

CONSPIRACY AND CONSCIENCE.

A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE GUNPOWDER PLOT.

By JOHN KNIPE.

A CONTEMPORARY JUDGMENT.

IN a seventeenth-century account of the Gunpowder Plot the writer, a good man unknown, whose conscience was plainly perplexed by the cold-blooded proceedings of the conspirators, as well as shocked and horrified, makes a psychological reflection which while it is quaintly worded is almost modern in its shrewd analysis of motive, consent, and action.

He says: "There are no conspiracies and insurrections more dangerous to States and Governments than those that the name of religion is made to patronize, for when that does head and manage the party as it makes it look somewhat considerable in itself, so it does inspire those that are concerned, with a certain furious and intemperate zeal and an ungovernable violence."

Here he shows that a Religious Motive demanding rebellion in its own interest, dignifies actual Crime, and takes away the moral restraint of religion from the criminal, and still worse his devout instincts become so perverted that he sins deeper by his exceptional violence than the common thief, cut-throat or murderer who offends by custom and habit. This is Motive or Cause leading to Consent founded on Fallacy which the chronicler defines thus: "They then rebel with authority and kill with a safe conscience and think they cannot do amiss as long as it is to do God service."

So Religion, as a moral influence, is lost on such minds. What check is left? Not natural affection, for "The brother will then deliver up the brother to death . . . and the laws of nature which are of themselves sacred and inviolable shall, in such a case be despised and lose their authority."

This comment was penned when the memory of the notorious attempt was fresh in the public mind, and the writer seems to have been a Londoner from the way he writes of the events connected with the plot. He returns repeatedly to stress such scruples or hesitations as he thinks he can discover among the conspirators and their friends. He wonders if one had openly refused after he shared the fatal knowledge whether it might not have forced the rest to abandon the attempt altogether. I have been able to trace some facts which have been before rather overlooked, incidents which throw some light on this very question. It was not left out of his scheming by the chief conspirator :

ROBERT CATESBY. THE BRAIN OF THE PLOT.

All accounts agree it was "Catesby's Conspiracy" and Guy Fawkes, a soldier of fortune, simply obeyed Catesby's orders, and was hired as an expert "sieger," one of the many discontented English Roman Catholics who took service under Spain in the Low Countries. Catesby was a very remarkable man and the Roman Catholic writers paint his portrait in dark colours, even blackening his character for years before his treason. He was born in 1573, at Lapworth in Warwickshire, of an old Roman Catholic family, his father Sir William Catesby a devout gentleman who was always in trouble as a noted recusant, his mother Anne daughter of Sir Robert Throckmorton. Robert, who was the only surviving son, went for a time to Gloucester Hall (now Worcester College), Oxford, favoured by the recusant gentry, who withdrew their sons after a year or two's residence, to escape the obligations of the Supremacy Oath. Young Catesby, by the best accounts, then went on to the Jesuit College at Douai. Sir William was forced to compound his recusancy fines at one-fifth of his income in 1585, and harshly imprisoned with his friend Sir Thomas Tresham at Ely in 1588. On plea of ill-health he obtained some indulgence from the Queen.

Robert is accused by Father Gerard, S.J., of being "very wild and he kept company with the best noblemen and wasted a good part of his living." Marriage in 1592 may have steadied him, for he was very happy in his home, and a devoted husband to his wife, Catherine Leigh of Stoneleigh, Warwickshire. As he was only nineteen, the marriage with their neighbour's daughter was probably arranged, for the following year he inherited from his grandmother the fine estate of Castleton. While his wife lived Catesby kept quiet, but she died after the birth of his second son. The elder boy died in infancy, and in 1598 old Sir William Catesby's death removed the one person who might have controlled Catesby's headstrong disposition. 1601 saw him hotly engaged in the Essex Rebellion, and inciting his friends the Wrights, Francis Tresham, Thomas Winter, and John Grant of Norbrook, all fiery and turbulent young men of good family and Jesuit supporters.

Catesby was captured, badly wounded and sent to the Tower. He might have been executed, but Elizabeth was merciful, though she exacted a heavy fine of 4,000 Marks (£3,000) and Catesby had the mortification of seeing 1,200 Marks of his fine bestowed by the Queen on Bacon. To raise such a sum he was forced to sell Castleton Manor, and employed the good offices of his friend Thomas Percy, steward or agent to the Earl of Northumberland. Catesby left the Tower not only poorer in estate but embittered and brooding over his misfortunes.

He plotted ardently with the Jesuits in connection with the Secret Mission to Madrid, and persuaded his great friend Thomas Winter of Huddington to accompany Father Greenway (whom we shall find very prominent later on) to the Court of Spain, where they were introduced by Father Cresswell, another Jesuit. The

mission was financed by Lord Monteagle and helped by Tresham, who had also been recently fined for his rebellion, but Father Garnet and Catesby were the instigators.

An invasion was planned for the following spring, with a rising at home. Elizabeth's death spoiled the plot, for Philip III preferred the chances of a stable peace with James. Among those "principal Papists made sure during the Queen's sickness" mentioned in the King's Proclamation, we read that Robert Catesby of Ashby St. Ledgers, Northampton, was imprisoned in London to prevent trouble; he was released at the peaceable accession of the King of Scots.

He was living with his widowed mother in her house, which would come to him by reversion, but Ashby St. Ledgers was Lady Catesby's dower. There were quarrels when her restless son sold other reversionary property, for Catesby was obliged to meet fines and he certainly financed Jesuit missionaries and other priests. He was now deeply in with malcontents and had meditated a powder plot to get rid of Elizabeth, having seen a Papal Brief in which the Pope bade them see the Succession secured to a Roman Catholic prince, and "desired when it occurred to be informed of the death of that miserable woman" (the Queen).

Christopher Wright returned from the Second Secret Mission to Madrid, where he almost certainly met Guy Fawkes, sent by Sir William Stanley and Captain Hugh Owen with the connivance of Father Baldwin. Both emissaries were coldly rebuffed by Philip III, who had already asked King James to receive a special Embassy of Peace. (1603, May.) And at home the Roman Catholics declared they would wait and see what were the new King's intentions towards them.

MR. THOMAS PERCY had gone privately to Holyrood and returned cock-a-hoop, swearing loudly that he had the own assurance from the royal lips that the odious Penal Laws should be recalled, and Roman Catholic grievances amended. This promise given before his accession may or may not be true. It seems that James did give some general, and probably vague, assurances of future favour, but for the precise terms as stated we have only Mr. Percy's word. He was a boaster and not of a veracious manner of talk.

However, some colour was given to his confident assertions by the fact that Mr. Thomas Percy was given a Court position. He was appointed to a coveted vacancy in the "Gentlemen Pensioners in Ordinary," a royal bodyguard of gentlemen in residence, which was highly privileged and whose Captain was Percy's cousin, the Earl of Northumberland. Further, his noble relative did not think it necessary to administer the usual Oath of Supremacy, knowing of course the scruples of his Catholic cousin. And Mr. Catesby was now interested in his family affairs, for he was arranging the marriage of a younger Robert, his son, a child of eight, with Mr. Percy's daughter, and this betrothal strengthened an old friendship.

But before long it was rumoured that the King was completely under Cecil's influence, angry at the "Extremist" Policy of the

Jesuit Party, who refused to take the oath of allegiance, and alarmed too by their attempts to convert his Queen, Anne of Denmark. The Bye and the Main Plots caused ill-feeling. Recusancy fines were heavy, and still worse, they were "farmed out to approved persons," which meant more oppression. The Penal Laws were to be again enforced.

Perhaps Catesby was not surprised when, about June, Percy galloped headlong up the private road to Ashby St. Ledgers, burst into his friend's presence, raging against James's perfidy and swearing he would kill the King with his own hands. Catesby remained calm as he listened and let Percy rage and stamp. Over the porch at the Manor there is still an ancient half-timbered room called "The Plot Room." This may have been the place where Robert Catesby reasoned with Percy saying coolly: "No, no, Tom, thou shalt not venture to small purpose, but if thou wilt be a traitor thou shalt be to some great advantage." At which suggestion Percy calmed, and seeing his friend recalled to common prudence Catesby, smiling, whispered in his ear: "I am thinking of a most sure way and I will soon let thee know what it is."

This is the first definite hint of their conspiracy and Roman Catholic historians point out that Catesby himself was one "who possessed a magical influence over his friends," to whom his purse was always open, "gallant, charming, brave to a degree, zealous and even pious, yet with something of the wild, lawless and blood-thirsty spirit of the half-tamed savage." He was in fact a "throw-back." "Of commanding stature, and great bodily strength," an accomplished swordsman and rider, he was "slender and well-proportioned" for his six feet in height, "with a strikingly beautiful face and captivating manners." At this time "he kept and maintained priests, and laboured to win many to the Catholic Faith and received the Blessed Sacrament every Sunday. . . . He was so liberal and apt to help all sorts it got him much love."

This is the frank testimony of Father Gerard, S.J., an honest and devoted priest who nevertheless instinctively distrusted Catesby and dreaded his superhuman power over his companions.

Brooding over the Papal charge to keep out a non-Catholic, Catesby's logic argued that "if it were right to keep him (James) out, it were right to put him out." He foresaw that Percy's forebodings were likely enough, but he needed to take counsel with a more prudent friend of better judgment, and "at Allhallowstide" (October 31) he sent an urgent messenger to Huddington with the request that both Thomas and Robert Winter would come to meet him, in London, "where he, and other my friends, would be glad to see me." Robert Winter simply declined, and probably he dissuaded Thomas, who writes: "I desired him to excuse me; for I found myself not very well disposed; and which had happened to me never before, returned the messenger without my company. Shortly, I received another letter, in any wise to come."

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THOMAS WINTER OF HUDDINGTON, CATESBY'S DEAREST FRIEND,
AND MR. JOHN WRIGHT.

It is evident from "Winter's Confession," which he was compelled to write at length, that he knew nothing then of Catesby's schemes. But he suspected some rash enterprise and he was considered to be the longest headed man in the "Extremist" Party. He knew several languages, "was a reasonable good scholar," and he was reputed to be careful and considerate. He was either a convert or one who had become a "practising Catholic." He was unmarried and lived at Huddington with his brother. Winter was a trained soldier and had fought against Spain in the late reign. He was a man of the world and his devotion to Catesby did not blind him to his friend's over-sanguine temperament. How Catesby wore down Thomas Winter's reluctance the Confession relates thus: "At the second summons I presently came up and found him with Mr. John Wright at Lambeth," (this John Wright had been also out for Essex, being a most quarrelsome man, slow of speech and quick to draw sword) "where he broke with me how necessary it was not to forsake our country, for he knew I had a resolution to go over (i.e. to the Netherlands) but to deliver her from the servitude in which she remained, or at least to assist her with my utmost endeavours."

Winter showed some impatience. He replied that he had "hazarded his life upon far lighter terms, and now would not refuse any good occasion wherein he might do service to the Catholic Cause; *but for himself he knew no mean probable to succeed.*" His plain speech to Catesby, which I have italicized, shows Winter's prudence, and being said openly before John Wright glanced at that rash gentleman's notorious readiness to espouse any sort of rising. It is clear that Catesby wanted John Wright there as a witness, and Winter's reply showed that he was aware of the subtle intention to compromise him thus in Catesby's schemes.

It was a duel of wits and Catesby dropped his subtlety in a quick, confident appeal. "He had thought of a way to deliver them from all their bonds and without any foreign help to replant again the Catholic religion." Smiling triumphantly and filled with enthusiasm, Robert Catesby paused a moment, while he and Wright watched Thomas Winter's perplexed and doubting face. Winter did not speak, and Catesby told him sharply, "It was to blow up the Parliament-house with gunpowder." Winter's first emotion was not horror, but sheer amazement. He gasped and stared at Catesby as if he could not believe his ears. But Catesby added: "In that place have they done us all the mischief and perchance God hath designed that place for their punishment." His lodging stood on the river-bank and Winter's eyes may have turned to that Palace of Westminster marked out for destruction. "I wondered at the strangeness of the conceit (idea)" he has written. He began to discuss the scheme. He showed no anger and felt none and he gave no sign of fear, being cool as Catesby and Wright, and his more practical nature began to balance the chances of success or

failure. Truly it "struck at the root" and would cause general confusion and changes, but, if it should fail as most similar schemes "miscarried," the scandal would be so great "that their religion would be injured, and not only enemies, but friends would with good reason condemn them." There is less to be said for Winter than for the rest since his own words show that he knew how others would regard the plot, though he told Catesby blame would follow failure.

Catesby answered by the common sophism: "The nature of the disease required so sharp a remedy." He asked Winter if he would give his consent. And never was that extraordinary persuasion of Catesby's more in evidence than in Winter's unhesitating reply: "Yes, in this or what else soever, if he resolved upon it I would venture my life." It was the response of personal friendship and the devotion of a man to his friend rather than zeal for religion which brought Thomas Winter to consent. He proceeded to point out obvious difficulties; a house must be hired next the Parliament-house, they wanted "one to carry the mine, noise in the working, and such like."

"Let us give an attempt," replied Catesby; "and where it fails pass no further." He was stayed by Winter's argument, fearing lest their religion should be injured. "They would leave no peaceable and quiet way untried . . . you shall go over and inform the Constable (of Castile, Juan de Valasco) of the state of the Catholics in England, entreating him to solicit his Majesty, at his coming hither, that the Penal Laws may be recalled and we admitted into the rank of his other subjects." Winter, who spoke Spanish well, readily agreed, but Catesby directed him also to "bring over some confident (trustworthy) gentleman, such as you shall understand best for this business (mining)." "And he named unto me Mr. Fawkes."

GUY FAWKES OF YORK.

The son of a Protestant Consistory Court Registrar at York, Guy Fawkes, whose mother was left a widow early and remarried to a Mr. Bainbridge of Scotton, was converted by his Roman Catholic stepfather and left England in his twenty-first year to take the Spanish service in Flanders. He was almost unknown in his native land except to the Jesuits and a few more. But Christopher Wright had probably heard of Fawkes as a distinguished soldier in Madrid, and there is little doubt but that Fawkes was recommended to Catesby as just the man required for a risky enterprise by Catesby's confessor, Father Greenway, who was Fawkes' old schoolfellow. Winter's Mission to the Constable of Castile failed. He passed on his message through his intermediary, Captain Hugh Owen, and received a civil perfunctory answer. Owen, privately questioned at Dunkerque by Winter, told him it was vain to expect help from Spain, now resolved on peace with James. Winter, hinting at a Roman Catholic rising, asked carefully about Mr. Fawkes, of whom he had heard "good commendations," and Owen praised his skill as a sieger and promised if Winter did not see

Fawkes then in Brussels, "he would send him shortly after to England." This proves that Winter was authorized to offer Fawkes high pay. The shrewd Yorkshireman would not be likely to return after years of absence without good reason. Winter went to Ostend and waited two days to see Sir William Stanley, and became his guest for some days hoping to meet Fawkes, and "asked of his sufficiency in the wars." The Spanish service was then a famous training for engineers, and Stanley "gave very good commendations of him." Just as Winter was departing Fawkes arrived, and though Winter prudently only said "some good friends of his wished his company in England" he invited Mr. Fawkes to talk with him further in Dunkerque. Fawkes probably got a hint from Stanley, for he followed Winter to Dunkerque two days after and consented to return with him. But Winter, still prudent, declined to satisfy his curiosity, saying no more than that there was "a resolution to do somewhat in England, if the peace with Spain helped us not, but as yet resolved upon nothing."

At Greenwich they took a two-pair of oars and rowed up to Lambeth, where Catesby received them in his lodging, "the beginning of Easter term."

"Good words," replied Winter moodily to his friend's eager question: "What news from the Constable?"

Catesby did not trust Fawkes at once, but he engaged his provisional services until Mr. Percy should arrive in town. Early in May, "whether sent for by Mr. Catesby or on some business of his own, up came Mr. Percy." Possibly he had business over the Earl's rentals. He cheated Northumberland scandalously and oppressed his tenants to give Catesby the money for the Plot Fund.

Percy saluted "our company, (Catesby, Winter, John Wright and Fawkes)," and his first words were: "Shall we always, gentlemen, talk and never do anything?" The others looked at Catesby, who took Percy apart and explained a scheme was on foot, and we trace Winter's mind in the resolve then made to bind themselves by an Oath of Secrecy, within the next two or three days. Behind the Church of St. Clement's Danes the five met in a mean lodging frequented by passing Jesuits, and in an upper room, probably a garret reached by a trap-door, "upon a Primer" swore each other to the Oath generally supposed to run thus:

"Ye shall swear by the Blessed Trinity and by the Sacrament ye now purpose to receive never to disclose directly or indirectly by word or circumstance the matter that shall be proposed to you to keep secret nor desist from the execution thereof until the rest shall give you leave."

After which they went into the adjoining room, where the priest was vested and ready, and they heard Mass and made their communion.

One is thankful to know of the priest, Father Gerard, whom they all knew, that as Fawkes confessed under torture: "He knew not of our intentions." After which they five retired to their "empty room" and "Then did Mr. Catesby disclose to Mr. Percy,

and I together with Jack Wright tell to Mr. Fawkes the business for which we took this oath which they both approved."

CHRISTOPHER WRIGHT (born 1571), John's younger brother, was brought in "a fortnight after Candlemas," Winter's account says; when the five plotters were desperately digging at the mine through the 3 ells thickness of the old Palace wall. "And soon after we took another unto us, Christopher Wright, having sworn him also, and taken the Sacrament for secrecy." (Fawkes' Confession. But both the Wrights had died then at Holbeach.)

ROBERT KEYES, a Jesuit convert whose father had been a Protestant clergyman, was Christopher's friend. "A grave and sober man of great wit . . . his virtue and valour were the chiefest things . . . his means were not great." His wife was governess at Turvey, Bedfordshire, to the children of Lord Mordaunt. Winter says: "About a month before Michaelmas." And he explains they hired Catesby's lodging at Lambeth, being conveniently opposite to Percy's in Whynniard's Block; to store the powder and wood and convey it by boat to that "house by the Parliament," and now Catesby chose "to be keeper thereof . . . Keyes as a trusty honest man."

But there is some discrepancy in Winter's dates. His own brother ROBERT WINTER joined reluctantly, frankly hating the whole black business. Although sworn like the others he refused stoutly to handle the powder and I suppose he was only admitted because it endangered the plot to leave him out, since Catesby often conferred with Thomas at Huddington. Robert Winter's share was little more than Misprision of Treason, until he took up arms.

THOMAS BATES was Catesby's devoted old servant and retainer. This humble serving-man has the distinction of being the only one of the band who protested he thought it was wrong. He went on errands and did his master service but grew uneasy and suspicious. Finally, Catesby and Winter observed it.

At his lodging in Puddle Wharf Catesby called Bates and asked him plainly before Winter what he thought they did that he eyed them so suspiciously and strangely. Bates blurted out he feared theirs was some dangerous matter about the Parliament house since he had been sent to get a lodging for his master hard by. This was "the baker's house" in Whynniard's Block which Catesby tried vainly to get.

Now both Catesby and Winter were desperate men. Bates was commanded by his master on peril of his life to repeat the Oath, but his horror and distress on learning what it meant was so great that Catesby sent him to confess himself to Father Greenway. And Bates swore that the priest both quieted his scruples, assuring him it was a meritorious deed, and bade him be faithful and secret.

Although Catesby was satisfied that Bates would not betray him, he saw there might be difficulties with others and as expenses were increasing he resolved to obtain what he called "the

resolution of the Case " from his friend Father Garnet, Provincial of the English Jesuits.

FATHER HENRY GARNET AND CATESBY.

It was not until 1605 that Recusancy fines were higher than in the old Queen's days, and both Cecil and the King were against putting the priests to death. Judges on the Western Circuit who hanged a few of them were forbidden to proceed to such extremities in future. " God, the priests swarm ! " wrote Cecil. It cannot be truly said that Roman Catholics were prevented from attending Mass, since almost every Roman Catholic house was open to the priests, and many gentlemen kept chaplains such as Grant of Norbrook, Abington of Hindlip, Lords Vaux, Mordaunt, Staunton and Arundel, the Digbys, the Littletons, the Wrights, the Winters, while Father Garnet's great friend Mistress Anne Vaux " kept White Webbs Enfield Chace at her own cost " to house Jesuits day and night.

It must be remembered in fairness to the Government that Recusancy fines then were no more thought of than Supertax is now.

Father Garnet went to and fro unmolested, and Catesby had no difficulty in finding where he was and arranging for a private interview on a question of conscience.

THE SECRET MEETING AT THE HOUSE IN THAMES STREET.

JUNE, 1605.

It is of course absurd to suppose that Catesby's own conscience was troubling him so late. Poor Father Garnet was simply an unlucky tool for a thoroughly unscrupulous man. He was in an awkward fix, for as he admitted : " I dare not inform myself of their affairs because of the prohibition of Father General (Parsons) for meddling in such affairs." Rome's official attitude was a cold hostility, passive and not without hope since many Peers and Councillors were Roman Catholics or sympathizers. Garnet had been in England since 1586 and had watched many plots fail. Probably the interview was at night and Catesby would come by boat from Lambeth. Garnet liked a glass of good wine, " excellent claret and some sack," and since Catesby made it clear he was not consulting his friend "*Sub Sigillo Confessionis*," but informally, desiring merely to have his opinion, it is very probable they were at supper. " To his fast friend he opens the Case as far as it was fit and the other willing to know it." For Catesby contrived to assume a careless curiosity as he put his momentous question ; in that quiet house " on Saturday after the Octave of Corpus Christi."

CATESBY'S QUESTION.

" Whether for the good and promotion of the Catholic Cause, the necessity of time and occasion so requiring, it be lawful or not, amongst many Nocents, to destroy and take away some Innocents also."

Garnet tumbled into the trap. " In truth I never imagined anything of the King's Majesty nor of any particular and thought

it an idle question." But this assurance rings false, for Garnet could hardly suppose that Catesby sought him out in private to ask an idle question! And he replied at once: "That, if the advantage were greater on the side of the Catholics, by the destruction of the Innocents with the Nocents, than by the preservation of both it was doubtless lawful."

But Catesby had some lingering doubts on the subject, and warming to his favourite casuistry Garnet proceeded: "That if, at the taking of a town possessed by the enemy there happened to be some friends, they must undergo the fortune of war, and the general and common destruction of the enemy."

Then Catesby smiled and nodded assent. And Garnet, whose keen wits seem to have been suspiciously clouded hitherto, became thoroughly alarmed when "I saw him when we had done make solemn protestation that he would never be known to have asked me any such question as long as he lived." Stupefied and perplexed the Jesuit stared at Robert Catesby who pressed his hand, called his servant and was gone out leaving Garnet to wonder. "After this I began to muse what this should mean and fearing he should intend the death of some great person . . . I would admonish him. This I did after at the house in Essex."

SECOND INTERVIEW BETWEEN CATESBY AND GARNET AT FREMLAND, ESSEX. JULY, 1605.

"He came," continues Garnet, "with my Lord Monteagle and Mr. Tresham. Walking in the gallery with him alone, my lord standing afar off, I told him (Catesby) upon that question lately asked . . . I wished him to look what he did if he intended anything. That he must first look to the lawfulness of the act itself, and then he must not have so little regard of Innocents that he spare not friends and necessary persons for the Commonwealth."

Catesby "offered to get leave from a third party to tell Garnet his plans," but the latter declined. He was forbidden to listen and "I told him what charge we all had of quietness and to procure the like in others." (A reference to the Pope's directions.)

"Oh, let me alone for that," said Catesby carelessly. "Don't you see how I seek to enter into familiarity with this lord?" And he turned aside to speak with Monteagle.

Garnet inquired of Monteagle "if Catholics were able to make their part good by arms against the King?" Monteagle gave a vague reply. He said the King was generally "odious to all sorts."

These private interviews with Catesby were that "general knowledge of the plot" to which Garnet confessed at his execution, he was guilty.

FATHER GREENWAY VISITS GARNET AT FREMLAND. (JULY.)

But Catesby had been alarmed by Garnet's suspicions. He was bound to have the "resolution of the Case" to persuade Sir Everard Digby, the adopted brother of Father Gerard. Soon afterwards Father Greenway, confessor to Catesby, Winter and

probably all the first seven plotters, rode over to Fremland, sought Garnet in his inner room and begged his fellow priest to hear him "not in confession but by way of confession." Panic-stricken Garnet refused. He guessed shrewdly that Greenway came from Catesby and bade him keep his penitent's secrets to himself. Greenway said the penitent desired to hear Father Garnet's judgment. This fairly scared poor Garnet who stuffed his fingers in his ears! Greenway's agitation grew until he almost wept as he entreated Garnet to listen, for he knew no other way of seeking counsel in a matter which might injure the faith.

According to Garnet, his fellow Jesuit strode up and down, beseeching and arguing, appealing to his pity in a case which so troubled his own conscience! Of course Father Greenway was an excellent actor and this Garnet must have suspected, but he wearied of the priest's importunity and suggested Greenway should simply tell him in confession. But Greenway answered it was not his fault that he should so confess it. And at last he prevailed on Garnet to hear him since his risk would be no greater than his fellow priest's, and possibly Garnet thought the matter would not turn out to be so perilous, as his own fears. Greenway, having wrung the reluctant consent from his Superior, swiftly informed him of the plot.

Father Garnet probably was, what he says, simply aghast at such wickedness. He pointed out the common ruin in which all concerned would be involved, and their own danger as directors to these conspirators if their Superiors knew. "The Pope will send me to the galleys!" wailed Garnet.

Greenway was now quite cool and composed. He agreed and thought that only an urgent appeal to the Pope would save them all. A long and anxious conversation followed and it was decided that Greenway should inform Catesby how Father Garnet forbade the design as cruel, sinful and wicked and the Pope would be certain to condemn it. After which Father Greenway rode quietly back to tell Catesby how Garnet was effectually silenced, being guilty of Misprision of Treason unless he broke the Seal of Confession.

Little Catesby cared what Garnet thought. He had gained his ends "the resolution of the Case" and he reported to the rest that such was the answer given in casuistry by the Father Provincial.

Any weak scruples of conscience would be lulled. And except Robert Winter, the seven confederates were too deeply engaged to be troubled in mind, and too far under the domination of Catesby, whose leadership excelled them in energy and administrative ability, while Fawkes and Winter had the callous temper of soldiers to whom the suffering of the unsuspecting citizens and courtiers was merely the stern fortune of war.

It was not from them but from late comers and innocent friends that the danger lay which threatened Catesby's Conspiracy. He and his friends were to be deceived, waiting in a false security, having reached that dead calm of the Conscience, that "Meridian of Evil, wherein once a man has deliberately chosen his path he is left alone to pursue it unto the end."