The Princess Doña Mary’s Constancy in the Catholic Faith, and the Methods the Heretics Employed to Separate Her from it

Only the most serene Princess Doña Mary, King Henry’s daughter and Edward’s sister, never consented to shutter the oratory in her house or to end the Masses said for her (or to hear them in secret and out of the public gaze), royal commands notwithstanding (so they say), imitating the faith and steadfastness of her saintly mother, Doña Catherine. The protector and the other heretical regents used every conceivable means to overcome her, entreaties as well as threats, but to no avail. Not only was the saintly maiden firm and unyielding in her resolve, but she also sharply rebuked the protector and her brother’s other counselors, in person and in writing, warning them to reflect upon their deeds, for the time would come when they would have to account for the realm’s wounds, the grievous abuse of her brother’s youth, and the perversion of her father’s last will and testament. For this reason, because she was the king’s sister, next after him in the succession to the crown, and because in the end Edward loved her as his sister (once he was a little older, he appealed to him and he melted with her tears), none dared lay a hand on the princess’s person, much as they wished to. Again and again they tried to compel her

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1 Sander, De origine ac progressu, 283–86.
2 Mary could be dramatic in her defiance of Protestant legislation: “when the new Prayer Book was enacted by statute, Mary moved to challenge the King’s authority and even the validity of his laws, at least in so far as they touched the Catholic religion. On Whit Sunday, June 9, 1549, when the new book was supposed to be used for the first time in all churches, Mary organized a particularly splendid Mass of Pentecost, according to the old, Latin rite, in her chapel at Kenninghall.” In 1551, she displayed her resistance to the campaign against rosaries by parading through London with a retinue of 130, each openly bearing a rosary. Edwards, Mary I, 69. Haigh, English Reformations, 205.
3 In the autumn of 1547, Mary wrote a letter (now lost) to Somerset, protesting the regime’s religious innovations. See David Loades, Mary Tudor: A Life (London: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 142–50.
4 Edward was in fact adamantly opposed to indulging Mary’s conservatism, which he regarded as idolatry. The king stubbornly resisted pressure from his lay and ecclesiastical advisers, perfectly willing to risk imperial displeasure. Faced with Edward’s determination, Mary was quick to blame his tutors, but in turn refused to capitulate. Far from the fraternal protection
with sweetness and with rigor; seeing that she was as strong as a rock, they decided to persecute her chaplains—so she would have no one to say Mass for her—and so they jailed them and punished them like criminals.\(^5\) Princess Doña Mary informed her cousin the emperor of this outrage; he instructed his ambassador to protest to the king and the regents of the realm in his name and convey his astonishment that while the king was a child, still guided by tutors, they would deny his cousin, the king’s own sister, what was conceded to the ambassadors of other kings and princes (that is, to have Mass said in a private oratory), and seek by force to keep from her the means of worship and reverence for Jesus Christ lauded by every Christian in the world and observed by their own ancestors.\(^6\) The council acknowledged the justice of this protest, and ceased to harass the princess about the Mass—all the more because King Edward, though as a child he left governance to the protector and his advisors, had nevertheless shown his grief that his sister should be so cruelly treated without his knowledge. Yet, in truth, it was God our Lord’s particular mercy to this pious maiden, in a time of such calamities, to furnish her with the means

\(^5\) Mary’s two primary chaplains, Dr. Francis Mallet (d.1570) and Dr. Alexander Barclay (c.1476–1552), were imprisoned in December 1550. Pollnitz suggests that this was an attempt by the council to mollify Edward, still frustrated by the compromise over his sister’s Masses. Pollnitz, \textit{Princely Education}, 181–85.

\(^6\) On May 10, 1549, Charles wrote to François van der Delft (c.1500–50), his ambassador in London, “More particularly, with regard to the answer given you by the Protector when speaking of the innovations and changes made in religion, namely, that he will not inquire into what our cousin may choose to do, it appears to us that this declaration does in no way ensure her safety for the future, for she may be troubled and persecuted whenever they see fit to do so hereafter, with the excuse that she is committing a breach of the law. Put these considerations before the Protector from us, and ask him to give her a written assurance in definite, suitable and permanent form, that notwithstanding all new laws and ordinances made upon religion she may live in the observance of our ancient religion as she has done up to the present; so that neither the King nor Parliament may ever molest her, directly or indirectly by any means whatever. If you see that he makes difficulties about it, and will not agree, make no definite answer but say that you will communicate with us. You may add, as from yourself, that the refusal seems very strange to you, and that you cannot say how we may take it or look upon it.” \textit{CSPS}, 9, p. 375.

As the conflict over Mary’s religious arrangements perdured and Edward refused to compromise, Charles actually urged the princess to relent, arguing that it would not be a sin if she submitted under duress. Pollnitz, \textit{Princely Education}, 182.