What Queen Mary Did on Taking Possession of the Kingdom

In this way, our Lord favored his faith and truth, giving the realm to Queen Mary in a victory illustrious and bloodless, some twenty years after her father, King Henry, had begun the schism in England. God placed her upon the throne, he preserved her from the arms, power, and malice of practically all the nobles of the realm, and he punished those who had disturbed and corrupted it for the sake of their own ambition. Let all mortals know that his divine majesty provides for human affairs, and although he may wait and, to our eyes, delay, in the end he rewards and punishes in his own time, and the good do not despair and the wicked do not prevail.

After Queen Mary had received this glorious and unlooked-for victory from heaven, she entered the city and the Tower of London in supreme triumph and majesty. Without the advice or consent of any, moved only by her Christianity, she renounced and abandoned the sacrilegious title of ecclesiastical primacy, which she ordered erased from all royal letters and proclamations. She liberated the bishops jailed for the Catholic faith, and restored the titles and estates of the duke of Norfolk and the son of the marquess of Exeter, who had been condemned to life imprisonment by her father King Henry. She freed the...
people from the tribute King Edward had imposed upon them, and mandated a just and fair value for the currency, lest her subjects be burdened or deprived of their property. By this all with eyes to see perceived how monarch had given way to monarch, from a heretic prince to a Catholic princess, and rejoiced at so wonderful a transformation.

And because until parliament assembled the queen’s authority could not compel the people to attend the divine offices and other Catholic ecclesiastical rites, while it was being convened she suspended by public edict the execution of her brother’s laws supporting the heretics. And she exhorted all to abandon the heretics’ temples, company, and communion and return to the rites and communion of the Catholic Church. In the public eye, she practiced what she preached, and by the mere declaration of her will and her example the whole populace was inspired to imitate their queen and lady. Thus it was that the divine offices began to be celebrated once more in Catholic churches across the realm; the pulpits were taken by Catholic preachers and the heretics forced to keep silent, as was confirmed much later by the public authority of parliament, which repealed all the laws passed against the Catholic faith in Edward’s reign. Throughout England and Ireland, and all other places subject to the crown, it was ordered that the ancient forms of the divine offices and the Mass be restored.

The heretics took considerable umbrage and offense at this change, but they did not dare protest or resist. Even so, there was one heretic more brash and frenzied than the rest who, when a Catholic churchman mounted the pulpit in Saint Paul’s in London for the first time since Queen Mary’s accession, and


One of Mary’s first proclamations, issued on August 20, 1553, provided for the issue of new gold (sovereigns and angels) and silver coins (groat, half-groat, and penny), specifically in response to the “base moneys of late made within her majesty’s realms.” TRP, 2:8–9.

Deut. 29:4; Ps. 134:16; Isa. 6:9; Jer. 5:21; Ezek. 12:2; Matt. 13:15; Mark 8:18; John 12:40; Acts 28:27; Rom. 11:8.

See TRP, 2:35–38.

1 and 2 Phil. and Mar. c. 6, provided for the renewal of “the Statute made in the fiftie yere of the Reigne of King Richarde the Seconde, concerning tharresting and apprehenc[i]on of erronious and hereticall Preachers.” SR, 4:1:244.

In December 1553, parliament passed 1 Mar. St. 2. c. 2, which demolished the legislative foundation of the Edwardian church settlement. See ibid., 4:1:202.