

Church History Senior S 5

but they were comparatively few in number and very poor people with very little influence in this country at the time of the revolutionary war. After that they expanded and expanded rapidly but up to that time their influence was far less than that of the other groups.

Now the result of the revolution as far as the Roman catholic church was concerned was to give it new lease of life in this country. In Great Britain under Queen Mary who had attempted to force everyone to become Roman catholic, there was such a fear of Roman catholicism, and then the attempt of James II to do the same thing, a century later, led to such a fear of Roman catholicism that Roman catholics couldn't hold any services in England. They couldn't vote, had little power in the government for two centuries. Roman catholics in England were a very much depressed group.

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Among these Roman catholics in England there were some men of considerable means. There were some members of the nobility who kept up their religion all this period, observing their ceremonies of their religion very privately and being careful not to become particularly conspicuous in the nation because the nation was very strongly opposed to Roman catholicism. The result was that in the English colonies in the United States Roman catholicism was forbidden in practically all the colonies with the exception of Maryland, even in those colonies which, like Rhode Island gave religious freedom to almost any other group. There was at least a law on the statute books forbidding the practice of the performance of the Roman catholic mass or forbidding any adherent of Roman catholicism to be a citizen of the state. That was the situation up until the revolutionary war and the few Roman catholics in America were regarded as subject to the direction of the few Roman catholic leaders in Great Britain and simply as a part of the very small and almost nonexistent English Roman catholic church, but as soon as the revolution had come to its end this situation in the United States was entirely changed. The attitude of the revolutionists was to get away from every restricted