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Papists and Puritans Under Elizabeth I

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A third act dealt with Catholic fugitives overseas. Here the government had in mind not only the exiles like those at Louvain, whose literary efforts were regarded with alarm, but also those who had fled after the Rising of the Northern Earls. The Acte agaynst Fugytives over the sea¹ asserted that these fugitives revealed the secrets of the realm, carried away large sums of money, practised rebellion, and made fraudulent conveyance of their lands in England by which they still retained the use of them. Anyone who had gone or who should go overseas without license and who did not return within six months was to forfeit the profits of his lands and all his goods and chattels. Fraudulent conveyances were to be void, and trustees who did not report them were subject to penalties. There was, however, an interesting distinction made between the different kinds of exiles. It was enacted that 'Yf any person by reason of his blinde zeale and conscience onely, departe beyonde the Seas without Lycense' and was not in any way involved in treasonable activity, then the Lord Chancellor might make provision 'for his desolate wyf and children' to the extent of between one-third and one-quarter of his estate. Anyone who came back and who did 'fullye reconcyle hymself to the true Religion established by the order of Law', declaring this to the bishop and 'shewing the same openly by commynge to the Devyne Servyce by Order of this Realme appoynted and receavyng the Holy Communion', might after a year recover his lands and profits.

The Rising of the Northern Earls in 1569 and the bull of excommunication of 1570 provided justification for those who argued that Catholics wished to overthrow the government by force. This belief was further strengthened in 1571 by the uncovering of the Ridolfi Plot. Although the traditional story of the plot can no longer be accepted, and although there is a good deal of uncertainty about the precise rôle of Ridolfi himself and of Mary Queen of Scots, and the duke of Norfolk,² there is no doubt that the pope gave enthusiastic support to the enterprise, which was intended to lead to a rising in England backed by Spanish troops. Ridolfi may have been in some degree a double agent and his scheme was completely unrealistic, but this does not alter the fact that the pope and the Spanish king supported the attempt to change the government of England. As Cecil and Walsingham uncovered more and more evidence in the last

¹ 13 Eliz. c. 3: *Statutes of the Realm*, IV, 531 ff.

² See p. 65 and note 1.

months of 1571, th could be used to Lord Burghley ga Aldermen of Lon known to a wider Tower in Septemb ally executed on lucky to escape w in no way implic they had no cont papacy and of Sp Catholicism as a Roman Catholici in 1572. Archbish destruction of Pro pressed dislike of feriors how they 1 Their imps be m places, as I am i princely cruelty a

It is impossible before the coming that there were la say who should t that there were pe laid down by lav secret. The streng ber of Catholic p priests were still question about w number was grea there was contin few replacements ment was achiev

¹ V. J. K. Brook, *The*

² T. F. Knox, *The* 1878, lxi-lxii, suggest duces a certain amou 1576 and of whom th at the peril of his life