



**Ten Reasons Proposed to His Adversaries For  
Disputation in the Name of the Faith: And  
Presented to the Illustrious Members of our  
Universities**

*St Edmund Campion SJ*

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Full Text in Latin and Full Text in English also. Though Blessed Edmund Campion's Decem Rationes has passed through forty-seven editions,(1) printed in all parts of Europe; though it has awakened the enthusiasm of thousands; though Mark Anthony Muret, one of the chief Catholic humanists of Campion's age, pronounced it to be "written by the finger of God," yet it is not an easy book for men of our generation to appreciate, and this precisely because it suited a bygone generation so exactly. Before it can be esteemed at its true value, some knowledge of the circumstances under which it was written, is indispensable. 1. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE Decem Rationes. The chief point to remember is that the Decem Rationes was the last and most deliberate free utterance of Campion's ever-memorable mission. During the few months that mission lasted he succeeded in staying the full tide of victorious Protestantism, which had hitherto been irresistible. The ancient Church had gone down before the new religion, at Elizabeth's accession twenty years before, with an apparently final fall, and since then the Elizabethan Settlement had triumphed in every church, in every school and court. The new generation had been moulded by it; the old order seemed to be utterly prostrate, defeated and moribund. Nor was it only at home that Protestantism talked of victory. In every neighbouring land she had gained or was gaining the upper hand. She had crossed the Border and subdued Scotland, she held Ireland in an iron grip, she had set up a new throne in Holland, she had deeply divided France, and had learned how to paralyze the power of Spain. What could stay her progress? Then a new figure appeared, a fugitive flying before the law. He was hunted backwards and forwards across the country, every man's hand seemed against him. It was impossible to hold out for long against such immense odds, and he was in fact soon captured, mocked, maligned, sentenced and executed with contumely. Yet Campion and his handful of followers had meanwhile succeeded in doing what the whole nation, when united, had failed to do. He had evoked a spirit of faith and fervour, against which the violence of Protestantism raged in vain. He had saved the beaten, shattered fragments of the ancient host, and animated them with invincible courage; and his work endured in spite of endless assaults and centuries of persecution. The Decem Rationes is Campion's harangue to those whom he called upon to follow him in the heroic struggle.

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