

of family and local support structures. Secondary to these were economic factors such as price fluctuations and unemployment. Healey ends by exploring the economic cycles and other events that caused crisis within Lancashire and thus increased burdens upon poor relief. Within this scope, he explores how the system responded and how different crises, such as a famine or a pestilence, challenged the system in different ways.

By avoiding theory, and effectively utilizing his sources, Healey provides an important history of the Lancashire poor. These were people who did not want to be poor, who worked, who looked for ways to avoid having to ask for poor relief but who, in the end, could only survive by becoming deserving poor. The work provides a complete history of poverty within Lancashire and demonstrates the consequences that the economic changes of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially in regards to manufacturing and resource extraction, wrought upon traditional societies.

Alexandra Walsham. *Catholic Reformation in Protestant Britain*. Farnham, Surrey and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014. xviii + 490 pp. \$139.95. Review by JONATHAN WRIGHT, UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM.

This volume brings together eleven major pieces previously published between 2000 and 2010. They will be well known to scholars of the period and many have received extended discussion elsewhere. I therefore dispense with a detailed piece-by-piece description but, make no mistake, they demonstrate how profound and fruitful Professor Walsham's impact has been in the field of early-modern Catholicism. They assuredly make for "a coherent vision of how ... minority Catholic communities energetically resisted their absorption into the Protestant kingdoms that comprised the British Isles" (xiii). Subjects covered include the moral dilemmas faced by Catholics, with focus on issues of conformity, conscience and the phenomenon of Nicodemism. The significance of the Jesuit mission, especially in the realm of miracles and cults, is also given close attention, as is the Catholic response to developments in print culture and the era's changes in ritual life. Walsham has written a lengthy introduction for this collection. It

stresses a number of important themes: the international context of events in Britain; the necessity of comparing and contrasting Protestant and Catholic experiences in the period – often a tale of meaningful mirroring and reciprocity; and the lasting legacy of persecution in forging British Catholic identity. There are also musings on a host of additional topics—including the role of Catholic exiles, interconfessional relations, and contemporary discussions about supernaturalism and divine intervention—and a first rate historiographical analysis that covers an impressive amount of ground and points towards future avenues of enquiry.

Chloë Houston. *The Renaissance Utopia: Dialogue, Travel and the Ideal Society*. Farnham, Surrey and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014. vii + 190 pp. \$109.95. Review by JOSEPH M. MCCARTHY, SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY.

This contribution to our understanding of utopian literature focuses on the changing form of the English utopia from Thomas More to the middle of the seventeenth century. Houston calls attention to the simultaneous preoccupation of utopian writings with their own literary form and with the imagined social forms of the societies they portray, charting their development from dialogue/travel narrative to their employment of multiple forms, an evolving “discourse of human perfectibility” aimed at perfecting the forms of society. The time period under consideration saw the transformation of the Utopia from an exercise in deploying dialogue as a means of philosophical interrogation into a narrative-based conceptualization of pragmatic reform.

The *terminus a quo* of Houston’s investigation is the publication of More’s *Utopia* in 1516, a time of widespread concern throughout Europe for reform that would not only address religious, political and social abuses and deformities but also provide opportunity for the spiritual renewal of individuals. More’s contribution to the discussion appropriated the best forms of ancient utopian writing and mediated them into the Renaissance in a production both at once powerful, exciting and puzzling, one that could be described in relatively current terms as self-referential, ironic, subversive and post-modern. *Utopia* is clear about the need for reform, ambivalent about the means of