough of the men of Kent retained an indignant memory of the Marian burnings to ensure an enduring association between popery and tyranny, however the vicissitudes of dynastic politics had shaken out.

The paradox of the Marian Church thus remains, because in a sense both Foxe and his critics were right. A Church which had a broadly popular programme of worship and practice, and which was committed to education and evangelization, nevertheless carried out one of the most sustained persecutions seen anywhere in Europe, and succeeded in confusing its impeccable English credentials by association with Spain. It is quite legitimate to argue that the Marian Church was overthrown not because of any inherent weaknesses or strategic failures, but simply because the queen who was its great patron and protector died, and her successor was a very different woman. It is legitimate, but it is not necessarily true. We no longer believe that the restored Catholic Church

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<sup>30</sup> See Chapter 11.



lacked serious evangelical purpose, or that it was heavily outgunned by Protestant polemic. However, the fact remains that it was overthrown with comparative ease in 1559 by a queen who may have known what she wanted, but who was feeling her way through what could have been a minefield of dissent.<sup>31</sup> In seeking to defend the Mass against the threat of the bill of uniformity, the bishops had significant support, and failed by a whisker. But seeking to defend the papacy against the bill of supremacy, they had almost none. For this the persecution may have been partly responsible, stirring up neighbour against neighbour and family members against each other more destructively than the Edwardine imposition of Protestant uniformity had done. A sour taste lingered in the communities which had been thus damaged, as Foxe's collection of stories testifies.

But persecution on its own would not have undermined the Church. More important, certainly at the gentry level, were the foreign political trappings and the ever-present threat to the holders of former ecclesiastical property, who rightly understood that Pole did not really hold them absolved of theft, no matter what the official dispensation might say. Political quarrels with the papacy in the last two years of the reign did not help either, ensuring (among other things) that there were far more episcopal vacancies at the time of Mary's death than there should have been.

No one ever did a more effective hatchet job upon a regime than John Foxe. The *Acts and Monuments* was never intended to be objective history in the modern sense. It was a savage polemic intended to demonize the Catholic Church, and particularly its clergy. Because of the eventual success of the Elizabethan settlement, Foxe's narratives came to seem the final verdict on the negative legacy of the Marian restoration for 200 years after he wrote. The positive legacy is less obvious, but equally real. Ironically, Mary's rebuilding of the episcopate may well have preserved it for the future of the Anglican Church. If Elizabeth had followed straight on from Edward, and the trajectory of reform reflected in the progressive radicalization of the Prayer Books of 1549 and 1552 had been continued, it is hard to see how the institution of episcopacy could have survived. More importantly, however, the theological and intellectual stiffening which Pole managed to give the Church laid the basis for the ideologically tough and resilient recusant movement in Elizabeth's reign, and thereby ensured the survival and disruptive presence of Counter-Reformation Catholicism in Elizabeth's Protestant kingdom.

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<sup>31</sup> N. Jones, *Faith by Statute: Parliament and the Settlement of Religion, 1559* (London, 1982).

While most religious conservatives after 1558 drifted more or less reluctantly into Anglican conformity, committed Roman Catholics embraced a new identity, which the propaganda of their opponents and the hard choices of politics in an increasingly confessionalized Europe would project as detached from, and even hostile to, the national community. The struggle of Elizabethan and Jacobean Catholics to retain both their national and their religious identities, torn between allegiances at first openly hostile and enduringly deeply suspicious of each other, is one of the less likely legacies of the Marian Church. It is one which has taken on new and sharp resonances in a Britain in which religious identity and national and cultural allegiances are once again often perceived as being at odds. But that, as they say, is quite another story.

Eamon Duffy, Cambridge University, and  
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# The Personal Religion of Mary I

David Loades

Mary was a Catholic. The one thing that is, and always has been, clear about Henry VIII's elder daughter is that she was loyal to the old faith. However, it is less clear exactly what that allegiance involved at different times in her life, because the distinction between 'the old faith' as that term was employed at the time and Catholicism as it was being reformulated by the Council of Trent is only just becoming fully appreciated.<sup>1</sup> Traditionally the Catholic faith, as it had been presented to its lay practitioners, was a matter of sacramental participation and ritual rather than theology. By the early sixteenth century, however, there existed a literate laity which was theologically informed; mainly aristocrats, merchants and lawyers, of whom Sir Thomas More was the outstanding example. From the clerical point of view, such men were a mixed blessing because, although they might bring an informed intelligence to their faith, they were also prone to ask awkward questions. A layman, whether he was a king or a cottager (or a lawyer) was required to confess his sins to a priest, to receive the sacrament of the altar at least once a year and to follow the prescribed rites of passage for baptism, marriage and death. He was also encouraged to give alms to the Church and to the poor, according to his means, and to seek the intercession of a hierarchy of saints, headed by the Blessed Virgin. He was not expected to question the teaching of the Church, or challenge the authority of the clergy. The ordinary actions of piety were deemed sufficient for his soul's health, and were as much a part of the natural order as seed time and harvest. The clergy who provided these spiritual services were as necessary, if not always as unquestioned, as ploughmen and shepherds.<sup>2</sup>

The uncomfortable currents beneath this apparently placid surface came partly from the literate laity, and partly from disgruntled elements

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<sup>1</sup> On this question see particularly E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (1993), 527–37; and Lucy Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism in Reformation England* (2000), 114–16.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Heath, *The English Parish Clergy on the Eve of the Reformation* (1969) demolishes many traditional myths about clerical behaviour.

among the clergy themselves. By insisting upon the necessity of the sacraments for salvation, and its own monopoly in providing them, the Church had become both rich and powerful. Not everyone thought that this was beneficial to its mission, and there had for centuries been voices raised proclaiming the doctrine of apostolic poverty, and urging the clergy to shed their temporal possessions and pretensions. These voices, which had been largely suppressed during the fifteenth century, were becoming distinctly audible again by 1510. The piety and anxiety of earlier generations had in the past created thousands of houses of prayer in England, controlling about a quarter of the landed wealth of the kingdom, and perfectly orthodox Christians were wondering whether this huge endowment was either necessary or justifiable. Clerical celibacy was a worthy ideal, but an uncomfortable one for a normal man. Were such vows either necessary or realistic for a priest working in an everyday community? These were issues to be addressed, and the Church as an institution was not doing very much about them. Clerical abuses were nothing new, and neither were the voices which drew attention to them and urged reform. John Colet began his celebrated convocation address of 1511 with the words

Ye are come together today, fathers and right wise men, to enter Council; in the which, what ye do, and what matters ye will handle, yet we understand not. But we wish that once, remembering your name and profession, ye would mind the reformation of the church's matter. For it was never more need, and the state of the church did never desire more your endeavours. For the spouse of Christ, the church whom ye would should be without spot or wrinkle, is made foul and ill-favoured, as saith Esias; The faithful city is made an harlot. And as saith Hieremias; She hath done lechery with many lovers, whereby she hath conceived many seeds of wickedness, and daily bringeth forth very foul fruit ...<sup>3</sup>

His words were not generally well received. In some quarters he was denounced as a heretic, but Colet in fact was voicing the concerns of the respectable community to which he belonged. It was because he cared so passionately for the Church that he wished the clergy to be worthy of their calling.<sup>4</sup> He was not a friar; but it was among the mendicants, who were the most effective preachers of the faith, that this kind of anxiety was most frequently voiced. Later a disproportionate number of them were to defect

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<sup>3</sup> J.H. Lupton, *Life of John Colet* (1909), App. C, 293.

<sup>4</sup> Wooding, *Rethinking*, 34–5. For another contemporary expression of the same view, see Richard Whitford, *Werke for Householdiers* (1530). For the context and significance of Colet's convocation address, see Christopher Harper-Bill, 'Dean Colet's Convocation Sermon and the Pre-Reformation Church in England', *History*, 73, 1988, 191–210.

to the reformers.<sup>5</sup> There were also among these questioning voices those who were absorbing the classical scholarship then being transmitted from Italy to the north. These were known as humanists, and their symbolic leader was the Dutch scholar Desiderius Erasmus. Not all the critics of contemporary abuses were so motivated, but many were, so that their learning became a matter of suspicion and hostility among defenders of the *status quo*. Even among the humanists there were differences of opinion; Erasmus, for instance, was much keener on vernacular scripture than was Thomas More; Erasmus was sceptical of the *opus dei* which provided the justification for monasticism; More and John Fisher not so. But they also had many ideas in common; particularly a strong belief in education, for laity and clergy alike, allowing pagan authors as well as Christian and encouraging the theological literacy of laymen. There was much emphasis upon moral probity, and women, particularly those of high rank, were encouraged to follow a similar programme. They were also sceptical about the more physical aspects of contemporary piety. There was an uncomfortable tendency, particularly among the poor and illiterate, to treat images as though they possessed a life and sanctity of their own; and Erasmus was scathing about the pious pretensions of that contemporary form of the package holiday, the pilgrimage.<sup>6</sup> Humanism had seeped into England from about 1470 onward, being signalled by an interest in Greek at Oxford and Cambridge. Among its early patrons was the deeply pious Lady Margaret Beaufort, and she, it is now believed, had a strong influence on the education of her grandson, the young Prince Henry.<sup>7</sup> Henry was the best educated young aristocrat of his generation, and his accession to the throne in 1509 was greeted with exultation by humanists all over Western Europe. Within weeks he had married the even more learned and similarly inclined Catherine of Aragon, the relict of his brother Arthur, who had been left stranded in England by the vagaries of Castilian politics.

Humanism thus became fashionable at court, and its future seemed to be assured. However, it was from the beginning a divisive tendency. Some clergy disliked it simply because they were averse to change, and too idle to meet a new intellectual challenge; others saw the education of the laity as subversive of their own position;<sup>8</sup> but some also had more

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<sup>5</sup> On the role of the friars, particularly as preachers, see Susan Wabuda, *Preaching During the English Reformation* (2002), 107–46.

<sup>6</sup> Erasmus wrote a satirical account of a pilgrimage to Walsingham. A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (1964), 5.

<sup>7</sup> M.K. Jones and M.G. Underwood, *The King's Mother; Lady Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby* (1992), 202–31.

<sup>8</sup> David Loades, 'Anticlericalism in the Church of England before 1558; an "eating cancer"?', in *Anticlericalism*, ed. Nigel Aston and Matthew Cragoe (2000), 1–18.

respectable doubts. It was very hard, for example, to draw a sensible line between acceptable practice and abuse in devotions to the saints. These cults were immensely popular, for the simple reason that saints, however virtuous, had been real people, and understood how real people felt. Christ, although in a sense a perfect man, was without sin, whereas the heroism of the saints lay precisely in overcoming that unfortunate feature of normal humanity. The orthodox teaching was that saints could only intercede, having no power of their own; but did it matter if that was not always understood? The piety of the simple needed such props. In fact there was little logic or consistency in popular devotion, which varied greatly from place to place. Christ was sometimes approached as a profoundly human friend, in a manner which would seem to remove the need for any form of intercession, and yet that was seldom the conclusion drawn.<sup>9</sup> The analogy with a human family was powerfully felt. God was the father, and the response to all prayer lay in his hands. The son was the human face of the father, but as he shared his power he was hardly an intercessor in the ordinary sense. The saints were the friends of Christ, and would intercede as human friends would do in a similar situation. The greatest intercessor of all, however, was the Virgin Mary, who was deemed not only to have all a woman's susceptibilities, but to share in a mysterious way in the influence which a human mother commonly exercised over her spouse and son. God was also unknowable, and his ways profoundly mysterious; even the learned had great difficulty in understanding his purposes.<sup>10</sup> Consequently it was a mistake to educate laymen to the point where they were able to ask questions to which there might be no answers, or at least no answers which could be formulated in words.

Unfortunately, while these disputes were simmering within the Church, the water was further muddied by Martin Luther. Luther was not a humanist but a traditionally trained theologian. Using St Paul and St Augustine as his starting points, he came to the conclusion that the abuses of the Church were the result, not of poor discipline, or even unworthy motivation, but of profound theological misunderstanding. God, he declared, had already decided upon whom he would bestow the grace of faith, and that was sufficient for the salvation of the recipient. Edifying and helpful as the offices of the Church might be, they were not

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<sup>9</sup> On devotion to the humanity of Jesus, see Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 232–8.

<sup>10</sup> John Standish later wrote 'Gods commands are unsearchable ... every foole can read and bable of the scripture, but only the Godly learned teachers can play the spiritual masons part in couching the lyvely stones in the spiritual building of Christes churche ...' *A discourse wherin is debated whether it be expedient that the scripture should be in English* (1555), sig. Eiv.

strictly necessary. At the same time Christianity was, and should be, a religion of the Word, and the Word was contained in the Bible. The accumulated traditions, laws and ceremonies of the Church were at best harmless and unnecessary accretions, and at worst a hindrance and an obstruction to true understanding. Threatened at its very heart by this marginalization of the sacraments, the Church in the person of Pope Leo X immediately proclaimed the defiant German a heretic in 1521. Within a decade a major schism had opened within the Western Church.<sup>11</sup>

Superficially, there were many similarities between Luther's teaching and the humanist critique. Both saw dangerous abuses in the practices of popular religion; both wished to open the Bible to the laity through education; both believed that the clergy had become too wealthy, and too often abused their calling. In fact the boundaries were symbolically drawn by a furious quarrel between Luther and Erasmus on the question of free will, but for about 20 years there was a great deal of confusion.<sup>12</sup> This played into the hands of conservatives, who were equally opposed to both, and enabled them to brand their Erasmian opponents as heretics when they were usually nothing of the kind. The Spanish *Alumbrados*, who were Erasmians with some mystical tendencies borrowed from the Brethren of the Common Life, were successfully branded as *Luteranos* by their enemies, and virtually wiped out by the Inquisition.

It was into this uncertain climate that Mary was born, and it provides the context of her upbringing. She was five when Luther was condemned, and just beginning to learn her letters. Because both her parents had received a first-rate humanist training, and were committed to its principles, Mary's academic education was taken seriously. Had Henry been the old-fashioned knight errant that he sometimes pretended to be, his daughter would have learned little beyond needlework and social graces; instead, she became a model for the offspring of ambitious courtiers. Catherine commissioned several treatises on the education of girls, not so much because she needed guidance as to make a point. In 1523 her fellow countryman Juan Luis Vives presented her with *De Institutione Foeminae Christianae*, writing in the preface 'Your dearest daughter Mary shall read these instructions of mine, and follow in living. Which she must needs do if she is to order herself after the example that she hath at home with her ...'<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Luther never considered himself to be a heretic, and blamed his condemnation on the politics of the Church. M. Brecht, *Martin Luther, his road to reformation, 1483-1521*, trans. J.L. Schaaf (Philadelphia, 1985).

<sup>12</sup> Erasmus attacked Luther in *De Libero Arbitrio* (1525), to which Luther replied with *De Servo Arbitrio*. See R.H. Bainton, *Erasmus of Christendom* (1969), 230-35.

<sup>13</sup> *Opera Omnia*, IV, 65-6. The reading programme was set out in another treatise, *De ratione studii puerilis*.

Vives did not suggest that Mary would grow up to have the intellectual capacity of a man, and measured his programme to a girl's supposed inferiority, but his ideas were radical by contemporary standards. A young girl needed protection, both against unsuitable literature and contaminating male company, because virginity was a virtue of the mind as well as the body. Nevertheless he prescribed a diet of scripture, the Latin fathers and certain acceptable pagan classics. Other advice tracts followed: two more from Vives himself, the *Rudimenta Grammatices* from Thomas Linacre and, perhaps most significantly, the *Christiani matrimonii institutio* from Erasmus. Catherine may have started to teach her daughter herself, but they were often apart and the queen had many calls on her time; so it was probably her chaplain, Henry Rowle, who had the first responsibility for this formidable task.<sup>14</sup> Vives himself spent some time in England, but seems not to have acted as a tutor in person.

Mary was not particularly precocious in her studies. The fragmentary stories of her early childhood which have survived refer to her being shown off by her father at court, being solemnly inspected by French envoys when a marriage negotiation was in prospect and toddling after Dominic Memmo, Henry's Venetian organist, with shrill cries of 'priest, priest'. The talents which attracted favourable comment were dancing and playing upon the virginals; if anyone was impressed by her scholarly aptitudes, they did not say so.<sup>15</sup> By the time that she was sent off to Ludlow at the age of nine, Mary could read and write fluently in English, had a good basic grasp of Latin and some French. Both Catherine and Henry were very careful to insist that she should be brought up as an English princess, so although she must have picked up something of her mother's native tongue (which she used with her Spanish servants) Mary never seems to have been formally instructed in the language.<sup>16</sup> The reading programme which Vives had prescribed was, of course, all in Latin. In 1525 the only English Bible was that of Wycliffe, which was both antique and illegal. Apart from being the recipient of frequent exhortations to piety, the content of Mary's

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<sup>14</sup> Wages of the princess's household, 1 October 11 Henry VIII (1519) to i September 12 Henry VIII (1520). *Letters and Papers ... of the Reign of Henry VIII*, ed. S.R. Gardiner et al. (1862–1911), III, 970 and Addenda, 259.

<sup>15</sup> D. Loades, *Mary Tudor; a life* (1989), 31–4. What was mainly commented upon was her robust health.

<sup>16</sup> There is some uncertainty about Mary's facility in Spanish. In 1554 the Venetian Soranzo described her as fluent, but his successor Michieli says at one point that she was competent, at another that she understood it, but did not speak it. It is perhaps safest to conclude that she understood it sufficiently, but spoke it only hesitantly. In conversing with Philip she may well have used Latin, in which they were both fluent.



religious instruction can only be deduced. Catherine was a member of the third order of St Francis, and was held to be a model of orthodox practice. She gave alms generously in the traditional hand-to-mouth manner, and seems not to have been influenced by the more systematic approach advocated in *De subventione pauperum*, in spite of her regard for Vives.<sup>17</sup> When Henry went on hunting trips, the queen tended to visit the local shrines, and her assiduity in this respect was often commented upon. Catherine did not appoint her daughter's tutors, that was done by the king, but there were no disagreements between them in this respect. Mary's first steps in the faith were thus guided by people who are all known to have been zealous, orthodox and steeped in humanism. Virtually all the factual information we have about her very early years comes from the accounts of her cofferer, Richard Sydnor; and the only things which are relevant in this context are the small sums which were distributed in alms on the princess's personal instructions.<sup>18</sup> The accounts say nothing of the companionship of other children, of toys or even of play. The impression given is of an austere childhood, in an almost totally adult environment, and with few normal emotional outlets. On the other hand, no one described her as either lonely or unhappy, nor did she ever recall her childhood in such a way. Vives had said that '... a daughter should be handled without any cherishing. For cherishing marreth sons, but it utterly destroyeth daughters ...' It would appear that Henry and Catherine followed his advice assiduously.<sup>19</sup>

Mary departed for Thornbury in August 1525 to take up her first royal duties, and was accompanied by a household numbering over 300 persons, including the staff of her chapel. Her personal service was supervised by Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, the mother of the future cardinal, and she was assigned a new schoolmaster in the person of Dr Richard Fetherstone.<sup>20</sup> Although an itinerary of her movements has been reconstructed, not very much is known of Mary's life during the four years which she spent in the Welsh Marches, and almost nothing of the progress of her studies.<sup>21</sup> Margaret Pole's instructions, which were specific in respect of Mary's diet, exercise and personal cleanliness, and careful to order that she should '... at due tymes ...

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<sup>17</sup> Garrett Mattingly, *Catherine of Aragon* (1963), 134–5.

<sup>18</sup> For example, an unspecified sum given to the poor en route between Richmond and Ditton in December 1521. *Letters and Papers*, III, 2585.

<sup>19</sup> Foster Watson, ed., *Vives and the Renaissance Education of Women* (New York, 1912), 133.

<sup>20</sup> Maria Dowling, *Humanism in the Age of Henry VIII*, (1986), 227. Vives seems to have approved of her new tutor, although he did not refer to him by name.

<sup>21</sup> W.R.B. Robinson, 'Princess Mary's itinerary in the Marches of Wales, 1525–7; a provisional record', *Historical Research*, 71, 1998, 233–52.

serve God from whom all grace and goodness proceedeth', were vague on the subject of schooling. She was to practise on the virginals, and work at her Latin and French, provided that she did not fatigue herself unduly.<sup>22</sup> Before she set off, Mary received an encouraging letter from her mother, and it is likely that they maintained a correspondence during the years when personal meetings were necessarily very rare; but the only writing of hers that survives from this period is a translation into English of a prayer by St Thomas Aquinas.<sup>23</sup> Fetherstone was a man with a good reputation as a scholar, and circumstantial evidence suggests that by the time that Mary returned to the Home Counties at the age of 13 she had a good command of both classical Latin and French; but of her devotional studies, if any, we know nothing at all.

By 1529 the process which was to turn a peaceful, and perhaps rather dull childhood into a turbulent and stressful adolescence was already under way. Henry had been trying to secure an annulment of his marriage since 1527, and the first crisis was reached with the failure of the Legatine Court in July 1529. Richard Fetherstone was one of the counsel assigned to advise Catherine, so he must have been either seconded from his place with Mary, or replaced. As soon as she discovered what was afoot, Mary sided with her mother. Whether this was simply the consequence of a natural empathy, or the result of the influence of Fetherstone and Margaret Pole, we do not know. It could have been a bit of both, and at first she was too young for it to matter much. However, as time went by without a solution, Mary's attitude became an embarrassment and an annoyance to her father. Catherine claimed that it was concern for Mary's legitimacy that motivated her fight for her marriage, but that was never the whole truth. If she had yielded to pressure and taken the veil, her daughter's legitimacy would not have been compromised, and her husband would have been free to marry again.<sup>24</sup> But the queen was bitterly offended by Henry's action, and had no intention of being co-operative. By 1533 both the court and the learned community had split right down the middle. On the king's side stood all those reformers who were having doubts (or more than doubts) about the Pope's role as the Vicar of Christ, and many humanists who thought that Henry's case was compelling. On the queen's side stood all those conservative clergy who detested the New

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<sup>22</sup> BL, Cotton MS Vitellius C.i, f. 23.

<sup>23</sup> BL, Add. MS 17012; the prayer is written on a blank leaf at the end of a book of hours.

<sup>24</sup> The canon law of such a situation was not entirely clear, but since it would not have been in anyone's interest to obstruct such a move, it would almost certainly have had that effect.

Learning and thought that any doubts about the *status quo* were heresy; also such of the humanists as felt that the integrity of the Church was more important than its abuses. Among the latter were John Fisher, Thomas More and Richard Fetherstone.

The crunch came in the summer of 1533, when Mary was 17. Henry formally repudiated his first marriage, and relegated Catherine to the status of Princess Dowager of Wales. Her daughter was thus no longer princess and the king's heir, but simply the Lady Mary. Neither woman would accept this verdict, on the grounds that the king and parliament had acted *ultra vires*. Henry had dismissed Catherine from the court two years before, and the tension had been screwed up intolerably between that breakdown and the final judgement. Mary was the main sufferer from this, and she was quite seriously ill in March and April 1531. It is clear from the oblique references made to it, and from the large sums that Henry paid to his physicians, that this was a menstrual disorder of uncommon severity.<sup>25</sup> As Mary had turned 15 in February 1531, this is unlikely to have been the onset of puberty, but was rather a malfunction which was to recur regularly for the rest of her life. Whether it occurred naturally, or was brought on by the stress of her parents' marriage breakdown, we do not know. Henry had forbidden his wife and daughter to meet, but they clearly continued to correspond by means of trusted and discreet servants, and it seems likely that Catherine's influence was actually strengthened by this sharing of affliction. Until 1533, the king's attitude towards Mary remained in theory unchanged, but the mutual hatred that Eustace Chapuys, the imperial ambassador, reported between her and Anne Boleyn must have made her attendance at court a virtual impossibility.<sup>26</sup> Henry appointed Richard Wollman, formerly his own almoner and presumably a man of 'the king's party', to oversee Mary's continued studies, and it seems likely that Fetherstone did not return to her service after the Blackfriars court.<sup>27</sup> Apart from a fragile lifeline to her mother, Mary was now emotionally isolated, and it was at this time that she appears to have sought consolation in her devotions, or at least they begin to be mentioned for the first time. By 1533 Mary was becoming more important than her mother as a symbol of opposition to the king's proceedings, and in July rumours were circulating in Flanders of an impending rebellion in England in her interest, supported by the imperial fleet and the brother of the king of

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<sup>25</sup> Loades, *Mary Tudor*, 61–2. There are many subsequent references to 'her usual malady'.

<sup>26</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, V, 12. (hereafter *Cal. Span.*). E.W. Ives, *Anne Boleyn* (1986), 247–8.

<sup>27</sup> Loades, *Mary Tudor*, 71.

Portugal. Mary seems to have done nothing to encourage these rumours, but then she did not have to. She was ill in March of that year, and again in June. At the end of that month the Venetian Marian Guistinian reported that 'some say' the king intended to make his daughter a nun; a reflection of her reputation for piety rather than any knowledge of Henry's mind.<sup>28</sup> The only good news was that, in spite of Anne Boleyn's best efforts, the lines of communication between Catherine and Mary remained open. However, another blow was pending. Provoked by her recalcitrance, which had become shrill and persistent, at the end of October Henry closed down her household altogether, and placed her, with a few personal servants, in the establishment then being created for the newly born Elizabeth.

The next three years were the most miserable of Mary's life, and planted iron in her soul. She now had neither a tutor nor a chapel of her own. She was not without friends, but they were perilous company. Fetherstone visited her, and reported to Eustace Chapuys that she was being threatened with prosecution for treason.<sup>29</sup> In 1534 Featherstone was himself imprisoned, and was to die on the scaffold in 1540. The issue was entirely political. Following her mother's example, Mary refused to accept any designation other than princess, or to recognize anyone but Catherine as queen. Chapuys described her as an heroic defender of the true Church, but what he meant was that she was a determined opponent of Henry's claim to ecclesiastical supremacy. Her position was very similar to that of John Fisher and Thomas More, both of whom suffered for treason in 1535. There was no other issue of doctrine or worship at this stage, and Henry still considered himself to be the model of a Catholic prince. The papacy was a corrupt and worldly institution, and he was the true defender of the faith. We have no idea what Mary thought about the papacy at this time, because she was only defending the Roman authority insofar as it was upholding her mother's cause. She did not hate either Anne Boleyn or Thomas Cranmer because they were heretics, but because they had conspired to destroy Catherine's marriage, and it was for the same reason that both women refused to accept the judgement of parliament. Catherine took a gloomy satisfaction in her daughter's martyrdom. 'The time has come,' she wrote, 'that Almighty God will prove you, and I am very glad of it, for I trust he doth handle you with a good love ...'<sup>30</sup> The letters continued to pass to and fro, Catherine's sometimes scribbled in Spanish; and they both worked

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<sup>28</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian*, IV, 928 (hereafter *Cal. Ven.*). On her illness, see Chapuys to the emperor, 28 June 1533, *Letters and Papers*, VI, 720.

<sup>29</sup> Dowling, *Humanism*, 55, 229.

<sup>30</sup> BL, Arundel MS 151, f. 194. *Letters and Papers*, VI, 1126.

themselves up into a state of moral and religious exaltation as they contemplated the unspeakable wickedness of the king's actions.

The third angle in this structure of defiance was Chapuys. Charles V was genuinely indignant over Henry's treatment of his aunt Catherine, and in a sense provoked the whole crisis by using his power in Italy to make sure that Clement VII did not yield to the king's importunities. However, he had no interest in diverting scarce resources from his struggles with Francis I and the Ottomans to overthrow the king of England. After 1533 his council urged him to accept the *fait accompli* because the queen's cause was a private matter, and Henry had made no hostile move against himself.<sup>31</sup> Charles, however, was a man of principle; he also had his own ideas about what was in his best interest. Catherine was becoming an embarrassment, but Mary's defiance might be useful, particularly if the English did rise in rebellion. He therefore allowed his ambassador to visit and encourage the beleaguered girl, and to upbraid Henry over his behaviour, secure in the knowledge that the king could not afford a complete breakdown of relations. Mary was almost pathetically grateful, and assured Chapuys that she regarded Charles as her one true friend, and her real father.<sup>32</sup>

This painful and difficult situation was brought to an end in 1536 by two dramatic events. In January Catherine died in the relatively comfortable seclusion of Kimbolton. There were the inevitable rumours of poison, but she probably died from a series of heart attacks. Mary, to her great distress, was not allowed to visit her mother in her last illness, and found her usual comfort in her devotions. If Henry expected his daughter's stance to be softened by the removal of its ostensible cause, then he was disappointed. However, in May Queen Anne Boleyn fell from grace and was executed on charges of treasonable adultery and incest. Mary had convinced herself that Anne was the sole cause of her father's grotesque aberrations, and hence of her own misfortunes. She therefore waited expectantly for an unconditional reconciliation. It did not come. Instead, during May and June she gradually became aware, through correspondence with Thomas Cromwell and conversations with Chapuys, that Henry was adamant in insisting upon her submission to his will as a condition of her restoration to favour.<sup>33</sup> For over a month extreme pressure was applied, and Chapuys became convinced that the king was serious when he threatened his daughter with execution. He

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<sup>31</sup> Consulta of 31 May 1533. *Letters and Papers*, VI, 568.

<sup>32</sup> *Letters and Papers*, IX, 596. The proprietary interest which Charles began to show in Mary was much resented by Henry; Loades, *Mary Tudor*, 85–6.

<sup>33</sup> BL, Cotton MS Otho C.x, f. 278. *Letters and Papers*, X, 1022. Loades, *Mary Tudor*, 100–102.

joined his voice to Cromwell's in urging her to yield to save her life; and on 22 June she gave way. This surrender scarred her as deeply as the experiences of the previous three years. In later life she did not know whether to reproach herself for having rejected the opportunity of martyrdom, or to thank God for having preserved her to fight another day. At the time Chapuys represented her as smitten in conscience, and wholly dependent upon himself for consolation, but that was a self-interested view.<sup>34</sup> Contemporary evidence, including Mary's own letters, points in a different direction. Her household was restored, she was received at court and quickly developed a warm friendship with her new stepmother, Jane Seymour. She wrote to the emperor, and to Mary of Hungary, professing the genuineness of her conversion to her father's cause; and when rebellion broke out in the autumn – the Pilgrimage of Grace – she repudiated the actions taken in her name, and retained her father's favour.

It is difficult to know exactly where Mary stood in the last decade of Henry's reign. Her formal education had come to an end with the dissolution of her first household, and we get only occasional glimpses of how she survived during the dark years. When Marillac, the French ambassador, was making some pertinent enquiries in 1541, he spoke to a lady who claimed to have served Mary throughout that period, and who testified that her chief solace in painful and sleepless nights had been to read works of *litterae humaniores*.<sup>35</sup> Years later, in conversation with Pole's representative Henry Penning, she professed '... that she had always been a most obedient and affectionate daughter towards the apostolic see ...', but she added '*interiamente*' – inwardly – suggesting that she had deliberately dissembled her submission.<sup>36</sup> However, that statement was made in very different circumstances, when it would have been difficult to say anything else. At the time there was no suggestion that she was anything other than a loyal and pious daughter. She was happy with the birth of her brother Edward, and mourned the death of her friend Jane Seymour. She disliked Catherine Howard, but that had nothing to do with either religion or politics, and became close to Catherine Parr. In learning, Catherine was an enthusiastic amateur, and Mary found herself acting as tutor. The queen's religious position was that which is usually described as 'evangelical'; orthodox on the sacraments, but supportive not only of the royal supremacy but also of the English Bible and experimental English liturgies. The evangelicals

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<sup>34</sup> *Letters and Papers*, XI, 7.

<sup>35</sup> Marillac to Francis I, 12 October 1541, *Letters and Papers*, XVI, 1253. The enquiries concerned a possible marriage.

<sup>36</sup> *Cal. Ven.*, V, 429. 21 October 1554.

were hostile, not only to the papacy, but also to monasticism, the doctrine of purgatory and the use of images in worship. After the king's death it became clear from the publication of her *Prayers or meditations* and *The Lamentation of a Sinner* that Catherine had already embraced a Protestant position on justification, but that was not clear at the time.<sup>37</sup> The queen was, however, regarded with deep suspicion, not only by crypto-papists but also by conservatives like Thomas Wriothesley and Stephen Gardiner, who had followed the king on jurisdictional issues, but remained loyal to most aspects of traditional orthodoxy.<sup>38</sup>

Catherine's friendship with Mary consequently raises questions about the latter. Of her learning we have no direct evidence because she left nothing in writing to testify to it, and Lord Morley's dedication to her looked back to her childhood

I do well remember that scant were ye come to twelve years of age but that ye were so ripe in the Latin tongue, that rare doth happen to the woman sex, that your grace could not only perfectly read write and construe Latin, but furthermore translate any hard thing of the Latin into our English tongue.<sup>39</sup>

In about 1545, Catherine persuaded Mary to undertake the translation of Erasmus's paraphrase on the Gospel of St John into English. She did not complete the work because of ill health, but her participation was well known, and when Nicholas Udall published *The First Tome or Volume of the Paraphrases of Erasmus* in 1548, he referred in the dedication to

such a peerless flower of virginity as her grace is; who in the midst of courtly delights and amidst the enticements of worldly vanities hath by her own choice and election so virtuously and so fruitfully passed her tender youth, that to the public comfort and gladful rejoicing which at her birth she brought to all England she doth now also confer unto the same the inestimable benefit of furthering both us and our posterity in the knowledge of God's word, and to the more understanding of Christ's Gospel.<sup>40</sup>

All of which suggests that Mary fitted quite comfortably into the circle

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<sup>37</sup> Susan E. James, *Katheryn Parr: the making of a Queen* (Aldershot, 1999), discusses the development of the Queen's religious position.

<sup>38</sup> For a discussion of Gardiner's alleged role in a conservative conspiracy against the queen, see G. Redworth, *In Defence of the Church Catholic; the life of Stephen Gardiner* (1990), 231–7.

<sup>39</sup> BL, Royal MS 17 C XVI. For a discussion of Morley's relations with Mary and his own religious position, see Richard Rex, 'Morley and the Papacy: Rome, Regime and Religion', in *Triumphs of English: Henry Parker, Lord Morley*, ed. Marie Axton and James P. Carley (2000), 87–106.

<sup>40</sup> Dowling, *Humanism*, 229.

around her father's last queen, and that there was nothing in either her intellectual tastes or devotional practice that set her apart as a rebel or a misfit. The explanation for this is probably that the core of her piety was the Mass, and in that she resembled Henry himself. Whatever else he may have doubted or discarded, and that included monastic vows and the doctrine of purgatory, the king remained committed to transubstantiation, as he demonstrated by his furious personal assault on the sacramentarian John Lambert.<sup>41</sup> His commitment may have been inconsistent with his desire to diminish that sacerdotal authority of which it was the foundation, but human beings are not logical, and it was the Mass which held Mary, Thomas Cranmer and the king together as the latter approached the end of his life.<sup>42</sup>

Unlike Cranmer, however, or Catherine Parr, Mary remained loyal to that commitment when Henry was no more than a memory. Charles V was puzzled and disappointed by her apparent spinelessness, and uncertain where she now stood in respect of 'the true faith'. In the eyes of Catholic Europe, she was Henry's only legitimate heir, and Charles waited expectantly for her to claim her inheritance in 1547. He deliberately did not respond to the salutations sent to him on behalf of King Edward VI; but Mary made no move.<sup>43</sup> Nothing which she had said or done since 1536 suggested that she doubted the authority of parliament or the king to determine the succession; or that she regarded her half-brother as anything other than his father's lawful heir. This was important, because if she had really retained her 'inward allegiance' to the papacy, she should have regarded Edward as a bastard, because his parents' marriage had been celebrated while his father was excommunicate, and the realm in schism. She may have simply kept her own counsel, believing that a challenge would have been merely suicidal in the circumstances; but of course she did not know that her chance would come again in 1553. As far as she knew, it was now or never in February 1547, and the death of the great schismatic might have seemed the obvious opportunity to put the situation right. However, not only did Mary not act, it is clear that no one in England was expecting her to act. No precautions were taken to frustrate such a bid, and all that Mary did was to complain that the Council had kept her in the dark for several days after her father's death.<sup>44</sup> The emperor soon realized that nothing was going to happen, and recognized the Protectorate government, distasteful as it was clearly going to be.

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<sup>41</sup> J. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (1583), 1101–21.

<sup>42</sup> D. MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer* (1996), 353–5. According to Cranmer's own testimony, it was 1548 when he was converted to a Protestant view of the Eucharist.

<sup>43</sup> *Cal. Span.*, IX, 7, 15. Loades, *Mary Tudor*, 135–6.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.



Mary's opposition to the religious policies of her brother's governments is notorious, but requires careful examination. Her objection was to the replacement of the Mass by the Prayer Book Communion service. The Mass was in Latin and the Communion in English, but that was not the real issue. The issue was the abandonment of transubstantiation – the real and corporeal presence of Christ in the elements. None of this, however, arose immediately. For several months Mary remained in Catherine's household, where she had spent most of her time in the last two years of Henry's life, and then in the summer took seisin of the substantial independent estate which she had been granted under the terms of her father's will. With an income of nearly £4000 a year, she was now a magnate in her own right, with substantial patronage in her gift.<sup>45</sup> This was an entirely new situation, because although she had been consulted, and frequently nominated her own servants, they had actually been appointed and paid by the king. Such independence was timely from her point of view, because by the summer of 1547 it was clear that Protector Somerset was moving in a Protestant direction. The Royal Injunctions, and Cranmer's homily on justification were indicators of what was afoot, and provoked speedy protests from conservative bishops such as Stephen Gardiner.<sup>46</sup> Mary reacted rather similarly; she increased her devotional exercises, and her household began to be noted as a conservative stronghold. Her piety had not attracted much comment since 1536, except in the conventional context of praise, where it was mentioned in the same breath as her learning, virtue and modesty, and with the same emphasis. However, in June 1547 Chapuys's successor, François Van der Delft, commented specifically upon her firmness in 'the ancient faith', and reported that she was hearing as many as four Masses a day.<sup>47</sup> Shortly after, Mary wrote what appears to have been a formal letter of protest to Somerset about the direction of his policies. The letter does not survive, and its contents can only be reconstructed from the Protector's response, but they are highly significant. Her father, she claimed, had left the country in 'Godly order and quietness', which the Council were going about to disrupt with their innovations. Englishmen were now so divided that '... if we executors go not about to bring them to that stay that our late master left them, they will forsake all obedience'. Somerset, of course, denied the charge, and claimed that Henry had left an incomplete reformation. The only

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<sup>45</sup> *Calendar of the Patent Rolls*, Edward VI, II, 20. The exact value was £3819 18s 6d.

<sup>46</sup> BL, Add. MS 28571, ff. 16–20. J.A. Muller, *The Letters of Stephen Gardiner* (1933), no. 126.

<sup>47</sup> Van der Delft to the emperor, 16 June 1547; *Cal. Span.*, IX, 100.

way to ensure the exclusion of popish authority was to exclude popish doctrine as well.<sup>48</sup> For the time being this dispute was no more than an irritation to the council, which had many more pressing matters to attend to; but by the end of 1548, when the legislation to introduce the First Prayer Book was already going through parliament, it began to be concerned. Mary was literally making an exhibition of herself, and in December Jehan Dubois, Van der Delft's secretary, wrote 'I understand that she was much welcomed in the north [she had just returned from Norfolk], and wherever she had power she caused the mass to be celebrated and the services of the church performed in the ancient manner ...'<sup>49</sup>

A mild remonstrance seems to have been attempted, but entirely without effect. By the beginning of 1549 Mary was gearing up for a fight, and when the new Prayer Book came into use on Whitsunday 1549, she had Mass celebrated with especial pomp in her chapel at Kenninghall.<sup>50</sup>

The emperor had already signalled his support through Van der Delft, and warned the English Council that he would not tolerate any pressure being put on his cousin to 'alter her religion'. Somerset should have told Charles to mind his own business, but he was in a weak position. Not only was he not the king, but with the French threatening hostilities over Boulogne, he could not afford to fall out with the emperor as well. His response was conciliatory, but pointed out that Mary was the king's subject, and could not be licensed to disobey his laws. Some private and limited dispensation might be possible, in view of her 'weakness', but no public permission.<sup>51</sup> Mary, however, was not disposed to hide her light under a bushel. On 16 June the Council wrote to her 'giving ... advice to be conformable and obedient to the observation of his Majesty's laws [and] to give order that mass should no more be used in her house ...' Mary responded on the 22nd, 'I have offended no law, unless it be a late law of your own making for the altering of matters of religion, which in my conscience is not worthy to have the name of law ...'<sup>52</sup>

In effect, she had returned to her position of 1533. The Council and parliament had acted *ultra vires*; not, this time, because they had offended against the law of the universal Church, but because they had

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<sup>48</sup> G. Burnet, *History of the Reformation* (1681), II, ii, 115.

<sup>49</sup> Loades, *Mary Tudor*, 143. The ambassador's knowledge of English geography was vague.

<sup>50</sup> *Acts of the Privy Council (APC)*, II, 291.

<sup>51</sup> Emperor to Van der Delft, 25 January 1549; *Cal. Span.*, IX, 330.

<sup>52</sup> Mary to the council, 22 June 1549; J. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (1583), 1332.

broken her father's settlement. This was dangerous language because it impugned the council's authority to govern during a royal minority. Nor did it have much logic, because the laws to which she was appealing rested upon the same foundations as those to which she was objecting, that is the authority of statute. A rag of respectability was drawn around this argument by the claim that, since the royal supremacy was personal to the king, it could only be fully exercised when the king was an adult. When Edward came of age, Mary claimed, he would find her his obedient sister in this as in all other matters.<sup>53</sup>

Given the controversial nature of the reforms, and the disturbed state of the country in the summer of 1549, this was a perilous conflict. Some of her servants appeared in the ranks of the rebels in Devon, but it was conveniently assumed that they had acted without her knowledge and consent; and she made no move to support the dissidents when trouble broke out in her own backyard in Norfolk. The issues, however, were very limited. What Mary wanted was the freedom to celebrate the traditional rites of the Church, particularly the Mass, without interference. She took refuge in arguments of authority merely to defend that position. There was no intention to challenge the legitimacy of the government in any general way, or even to challenge the royal supremacy. The papal authority was not an issue, and there were no disputes over doctrine, except by implication. This dispute went through several phases between 1548 and 1552, and was never really resolved. It was only when Charles decided that the conflict was unproductive, and urged a compromise that Mary to some extent backed down. She accepted a less public and ostentatious display of traditional worship, and in return for this restraint, the Council diminished its campaign of harrassment. Neither side backed down completely, because by 1552 Edward's conscience was as offended with his sister's behaviour as hers was with his.<sup>54</sup> The stalemate was only ended by Edward's death, and it does not tell us as much about Mary's beliefs as might be supposed. Presumably her household kept all the traditional feasts and used the full range of sacraments, although we have no specific information to that effect. Her chaplains also seem to have preached, both within the household and outside, and were occasionally in trouble for so doing. But we have no idea what she thought about the doctrinal disputes which were exercising the fathers of the Church across Europe, or even whether she was aware of them. She probably continued her habit of reading the Latin fathers and the scriptures, although whether she

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Edward to Mary, 24 January 1552. *Cal. Span.*, X, 209–12. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 1338.

studied the latter in Latin, English or both, we do not know. English conservatives, both lay and clerical, looked up to her as an example, and her reputation as a 'good christian' spread across Catholic Europe,<sup>55</sup> but she seems to have had no network, and made no attempt to correspond with Catholic divines. In fact, in spite of her enthusiasm for the Mass, she was not ostensibly a Catholic at all, but what her father had made her – a conservative humanist with an extremely insular point of view.

Consequently, when the succession crisis of July 1553 brought her to the throne, most people thought they knew exactly what they were in for. She had publicly and stubbornly defended her father's settlement for nearly five years, and 'religion as King Henry left it' was what she stood for in the public mind. Her first pronouncement on the subject, the proclamation of 18 August, appeared to confirm no less.

First, her majesty being presently by the only goodness of God settled in her just possession of the imperial crown of this realm and other dominions thereunto belonging, cannot now hide that which God and the world knoweth, how she and her father of famous memory, her grandfather and all her progenitours kings of this realm, with all their subjects have ever lived like Christian princes, both truly following themselves, and maintaining their subjects in Christ's true religion, and ended their lives therein ...<sup>56</sup>

However, in spite of including her father in this pantheon of virtue, the queen's intentions were not at all what they appeared to be. Her swift and unexpected triumph over the Duke of Northumberland had released a flood of pious exaltation. Her accession was a miracle, wrought by God for the specific purpose of restoring England to the true faith, and the true faith was not her father's settlement, but the faith in which her mother had lived and died.<sup>57</sup> Within a few weeks she had disclosed to her Council that she intended to restore the Church 'even to the Pope's authority'. It may be deduced that she had always, and for good reason, dissembled about the papacy, but we cannot be sure. If she had been mainly concerned about her own safety, she could have been less abrasive about her worship. She was persuaded to allow her brother to be buried with the Protestant rites to which he had been loyal; but against the advice both of her Council and of the imperial ambassadors, insisted on celebrating a requiem Mass as well, apparently oblivious of the fact that she could have offered his memory

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<sup>55</sup> Rex, 'Morley and the Papacy', 97–8.

<sup>56</sup> J.L. Hughes and P.F. Larkin, *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, II (1969), 5–8. This form of words is taken from PRO, SP11/1/14.

<sup>57</sup> 'The Vita Mariae Reginae of Robert Wingfield of Brantham', ed. D. MacCulloch, *Camden Miscellany*, 28, 1984. This mood of exaltation was also reported in a number of the dispatches of the imperial ambassadors.

no more deadly insult.<sup>58</sup> Mary's state of mind over the next few months merits serious consideration, because her actions were a curious mixture of politic caution and impolitic zeal. On the one hand, as she pointed out to Francesco Commendone, restoring the true Church would take time because many bad laws would have to be repealed and nullified.<sup>59</sup> On the other hand she ignored, and encouraged her subjects to ignore, all those laws of the previous regime which offended her conscience. The queen's proceedings, as Stephen Gardiner pointed out to John Hales, were more to be regarded than the law. Her priorities were, first and foremost, the restoration of the Latin rite in all its richness, and particularly the Mass; and second the exclusion and punishment of all those clergy who had presumed to marry under the permissive law of 1549.

Once the Edwardian statutes were repealed, with effect from 20 December 1553, Mary used her authority as Supreme Head to press this programme hard, and one of the first instructions in the royal articles of March 1554 was that every bishop

... shall deprive or declare deprived, and amove according to their learning and discretion, all such persons from their benefices or ecclesiastical promotions, who contrary to the state of this order, and the laudable custom of the church, have married and used women as their wives ...<sup>60</sup>

The reason for this seems to have been a spin-off from her devotion to the sacraments. A married priest was polluted, and his sacraments consequently also polluted, although not necessarily invalid. In fact many married priests were not 'Protestants' in any other sense, so marriage was hardly an infallible test for heresy, but that hardly mattered to Mary. Indeed the thought that a sacrament might be both valid and polluted made it all the more obnoxious. She was also deeply concerned with chastity; partly as a result of having had it drummed into her by her mother, Vives and her tutors that this was a woman's crowning glory; partly because of an emotionally deprived adolescence in which her status was such that no man ventured to approach her; and partly, perhaps, because of her recurrent physical problems. However, beyond this distinctive preoccupation there is much less evidence of Mary's personal piety than might be supposed. She received innumerable dedications of works of Catholic devotion or polemic; but they tell us

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<sup>58</sup> *Cal. Span.*, XI, 134. Loades, *Mary Tudor*, 193–4.

<sup>59</sup> *Cal. Ven.*, V, 785. Commendone was the secretary to the Cardinal of Imola, the nuncio in Brussels, and thus an indirect representative of Julius III.

<sup>60</sup> W.H. Frere and W.M. Kennedy, *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the period of the Reformation* (1910), II, 326.

nothing beyond the fact that she was famously orthodox, and reputed to be remarkably learned for a woman.<sup>61</sup> Her own letters and official pronouncements say little more. We know that she was keen on 'good preaching' to undo the effects of 'evil preaching in times past'; and that she considered the punishment of heretics a duty which she owed to God. The comments of observers can take us a little further. Simon Renard, the imperial ambassador, was particularly close to Mary during the first year of her reign, and he reported at the end of October 1553, with regard to the negotiations for her marriage '... she said to me that she had wept over two hours that very day, praying to God to inspire her in her decision'.<sup>62</sup> This probably tells us more about her emotional state than her piety, but it is significant that prayer was her first resort in a crisis. Three days later Renard was able to report the queen's decision,

On Sunday evening [29 October] the Queen sent for me, and I went to her. In the room where she spoke to me was the Holy Sacrament, and she told me that since I had presented your Majesty's letters to her she had not slept, but had continually wept and prayed God to inspire her with an answer to the question of marriage. ... As the Holy Sacrament had been in her room, she had invoked it as her protector, guide and counsellor, and still prayed with all her heart that it would come to her help ...<sup>63</sup>

The room in question was presumably her closet or private chapel, because it would have been unusual for any layperson, even a monarch, to keep the reserved sacrament in any other room, and confirms what earlier indications would suggest, that the sacrament of the altar was the focus of her spiritual life. The following year an anonymous Spaniard who had attended her wedding in Winchester Cathedral noted 'All the while, for an hour, she remained with her eyes fixed on the sacrament. She is a saintly woman. ...'<sup>64</sup> By contrast, there are few references to other devotional practices. It would have been natural for her to have a particular regard for her namesake, but the evidence is very slight.<sup>65</sup> In conflict with her brother's council she had used the rosary as a 'badge' for her affinity; and Pole famously greeted her with the words of the

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<sup>61</sup> Lord Morley's dedication, already referred to, was typical, although more specific than most. Miles Huggarde's *The Displaying of the Protestants* (1556) was simply dedicated to 'The most excellent and most vertuous Ladye ...'

<sup>62</sup> *Cal. Span.*, XI, 319. Renard to the emperor, 28 October.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 327. Same to same, October 31.

<sup>64</sup> *Cal. Span.*, XIII, 7. Anonymous letter of July 1554.

<sup>65</sup> By contrast, Lord Morley's devotion to the Virgin is most conspicuous, and as he shared the queen's devotion to the sacrament, they may have been alike in that also; but there is no direct proof. *Triumphs of English*, 97–8, 253–69.

Hail Mary when he returned in November 1554, but that would have been a natural thing for him to have done in the circumstances, and not much can be read into it.

She was assiduous in her private devotions, and no doubt this would have involved many prayers to the Virgin and other saints, but she took no steps to restore any of the great Marian shrines, which might have been expected to feature among her first priorities. She dutifully kept all the major feasts of the Church, but there is no sign of favouritism there, either. Too much should not be made of silences, but her mother had been an assiduous pilgrim; many shrines had benefited from her generosity, and many people had commented upon the fact. The shrines had been destroyed in the 1530s, at a time when Pole and most religious conservatives believed that Henry had first become an enemy of the faith. They had gone down at the same time as the traditional noble families of Percy, Courtenay and Dacre. But whereas Mary restored the old nobility, she did not restore the shrines. St Thomas of Canterbury, St Cuthbert and Our Lady of Walsingham remained desolate. Neither did Mary ever undertake a pilgrimage as queen.

Pole's Legatine Synod discussed the possibility of a new and orthodox translation of the Bible, and that might have happened in due course, but no one in a position of authority suggested re-edifying the great shrines which had been such an important feature of English piety only a generation before.<sup>66</sup> The shrine of St Edward the Confessor at Westminster was indeed rebuilt, but that was undertaken by the monks, and owed nothing to Pole or the queen. Mary was well read in the scriptures but seems to have followed no particular saints, which was unusual, particularly in the middle of the sixteenth century. Nor do we have any idea of how her prime devotion to the sacrament was expressed in practice. In describing her daily routine in August 1554, Giacomo Soranzo merely wrote '... she rises at daybreak, when, after saying her prayers and hearing mass in private, she transacts business incessantly until after midnight ...'<sup>67</sup>

He was clearly more impressed by her application than by any unusual piety. The absence of specific comment about the queen's devotional practice, either then or later, suggests that it was regarded as normal. She confessed and received absolution whenever she felt the need, but received the host only at Easter. Several detailed descriptions of her wedding, for instance, do not suggest that she received it then, despite the special and sacramental nature of the occasion. The official account by the English heralds says

<sup>66</sup> J.P. Marmion, 'The London Synod of Cardinal Pole' (Keele University, MA, 1974).

<sup>67</sup> *Cal. Ven.*, V, 532.

This done [the proclamation] the trumpets sounded, and thus both returned hand in hand, the sword being borne before them, to their traverse in the choir, the queen going always on the right hand, and there remained until mass was done; at which time wine and sops were hallowed and gave unto them ...<sup>68</sup>

Whatever hallowed sops may have been, they were not the host. To Mary the consecrated Host was literally the body of Christ, to be adored and invoked, but to be touched only rarely and after the most solemn preparation. This was not only perfectly orthodox, it was also the commonest form of orthodoxy. The only occasion upon which we are specifically told that she communicated was on her deathbed, when a temporary improvement in her condition was attributed to this 'sacred medicine'.<sup>69</sup> Giovanni Michieli, writing in May 1557, was slightly more enthusiastic than his predecessor, describing her as 'a real portrait ... of the true fear of God', and adding

Few women in the world ... are known to be more assiduous in their prayers than she is, never chosing to suspend them for any impediment whatsoever, going at the canonical hours with her chaplains either to church in public or to her private chapel ... precisely like a nun and a religious.<sup>70</sup>

She kept all the fasts, he noted, and performed all Christian works. The records of her almsgiving remain, and show her to have been generous, but not especially so. It was of the Church as an institution that she felt it necessary to be particularly supportive, because of the hammering which it had suffered over the previous 20 years; but here again the signals are somewhat mixed. In spite of her enthusiasm for a settlement with the papacy, Mary played almost no part in the negotiations which produced it. This was probably because she recognized that a compromise over property was politically necessary, but the concessions offended her conscience. She was certainly opposed to the legislation which effectively gave the holders of former ecclesiastical land a legal title, but allowed herself to be overruled by Philip, who had conducted most of the negotiation.<sup>71</sup> In March 1555 Michieli reported that her conscience was still troubling her. She had set up a special committee of six councillors to decide what to do about the Church property still in

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<sup>68</sup> *The Chronicle of Queen Jane*, ed. J.G. Nichols (Camden Society, 1850), App. XI, 169.

<sup>69</sup> Priuli, reporting on the deaths of the queen and the cardinal, ten days after the event, declared 'During their illness [they] confessed themselves repeatedly and communicated most devoutly, and two days before their end each received extreme unction, after which it seemed as though they rallied ...' *Cal. Ven.*, VI, 1286.

<sup>70</sup> Michieli's valedictory report, 13 May 1557. *Cal. Ven.*, VI, 884.

<sup>71</sup> Loades, *The Reign of Mary Tudor* (1991), 267-70.



the hands of the Crown. 'Her majesty,' he went on, 'wishes it to be entirely restored to those who were deprived of it ... although nothing is said of that which passed into the hands of private individuals, and constitutes the chief amount.'<sup>72</sup> Her committee probably advised against wholesale restoration, because only a relatively small amount was eventually given to pious uses, and the Crown went on selling former Church property, as it had done since 1536. Some episcopal estates, which were mostly in her hands through the attainder of the original grantees, were indeed restored; and many advowsons, which constituted a relatively cheap gesture.<sup>73</sup>

Altogether seven religious houses were restored, or more correctly re-founded: the Benedictine monastery of Westminster, the Carthusian house at Shene, the Franciscan Observants at Greenwich and Southampton, the Black Friars in London and the nunneries of Sion and King's Langley. The total endowment, which came almost entirely from the Crown, amounted to some £3500 a year – about the income of one major peer.<sup>74</sup> Mary's attitude towards the regular religious is not entirely clear. Michieli reported that she had sent abroad for English friars of the orders of St Dominic and St Francis 'who, to escape past persecutions, withdrew beyond the seas ...', but it is not clear that any came.<sup>75</sup> She was allegedly delighted when 16 men in Benedictine habits presented themselves before her with a petition to return to the cloister, and swiftly granted their wish. However, she had taken no initiative herself, and it was in fact nearly two years before the Benedictine House of Westminster reappeared.<sup>76</sup> The general impression is that she was reactive rather than proactive and seems to have had no specific vision of monasteries or friaries as essential centres of spiritual regeneration. Westminster, with an endowment of about £2000 a year, was her only large foundation, and even that was not on a grand scale by past standards. The Hospital of the Savoy and the Preceptories of St John of Jerusalem, both in England and Ireland, were also re-established, along with a few colleges, of which Manchester is the best known. All these foundations would have had an intercessory function, but that was not

<sup>72</sup> Michieli to the Doge and Senate, 19 March 1555. *Cal. Ven.*, VI, 32.

<sup>73</sup> For such grants, see the *Calendar of the Patent Rolls*, Philip and Mary, IV, 399, 401, 420, 437, 439, 449, 450.

<sup>74</sup> This total is exclusive of the Hospital of St John (£1436) and the Savoy (about £250). Loades, *Reign of Mary*, 350–51.

<sup>75</sup> *Cal. Ven.*, VI, 32. As far as we know, all those who returned to the cloister in Mary's reign had remained in England. M.C. Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, III, (1959).

<sup>76</sup> It was November 1556 before the new monastery was given legal existence. *CPR*, III, 354. PRO, SP12/1/64.

their main purpose, and Mary did not establish any chantry or other institution for the primary purpose of praying for souls – her own or anyone else’s. When she made her will in March 1558 she left significant bequests to all the houses of her foundation, asking them to pray for herself, her mother, her progenitors and, in due course, for her husband. But whereas her father, for all his reservations about purgatory, had requested the endowment of no fewer than 30 000 Masses for the repose of his soul, his pious and orthodox daughter did no such thing.<sup>77</sup>

Any assessment of Mary’s religious foundations must take account of the context. By comparison with what had been lost, they were insignificant, but by comparison with the initiatives of other members of her family, they were generous. She gave less land to the Church than to the restored noble families, but far more than Elizabeth in a much longer reign. Henry VIII, in a sense, had given more still if his colleges and the new cathedrals are taken into account, but that would be a false perception because he was merely putting back part of what he had just confiscated. Mary’s pious benefactions were substantial, both during her reign and at her death, but there is little sense of engagement. We simply do not know whether she rated the regular life highly, or merely regarded such houses as part of the proper equipment of a Catholic Church. Both Pole and More owed much of their spirituality to the Carthusians, but if any similar influence worked on the queen, we have no record of it.

Mary’s will is, up to a point, a revealing document. Its opening formula is strictly traditional, bequeathing her soul to God, the Blessed Virgin and all the company of heaven.<sup>78</sup> Her first request was that £1000 be expended for the relief of poor prisoners, and the second that her mother’s mortal remains should be brought from Peterborough, and interred next to her own burial place. There then followed gifts to all the seven religious houses, with a request for their prayers. Syon and Shene each received lands to the annual value of £100, plus £500 in cash; the Observants at Greenwich a similar lump sum of £500; the Black Friars at St Bartholomews 400 marks; the Observants at Southampton and the nuns at King’s Langley each £200; and the Abbey of Westminster the same. The most generously treated was the hospital of the Savoy, whose endowment was more than doubled, to £500 per annum. However, these were not large sums, and they were widely scattered. For the sake of comparison, each university was to receive £500 for the support of poor students, Cardinal Pole £1000 to act as executor and her

<sup>77</sup> T. Rymer et al., *Foedera, Conventiones. litterae* etc. (1704–35), XV, 117.

<sup>78</sup> Loades, *Mary Tudor*, Appendix III, 370–83.

household servants a total of £3400.<sup>79</sup> The queen's continuing interest in education is significant. When she had felt inspired to give thanks to God for her victories over Northumberland and Sir Thomas Wyatt, she had made grants to Oxford University and to Trinity College, Cambridge.<sup>80</sup> Admittedly these were foundations with a religious purpose, but a more direct expression of piety might have been expected in the circumstances.

All the information which can be recovered about Mary's personal piety suggests two things: the intensity of her devotion to the sacrament of the altar, and the learned and reflective humanism in which she had been reared. Mary's emotions were engaged by the Mass and by the memory of her mother, but we have very little idea of what she thought about such controversial issues as justification by faith, purgatory or the priority of scripture. She felt strongly about the honour and respect due to the clergy – that was a consequence of her feelings about transubstantiation – and her strong views on clerical celibacy were partly a consequence of that. She deplored the English liturgy because it was not the Mass, but there are strong hints that she continued to read her Bible, and the English translation which her father had approved was never withdrawn. When her loyalty to the papacy was put to the test, it proved to be rather less strong than she claimed. When Paul IV and her husband went to war in 1556, she sided unhesitatingly with the latter, her earthly husband taking precedence over her spiritual father. In view of Paul's irascible and somewhat irrational conduct that is not surprising, but she risked excommunication, and that would have been a serious matter to her. She refused to accept Reginald Pole's recall to Rome in the following year,<sup>81</sup> and when Paul tried to nominate William Peto as a legate to succeed him, she refused to accept the appointment. It was believed in Rome that the English schism was to be renewed.<sup>82</sup> That did not happen, and Mary was never excommunicated, but relations with Rome were not at all cordial in the last 18 months of her life. Ironically, when she died in November 1558, the Pope's first reaction was one of relief at being rid of such an undutiful daughter.<sup>83</sup>

Mary's marriage to Philip put her in touch, probably for the first time, with the mainstream Catholicism of the Counter Reformation, but

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<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> Loades, *Mary Tudor*, 245.

<sup>81</sup> Sir Edward Carne to Philip and Mary, 10 April 1557. PRO SP69/10/586. Loades, *Reign of Mary*, 363–4.

<sup>82</sup> Navagero (Venetian ambassador in Rome) to the Doge and Senate, 14 August 1557. *Cal. Ven.*, VI, 1248.

<sup>83</sup> C.G. Bayne, *Anglo-Roman Relations, 1558–1565* (1935), 10.

it does not appear to have had much impact. Philip brought his own chaplains and confessors with him, men such as Alonso de Castro and Bartolomé Carranza, so that Mary must have been frequently in communication with them. She listened to their sermons, and no doubt talked to them in private, but it is not apparent that they had any influence on her actions. The king himself was a deeply pious man, but in the mode of his own country, and we do not know whether they normally shared their private devotions. In public, and particularly on important festivals, if Philip was in England, they attended Mass together; but if they shared their religious experiences, neither of them ever spoke of it to a third party. Philip, for all his orthodox zeal, had a much less emotional approach to his faith than Mary. Most particularly, he was prepared to regard heresy as a political problem, as his father had done in similar circumstances. However, Philip had been reared, and lived all his life in a climate of Catholic orthodoxy, whereas Mary's faith had, in her own eyes at least, been tested in the fire. As Soranzo wrote

... nor did she [during her brother's reign] chose by any act to assent to any other form of religion, her belief in that in which she was born being so strong that had the opportunity offered, she would have displayed it at the stake ...<sup>84</sup>

There had never been the slightest chance that she would have been called upon to make the supreme sacrifice at the hands of Protestant bigots, but that was her self-image, and the view which was widespread in Catholic Europe. Mary had shown more than a touch of hysteria on a number of occasions when under pressure. It had appeared in her reaction to the events of 1533–36, particularly in the insulting language which she deliberately used to her *bête noir*, Anne Boleyn. It had appeared in the summer of 1536, when the threat to her life had briefly been real, and it had appeared several times between 1549 and 1551; most notably when she had contemplated flight in the summer of 1550, and again when a delegation visiting her from the Council was sent on its way with her public insults ringing in their ears.<sup>85</sup> During her reign, Mary suffered a physical and emotional collapse after the failure of her pregnancy in the summer of 1555. She was also deeply disturbed by Philip's failure to return in 1556, and by his attempts to put pressure on her over his coronation. But she showed none of the hysterical uncertainty which had afflicted her in 1550, and neither her role as a persecutor nor her aversion to married clergy need be attributed to emotional reflexes.

<sup>84</sup> Soranzo's valedictory report, 18 August 1554. *Cal. Ven.*, V, 532.

<sup>85</sup> *APC*, III, 347.

In spite of the width of her reading and her exposure to the evangelical intellectuals around Catherine Parr, when it came to the point Mary was utterly unable to understand anyone who did not share her specific convictions. To her, heretics were people who had led her father astray, ruined her mother, plundered the Church and destroyed the godly peace of England. That they might be people with religious convictions as profound as her own, she never for a moment accepted. This attitude was partly the result of her own highly stressful experiences, and partly of the influence of seasoned politicians like Stephen Gardiner. Gardiner was convinced that heresy was a mere cloak for greed and political ambition, and the events of Edward's reign had provided some justification for such a view.<sup>86</sup> Moreover, Gardiner was a lawyer, not a theologian, and whereas he could find arguments to justify the Royal Supremacy, he could find none to attack such fundamentals as transubstantiation. By the time that he became Mary's Lord Chancellor he had become convinced that only the traditional doctrines of the Church and the authority of the clergy could protect the country from a criminal conspiracy.<sup>87</sup> Like Mary, although for rather different reasons, he did not take the beliefs of heretics seriously. During the first year of the reign they collaborated enthusiastically in sweeping the Protestants out of all their positions of power or influence, both apparently convinced that the destruction of their power base would reveal them for the time-serving frauds they really were. The failure of many of the leaders to recant under the pressure of deprivation and imprisonment was taken either as 'vainglory' or as a subtle political tactic to maintain a ground for counterattack. The fact that there were numerous Protestants of humble status was merely evidence of how easy it was to delude the 'common people'. Both Mary and Gardiner were convinced that once proper ecclesiastical jurisdiction had been restored, the 'sharp correction' of a few leaders would solve the problem.

Neither Philip nor Pole shared this optimistic view. The king had no more sympathy with heretics than Mary had, but he knew what they were, and did not expect them to be easily cowed. The cardinal's understanding was much more subtle, because he knew what the issues were and could see where the dissidents were coming from.<sup>88</sup> He did not disagree with persecution, but was uneasy, particularly over the execution of the ignorant. Once the fires had been lit in February 1555, it soon became apparent to everyone except Mary that English heresy

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<sup>86</sup> Redworth, *In Defence of the Church Catholic*, 248–82.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> For a full discussion of Pole's doctrinal position, see T.F. Mayer, *Reginald Pole, Prince and Prophet* (2001).

was a tough plant. It may have been small-scale, but it was prepared to meet conviction with conviction, and threats with defiance. By the summer of 1555 both Philip and Gardiner had decided that the burnings were a bad idea. The king did not intervene openly, but let it be known that he did not approve. What he may have said to Mary in private we do not know, but it did nothing to deflect her. Gardiner, in John Foxe's words, was 'utterly discouraged' and began arguing for a lower-key policy of sanctions.<sup>89</sup> However, Philip left England in August, and Gardiner died in November. From then on, the persecution was clearly driven by the Queen, dragging a reluctant Pole behind her.

'Touching the punishment of heretics,' she wrote in her only recorded pronouncement on the subject, 'methinketh it ought to be done without rashness, not leaving in the meantime to do justice to such as by learning would seem to deceive the simple, and the rest so to be used that the people might well perceive them not to be condemned without just occasion ...'<sup>90</sup>

However, what might seem 'just occasion' to the Queen was not necessarily seen that way by her subjects. Eventually nearly 300 went to the stake, mostly labourers and artisans, and many of them women. As events turned out, this was a catastrophic mistake, and in spite of John Foxe's efforts to conceal the fact, it was Mary's own mistake.<sup>91</sup> So what turned this humane, well-read humanist Christian, who was so well loved by her servants, into the most ruthless persecutor in English history? That same commitment to the sacrament of the altar, which had caused her to defy her brother and celebrate four Masses a day with 'unusual splendour', also gave her a profound hatred for those who rejected it. It was not the denial of the papacy, or the English Bible or even justification by faith which was the crime against the Holy Ghost, but the rejection of transubstantiation. Over and over again, this was the issue which sent heretics to the stake, humble and learned alike. Of course it was also a key issue for the authority of the clergy, so it was easy for Foxe to make it appear that the priests were simply protecting their own interests, but it was also the issue which touched Mary to the heart. To eradicate such a virus, which threatened the souls of all whom it infected, no measures were too extreme. To punish such heretics was not a policy, but a duty solemnly enjoined by God.

For all her humanist education, Mary was a woman whose convictions

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<sup>89</sup> Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 1785.

<sup>90</sup> BL, Cotton MS Titus C.vii, f. 120.

<sup>91</sup> Foxe was concerned to demonize the Catholic clergy, and therefore consistently emphasized their role in the persecution instead of the queen's. Most of the bishops were very reluctant persecutors.

were stronger than her reason. When Thomas Cranmer was crumbling under the threat of burning in the winter of 1555–56 and busily recanting all he had ever stood for, the queen was unmoved. She hated Cranmer, both as an arch heretic and as the destroyer of her mother's marriage, and had reprieved him from a traitor's death specifically to face the fire. So in Foxe's words 'she would nothing relent' of her determination to execute him, although he had never relapsed and was not, apparently, obstinate.<sup>92</sup> It was publicly given out that his recantations were insincere, and therefore irrelevant. The Council even tried to suppress them, presumably on the queen's orders. Had Cranmer been allowed to live, and his recantation to stand, he would have been as utterly discredited as the Duke of Northumberland and his cause would have been severely damaged. As it was he died a martyr, and a nail in the coffin of Mary's historical reputation.

In a sense Mary was an enlightened Christian, well read in the Bible, the Latin fathers and not ignorant of pagan antiquity. From her childhood, her faith could have developed in several different ways, but it was steered in a conservative direction by loyalty to her mother. Most of the traditional teachings and practices of the Church were second nature to her, and how much she ever thought about them we do not know. She found a congenial soulmate in Reginald Pole, one of the most subtle and learned churchmen of his generation, and a man whose true convictions still defy lucid reconstruction.<sup>93</sup> However, her belief in the sacrament of the altar was a different matter altogether. This was a profound faith which could not be compromised, either in adversity or prosperity. All the emotional frustrations of her life were channelled into the devotion of the Lord's body, and it made her both holy and perilous. As a monarch her priorities for the Church lay in the restoration of the sacraments, in education and in the re-establishment of parochial discipline, as her tutors had taught her long ago. Her programme failed partly because she died too soon, but the strength and nature of her personal faith also brought failure of another kind. She was quite incapable of treating heresy – and particularly sacramental heresy – as a political problem. Her bishops and Pole's commissioners hammered away incessantly on a single theme: '... after the words of consecration spoken, what remaineth in the bread and wine?' The answers brought death to scores of men and women. Mary could have found another way, and neither Pole nor Philip would have objected, but she would not do so because to her the denial of the corporeal presence was an unspeakable blasphemy. That also made its contribution to the rejection of her cherished ideals, and left her with the sobriquet 'Bloody Mary'.

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<sup>92</sup> *Acts and Monuments*, 1884.

<sup>93</sup> Mayer, *Reginald Pole*.