

Grade 9 Answer

Account Question

8
Marks

Question:

Write an account of how the Catholic Question affected Restoration England.
(8 marks)

Answer:

The Catholic Question affected Restoration England, firstly, through fear of plots. The Popish Plot of 1678 was a significant plot, despite the fact that it did not exist. Titus Oates was a renegade who, in attempts to increase his standing in society, claimed he had uncovered the Popish Plot. This was a plot to kill Charles II, murder thousands of Protestants and then crown Charles' Catholic brother James as King of England. The fears of this claim were further heightened when Sir Edmund Geoffrey, who took Oates' statement, was found murdered. Charles II treated Oates' claims with scepticism, however Parliament believed the claims. Known Catholics were ordered to leave London and by the end of 1678 Parliament had passed two acts that forbade Catholics from being members of the Commons and the Lords, which lasted many years. Therefore, the Catholic Question affected Restoration England as it created widespread tensions and fear of Catholic plots, which allowed Oates to create a false plot to persecute Catholics.

The Catholic Question continued to affect Restoration England through the Exclusion Crisis, that ran from 1679 to 1681. The Popish Plot was a significant trigger for this crisis, which was the issue of whether Charles II's Catholic brother James should be allowed to inherit the throne. The Whigs wanted to exclude James, but the Tories supported him, and these tensions almost caused a civil war. A bill was introduced by the Whigs to exclude James from the succession, but Charles II dissolved Parliament to prevent the bill from passing. Therefore, the Catholic Question affected Restoration England as there was strong opposition within Parliament to having a Catholic king, and divisions led to extreme political instability.

Feedback:

This answer would get 8/8 marks because the pupil has identified 2 key ways the Catholic Question affected Restoration England (the Popish Plot and Exclusion Crisis). They have explained each point in depth using historical information, and written the events in chronological order, using links between the points.

