The Bulwark

Magazine of the Scottish Reformation Society

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(a) To propagate the evangelical Protestant faith and those principles held in common by those Churches and organisations adhering to the Reformation;

(b) To diffuse sound and Scriptural teaching on the distinctive tenets of Protestantism and Roman Catholicism;

(c) To produce and distribute evangelistic, religious and other literature in connection with the promotion of the Protestant religion.

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THE ST BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY MASSACRE

24th August, 1572

Part I

by James MacInnes

This is the first half of a paper originally delivered at the Society's online conference on 20th August 2022, marking the 450th anniversary of the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre. Rev. James MacInnes is the Free Church (Continuing) minister of Lochalsh and Strath.

I. WHY SHOULD WE THINK ABOUT THE ST BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY MASSACRE?

What took place then was a long time ago, in a very different world. Most of society today will not have heard about the St Bartholomew's Day massacre. Of those that have, the majority will say that its significance is merely historical, and that

today we are advancing in a new era that is leaving narrow-minded bigotry behind, and that focusing upon the evils of the past will simply perpetuate thoughtless sectarianism. Beside this, and much more significantly, there is the exhortation of Philippians 4:8: "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." The question that may therefore be legitimately asked, is, is it correct and is it helpful for us to focus upon this ugly and violent episode from the past?

In answer we must recognise that when scripture directs us to meditate and dwell on what is good, it does not forbid us from recognising and learning from what is not good. Rather, in scripture itself there are many horrific events, and we have a duty to notice and learn from them. It is very naïve to think that today's world has progressed beyond such horrific violence. We must not turn away from the issues of our own day but be thoughtfully involved in addressing them, and there are important lessons to be learnt from this historic event.

II. AN OUTLINE

In Paris, on 24th August 1572, there was an assault upon the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, which escalated into an onslaught of violence whereby thousands of men, women, and children were brutally slain. In an age of almost constant warfare, it was a time of peace and a time of feasting. Sixteenth-century Paris, with its densely packed population of between 250,000-300,000, was swollen with French nobility gathered to celebrate the marriage of the king's sister Margaret. Her bridegroom was Henry, head of the house of Bourbon, second cousin of the monarch and, as the "first prince of the blood", the most senior male noble of royal descent; next in line to the throne after the house of Valois.

The dumping of victims into the river Seine turned the waters red. Mutilated corpses, often stripped naked, were heaped in the streets. The violence in Paris continued for days, and then spilt over into other principal cities during subsequent months. The number killed is not known, but even those with an agenda for minimising the outrage acknowledge that it is counted in thousands. These lower estimates suggest two or three thousand, or a little more. However, across the nation it is thought that between 20,000 and 30,000 were slain, perhaps more. In the opinion of the Duke of Sully, who served as the Chief Minister of France from 1589-1611, and who survived the violence by carrying a Roman Catholic devotional book under his arm, it was 70,000 who died. There is no precise figure.

It was a time when the realities of war, between and within nations, and empires, was never far away. Yet the outrage and horror of what transpired was such that the only way to describe it in the English-speaking world required adopting the French word "massacre", meaning slaughterhouse butchery.

That it is the *St Bartholomew's Day* massacre relates simply to 24th August being the date that the Roman Catholic Church celebrated the feast of St Bartholomew, one of the Twelve Disciples.

III. WHO WAS MASSACRED?

The answer to this is straightforward. Those who died were Huguenots – French Protestants. There is uncertainty regarding the significance of this name which almost certainly was first used pejoratively. Perhaps it originates with the German for *confederates* – the Reformed Church's theology being informed so significantly through the ministry of Calvin, located in Geneva, a city-state within the Swiss confederacy. The name entered common parlance around 1561, the same year that the French government protested against the influx of Genevan trained preachers, who, they claimed, were responsible for stirring up discontent amongst the people.

One effect of the name "Huguenot", regardless of its etymology, was that it identified those who by virtue of their faith were Protestants as outsiders; being not only different, but by implication, those who could not belong. This was ironic, given that Calvin himself was a Frenchman, and that those preachers coming into France were almost exclusively returning to their native land. There had been, and continued to be, a steady stream of French exiles to Geneva; many, like Calvin himself, being driven by increasing persecution; and others, once Calvin's Geneva had been established, being drawn by the opportunity to live and learn in what Knox described as "the most perfect School of Christ that ever was in the earth since the days of the apostles."

IV. WHY WERE THEY MASSACRED?

To answer this, it is necessary to outline the development of the Reformation within France, and to identify certain key individuals.

1. The Concordat of Bologna

As in other nations, the response encountered by the Reformation in France was shaped by the political structure. In Germany for instance, the independence and power of the Electors provided Luther with a degree of shelter and protection from both Pope and Emperor.

The year prior to Luther's posting of the Ninety-Five Theses in Wittenberg, Francis I – recently crowned King of France – negotiated a revision to the relationship between the French crown and the papacy. Within France the Conciliar Reform movement had sought to curb the excesses of the papacy by structural change, so that the crown, for the previous eighty years, had held to the so-called Sanction of Bourges. This maintained that the Pope was subject to Ecumenical Councils; that these councils were to meet every ten years; and that appointment to high office was to be by election and not by papal nomination. Rome, of course, did not agree – but had not been able to enforce its will on the matter.

Francis's 1516 revision resulted in the so-called Concordant of Bologna, being much more to the mutual advantage of both King and Pope. The monarch was made the practical head of the French Church, while acknowledging the Pope's overall supremacy. In one respect this had the effect of secularising the Church, but it also made the interests of the Church and the throne identical. Thereafter opposition to the ecclesiastical system meant opposing the absolutism of the sovereign. Consequently, civil power would be harnessed to eliminate the "reformed heresy".

2. Francis I

But we must also look beyond France; this was a time of great upheaval throughout Europe with the major powers vying for dominance. Interestingly, both Francis and his son Henry, while persecuting the Reformed Church within France, supported

Francis I

Henry II

the Protestant princes of Germany, hoping to undermine the power of Emperor Charles V.

Suffering the humiliation of imprisonment by Spain in 1525, Francis was obliged to accept significant concessions in the subsequent treaty, and he would begin to purge and cleanse his kingdom, proving his orthodoxy by consenting to the suppression of the heretics. As a result of large subsidies offered by the Church, he sanctioned the torture and execution of Protestant subjects. It was into this hostile environment that a certain John Calvin was born-again, and by January 1535 numbered with those seeking refuge from persecution outwith France.

Persecution continued to increase, escalating particularly after the "Affaire des Placards", when posters critical of Roman Catholic doctrine were placed around Paris and other prominent cities; one such poster even appearing upon the door of the king's bedchamber. The following year, Calvin published his *Institutes*, initially in Latin, but to be followed by a French translation, dedicated to the king:

> "Your duty, most serene Prince, is, not to shut either your ears or mind against a cause involving such mighty interests as these … This cause is worthy of your ear, worthy of your investigation, worthy of your throne."

It is not known, of course, if Francis ever read these words addressed to him, but what is evident is that he did not heed Calvin's exhortation to examine matters in the light of Scripture. His priority was political stability, and in search of this, persecution increased throughout his own reign and those of his son and grandsons.

3. Edict of Chateaubriand

In 1547 Francis was succeeded by Henry II. Henry had married Catherine de Medici, a member of the powerful Florentine family deeply embedded within international politics and the papacy (in less than ninety years, four members of the de Medici family were to be appointed Pope). In this generation at least, there was no problem in producing an heir, and amongst Henry and Catherine's children were three kings of France: Francis II, Charles IX, and Henry III. However, the next generation was unable to produce a legitimate heir, so each of these three brothers succeeded in turn to the throne.

Henry III was predeceased by a fourth brother, and so when the last of the Valois kings died, the crown passed to Henry Bourbon, the first prince of the blood, who had married Margaret Valois. This marriage was the reason for the gathering of Huguenots in Paris at the time of the massacre.

There had been tremendous growth in the Reform movement and by 1572 perhaps 2 million (10-15% of the population) were Huguenots. This included a high proportion of an articulate and prosperous middle-class – a demographic which is possibly explained by self-confident independent thinkers being members of professional guilds, which provided a forum for, and encouraged the discussion of, new ideas.

The Roman Catholic governor of Narbonne observed that many who became Huguenots were young, educated men: "lawyers, bourgeoisie, merchants, young men with a taste for literature and freedom … artisans of a spirited cast of mind." A later commentator blamed schoolmasters for teaching pupils to think for themselves. There was an undeniable correlation between literacy and Protestantism, facilitated by the increased availability of theological tracts and treatises.

In response to this boom in literature, the French court issued the 1551 Edict of Chateaubriand, prohibiting "the introduction of any book from Geneva and other places notoriously rebellious to the Holy See, the retention of condemned books by booksellers, and all clandestine printing". A half-yearly visitation of every printing establishment was instituted, and the examination of all packages from abroad. Anyone found with letters from Geneva was to be arrested and punished. All "unlettered persons" were forbidden to discuss matters of faith at the table, at work, in the field, or in the secret conventicle. It is significant, and interesting, given the claim of "Christian orthodoxy" made by the Roman Catholic Church, that psalm books were amongst the prohibited texts. The violence of persecution was great, and terror was utilised to intimidate those who persisted in Reformed Worship.

To give only one such example:

> "A Huguenot goldsmith who was challenged by priests for failing to doff his hat as he passed the church of Notre Dame, and declared that the church was 'no more than a pile of stones', was followed by jeering children. Attracted by their cries – 'Lutheran, Heretic' – a mob attacked him; he was taken to prison, and there beaten to

death by fellow prisoners for refusing to go to mass. After his body had been recovered and decently buried, it was dug up and cast into a pit."

Yet the Edict, and the violence, proved ineffectual. Beza wrote to Bullinger marvelling at the number of volunteers from Strasburg and Geneva willing to hazard all to make the truth known. And the number associating with the Reformed Church continued to increase.

4. Admiral de Coligny

In 1551, reaching beyond European powers to the Ottoman Empire, Henry II formed an alliance with Suleiman the Magnificent and declared war upon Emperor Charles V. Defeat in one of the subsequent battles resulted in the surrender and imprisonment of the senior and highly regarded Admiral of France, Gaspard de Coligny. Held by the Spanish, who were then dominant in the Netherlands, de Coligny became seriously unwell. Under the gracious hand of God, he was converted after having received reformed literature from his brother.

Recognising the potential significance of the conversion of this influential noble, Calvin began to correspond with de Coligny. Released upon conclusion of peace with Spain, de Coligny openly identified with the oppressed Reformed Church; as did several other powerful nobles, with the result that at the royal court there was now an influential Huguenot party. Along with de Coligny, the most significant and senior were Louis, Duke of Conde, and, nominally, his elder brother Antoine who was head of the house of Bourbon.

Injured in a jousting tournament held to celebrate the treaty with Spain, Henry II

Catherine de Medici

died unexpectedly. The year was 1559. His son was crowned Francis II, already married to Mary Queen of Scots; he was only fifteen. Never physically strong, he reigned for only nineteen months, with the crown passing to his ten-year-old brother Charles IX. Charles was king, but it was a regent who would act in the king's name and with the king's authority. By convention the lawful regent was the first prince of the blood, the Huguenot Antoine Bourbon. He, however, vacillated, and did not press his claim, with the consequence that the regency was placed into the hands of the young king's mother, Catherine de Medici.

Catherine's authority was not unchallenged, with the leading nobles, divided into two factions, vying for influence. The Bourbons, led by Louis, the Duke of Conde (Antoine's younger brother) with Admiral de Coligny; and a militantly ardent Roman Catholic party, led by the house of Guise.

5. The Wars of Religion

During Francis II's short reign, the Duke of Guise and his brother the Cardinal of Lorraine had served as the monarch's chief advisors. Uncles of the then French Queen (Mary Queen of Scots), these leading nobles had massive influence in France and beyond (their sister, Mary of Guise, widow of James V, was then regent in Scotland), and encouraged the increased persecution of Huguenots.

Concessions that Catherine was obliged to make to the Huguenots outraged the house of Guise – in part concerned that Spain, with its infamous Inquisition, was to have the prestige and political advantage of dealing decisively with the reformed "heresy". When the Duke of Guise led a troop of horsemen against a defenceless congregation gathered in Vassy in 1562, sixty-three were killed and civil war broke out as the Huguenots moved to defend themselves from subsequent assaults. This began the first of eight "wars of religion". In reality, it was one extended war interspersed with inconclusive treaties, which was to continue for the next thirty-six years: 1562-63; 1567-68; 1568-70; 1572-73; 1575-76; 1576-77; 1579-80; 1585-98.

While initial cruelties against the Huguenots brought sympathy from a majority not governed by strong religious feeling, feelings quickly polarised as Huguenot armies made gains. Actively involved, Calvin counselled in vain against unrestrained iconoclasm: "God has never enjoined on any one to destroy idols, save on every man in his own house, or in public on those placed in authority … we must look to what is lawful for us to do, and keep ourselves within bounds".

At the Church of the Holy Cross in Orleans, the Duke of Conde pointed an arquebuse (an early long gun fired from the shoulder) at a soldier about to destroy a statue. He is reputed to have replied, "Sir, have patience with me until I shall have overthrown this idol, and then let me die if that be your pleasure". Far from being an isolated incident, the ongoing destruction of church property and violent interference with Roman Catholic worship implied that the Huguenots would be as intolerant as their oppressors, and any lingering sympathy evaporated. Renewed edicts of toleration brought intermittent respite, but no solution, and open warfare broke out three times prior to the notorious events on St Bartholomew's Day.

Duke of Conde

6. The Huguenots and Paris

The Huguenots were always a minority, but strategically positioned, having taken possession of significant towns and cities over a wide area. The heartland of their support was toward the south, which allowed them to withdraw and maintain deep lines of communication. The defeat of the Huguenots was at no point a foregone conclusion. Skilled generals commanded troops animated with righteous indignation at the increasing catalogue of atrocities perpetrated against civilian as well as military targets, and meanwhile international concerns demanded that the crown retain a standing army to face down any threat from long borders with Germany; the then Spanish Netherlands; Switzerland; Italy; and Spain. Although they were a minority, it was the Huguenots that were in the ascendency. The first national Synod of the Reformed Church met in 1559; the following year – presenting the need for toleration – de Coligny spoke of 2,150 congregations nationwide.

Charles IX

Admiral de Coligny

While Paris always remained under the control of the crown, a successful blockade, during the second war in 1567, brought the inhabitants to a state of heightened dread, convinced that, were they to gain admission, the Huguenots would burn the city to the ground.

In 1569 de Coligny was tried in absentia for treason and sedition, primarily so that the crown could confiscate his properties, but the concept appealed to the Parisian mob who gathered to see him executed in effigy. Always a small minority in Paris, Huguenots lived with the constant prospect of seizure; one example which was to have ongoing significance was merchant Philippe de Gastines with his son Richard who were hanged for illegally celebrating the Lord's Supper. His family home was destroyed and a monument asserting Roman Catholic dominance – a large pyramid topped by a cross – erected upon the site, the Cross of Gastines. However, following a further pause in the wars, in October 1571, and upon reversal of the judgment against him, de Coligny returned to court at the king's express invitation. Strangely, given all that had, and would transpire, the king, neither robust physically or emotionally, took to, and increasingly looked to, de Coligny.

7. The high position of de Coligny

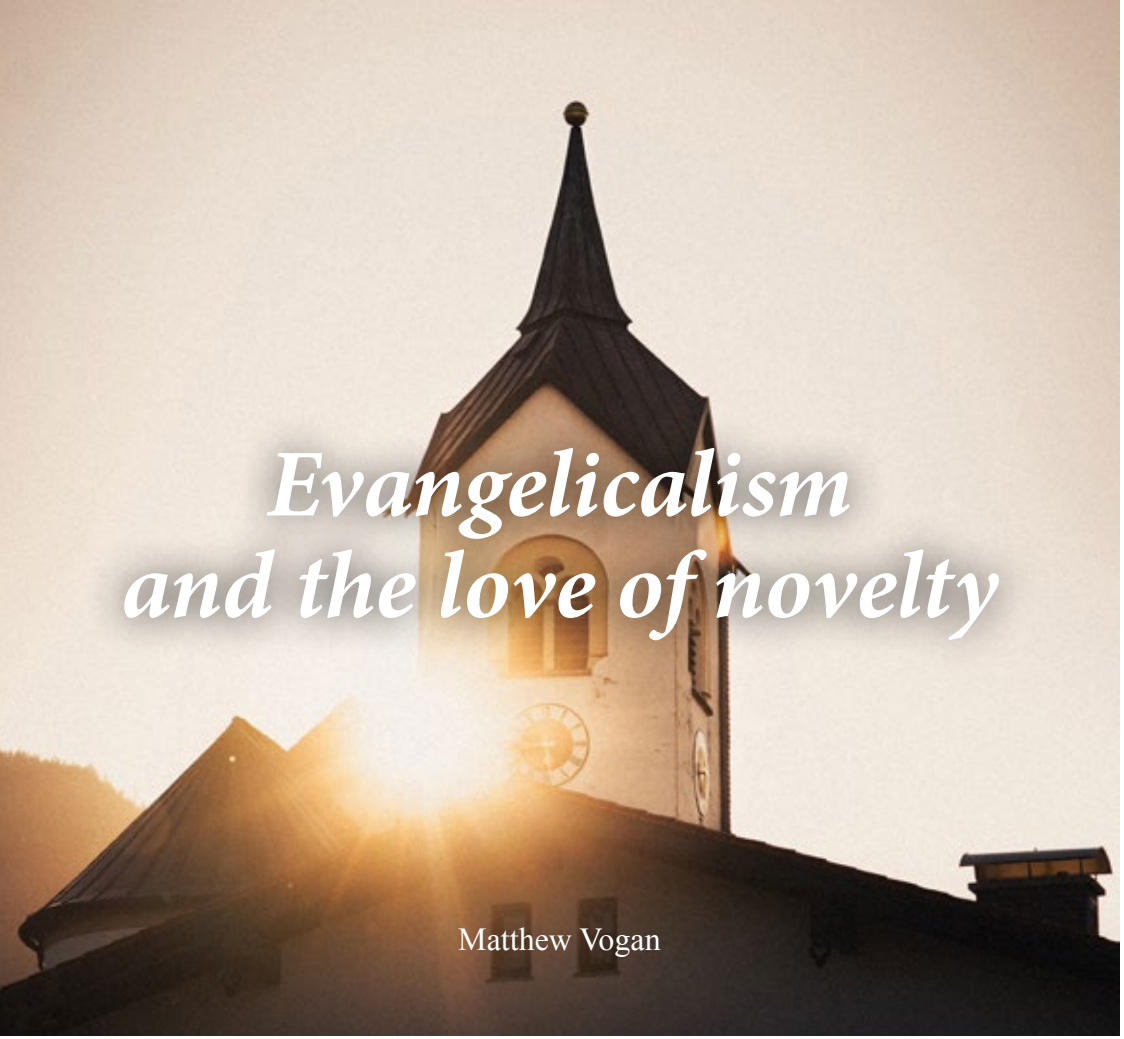
At an earlier occasion (1563), and with great perception, Calvin had written to de Coligny: "we thank God that you have resolved to go [return] to court … for we have learned by your absence from it how profitable it would have been had you always remained there. It seems even that everything must go from bad to worse if God do not speedily prevent it, which we trust he will do by means of you. Thus, persuaded that he has reserved you for this purpose, we entreat you most earnestly not to let slip any opportunity. For your presence, at any rate, will impose upon your enemies."

Antoine and his brother Louis, the Duke of Conde, were now dead, and given the youthfulness of Antoine's son Henry, de Coligny was, in practice, the undisputed Huguenot leader. And his presence certainly did impose upon his enemies. Over fifty years old, and in full vigour of life, this dignified and conscientious stateman, renowned for personal courage, political skill, and military prowess, pressed for the best interests of the Reformed Church at every turn.

In compliance with the most current edict, the Peace of Saint-Germain, he sought for the removal of the Cross of Gastines. Roman Catholic preachers, however, likened the removal of the cross to a betrayal of Christ. The eventual relocation under guard, a compromise instructed by the king, resulted in scarcely containable violence and the pillaging of Huguenot homes, particularly that of the Gastines family, which left fifty dead.

Spain was France's hereditary enemy, but the prospect (in May 1572) of the French crown heeding de Coligny's counsel and supporting a Huguenot army aiding the Protestant rebellion led by William of Orange in the Netherlands provoked further outrage. There was no love for Spain, but Roman Catholic Parisians hated the prospect of being allied with these detested heretics. Each edict of toleration had been a toleration too far. In a nation weary with war, and the cost of war, Huguenots were visibly claiming rights and exerting influence that the populace deeply resented. The prospect of de Coligny's continued influence at court was unacceptable to the Roman Catholic party who speculated about a Huguenot coup and seizure of the king.

And then there was the forthcoming marriage of Henry Bourbon, the Prince of the Blood and King of Navarre (a minor but Protestant kingdom), with the King's sister, a union for which the pope had not given sanction. Compromised, complicated, and uncomfortable – it must have been all these to the zealous within both parties (de Coligny himself had been uncertain). Yet surely it was symbolic of the acceptance of a permanent presence and involvement of the Huguenots in every aspect of society.



Evangelicalism and the love of novelty

Matthew Vogan

1. THE LOVE OF NOVELTY

The love of novelty is when we are taken up with whatever is new, simply because it is new. We ought to recognise that it is part of our corrupted nature to have this obsession. As the puritan Thomas Manton put it: "There is an itch of novelty; naturally we adore things that are new; they flocked about Paul because they supposed him a setter forth of new gods, Acts 17. Seneca observeth right … 'men admire a glaring meteor and comet more than they do the glorious sun'."

Obsession with whatever is new has been the spirit of the modernism in secularist society. Novelty is the preeminent virtue. The term "modern" is not so much about history or time as about quality – everything must be "new"; and simply because it is new it is immediately original and different and transcends all that was there before. Modernity tears itself from tradition and history and so is forever engaged in repeating itself. The cult of the modern produces a "society of the spectacle" because the craving for endless novelty is the same as the craving for the spectacular.

One of the greatest fallacies of our day is the appeal to novelty – what logicians call *argumentum ad novitatem*. People assume and argue that because something is new, it is therefore correct or better. The latest and newest implies the most correct and best. This is the basic assumption of most commercial advertising.

Samuel Rutherford shows how natural an assumption this is with us and how easily it can slip into religious matters. "Novelty can go for conscience, our nature is quickly taken with novelty, even as a new friend, a new field, a new house, a new garden, a new garment, so a new Christ, a new faith, delights us" *(Free Disputation Against Pretended Liberty of Conscience)*.

In an article, "The Future of Evangelical Theology", Thomas Oden (died 2016) lamented the invasion of novelty into evangelicalism:

> "The Babylonian captivity to novelty is the temptation of all modern reflection. It is invading evangelical leadership at an alarming rate, in ways disturbing to evangelicals in the mainline who have suffered from its bewitchments for two centuries." (*Christianity Today*, 9th February 1998, p. 46.)

The problem with novelty is that people soon become tired of it, as the novelty wears off, so that there must be yet more novelties. As John Calvin says in his commentary on Joel: "When anything new happens, it may be, that we are at first moved with some wonder; but our feeling soon vanishes with the novelty, and we disregard what at first caused great astonishment." Within evangelicalism, endless constantly changing variety has become the order of the day. As a result, an ahistorical myopia prevails that is bent upon removing the ancient landmarks and everything that does not have the appearance or appeal of novelty. The Word of God wisely counsels: "meddle not with them that are given to change"(Prov. 24:21).

Thomas Manton

Yet as John Calvin argued so clearly: "In the matter of religion, all novelty should not only be rejected but also detested" (Calvin's preface to the French Bible, 1588). The Lord Jesus Christ was conscious of the spirit of novelty in his own days amongst the hearers of John the Baptist (Matthew 11:7- 9).

II. NOVELTY IN WORSHIP

Novelty in worship is one of the most obvious areas where the "cult of the new" influences evangelicalism. Many churches

are at the mercy of the latest ideas of a local worship leader and the latest fads of the professional worship-leader-cum-pop-musician. Choruses must ever be the latest – those from 15-20 years ago have become tired, worn, and stale. There is a certain delight and temporary emotional satisfaction from this, no doubt. Such delight is not necessarily, however, a spiritual emotion or an indication of what it is acceptable to God. As the puritan Stephen Charnock argues:

> "[We cannot make] every delight an argument of a spiritual service. All the requisites to worship must be taken in. A man may invent a worship, and delight in it, as Micah in the adoration of his idol, when he was glad he had got both an ephod and a Levite, Judges 17. As a man may have a contentment in sin, so he may have a contentment in worship; not because it is a worship of God, but the worship of his own invention, agreeable to his own humour and design, as Isaiah 58:2, it is said, they delighted in approaching to God, but it was for carnal ends. Novelty engenders complacency; but it must be a worship wherein God will delight, and that must be a worship according to his own rule and infinite wisdom, and not our shallow fancies."

Once innovations have been made, they become dear to people through long familiar association and they are loath to part with them because of this. It can then become an appeal to age, tradition, and preference. We can think of the hymns that were introduced, first at the communion, then once a service at the end, and which then finally pushed out metrical psalms altogether. Although there was no

Stephen Charnock

biblical warrant for composing such non-inspired materials of praise, the impulse to innovation and novelty soon established the practice.

Change in the sense of reformation will sometimes be required but only in the direction of reforming worship closer to the Word of God. This was the view of the Westminster Assembly when they would only put aside the liturgy of the Church of England upon many "weighty considerations … not from any love to novelty" (Directory of Public Worship).

III. NOVELTY IN PREACHING

It is possible for those who believe themselves to be conservative and reformed in their doctrine and practice to pursue novelty in preaching. There is a desire for the rhetorical display of using expressions that are new and catching but do not mean much at all and may even be misleading. This was pointed out by J.W. Alexander in his book *The Preacher's Studies:*

James Waddell Alexander

> "The lust of novelty betrays some young preachers into a feverish thirst for new reading, in the course of which they scour the fields for every antithetic pungency, and every brilliant expression. For fear of commonplaces, they forbear to give utterance to those great, plain, simple, everlasting propositions, which after all are the main stones in the wall of truth. The preacher errs grievously, who shuns to announce obvious and familiar things, if only they be true and seasonable, and logically knit into the contexture. The most momentous sayings are simple; or rather, as Daniel Webster once said, 'All great things are simple.'"

The Apostles and their Lord were not afraid to use "great plainness of speech". It is possible to use academic theological words which people may not understand fully, or at all, but they may be taken with the novelty of it and the show of learning. Some of the controversy surrounding the *Marrow of Modern Divinity* in the early eighteenth century had to do with the use of new terms on the part of those promoting it, which made some think that it was new doctrine. As John Willison points out, this was partly "because in their sermons they disused and censured several old approven words and phrases as too legal, and affected some new modes of speaking."

Men may be tempted to look for fresh and striking topics for sermons or bold, rhetorical, and revolutionary interpretations of verses which go against received thinking and therefore make the preacher stand out. As Richard Baxter searchingly indicates, the danger is that preachers will cause people to "love novelty better than verity, and playing with words to please the fancy, rather than closing with Christ to save the soul." It is possible to "receive the word" with a carnal joy that may be based upon the novelty of it but this seed cannot last and continue to grow.

There is nothing wrong, however, with repeating vital truths. It is eminently biblical. Paul tells the Philippians (Phil. 3:1) that to write the same things was not grievous to him, and it was safe for them. They needed to hear these things again. Peter writes similarly to say that he would not be negligent to put them always in remembrance of those things that they knew (2 Pet. 1:12.)

IV. NOVELTY IN DOCTRINE

The Church must constantly be watching against novelty in doctrine because this commonly means serious heresy. Again there is a need for ensuring that our doctrine is firmly founded on the Scriptures, yet the Church has witnessed many heresies down through the centuries and learned

to guard against them. The desire for innovation in theology often comes from a root of pride. Calvin spoke bluntly of "little men of superstitious minds, who are always devising some novelty as a means of gaining admiration for themselves." Whatever the motive, however, it is pride that causes people to reject the illumination of the Holy Spirit in past generations of the Church and to assume that only what they have discovered in their own originality is valid. The Early Church Father, John Chrysostom, commented on the heretics such as Hymenaeus and Philetus that Paul speaks of in 2 Timothy 2. "He shows that novelty of doctrine is a disease, and worse than a disease. And here he implies that they are incorrigible, and that they erred not weakly but wilfully." Calvin preached on this chapter, solemnly drawing similar conclusions:

> "But it is true, our nature is such, that we take great pleasure in novelty, and in speculations which seem to be subtle. Therefore, let us beware, and think as we ought, that we may not profane God's holy Word. Let us seek that which edifieth, and not abuse ourselves by receiving that which hath no substance in it. It is hard to withdraw men from such vanity, because they are inclined to participate in it. But St Paul showeth that there is nothing more miserable than such vain curiosity: 'For they will increase unto more ungodliness.' As if he had said, my friends, you know not at first sight what hurt cometh by these deceivers; who go about to gain credit and estimation among you, and with pleasant toys endeavour to please you; but believe me, they are Satan's instruments and such as in no wise serve God but increase unto more wickedness; that is, if they are let alone, they will mar the Christian religion; they will not leave one jot safe and sound. Therefore, see that you flee them as plagues, although at first sight, the poison which they bring be not perceived."

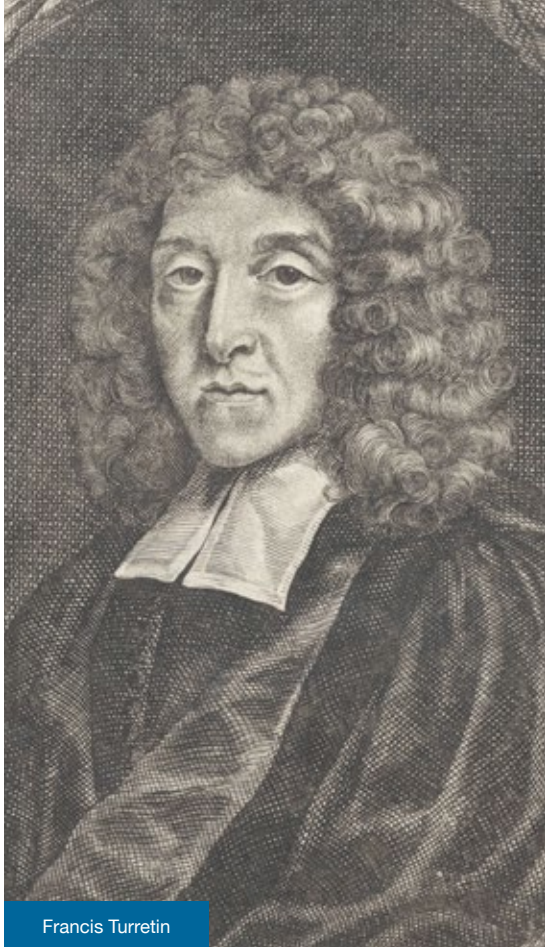
Evangelicalism is being assailed with a flood of novelty in doctrine at the present time. There is that from conservative evangelicals in the Federal Vision theology which distorts justification by faith alone. Some of the most alarming innovations, however, come from a so-called "post-conservative" handling of Scripture. Post-conservative means that people no longer wish to be bound to the Scriptures as their supreme authority. A high view of Scripture and theological novelty are impossible companions. There are the Open-theists such as Clark Pinnock who jettison the orthodox doctrine of God.

Then there is the ecumenical and professedly post-evangelical, post-doctrinal, and certainly postmodern Emerging Church movement. This movement has moved beyond the idea of giving the central and supreme place to Scripture. The latter is no doubt evangelicalism's love of novelty come to its fullest expression in every way. It has developed a rather Romish trend in worship by combining candles, incense, darkness, labyrinths, and silence. Is it not significant that one of Brian Maclaren's books is entitled *A New Kind of Christianity?*

Then there are those rejecting the doctrine of penal substitution, such as Steve Chalke. The general vanguard movement within evangelicalism is sometimes expressed as being towards experience over doctrine and as being inclusivistic instead of exclusivistic. Doctrine is being shaped by the values of contemporary secular society and what sounds acceptable within it. Chrysostom writes in his Commentary on Matthew about "the unsettling power of novelty", and evangelicalism is certainly unsettled in the current climate. Where there is little grounding in the truth, individuals are in danger of being tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine (Eph. 4:14), especially by anything that has the appearance of novelty.

When the Reformation was underway, the Reformers made it clear that they were countering the innovations of Rome with not only what the Scriptures taught but what the Early Church believed, from which Rome had defected. As his prefatory address to the *Institutes* shows, Calvin roundly rejected the idea that the Reformers were introducing anything novel. He responds adamantly to those that would try to label the Reformation teaching as novel:

> "First, in calling it new, they are exceedingly injurious to God, whose sacred word deserved not to be charged with novelty. To them, indeed, I very little doubt it is new, as Christ is new, and the Gospel new; but those who are acquainted with the old saying of Paul, that Christ Jesus 'died for our sins, and rose again for our justification' (Rom. 4: 25), will not detect any novelty in us. That it long lay buried and unknown is the guilty consequence of man's impiety; but now when, by the kindness of God, it is restored to us, it ought to resume its antiquity just as the returning citizen resumes his rights."



Francis Turretin

Later theologians such as Francis Turretin also disclaimed novelty. "I avoided [novelty] most diligently lest it should contain anything new, a stranger from the word of God and from the public forms received in our churches, and nothing is built up there that is not confirmed by the vote of our most proven theologians."

V. CONCLUSION

One could also refer to novelty in practice which, besides introducing innumerable gimmicks and paraphernalia that only serve to trivialise religion, also rejects vital godliness and Christian experience as a thing of the past. John Kennedy of Dingwall

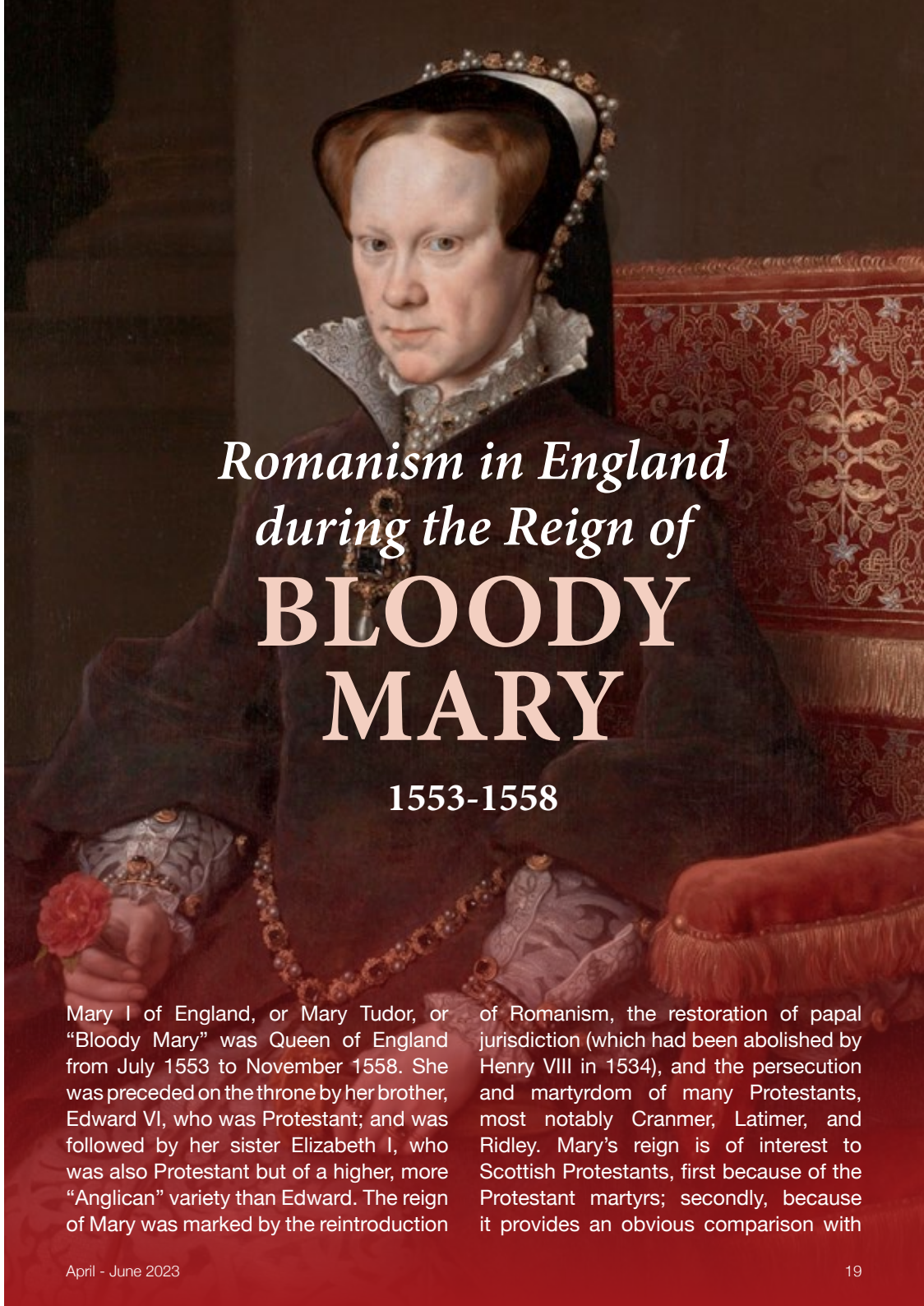
saw this spirit very clearly in nineteenth-century Scotland:

> "As the tide of declension is moving on, an impression is produced in the hearts of those who are adrift that all things which they are leaving behind them are but relics of darker times. Adherence to what is antiquated is all that is implied, they say, in the conservatism that cleaves to 'the old paths' and 'the good way' in which our fathers walked. It is characteristic of young men that they do not like to appear to be behind the age. They must be abreast of the intelligence of a century so enlightened as this is. They must cast away the old clothes of traditionalism, and must learn to sneer at the days and ways that are gone, that they may be like those who assume to be the leaders of thought – the advanced guard of the army of progress. They must neither think nor speak like the men of earlier, and, therefore, more benighted times!
>
> … But, my young friends, be not led away by this affectation of progress with its contempt for what is past. There never was a time when in science there was more utterly baseless speculation, and in which more structures of lies were reared within the religious sphere than now. There never was an age of more hasty thinking and of more hazy utterance than the present in all things affecting what is divine and spiritual. But God is unchanging. On that grand truth firmly plant your foot in faith. The law of God is unchanging. That truth is another strong foothold. On these be 'steadfast and unmovable' in the midst of all present unsettlement of thought and practice."

John Kennedy of Dingwall

Although the desire for it may be insatiable among evangelicals, truly "novelty is the last object which a wise inquirer will seek" (J.W. Alexander). What should we seek? We are not left without an answer:

> "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken." (Jeremiah 6:16-17).



Romanism in England during the Reign of BLOODY MARY

1553-1558

Mary I of England, or Mary Tudor, or "Bloody Mary" was Queen of England from July 1553 to November 1558. She was preceded on the throne by her brother, Edward VI, who was Protestant; and was followed by her sister Elizabeth I, who was also Protestant but of a higher, more "Anglican" variety than Edward. The reign of Mary was marked by the reintroduction of Romanism, the restoration of papal jurisdiction (which had been abolished by Henry VIII in 1534), and the persecution and martyrdom of many Protestants, most notably Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley. Mary's reign is of interest to Scottish Protestants, first because of the Protestant martyrs; secondly, because it provides an obvious comparison with

Scottish Romanism in the same period; thirdly, because of possible influence it may have had on Scotland; and lastly, because John Knox had been ministering in England from 1549-1552 and knew many of the leading Protestants who were martyred (especially John Rough, d. 1557, who had been with Knox in St Andrews Castle in 1547), and others who were exiled to Geneva. He was therefore deeply affected by the events in England.

I. PECULIARITIES OF MARY'S REIGN

The Romanism reintroduced during the reign of Bloody Mary had several peculiarities.

The first was that England was *out of favour with the Pope* during the larger part of Mary's reign. Mary's mother was Catherine of Aragon (in Spain), and Mary was married to Phillip II, King of Spain, in June 1554; and the Pope from May 1555 was Gianpetro Carafa, Paul IV, who had a hatred of all things Spanish. During his papacy, he promoted the Roman Inquisition, and imprisoned numerous prominent figures in Rome on suspicion of heresy. One person that he wanted to imprison in this way was Cardinal Reginald Pole, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1556, for whom he had a longstanding dislike. A previous pope had sent Pole as Papal legate to England, but Paul IV stripped Pole of this status and recalled him to Rome in June 1557. Mary, however, would not give permission for Pole to leave England, and the result was a practical estrangement between England and the papacy for the final year of Mary's reign. Mary and Pole died on the same day, 17th November 1558, and Paul IV rejoiced at the news, even though it meant the restoration of Protestantism to England.

A second peculiarity of Mary's reign was that *her persecution of Protestants was unusually severe* by contemporary European standards. The martyrdoms started in February 1555, and in the space of three and a half years, about 285 people were burnt at the stake. Many of the richer ones escaped abroad (and, indeed, were allowed to escape) and it was often the poorer people – who posed no threat to the stability of the kingdom – who were burnt. The number of English martyrs during this period exceeds the combined number of martyrs (whether Protestant, or just heterodox by Inquisition standards) in both France and Spain in any comparable three-and-a-half-year span. What motivated Mary's regime to persecute Protestantism so intensely?

A third peculiarity was *the exclusion of the Jesuits from England* during Mary's reign. During his long period in Italy, Pole had been friendly with Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, and Loyola was very keen to start a Jesuit mission in England, but Pole would not give permission. The reason for this refusal is not known, though many suggestions have been made. Jesuit missions flourished elsewhere in Europe, but not in England.

A fourth peculiarity was *the strange case of Bartolomeo Carranza.* Carranza (1503-1576) was a prominent Spanish Dominican friar who had been the Imperial theologian at the Council of Trent from 1545-1548 and 1551-1553 and who came to England in 1554 with Philip II as a religious adviser. He could not speak English, but he was friendly with Pole, and his advice was often taken – for example that the bodies of Martin Bucer in Cambridge and Peter Martyr's wife in Oxford should be exhumed and burnt. In 1555 Carranza was asked by Pole's Legatine Council to draw up a *Catechism* to counter

Reginald Pole

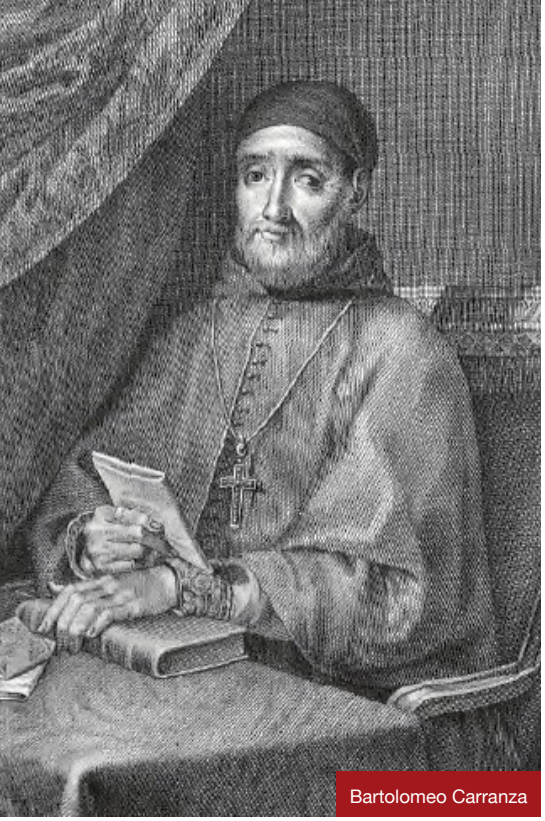
Philip II

Protestant teaching in England, and this was eventually published in Spanish in Antwerp in 1558, with English and Latin translations in preparation. By this time Carranza had been appointed Archbishop of Toledo (the Spanish equivalent of Archbishop of Canterbury), but when he proceeded to Spain to take up his position, he was, after ten months, arrested by the Spanish Inquisition on suspicion of Protestant leanings, largely on account of material in his *Catechism*. He was to remain imprisoned by the Inquisition under investigation for heresy for the next seventeen years, until within a few weeks of his death. Extraordinarily, notwithstanding the suspicions of heterodoxy, his *Catechism* was used as a basis for the *Roman Catechism* produced by the Council of Trent in 1566.

From all these, it can be seen that there was something odd about English Romanism under Mary. What was going on?

One other strange thing, from a Scottish perspective, was the very limited contact between Romanism in England and in Scotland during Mary's reign. This was for political reasons – Scotland, with Mary of Guise as Regent, was aligned with France; while Mary Tudor was aligned with Spain, the bitter rival and enemy of France.

Furthermore, England and Scotland were traditional enemies; and war, or the threat of war, was never far away – war was threatened between the end of 1553 and the beginning of 1556 and was waged sporadically between the end of 1557 and Mary's death in November 1558. Thus, while the reintroduction of Romanism in England must have reduced the Protestant influence crossing the border into Scotland, and made the obtaining of English Bibles more difficult, it had no direct effect on Romanism in Scotland, which operated independently of England.



Bartolomeo Carranza

II. CONTROVERSY AMONG THE HISTORIANS

For the last forty years, the reign of Mary, and the religion of her reign, has been a subject of intense interest and controversy among British, Continental, and American historians, with dozens of books and papers published in the area. Basic questions have included, "What was the nature of the Romanism reintroduced to England?"; "Was it *successful*, i.e. was England more or less Romanist in 1558 at the end of her reign than in 1553 at the start of it?"; and "Who was responsible for the severe persecution?"; and these questions have received very varying answers. The "traditional view", supposedly maintained by A.G. Dickens and G.R. Elton in the mid-twentieth century, was that Mary's reign was an unsuccessful and imprudent attempt, in the face of a rising tide of Protestantism, to go back to the modified Romanism of the latter part of Henry VIII's reign; and that the severe persecution was counter-productive because it sickened the English and turned them towards Protestantism.

This view was attacked from the early 1980s, with "revisionist" historians such as Eamon Duffy arguing that Protestantism was far less popular than had been supposed; that Mary and Pole had a coherent and "sensible" plan for promoting streamlined Counter-Reformation Romanism; that this plan was working, and only failed because of the death of Mary; and that the severe persecution was not unpopular and was effectively stamping out Protestantism. Since then, "post-revisionist" historians have appeared, challenging and modifying the views of the revisionists. One of the latest, Frederick E. Smith, argues that the Marian Church contained several different strands of Romanism, essentially in competition with each other.

III. WHAT SORT OF ROMANISM PREVAILED IN ENGLAND UNDER MARY?

Without delving into all the discussions on this subject, one interesting general conclusion is the leavening influence that thirty years of Protestantism had already had on English Romanism. The effect of this was the downplaying of some of the more "medieval" aspects of Romanism such as pilgrimages, saints, images, purgatory, indulgences, and monasticism. These things were not wholly absent under Mary but they did not recover the prominence of forty years before. The heart of Mary's personal religion, and of the Romanism of her reign, was the Mass and transubstantiation; and it was for the denial of transubstantiation that most of the Protestant martyrs were burnt. Scottish Romanism up to 1559 was probably more "medieval" than English Romanism.

Another significant feature of the Marian Church was the degree of control that Mary exercised as Queen. Papal supremacy had notionally been restored, but in practice, Mary remained in a strong position. One example of this was the prayer that Mary introduced in the Mass for her father, "a king of most pious memory" *(regem piissimae memoriae).* Archbishop Pole deplored this prayer, partly because it lacked papal approval and partly because Henry VIII had sought to execute Pole for his opposition to Henry's divorce; and failing to catch Pole, Henry had executed Pole's mother and brother instead. From 1557, when Mary was defying the Pope in refusing to permit Pole's return to Rome, the English Church was very much in the position that it had been under Henry VIII when he declared himself to be its "supreme head".

Bishop Stephen Gardiner

IV. WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BURNINGS?

John Foxe (1517-1587), whose various editions of *Actes and Monuments* (1563, 1570, 1576, 1583) are the main source of information about the martyrdoms, chiefly blamed them on the English bishops, especially Stephen Gardiner (Bishop of Winchester) and Edmund Bonner (Bishop of London). He exonerated Mary; and of Pole he said that he was "no great bloody persecutor". Gardiner was certainly enthusiastic about the burnings in the beginning but according to Foxe, he was heartily weary of them by the summer of 1555, and died a few months later; and yet the deaths continued.

Since Foxe's time, other information has become available and other names have been suggested as the main instigators of persecution. In the 1950s, the Roman Catholic historian Philip Hughes blamed Philip II. Philip was certainly used to brutal religious persecutions in Spain, and continued them on his return to Spain after the death of Mary, but there is no evidence, apparently, that he advocated such a policy in England, and in 1556, one of his religious advisers, Juan de Villagarcia, vainly interceded for mercy towards Cranmer. In recent years, Cardinal Pole's *Correspondence* has been

published, which shows that he was much more heartily and actively involved in the burnings than Foxe realised. Bartolomeo Carranza, too, played his part in egging Pole on, and one contemporary alleged that Carranza saw Pole "as being softer than he would have wished in the punishment of [heretics]."

Much of the blame, however, must attach to Mary herself. Her mother's divorce from Henry VIII, and her own unhappy upbringing, had given her a deep bitterness against Protestantism, and against Cranmer in particular. She was an intelligent and well-educated woman and yet she had been stubbornly clinging to the Mass over many years, in the face of the obvious biblical and common-sense arguments. The foundation of her religion was mere tradition and superstition, leaving her vulnerable to Protestant criticism which she wanted to silence. She had imbibed the idea that the burning of "heretics" was a ruler's duty and was pleasing to God, and that heretics were "like infected animals, needing to be burned to protect the rest of the flock". Several modern historians have expressed their disapproval for her name "Bloody Mary" but it is not one that does her any injustice.

V. DID MARY'S REIGN INCREASE THE SUPPORT FOR ROMANISM IN ENGLAND?

Questions of this sort are very difficult to answer. One can now read *ad nauseam* about the "intense", "vibrant", and "dynamic" Romanism of Mary's reign, but some of the evidence supporting these claims could do with careful sifting.

For example, Pole is set forth as an enthusiastic proponent and exponent of preaching. One of his own surviving sermons, however, was described by contemporaries as "meagre", "jejune (uninteresting)", and appearing ignorant of theology. Another surviving sermon, summarised at length by Eamon Duffy, sounds more a religio-political lecture than a sermon, and reveals an astonishing hatred, malevolence, and insecurity towards Protestants. The London martyrs (who numbered well over a hundred) were dismissed as a multitude of "brambles and briars" which had been "cast in the fire". Preached in London on 30th November 1557, within a year of his death, it gives no indication of a country in which Romanism was peacefully prevailing.

Count Feria, the Spanish ambassador, arrived in London in January 1558 and thereafter made some well-known negative reports about Pole – that he was "lukewarm" and was (in Duffy's words) "sleep-walking through his task of re-Catholicizing England". In more than one of Duffy's works, these remarks are dealt with early on, apparently so as to negate their force. They date from March 1558 – time for Feria to acquire a reasonable grasp of the situation – and within eight months of the end of Mary's reign. They give a very different picture from the confident and "vibrant" one that Duffy was seeking to present:

> "Your Majesty [Philip II] asks me various things about which I will now reply. If I have not done so before, it is because I am at my wits' end with these people here, as God shall be my witness, and I do not know what to do. Your Majesty must realise that from night to morning and morning to night they change everything they have decided, and it is impossible to make them see what a state they are in, although it is the worst any country has ever fallen into. If it were only a question of them, I think the best thing to do would be to let them get into the power of anyone who might take them over, for that is what they deserve. But I am afraid they might drag us after them, as your Majesty may consider. … The Cardinal [Pole] is a dead man, and although I have been able to warm him up a little by talking to him every day, and what he has heard from Italy since the fall of Calais has stirred him somewhat, the result is not all I could wish."

At the end of 1555, Pole's Legatine Council advanced various proposals for the strengthening of Romanism in England. Much is made of this Council, although its decrees were never promulgated, and were only finally published as *Reformatio Angliae* in Rome in 1562. One of the proposals involved various publications, but the implementation of this was leisurely. The only one of these publications to appear in English was printed in June 1558, while another one, Carranza's *Catechism*, mentioned above, was published in Spanish in 1558, but with the Latin and English translations still not ready. Mary's death brought Pole's whole scheme to an early end, and Elizabeth had no great difficulty in re-establishing Protestantism. A case can certainly be presented that Mary's reign strengthened English Romanism, but how sober and balanced the reasoning is is another matter.

VI. CONCLUSION

Mary's reign helps to explain why the Mass loomed so large in the Scottish Reformation of 1559-60. Romanism in Scotland in the 1550s had not been leavened by Protestantism to the extent that Romanism in England had, but nevertheless, it was the abolishing of the Mass, even more than the destruction of the friaries, that was the great aim of Knox and his fellow Scottish Reformers. Events in England had made the Mass – or the rejection of the Mass – the great litmus-test between Romanism and Protestantism. By contrast, the doctrine of Justification by Faith was much less of an issue, and indeed there were Scottish Romanists who were ready to accept Justification by Faith but who still wanted to retain the Mass.

The difficulty of accounting for the Reformation, and for the rise of Protestantism, is not going to go away. Romanism does have an appeal to the fallen human heart that Protestantism lacks, but how then did Protestantism ever prevail? This is the problem of the Reformation for the secular historian. The real explanation is that the conversion of a sinner from irreligion or false religion to the truth is a supernatural work of the Spirit of God. It made no difference to the power of the Spirit whether Romanism was in a feeble or "vibrant" condition in the 1550s, and whether Protestantism was popular or unpopular with the English laity. The same mighty Power was able to bring "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God". The Reformation happened because many people – including some prominent and powerful ones – were truly converted at around the same time, in England and Scotland and elsewhere. How and why this happened will always be a puzzle to secular historians; and indeed the people of God have no better explanation than, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight" (Mt 11:26).

Zwingli:
God's Armed Prophet

Bruce Gordon

(New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021), 376 pages, hb, price £25.

This is a much better book than first appears. It gets off to a bad start with the author telling us that he has "kept masculine pronouns for the deity, mindful that for many it jars with modern views" (p. xv). Perhaps Yale University Press demands a nod of this sort in the direction of "wokeness". Thereafter, however, the author settles down to a very readable, well-informed, comprehensive, and broadly sympathetic account of Zwingli's life and opinions. A vast amount of material is touched upon, without entering into excessive detail. Each chapter is broken up into short sections of two or three pages so that the less energetic reader can proceed a little at a time.

The most interesting point, overall, is the author's contention that Zwingli (1484-1531) was the originator of the Reformed Church (p. 6):

> "Zwingli envisaged a new form of Church, a new understanding of the sacraments, and a new way of being the sacral community. That vision would ultimately become the 'Reformed tradition', often misleadingly known as 'Calvinism', and its theology and forms of Church would find a multitude of expression. Their origins lay in the aspirations of a peasant's son from Toggenburg."

This theme is established as the book traces the development of Zwingli's thought in response to the providential events of his life. Those who adhere to the Reformed Church will be interested to see the gradual emergence in Zwingli's thinking of truths which are important to them; and will glorify God in bringing these precious things to light in the way that he did.

Bruce Gordon is the Titus Street Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Yale Divinity School. Previously he was Professor of Modern History at St Andrews University. He has written books on Calvin, Calvin's *Institutes*, and the Swiss Reformation, among other topics.

There are a couple of useful maps. The book is nicely produced and reasonably priced with some interesting illustrations (and two or three less appropriate ones). One small blemish or omission is that Francois Lambert of Avignon who held a public debate with Zwingli in Zurich in 1522 (p. 68), and may well have been converted as a result of that debate, is none other than the important reformer Francis Lambert of Marburg. Lambert in turn strongly influenced the Scottish reformer and martyr Patrick Hamilton during his brief stay at Marburg in 1527, and it was Lambert who persuaded Hamilton to write his *Patrick's Places*. Thus *Patrick's Places* probably owes something of its origin and theology to Zwingli. Lambert is unwittingly omitted in the index, but here we have strong supporting evidence that Zwingli was indeed the "father" of the Reformed Church.

JOHN WELSH OF AYR

I. A BOY

As a boy growing up in the south of Scotland, John Welsh was known for rebellious behaviour. He used to run away from school. After he had finished his schooling, he left his father's house and went to join a gang of thieves near the border with England. At that time England and Scotland were separate countries. The gang would rob people on both sides of the border. He stayed with the gang for a long time until he wore out a suit of clothes. Like the prodigal son in the Bible, he found he had lost a great deal and was now in rags, and just like the prodigal son he decided to go back to his father and his house. But he knew his father would not be pleased with all that he had been doing, so he went to his aunt and begged her to speak kindly to his father on his behalf. So he stayed with her for a while.

One day his father came, and his aunt brought up the subject of his son by asking if he had any news. "The first news I expect to hear of him is, that he is hanged for a thief," exclaimed his father. But his aunt pointed out that many who once were known for bad lives had changed their ways. The father still lamented the wicked ways of his son but then he decided to ask the aunt, had she heard any news of him, was he alive? "Yes," she replied and she hoped he would prove "a better man than he had been a boy."

She then called John and out he came weeping. He kneeled down and begged his father, for Christ's sake, to pardon his wicked ways and promised to be a new person. His father did not relent at first, but the tears of his son and the pleading of the aunt won him over. John pleaded with his father to send him to college, and if he returned to his old ways his father would be right to disown him. He proved not only to be a good student but was truly converted and now wanted to become a minister. It was an amazing transformation!

II. A MINISTER

So John became a minister not too far from the border in the town of Selkirk which was an area where the gospel had only penetrated in part. Welsh was always a man of prayer who often spent up to 7 or 8 hours in prayer each day. It is said that, when he went to bed at night, he would lay a big tartan blanket on top of him. When he awoke during the night he would pray and cover himself from the cold with the blanket. He preached publicly every day and while many appreciated him there, the wicked people of the area wanted rid of him because he faithfully exposed their evil lives. They even cut off the back of Welsh's horses so that they died.

Before long Welsh went to Kirkcudbright which was in the south west of Scotland and near the sea. Here there were a number of converts, but it was not long, either, before he went to the town most connected with his name, the larger town of Ayr. This was another place well known for its wickedness. Godliness was so much hated by so many that no-one would give John Welsh somewhere to stay when he arrived. But he found a Christian man who let him live in part of his house.

III. MINISTER OF AYR

Ayr was such a violent place at the time that it was dangerous just to walk down the street. There were quarrels and conflicts that frequently led to blood-shedding as swords were brandished. John was determined to bring this to an end. When a fight broke out, he would rush into the midst of it with his head protected by a helmet. Then he sought to bring them to be reconciled. He would sit them down to a table in the middle of the street where he would pray and urge them to become friends. Then they would eat and drink together and finally it would all conclude with singing a psalm. He also did what he could to ensure that the Lord's Day was kept holy in the town.

People began to pay attention to him and respect him. They knew that he lived close to the Lord. Again he would preach each day and again he would spend much time in prayer, sometimes whole nights at the church. After he married the daughter of John Knox, he would spend much time during the night in prayer. She heard some of the things he would pray, one of which was "Lord, wilt thou not grant me Scotland?"

IV. BANISHED TO FRANCE

Scotland needed much prayer. King James was forcing bishops on the Church who would rule it according to his will. He was determined to remove the authority of General Assemblies where ministers and elders would come together to agree matters on the basis of God's Word. He forbade them to meet, and when they did meet without his authority, James seized on leading ministers and put them in prison. John Welsh among them was sent from prison to prison until he was banished from Scotland altogether, and had to go to France. Rather than complain, he was thankful to God that he had ever had opportunity to serve him. "Who am I," he exclaimed, "that he should first have called me, and then constituted me a minister of the glad tidings of the gospel of salvation these years past, and now, last of all, to be a sufferer for his cause and kingdom?" Why was he suffering? It was, he said, for the sake of Christ as Head of his Church and who only had the right to order things in it. Just before he set sail for France, friends came to see him off; they sang Psalm 23 together and watched him depart.

V. MINISTER IN FRANCE

He had only been there a little more than three months when he could preach in French. He became a minister in two different places and served there for sixteen years. But in France he was not free from the wrath of kings because Louis XIII of France decided to fight against Protestants. His army surrounded the town of St Jean d'Angely where Welsh was. He encouraged the people to stand firm. He needed that courage and faith himself because at one time a cannon ball was fired through the wall of his room and broke the bed on which he was lying. His first reaction was to get on his knees and give thanks to the Lord for such a deliverance. Welsh also boldly preached before some of the king's court when they were allowed to come into the city during a time of truce. The king was annoyed, but after he had spoken with Welsh he said he wanted him to be his chaplain!

But the king came back and conquered the city. Welsh had already left for La Rochelle. He was now unwell, however, and he requested that he would be permitted to return to his native land. His wife bravely went to speak with King James who was very rude to her. She held her ground but the king was in no mood to be kind. Welsh was now clearly dying but he was much in prayer as ever. The Lord drew near to him in his soul. He had such a sense of this that he once cried, "O Lord, hold thy hand; it is enough; thy servant is a clay vessel, and can hold no more!"

The time came when he had an opportunity to preach once more, but this was to be his last sermon. Two hours later, his soul passed peacefully into the presence of the Lord whom he had served so faithfully.

Do you pray regularly? Do you know what it is to be earnest in prayer? John Welsh shows us what it is to be faithful in prayer, as well as in his life and commitment to the Lord Jesus. He had confidence in God's promises about prayer, such as "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jeremiah 33:3). Here is a promise for you about prayer: "Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:12-13).

Society & Branch News

VISITS TO THE MAGDALEN CHAPEL

The Magdalen Chapel continues to be open to the public as the availability of volunteer staff permits. Private viewings are also possible and can be arranged either by texting 07857 472394 or emailing the Secretary at info@scottishreformationsociety.org. In the last year, in addition to a considerable number from Britain, there have been visitors from Mexico, Spain, the Netherlands, Brazil, Germany, France, Saudi Arabia, the Philippines, the Czech Republic, Sudan, Chile, Egypt, Italy, Israel, Switzerland, Belgium, Croatia, Russia, Malaysia, and Canada. There have also been many American visitors, and the following states have been mentioned: Virginia, Washington, Iowa, Texas, New York, California, Illinois, Florida, Maryland, Kansas, Wisconsin, and Washington DC. Viewing is free but the Society welcomes donations for the maintenance of the Chapel.

ONLINE SUMMER CONFERENCE ON JAMES BEGG

The 2023 online summer conference will be held on Friday 18th August, DV, from 7 to 9 pm (BST). The subject is *James Begg and the Union Controversy of 1873*. The speakers are Rev. Iain Wright (Orlando Park, IL) and Rev. Dr Alasdair Macleod. See the separate notice for further details.

THE 2023 AGM

2PM, SATURDAY 2ND SEPTEMBER DV, MAGDALEN CHAPEL

In addition to the business meeting, there will be a short address by the Chairman.

ONLINE

JAMES BEGG CONFERENCE

FRIDAY 18TH AUGUST 2023 DV

Subject: **James Begg and the Union Controversy of 1873**

Speakers: **7pm Rev. Iain Wright** (Orlando Park, IL)
Subject: *"James Begg: an honest and consistent man"*

8pm Rev. Dr Alasdair Macleod
Subject: *"James Begg's role in the Union Controversy, 1863-1873"*

The link for joining the meeting will be posted on the Society's website in due course.

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MEMBERSHIP & BULWARK SUBSCRIPTIONS

All correspondence regarding Membership and *Bulwark* subscriptions should be sent to the Treasurer, Mr Hugh Morrison, 288 South Gyle Road, Edinburgh, EH12 9DU. Email: treasurer@scottishreformationsociety.com. The subscription is £10 per annum for membership of the Society and £15 per annum for the *Bulwark*. Membership forms can be obtained from the Treasurer or downloaded from the website www.scottishreformationsociety.org

Front cover: Admiral de Coligny by François Clouet