

Reference is made to Ward's cantos on "England's Reformation, from the time of King Henry VIII. to the end of Oates' Plot." It was written after the manner of the much better known "Hudibras," though on account of its nature the work chiefly circulated among Catholics. It assails the Reformers in the most biting and sarcastic terms, turning to ridicule and contempt their would-be heroic deeds. This work was issued about the beginning of the famous reign of Queen Anne, when the appearance of a new and brilliant astral body was attracting the attention of all literary star-gazers. This was Alexander Pope, than whom perhaps no Catholic author has made a more indelible impression on English literature. He is, however, more celebrated as a poet than as a Catholic, and his influence can hardly be said to have been the direct consequence of his faith. But the spirit of Catholicism nevertheless enters largely into his works. Pope never attempted to conceal his belief, despite universal hostility to it, and his indifference was probably largely assumed, for his death was most exemplary. He is generally conceded a place in the first rank of English poets. Though inferior to some of the earlier poets in sublimity and imagination, he is unsurpassed as far as brilliancy of finish and elegance of diction are concerned. His works have given him enviable fame, and have been no small factor in the modification of the English tongue.

For almost a century after Pope, no Catholic names appear on the list of English authors with exception of those two famous ecclesiastical writers, Butler and Challoner. This was the gloomy period of the penal laws, when Catholics were effectually barred out from literary pursuits, except such as wrote from continental refuges. Allan Butler was one of these. From the English College at St. Omer he issued many religious works, the chief of which is the "Lives of the Saints." This remarkable book is a lasting monument to the vast erudition which made him one of the most learned men of the age. Even Gibbon admitted it to be "a work of merit," and Bishop Doyle praised it as "a mass of general information, digested and arranged with an ability and a candor never surpassed."

Bishop Challoner is another name dear to the Catholic heart. His writings are also of a religious nature, chiefly controversial