Acknowledgements.

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"You have ... presented to your view these two Factions (as it were in a Cockpit pecking at one another) which arising originally from the two Houses and Synod have so much disturbed and dislocated, in every joynt, both Church and Common-wealth".

Clement Walker in his preamble to his History of Independency, 1648.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.

1640-1643 saw clear differences between Presbyterians and Independents that were inherent in Puritan history, although theories on church-government were still imprecise and the Presbyterians not a united group. An agreement to avoid public controversy was composed and largely adhered to until the end of 1643. The opening of the Westminster Assembly promised either unity or a breach, although its members were moderate compared with hotheads outside the Assembly. Despite some conflicts, unity prevailed until December 1643, although this was only achieved by ambiguous statements in the Covenant and Dissuasive.

But in January 1643-4 the Assembly Independents published a manifesto, which, although designed to defend their theories from the taint of separatism and assist accommodation, had the opposite effect. Assembly debates immediately became more divisive, despite the efforts of an accommodation group led by Marshall, and the influential Scots divines guided the leading Assembly members, fearful of the sects and antagonised by the Independents' delaying tactics, to begin to vote a Scottish style Presbytery. The Independents became more intransigent in defence and in case dissent was necessary, began to hint at a toleration and to seek an alliance with Erastianism. Meanwhile the manifesto was deemed to have broken the previous agreement, whereupon a vehement pamphlet war began and gathered momentum. This recriminatory literature, the preserve of extremists although

moderate pleas were heard, did display the similarities and dissimilarities between the two systems before the public.

1644-5 saw Assembly divisions reach a zenith with the inevitability of a Presbyterian establishment, the failure of the Parliamentary committee of accommodation and the Independents' open dissent. The Independents' new aim - toleration - was reflected in the continuing pamphlet war and inevitably entailed a close identification between radical Independents and the sects. Independent congregations were steadily growing and the religious terms had been translated into politics. Although the Independents had failed in the Assembly, they had successfully delayed the Presbyterian settlement, and the strength of the army would now aid their cause.

The Presbyterians' own divisions and clashes with Parliament over the "jure divino" right of church officers to govern the church and suspend sinners from the sacrament further delayed the settlement of Presbyterian discipline, and strengthened the position of Independents who exploited the controversy to their own ends. By 1646 the establishment of Presbytery was resumed, but it was too late. The army, espousing the cause of toleration, was in conflict with Parliament, as a result of which the political involvement of extremist ministers reached a crescendo. Attacked and defended in pamphlets, the army's ultimate triumph meant

that the national Presbyterian church would have to suffer Independent congregations. Moreover, in practice Independent churches were more successful than Presbyterian, because of the commitment of their members and the lack of civil support for Presbytery. In general conflict in the 1640s on a local basis was followed by greater harmony in the 1650s, but national attempts at unity still failed. The Restoration meant that once again Presbyterians and Independents must be partners in adversity.

NOTES

When contemporaries referred to Episcopacy, Presbyterianism and Independency, they frequently used a capital letter to designate significance to these words, but this was not invariably the case. In this study these nouns will be assigned capital letters, as will the word "Presbytery", when it is used (as in the style of contemporaries) as a synonym for Presbyterianism. Where "presbytery" is used with no capital letter, it will signify just one presbyterian body; i.e. a classis, a synod. The same principle has been applied when the words are used in an adjectival context.

Since the dates of the tracts in the Thomason collection usually refer to the date of purchase by Thomason and not to the date of publication, I have not used brackets in footnotes to refer to tract material, as is the case with the references to books. E.g.

R. Hollingworth, An Answer to a Certain Writing, 11 September 1643, E.67(5).

A.S.P. Woodhouse, Puritanism and Liberty (1938).

Introduction

The conflict between Presbyterians and Independents in the Interregnum has hardly been a neglected subject. The significance of the religious issue for Parliamentary and political divisions has received extensive treatment, particularly for 1646-8. Professors Hexter, Underdown and Yule and Dr. Pearl in particular have discussed the problem and reached varying conclusions; Professor Yule maintaining that political divisions had a greater religious content than the others allow, whilst agreeing with them that religion was not the prime factor in political groupings.[1] Professor Kaplan has recently favoured the dissociation of political and religious terminology.[2] This study is not concerned with political divisions, although the religious controversies cannot be entirely divorced from the political situation, just as political groupings were not totally unconnected, though certainly not primarily concerned with, religious issues. Religion and politics were consistently linked by contemporaries, although their relationship will be a matter for continuing controversy among historians of the seventeenth century.

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1. J.H. Hexter, "The Problem of the Presbyterian Independents", in Reappraisals in History, (Aberdeen 1961) pp.163-184; V. Pearl, "The Royal Independents in the English Civil War". Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 5th series, XVIII (1968); D. Underdown, "The Independents Reconsidered" Journal of British Studies, III (1964) and "The Independents Again", Journal of British Studies, VIII, 1968, and also Prides Purge. Politics in the Puritan Revolution, (Oxford, 1971) p.4,ff; G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, (Melbourne 1958), and "Independents and Revolutionaries", Journal of British Studies, Vol. VII, (1968).
2. L. Kaplan, "English Civil War Politics and the Religious Settlement". Church History, (September 1972).

The purpose of this study is to investigate a matter largely avoided in the currently fashionable debate; that is, the divisions that existed in matters of church government between Presbyterians and Independents (using these terms in a purely religious context) and the conflicts that ensued.[1] Professor Yule has contributed greatly to our knowledge of the Independents, but his prime concern was to relate their religious beliefs to politics and society, not to compare them with the Presbyterians or to discuss the religious battle between them.[2] While recent interest has grown about either religious Independents or Presbyterians, the relationship and divisions between them remain largely unexplored, although Professor Kaplan has discussed the restraint of conflict in 1643.[3]

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1. Where political divisions are referred to, I will make this clear by specifying political Presbyterians and political Independents.
2. G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War.
3. L. Kaplan, "Presbyterians and Independents in 1643", English Historical Review, (April 1969). Dr. Shaw's History of the English Church 1640-1660 (2 vols, 1900) discussed some of the issues and Assembly divisions, but made no investigation of the two theories or the pamphlet literature. Dr. Carruthers' study of the Assembly did not specify the conflict in any detail. S.W. Carruthers, The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly, (Philadelphia, 1943).

The Presbyterians have been examined in three articles; E.W. Kirby, "The English Presbyterians in the Westminster Assembly", Church History, XXXIII (1964); G. Yule, "Some Problems in the History of the English Presbyterians in the Seventeenth Century", Journal of the Presb. Hist. Soc. ie. Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, XIII, (May 1965), and G. Yule, "English Presbyterianism and the Westminster Assembly", The Reformed Theological Review (Australia, XXXIII, May - August 1974). I am most grateful to Professor Yule for allowing me a copy of this last article. Two chapters have also been devoted to the period in C.G. Bolam, J. Goring, H.L. Short, R. Thomas, The English Presbyterians, (1968).

Two articles have appeared on the Independent divines; S.C. Pearson, "Reluctant Radicals: The Independents at the Westminster Assembly", Journal of Church and State, Waco, Texas, (Autumn 1969), and Tai Liu, "In Defence of Dissent: The Independent Divines on Church Government 1641-46". Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc (ie. Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society (May 1972).

(cont. overleaf).

This investigation has therefore various interconnected aims. Firstly it seeks to examine the debates in the Westminster Assembly, to discover the extent and seriousness of the conflict between Presbyterians and Independents during the years that the Assembly met, the role the Assembly played in the development of the controversy and the stage at which accommodation between the two groups became impossible. Illustration will be given to the varying aims of the Independents at different stages of the debates and the increasing intransigence of the Presbyterians under the influence of the Scots and fear of further sectarian expansion. In presenting the laborious debates on church government, retarded mainly by deliberate tactics on the part of the Assembly Independents, it is hoped to indicate that the Assembly's delay in establishing an effective government had two results. Firstly it increased the number of sects and heresies, and made the Presbyterians more hostile to the Independents, thus ensuring that accommodation would be more difficult. But secondly this delay ultimately served the Independent cause well, given the rising political force of the New Model Army, sympathetic to toleration on account of its dominance by religious radicals.

Secondly, it seeks to show that both Presbyterians and Independents were not united groups. Whilst the Assembly Independents were moderate semi-separatists, the Independent

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cont. 3. Berndt Gustaffson discussed the Dutch background of the Independents in "The Five Dissenting Brethren, a study ion the Dutch Background of their Independentism", Acta Universitatis Lundensis, N.S. Avd. I. LI. (1955).

cause outside the debating-chamber was championed by both moderates and radicals, and the distinction between a radical Independent and a separatist became increasingly impossible to make. Indeed, the Presbyterian/Independent conflict provided much stimulus to the rising Leveller movement, since the Leveller protagonists were first active in the religious controversy. But the Presbyterians both inside and outside the Assembly were no more homogeneous than the Independents. The Presbyterian divisions were complex and were not merely based on extremists and moderates, but on basic theoretical divergences unsolved in the ambivalent history of pre-revolutionary Puritanism. Thus some Presbyterians did not merely favour moderate Episcopacy and dislike lay elders, but more important by 1645 a serious split had developed between "Erastian" and "rigid" Presbyterians, rooted in their views on the role of the civil magistrate in religion and the divine right of church authority. This study will indicate how both Presbyterians and Independents exploited the divisions of their rivals, and how in particular, the Erastian controversy only further aided the Independents' policy of "retarda et impera" - delay and control.

Thirdly, some consideration will be given to the political involvement of both Presbyterian and Independent ministers, particularly after 1646. Their role in city politics, and their influence on petitions in city and country will be discussed, as will the part played by the extremists after 1646 in inciting the confrontation between army and Parliament, counter balanced by the efforts of the moderates to achieve reconciliation.

Fourthly, the pamphlet controversies between Presbyterians and Independents will be juxtaposed with the Assembly debates. Since the pamphlet war was largely dominated by extremists (although moderate pleas were heard), this will illustrate the controversial climate in which the Assembly divisions were exacerbated. The pamphlet literature will be shown as primarily operative on two levels, the first for the educated lay and clerical public, who would appreciate extensive theological references and academic arguments, and the second for the less educated common folk who would enjoy a bawdier and more scurrilous presentation of a conflict simplified into a clash between clerical pretension and the freedom of the subject.

Finally, but not least important, both through the pamphlet war and Assembly debates, the nature of the religious controversy between Presbyterians and Independents will be examined, and its roots in Puritan history indicated. Both sides will be revealed as nearer than the invective of many pamphleteers implied, although their serious differences cannot be underestimated. Various inconsistencies will be apparent in the arguments of both groups, particularly with the complications afforded by the Erastian conflict, and the controversy among Presbyterians over the issue of pure or mixed parish communions. Consideration will be given to the operation and effectiveness of both Presbyterian and Independent theories in practice in England, and to the conflicts and coexistence between the two groups on a local basis. The approach of the study is chronological,[1] for although presenting

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1. It should be noted that all dates will be given according to the old-style calendar, in which the year begins on the 25th March. To avoid confusion, dates from 1st January to 24th March will be styled (e.g). 1643-4.

problems in so far as certain issues like toleration and the power of the civil magistrate came repeatedly under discussion, this method has the advantage of revealing all the interrelated facets of the controversy at any one stage. However, the main similarities and divergencies between the two theories had been presented in pamphlets before 1644, and a chapter is devoted to these at the end of the first part of the study. Similarly, the second section ends with the consideration of the operation and coexistence of the two systems on a local basis. So it is hoped that the overall view provided by such chapters will provide a frame of reference for the study and obviate some disadvantages of the chronological presentation.

A note on the Jacob-Esau analogy.

Genesis records that before the birth of the twins Jacob and Esau, they "struggled together" in the womb of their mother Rebecca, whereupon God told her that two nations should be the fruit of her labours. Esau, the first-born, was a cunning, hairy man of the world, whereas Jacob was "a plain man", and it was Jacob who won the blessing of his father.[1] The seventeenth century mind saw in this Old Testament account a perfect analogy of the mystery of salvation and reprobation, and of the eternal struggle between the carnal and the spiritual. William Gouge stressed

"that great difference which is made between Jacob and Esau ... applieth to God's chosen children on the one side, and all the other, on the other side".[2]

When dissensions arose about the nature of Reformation in the English church in the 1640s, it was perhaps not surprising that the Jacob-Esau conflict should frequently be employed. One newsbook reported that there were

"Giants ... in the Church of God ... are there not strivings in the womb before the breath, as between Jacob and Esau".[3]

Adam Martindale perceived that in particular

"the Presbyteriall and Congregationall governments were like Jacob and Esau, strugling in the wombe".[4]

Some Presbyterians were sure the Independents were the very image

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1. Genesis 25 v. 22-35, 27 v. 1-40.
2. W. Gouge, The Progresse of Divine Providence, 24 September 1645, p.5, E. 302 (25). For similar examples see F. Dukes, The Fulnesse and Freenesse of Gods Grace in Jesus Christ, 1642 p.72, E. 146 (23); S. Gower, Sermon before the Commons, 31 July 1644, p.16, E.3 (25); T. Edwards, Gangraena Part III, 28 December 1646, p.26-7, E.368 (5); and M. Newcomen, The All-seeing unseen eye of God, 30 December 1646, p.34, E.369 (6).
3. The Scotish Dove No. 127, 18-28 March 1645-6 p.598, E.330(3).
4. ed. R. Parkinson. The Life of Adam Martindale, written by himself, (Manchester, Chetham Society 1845) vol. IV p.61.

of Esau;

"this hairy ruffenesse shewes them to be of the hated brood of Esau, whose hoary - hairy scalpes God doth and shall smite with a frenzie lunacie, which they call illumination of the spirit".[1]

Thomas Edwards reported that the Independent Jeremiah Burroughes was saying little better of the Presbyterians;

"(he) in his preaching at Cornhill ... hath often strange passages and flings ... against the Presbyterians, comparing them, to Esau, and the Independents to Jacob, speaking of Esau ... we had at home many Esaus, wild, rough men against their brethren, who hee doubted not should be brought down in due time; or words to that effect".[2]

One Independent pamphleteer observed that readers should, like Isaac, give their favours to the side that had the greatest appearance of truth, and at the Whitehall Debates Captain Butler deplored those who tried to malign Jacob;

"Truth and light and knowledge have still gone under the name of errors and heresies, and still they have put these Esau's garments upon Jacob's back".[3]

The Jacob-Esau analogy was in many ways appropriate for the Presbyterian-Independent controversy. Jacob and Esau were twins, with a common parentage, and the prospect of a great inheritance, but like the Presbyterians and Independents, the more they had in common, the more their differences were accentuated, and unity became impossible. But there the analogy ends. Jacob and Esau were destined to lead two nations;[4] the Presbyterians and Independents to strive for a Reformation of the national church that was to elude them both by 1660.

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1. Anon, Tub Preachers Overturn'd, (in support of Thomas Edwards) 16 April 1647, p.13, E.384 (7).
2. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, p.108.
3. A Short Answer to A.S., 1644, p.19, E. 27 (6); A.S.P. Woodhouse, Puritanism and Liberty, (1938) p.170 (quoted)
4. Gensis 36; Esau led the Edomited and Jacob the Israelites.

PART ONE

THE BEGINNINGS OF STRUGGLE

"in our dayes in this Kingdome, the chiefe question is about the Church and the discipline of the Church, and our Controversie may fitly be tearmed the Disciplinary Controversie..."

T. Edwards, *Reasons against the Independant government*, August 1641, dedicatory epistle, E. 167 (16).

Chapter One

THE PURITAN LEGACY: THE EMERGENCE OF PRESBYTERIANISM AND INDEPENDENCY. 1640-1643.

"wee are full of divisions, sinfull, paenall in Church and State ... Sects and Schismes etc ... truly are our misery, and fill us with scandals, shame and sorrow ... I beseech you ... to build the Temple, that our Jerusalem may be at length a City compact together and at unity in itself".

R. Vines, Caleb's Integrity in following the Lord fully, Sermon to the Commons, 30 November 1642, p.23-26.

(Parliament must aim at) "Unity in reducing independency of Episcopall Jurisdictions under one civill government; order in exploding that Chimera of Independency of Congregations within one nationall Church ... if you would retain the truth, let the discipline we must have to be known as soon as may be, (you cannot imagine what confusion we have in our Countrey Congregations in this interval of discipline)".

C. Herle. A Payre of Compasses for Church and State, Sermon to the Commons, 30 November 1642, p.12, p.42, E. 130(3).

"Till (1641) ... I never thought what Presbytery or Independency was nor ever spake with a man who seemed to know it".

R. Baxter, A True History of the Councils Enlarged, (1682), p.91.

Between the assembling of the Long Parliament on 3rd November 1640 and the long-awaited gathering of the Westminster Assembly of Divines on 1st July 1643, there passed three years of discussion and speculation as to the precise nature of religious reformation intended by these bodies. Since the failure of their Elizabethan predecessors to alter the government of the Church, Puritan ministers had, on the whole, conformed uneasily and concentrated their efforts on "the warfare of the spirit", preaching and pastoral care. Accustomed as they were to dissenting from various Anglican rituals[1] and objecting to the lordly Laudian Episcopacy, many divines found themselves largely unprepared before 1640-43 to formulate a definite polity for church government, and their sermons made few such recommendations. Parliament strove to bury the ecclesiastical issue in the promise of a synod, and gave little guidance. Cromwell for one explained that

"I can tell you sirs, what I would not have; tho' I cannot, what I would".[2]

The years 1640-43 must therefore be seen as an exploratory period in which distinctions between theories of church government were not yet clear-cut; Dr. Lamont has stressed the importance of these years as an interim period between pre-revolutionary "cohesive" Puritanism and revolutionary Puritanism with its divisive groups.[3]

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1. ie rituals within the Established Church of England; eg, the use of organs, certain vestments, aspects of liturgy, and the ceremony of the cross in baptism.
2. Sir Philip Warwick, Memoires of the Reigne of King Charles First, (1701) p.177.
3. W.M. Lamont, "Puritanism in History and Historiography: some further thoughts", Past and Present, (August 1969) p.134.

Nevertheless the differences between Presbyterians and Independents in the Puritan camp really existed in an embryonic form during 1640-43, although they were in need of further development and aggravation to become explosive. Nor were such divisions created in this period, although some Royalists at least, thought otherwise. One in 1645 defined Presbyterianism as "a Mushroome Eldership" originating from "Calvin's fancy", but believed Independency to be a "Jonas-Goard ... sprung up in a night" in 1643! Another specified in 1647 that "this congregationall way (was) never thought on till within a few yeeres".[1] Masson assumed far too conscious a controversy in Puritan history when he wrote

> "For sixty years before 1643 Independency had been a traditional form of Anti-Prelacy in the English popular mind, competing with the somewhat older Anti-Prelatic theory of Presbyterianism".[2]

But the differences, "rival tendencies within the soul of Puritanism itself",[3] were inevitably inherent in Puritan history.

Both Presbyterians and Independents alike were anxious to prove that their respective ways were the closest approximation to the ideals of the "fathers" of nonconformity. John Cook maintained that the Independents "desire neither more nor less than what the Puritans desired of Queen Elizabeth and King James", and thought that better titles for Presbyterian and

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1. Mercurius Anti-Britannicus, Oxford, 11 August 1645 p.14; E. 296; A True Account and Character of the Times, 9 August 1647, p.4, E. 401 (13).
2. D. Masson, Life of Milton, (7 vols. Cambridge 1859-94) vol. ii. p.602.
3. R.H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, (Pelican edition, 1966) p.212.

Independent would be conformist and reformist respectively.[1]

The Savoy Declaration insisted

"for our selves we are able to trace the footsteps of an Independent Congregational way in the ancientest customs of the Churches; as also in the Writings of our soundest Protestant Divines, and ... the old Puritan Nonconformists".[2]

Presbyterians furiously refuted such claims, upholding their own way as the true Puritan tradition, and relegating the Independents to be the progeny of Robert Browne the separatist.[3]

Both in theory and practice however, English Puritanism had been ambivalent, and if English Puritans before 1640 are called "Presbyterians", it is only with the recognition that there were various styles of Presbyterianism. When by 1592 the word "presbyteriall" is found in English usage as referring to government by "presbyters" or "elders", it is generally assumed that this government must correspond to Calvin's

Genevan experiment of a governmental structure based on ascending hierarchical committees of elders or presbyters.[4] Such certainly was the scheme of Walter Travers' and Thomas Cartwrights' "The Book of Discipline", which, as the first definitive treatment of synodical government in the English context, was to exert a profound influence on Puritan thought.[5] But several variations on the basic Calvinist theme were possible.

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1. J. Cook, What the Independents Would Have, 1 September 1647, pp.2-3, E.405 (7).
2. A Declaration of the Faith and Order Owned and practised in the Congregational Churches in England, agreed upon ... at the Savoy, February 1658-9, preface, E. 968 (4).
3. Eg. J Bastwick, The Utter Routing of the whole Army of all the Independents and Sectaries, 1646, (preface); R. Baillie, Errours and Induration, Sermon to the Lords, 30 July 1645, preface, E.294(12)
4. M.M. Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, (Chicago 1939), p.490.
5. The Latin text of this circulated in MS.in Puritan circles after 1583; the English translation was not published until 1644 as A Directory of Church Government ... Found in the Study of the most accomplished Divine, Mr. Thomas Cartwright, February 1644, E.269 (17).

Firstly, the Puritans did not necessarily see Presbyterianism and a reformed Episcopacy as mutually exclusive; when the Puritan spokesmen at the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 spoke of "presbytery" they meant that a bishop would be assisted in his council and at ordinations by a number of other senior ministers. Secondly, Calvin had included lay elders in his presbyteries, but whilst theoretically accepting these, the Elizabethan Presbyterian experiments ignored them in practice, and many English Presbyterians disliked them in the 1640s.[1] Thirdly, the English Puritans accepted, as Calvin and Luther had done, the role of the civil magistrate in the reformation of the church, but were undecided about the precise relationship of the State to the Church. Travers made no mention of the Queen in the Book of Discipline, and it is scarcely surprising that he was suspected of elevating clerical power above the civil in church affairs. In Scotland Andrew Melville drew a sharp distinction between the authority of the Church and of the secular State.[2]

There was also fourthly a crucial distinction between whether Presbyterian government was prudential or as essential to faith, and divinely ordained, as Melville believed.[3] Travers and Cartwright made a significant compromise between these two views, stating that the government of each particular church by its own "presbytery" was jure divino, whereas the hierarchical

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1. P. Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, (1967) p.453,ff.
2. G. Yule, "English Presbyterianism and the Westminster Assembly", The Reformed Theological Review, (May - August 1974) p.35.
3. Ibid., p.34. Calvin himself believed it was prudential: he allowed bishops in Poland.

synodical structure was merely profitable "as far as it is not expressly confirmed by the authority of Holy Scripture".[1] This leads fifthly to another basic problem which the early Puritan movement left unanswered, namely, whether or not the hierarchical synods should have authoritative power over the individual congregation. Travers and Cartwright had insisted that "no particular Church hath power over another", and that although a church ought to "obey the opinion of more churches with whom they communicate", they were under no obligation to do so.[2] Paul Baynes too upheld the authority of "parishional" against diocesan or provincial churches.[3] William Bradshaw in his "English Puritanisme" was even more specific; synods were to be purely advisory since

> "Christ Jesus hath not (subjected) any Church or Congregation of his, to any other Superiour Ecclesiasticall Jurisdiction, then unto that which is within it selfe".[4]

William Ames wavered from the authoritative view of synodical power to the advisory, and irritated John Paget, who favoured the former;

> "I may justly testify that I have found him wavering in his opinion touching the authority of synods ... though he did never plainly retract (his translation of Bradshaw) ... yet he shewed himself divers times inclining to a change of his judgment - yea, and sometimes acknowledged that synods had power to judge of causes".[5]

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1. A Directory of Church Government, n.p. (no pagination).
2. Ibid.
3. Paul Baynes, Diocesans Tryall, (1621). This was reprinted in 1644.
4. W. Bradshaw, English Puritanisme: containing the Maine Opinions of the rigidest sort of those that are called Puritans in the Realme of England, (1641) p.4, E.208 (4). The work was first published in 1604; the 1641 edition is attributed to Ames, who translated Bradshaws work into Latin. W. Haller, The Rise of Puritanism, (New York, Harper Torchbook edition, 1957) p.408.
5. J. Paget, A Defence of church-government exercised in presbyteriall, classicall and synodall assemblies, 1641 p. 106.

Yet some divines believed at an early stage that synodical authority was vital. Articles against the Northamptonshire and Warwickshire Elizabethan Puritans specified that matters decided by the "synod" were "holden autenticall, and is decreed to be put accordinglye in execution".[1]

Moreover in practice too the Puritans had been forced to adopt an ambiguous position. Whilst in theory they accepted the parochial structure of the national church, in practice they were forced to withdraw from it, just as the Independents were later to do. Elizabethan prophesyings and classes represented such a separation, as did the Puritan emphasis on exercises based on the family and household. Professor Haller has stressed that every Puritan group engaging a lecturer was behaving as an effectual "gathered church".[2] So too Professor Collinson insists

> "In its congregational practice, the puritan church within the Church ... contained an unresolved struggle between presbyterian and independent tendencies, although these were not yet identified by labels or recognised to be mutually incompatible".[3]

The differences inherent in English Puritanism were waiting to surface when Episcopacy was "overthrown" in 1641.[4] In 1640-43 the word "Puritan" became translated in effect to Presbyterian, but the "new" term was no less vague than the old. As Baxter

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1. Articles where with ye ministers of Northam. & Warwickshires are charged. 16 July 1590, quoted by C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England 1643-1660, University of Manchester M.A. Thesis, 1949, p.10.
2. W. Haller, Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution, (New York, Columbia Paperback edition, 1963) p.115.
3. P. Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan movement, p.334.
4. The Root and Branch bill to abolish Episcopacy was introduced on 27th May 1641, but Episcopacy was not legally abolished until 9th October 1646.

wrote,

"Any man that was for a serious spiritual way of worship (though he was for moderate Episcopacy or Liturgy) and that lived according to his profession, was commonly called a Presbyterian, as formerly he was called a Puritan, unless he joyned himself to Independents ... " 1

Thus many Presbyterians favoured a reduced Episcopacy; even Marshall, Calamy and Vines who by 1643 would accept the advisability of a hierarchical structure of presbyteries as in Scotland, were still in 1640 thinking of

"the ancient moderate Episcopacy, in which one stated President with his Presbytery, governed every Church; though not for the English Diocesan frame, in which one Bishop, without his Presbytery, did by a Lay-Chancellour's Court govern ... in a Secular manner".2

Cornelius Burges was to cling more tenaciously to Episcopacy than many of his colleagues, and assured Baxter that English nonconformists up until 1643 had made no firm commitment to the Scottish-style Presbytery.[3] Baillie informed Spang that without Scottish influence, England would never have been reformed, since

"The learnedest and most considerable part of them were fully Episcopal. Of those who joined with the parliament, the greatest and most countenanced part were much Episcopal".[4]

Long after 1643 the question of lay elders, the role of the civil magistrate and the divine right of clerical authority were to provide serious problems for the English Presbyterians,

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1. ed. M. Sylvester, Reliquiae Baxterianae, (1696), ii, p.278.
2. Ibid., i, 48. See D.N.B. (i.e. Dictionary of National Biography) for this evidence.
3. D.W.L. Baxter MSS, 59. 3. f.80. See also below, p.99.
4. R. Baillie, Letters and Journals, (printed for William Creech and William Gray, Edinburgh, 1775). (Henceforth referred to as Baillie) ii, 81. 27 December 1644.

who always remained a hybrid group.

In the absence of any clearly defined Presbyterian policy among the English divines, it was not surprising that the Scots propaganda on behalf of their own precise polity should find willing ears.[1] The Scots' persuasive powers were best revealed in the Assembly debates, but long before 1643 Scottish divines were concerned to guide the English Reformation along Scottish lines. Although Baillie, Henderson, Gillespie and Rutherford did not officially take up residence in London until the autumn of 1643 as the chaplains to the delegation of Scottish Commissioners, Baillie, Gillespie and Robert Blair paid a visit in 1640, and Henderson in 1641.[2] The Scots were aware of the necessity to liaise with Independent - inclined divines in engineering the downfall of Episcopacy, and realised that the English Reformation could never assume the character of the Scottish, where Presbytery had been clerically effected, gaining governmental recognition only after it had become a "fait accompli".[3] Henderson however showed greater insight than most Scots when he observed that

"We are not to conceive that they will embrace our form. A new form must be set down for us all".[4]

David Stevenson has recently shown that the Scottish kirk was not as united as it appeared in the late 1630s and early 1640s, and that the demands of the "radical party" in the kirk for private meetings were hailed by English Independents as proof

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1. This point is made by C.G. Bolam, J. Goring, H.L. Short, and R. Thomas, The English Presbyterians, (1968) p.40.
2. For these divines, see their respective D.N.B. entries.
3. L. Kaplan, "Presbyterians and Independents in 1643", p.250.
4. Henderson to Baillie, 20 April 1642, D.N.B. for Henderson.

that some Scots "encline unto an approbation of that way of government" (ie. Independency). Certainly the radicals hoped that their countenancing of private assemblies would mollify Independents in England and achieve greater unity, whereas the orthodox Scottish divines feared the radicals were tainted with Brownism. But in fact the radicals were no less opposed to the Independent church government than their more conservative colleagues, and the controversy in the Scottish kirk was successfully settled in the 1640s to enable the Scots to present a united front before their English allies.[1]

Thus, before 1643, Baillie, Gillespie and the more "radical" Rutherford had all published vindications of the Scottish Presbyterian discipline,[2] which, based on the theories of Andrew Melville, had two major features. The first was a hierarchical structure of Presbyterian assemblies, the congregational presbytery or kirke - session, the classis (formed of all the congregations in a specific locality), the provincial synod, or circuit presbytery,[3] and finally a national assembly, all of which had authoritative power over lower assemblies. Secondly, it stressed Melville's "Two Kingdom Theory", namely, that the civil and ecclesiastical powers were separate, and that whilst the civil magistrate must maintain the church's

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1. David Stevenson, The Radical Party in the Kirk, 1637-45, Journal of Ecclesiastical History, XXV (April 1974), especially pp.145-160. The "radicals'" demand for private assemblies was in addition to the public worship, and did not lessen the authoritarianism of the Scottish structure of church government. The radicals' demands became tacitly granted by the kirk.

2. R.Baillie, The Unlawfulnesse and Danger of Limited Episcopacie, 1641; G. Gillespie, An Assertion of the Government of the Church of Scotland, 1641; S. Rutherford, A Peaceable and Temperate Plea for Paul's Presbyterie in Scotland, 1642.

3. Strictly speaking, the word "synod" should only be used for a provincial presbytery, but it was often taken to mean any presbytery higher than the congregational.

independence, he could have no power over church discipline, which theoretically could be applied to himself as a church-member.[1] Not surprisingly however, Scottish divines were at this stage anxious to avoid stressing this aspect of their Presbytery. Meanwhile the Scottish General Assembly despatched recommendations that England should join her in a common church government.[2] Gradually the Scottish system began to permeate English thought, until by 1643 English Presbyterians would have agreed that an acceptable form of national reformation would be government by authoritative hierarchical assemblies according to the Scottish model, whether or not they believed such a system to be the one eternally perfect unalterable divine prescription.[3] Some leading ministers had rejected a moderate Episcopal solution as early as 1641, and in July 1642 various divines wrote to the Scottish General Assembly assuring them that "the most godly and considerable part" of the English ministry and people desired the establishment of Presbytery.[4]

Since the Independents accepted the congregational presbytery, and the consultative value of higher assemblies,

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1. For a brief description of the Scottish polity, see A True Relation of the forme and government of the Kirke of Scotland, 1640, E.205 (8).
2. Eg. The Scots Declaration, 1642, E.115 (3); Good News from the Assembly in Scotland, 1642 E. 109 (37). The same sentiments were sent to Charles; The humble Petition of the ... Kirke of Scotland, 1642-3, E.246 (21).
3. My definition of an English Presbyterian thus hinges on the acceptance (not necessarily jure divino) of authoritative synods. Later, the Erastian controversy would further divide Presbyerians.
4. Thomas Case and other city ministers (including probably Thomas Edwards) were early rejecters of moderate Episcopacy. E. Dering, Collection of Speeches, 1642, P.77, E.197 (1). The 1642 letter is quoted in D. Masson, The Life of Milton, vol.ii, p.420.

they were in a real sense Presbyterians too. Bastwick called them "Presbyterians Independent" as opposed to "Presbyterians Dependent"[1], and the ambivalence of the nonconformist fathers gave much credence to the Independent claim that theirs was the Presbyterianism of Cartwright, Baynes, and particularly Bradshaw. But although in 1640-3 many individuals' theories of church government were not clear-cut, the Independents did emerge in contradistinction to the Presbyterians. They became identified as men who denied any authoritative power to assemblies higher than the individual congregation, in contrast to the Presbyterians' belief in the necessity of coercive classical and synodical authority. Baxter, with good reason, dated the split between Presbytery and Independency to 1641,[2] whilst according to Baillie, Robert Blair was deliberately sent south of the border in 1640

"to satisfy the minds of many in England who love the way of New England better than that of Presbyteries used in our Church of Scotland".[3]

By 1641 the word "Independent" was emerging, although it was used mainly as yet in an adjectival context.[4] But it was more common in 1640-3 to refer to all those with congregational tendencies indiscriminately as Separatists, sectaries, Brownists

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1. J. Bastwick, Independency not God's Ordinance, Part I, p.7, 21 May 1645, E.285 (2).
2. See below, p.30.
3. Baillie, i, 215.
4. Eg. T. Edwards, Reasons against the Independant Government of Particular Congregations, 1641, E.167 (16).

or Burtonists. Pamphleteers seemed to be in grave doubts as to the various tenets of these groups,[1] but were unanimous in dubbing them ("Amsterdamian") or "new wine lately come from New England"; thus illustrating the two-fold impetus - Dutch and American - to Independency.[2] But a precise definition of Independency must distinguish it from the sects, who held doctrines unorthodox to the Church of England, and from separatists, who held that any national church and its congregations were anti-christian, that the civil magistrate had no religious powers, and that church and state must be completely separated.

A phrase often used in 1640-44 is "semi-separatist", which accords well with the Independents' partially autonomous congregationalism, with its reliance on the civil magistrate, and its denial of the ultimate separatist rejection of a national

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1. Burton was an Independent. See T. Chisheare, A Sermon, 1641 E.173 (20); and H.P. (Henry Peacham) Square - Caps turned into Roundheads, 1642 E.149 (1). For an example of contemporary confusions, these were the definitions of the author of Religion's Lotterie, 1642, E.107 (34) penultimate page;

"Separatists. The Separatists are men that would have no Bishops, but Elders, Ecclesiasticall and Layicke ...

The Brownist would have no Common-Prayer, onely expemporary Prayer, by the motion of the Spirit ...

The Puritane is the most commendable of all the rest, for he would have a Religion for which he hath a president, to wit, the Kirke of Scotland".

2. Eg. H.P. Square-Caps turned into Roundheads, p.2; The Dolefull Lamentation of Cheapside Crosse, January 1641-2 p.7, E.134 (9).

religious system.[1] John Cottom later tried to define semi-separatism by insisting that the Independents were not a sect, because they were orthodox in faith, and not separatists like Browne who

"separated from Churches and from Saints: we, only from the world, and that which is of the world".[2]

Edwards proved that in 1641-4 semi-separatist and Independent were synonymous by linking them in his references to the Apologetical Narration,[3] and I too use the words synonymously up to 1645. After 1645 the term "semi-separatist" was not used, as the imminent establishment of a national Presbyterian church meant that many radical Independents became increasingly identified with the separatists, and the barriers between ("semi-separatists") (Independents) and separatists became blurred. Even so, the moderate Independents (called also the "Meer Independants" or "pure Independents" in distinction to the radicals)[4] retained the semi-separatist theory, consistently affirming the role of the magistrate in religion. But both before and after 1645 the semi-separatists or Independents were repeatedly confused

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1. For the use of "semi-separatist", see An Exact description of a Roundhead, 1642, E.238 (21) which distinguished between Puritans (Presbyterians?) and semi-separatists, but acknowledged they had common roots; K. Chidley, The Justification of the Independant churches of Christ, 1641, p.36, E.174 (7), and James Wilcock, A challenge sent to Master E.B. (Edward Bright) a Semi-Separatist from the Church of England, January 1641-2, E.131 (22). Lord Brooke also said "The Separist (sic) is subdivided into Separatist and semi-separatist"; A Discourse Opening the Nature of that Episcopacie, 1641 p.90, E.177 (22). A little later there appeared Spongia, or Articles exhibited by certaine Semi-separatists, indicted at Sessions, against Daniel Featley D.D., Oxford, 2 January 1643-4, E.80 (4).
2. J. Cotton, The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared, 9 February 1647-8, p.9, E.426 (8).
3. T. Edwards, Antapologia, July 1644, eg. pp.1, 24. E.1(1).
4. Baxter used the term "meer Independants", Reliquiae Baxterianae, Appendix, p.73; Edwards the term "pure Independents in his Gangraena. Part I, 26 February 1645-6, p.14, E.323 (2).

with sectaries or separatists or both, and all the contemporary confusions aided the Scots' claim that only their model could eradicate sects and separatists - semi or otherwise.

Semi-separatists or Independents could look to both English and foreign precedents for their ideas. Refugee congregations had been permitted in England in the reign of Edward VI to be independent of the episcopate; John à Lasco's church in particular figured prominently in later Independent pleas for similar treatment.[1] But the "first Independent congregation" [2] was that established in 1616 by Henry Jacob, since Jacob repudiated the separatists to remain in partial communion with the established church, whose ecclesiastical validity before God he fully recognised.[3] This congregation still existed in 1640, and a leading Presbyterian layman, John Bellamy, was later to admit his former membership, stressing that the congregation received communion from Anglican ministers and baptised their children in the parish churches.[4] But undoubtedly the strongest examples of Independent ideas

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1. John à Lascos' congregation existed under Elizabeth. Valérand Poullain also led a congregation of exiles in Edward's reign. See G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints; The Congregational Way 1640-1660, (Oxford 1957), pp.5-6.
2. So called by G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, p.8. ff.
3. For Jacob see his A Defence of the Churches and Ministery of Englande (against the Brownists), Middleburg 1599, and John von Rohr, "The Congregationalism of Henry Jacob", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc. XIX (October 1962) pp.107-117.
4. J. Bellamy, A Justification of the City Remonstrance, 21 August 1646, p.21 ff, E.350 (23).

successfully practised came from abroad - in particular, from the Low Countries and New England.[1]

In the Low Countries the congregations of English exiles had enjoyed their freedom with very little control from the Dutch church authorities, and subordinated in practice only to the the Dutch civil magistracy.[2] The five Apologists[3], who had all ministered to such congregations, stressed that they were not merely tolerated by the Dutch, who also suffered sects, but were recognised as churches equal to all other Reformed Churches, sharing communion with the orthodox Dutch Presbyterian church, their buildings, and many other privileges.[4] In addition, the English exiles in Holland imbibed the invigorating climate of Remonstrantism with its emphasis on tolerance and the State.[5]

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1. It is worth noting that the Frankfurt congregation of Marian exiles adopted Independent ideas, eg. the church covenant, and a dispute arose over the rights of the people against their officers. (The Frankfurt church had various disputes in its history). Significantly, an account of the dispute was published in 1642 as the latter part of A Brief Discourse of the Troubles begun at Frankeford, April 1642, p.53 ff., E.142 (2). See also M.M. Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, p.152.
2. Berndt Gustaffson, "The five Dissenting Brethren, a study on the Dutch Background of their Independentism", Acta Universitatis Lundensis, (1955) pp.40-44. Although in the 1640s the English churches came more under the Dutch ecclesiastical authorities, this had previously not been the case. Attempts to erect a special classis for the English preachers had totally failed. R.P. Stearns, Congregationalism in the Dutch Netherlands, The Rise and Fall of the English Congregational Classis 1621-1635, (Chicago 1940).
3. Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, Jeremiah Burroughes, William Bridge and Sidrach Simpson.
4. The Apologists believed this distinction to be crucial. The exile congregations were allowed to use the bells to summon their congregations to worship (a privilege not accorded the sects, who anyway felt such bells to be popish). The Dutch churches, sometimes allowed the exile ministers contributions towards their maintenance, and gave them communion wine. Members of Dutch churches and the exile congregations could take the sacraments in each others churches. The churches were recognised by the State; in Arnheim in 1638, 10-12 English families received full permission from the magistrates to assemble for public worship in the

(cont. overleaf).

But there remained only one national Independent church in existence in the world, and so it was the New England way that became the blueprint for Independents, just as the Scottish model would similarly serve the Presbyterians. Needless to say, the circumstances in which the New England way had been created were no less uncopyable than that of the Scots, for England could never recreate the unique environment of a new world. But there "non-separating" congregations were autonomous within the loose structure of a national church; the State providing the unifying bond or framework between them.[1] Individual churches could be "advised" by a non-authoritative

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4(continued from previous page).
'Broederen Kerk' ie. the church to which Thomas Goodwin and Philip Nye ministered. The Rotterdam church was similarly recognised. See B. Gustaffson, op.cit, pp.20-24; An Apologeticall Narration, January 1643-4 pp.7-8, E.80 (7); and S. Simpson, The Anatomist Anatomis'd, 28 June 1644 pp.10-11, E.52 (22).
5. The Remonstrants were a group of ministers advocating religious liberty in Holland. They appealed to the State or local civil powers against the attacks of ecclesiastical authorities, but were not sectarian and never sought exclusion from the Dutch national church. The strong links between the Remonstrants and Independents are shown by B. Gustaffson, op.cit, p.85, ff.

1. The theory of relations between the New England church and state was based on the idea that the civil authorities, like the churches, would be dominated by saints. In practice the State frequently intruded upon the internal affairs of the church. See A. Simpson, Puritanism in Old and New England (Chicago 1955); P. Miller, Orthodoxy in Massachusetts, 1630-1650 (Cambridge Massachusetts 1933); P. Miller and T.H. Johnson, The Puritans, (New York 1938).

synod or "consociation" of churches, so that despite congregational freedom, orthodoxy could still be obtained on the rather doubtful premise that rightly informed consciences would reach the same conclusions. In the early 1640s relaxation of previous censorship allowed the first books describing the New England model to be published in England.[1]

Professor Hexter has stated that in 1643 the Presbyterian Independent issue had not yet emerged, and Professor Yule has echoed

> "it was not until the meeting of the Westminster Assembly that in England Independency became anything more serious than speculation". [2]

However the relevance of these observations must be limited. In 1641 one MP. told Parliament

> "Mr. Speaker, There is a certaine, new-born, unseen, ignorant, dangerous, desperate way of Independency; are we Sir, for this independent way? Nay (Sir) are we for the elder brother of it, the Presbyteriall form? I have not yet heard any one Gentleman within these walls stand up and assert his thoughts here for either of these waies".[3]

There were a very few MPs who were sympathetic to an Independent

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1. Eg. A coppy of a Letter of Mr. Cotton in Boston ... in answer of certaine Objections made against their Discipline and Orders there (1641) E.163 (11).
and John Cotton's The True Constitution of a particular visible Church, written in 1643 and published in England in 1642. This latter work went through four editions, the last being published in 1644 as The Doctrine of the Church, to which is committed the Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven. There was also a manuscript of Cotton's circulating in the early 1640s, which was finally published in 1645 as The Way of the Churches of Christ in New England.
2. J.H. Hexter The Reign of King Pym, (Cambridge, Massachesetts 1941) p.98; G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, p.34.
3. E. Dering, A Collection of Speeches, 1642 p.99, E.197 (1).

model of church government,[1] and more who accepted the virtues of some kind of Presbytery, as long as the State remained strictly in control. Nevertheless the Presbyterian-Independent controversy, was not disturbing Parliament.[2] Nor was it yet bothering the average Englishman, although laymen could be found joining Independent congregations. It is generally assumed that Englishmen opposed Presbytery, although such opposition was really to clerical power (a traditional bête noire of the English) and ironically, to lay elders. Baillie, observed that "as yet a Presbytery to this people is conceived a strange monster".[3] But so was Independency; most Englishmen were probably willing to accept any Parliamentary reformation that avoided clerical tyranny and confusion in the church.[4] Baxter found that

> "most that ever I could meet with were against the ius divinum of lay elders, and for the moderate primitive Episcopacy, and for a narrow congregational or parochial extent of ordinary churches, and for an accommodation of all parties in order to concord".[5]

Many divines too were in 1640-43 uncommitted to rigid views on church government. But the pamphlet literature reveals that the differences between Presbyterians and Independents were

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1. See below p.37.
2. The choice between the two religious systems never really was to be an issue in Parliament, although the toleration question was to be important.
3. S.R. Gardiner, History of the Great Civil War, 1642-49, (1893), vol. i, p.267.
4. E.g. The plea of Dorchester inhabitants in The English Post, from severall parts of the Kingdom, 1641 n.p., E.168.(14).
5. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i,64.

publicised and recognised as potentially serious. Divines were lamenting the fact that with some men

"the least Difference breedeth a Distance, the least difference in Judgement severs them in their Affections ... (from) followers of the truth, according to light received, as well as themselves".[1]

Certainly the pamphlet debate was as yet muted and the major theme in this literature in 1640-43 was that moderation must prevail, although Henry Wilkinson disagreed,

"This middle way, this halting between two opinions is sure to be wrong; the extreames both are sure to be better, and one is sure to be right".[2]

There was no indication that accommodation might prove impossible, nor would there be for sometime after 1643. Only the sects were generally condemned by divines. Baillie felt sure that Presbyterians and Independents could settle their differences;

"All the English ministers of Holland who are for the New England way are now here, how strong their party will be here is diversely reported; they are all in good terms with us; Our only considerable difference will be about the jurisdiction of Synods and Presbyteries. As for Brownists and Separatists of many kinds here they mislike them well near as much as we ... Our questions with them of the new way, we hope to get determined to our mutual satisfaction if we were rid of Bishops".

He believed Independents would assist the Presbyterians to overthrow Episcopacy.

"upon hope either of satisfaction when we get more leisure, or of toleration, on their good and peaceable behaviour".[3]

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1. John Brinsley, Israel's Cure, 1642, p.40. Brinsley was the minister at Yarmouth where the Independent William Bridge was lecturer.
2. H. Wilkinson, A Sermon against Lukewarmenesse in Religion, preached, 6 September 1640 p.7, E.204 (7).
3. Baillie, i, pp.231, 253.

Presbyterian - Independent Activity 1640-43

Edwards bewailed in August 1641 that for the past nine months Independent congregations had increased and multiplied, and he feared they would prosper further on account of the sad lack of worthy preachers in many towns and parishes. Despite the fact that Edwards was convinced that the Independents were no better than the true Separatists, Anabaptists and sectaries, he did distinguish a new growth of semi-separatism, although undoubtedly he exaggerated its extent.[1] What was the impetus to this new semi-separatism? Masson believed that

"Even had there been no return in 1641, of the five Independent English ministers from Holland, and no beginning in that year of a movement back from the New England colonies, there would doubtless, within that year have been an indigenous reappearance in England, of the theory of Independency".[2]

But the fact remains that the return of exiled ministers was the major factor in the growth of semi-separatism. Edwards was later to blame the five Apologists for propagating Independency on their return from Holland;

"I am perswaded that ... you Five have acted for your selves and way, both by your selves, and by your instruments, both upon the stage, and behind the curtaine ... more then any five men have done in so short a time this 60 yeares: and if it be not so, whence have come all the swarmes and troopes of Independents in Ministery, Armies, City, Countrey, Gentry, and amongst the common people ... have not you five had the greatest influence to cause this?"[3]

But he was writing back into earlier years a cohesive grouping of these five ministers which probably did not occur until they found themselves a minority group in the Westminster Assembly.

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1. T. Edwards, Reasons against the Independant government of particular congregations, August 1641, pp.28-29 and p.33, E.167 (16) The Presbyterians were understandably keen to encourage non-Independent godly preachers in the country.
2. D. Masson The Life of Milton, vol ii, p.587.
3. T. Edwards, Antapologia, July 1644, p.221, E1 (1).

Edwards did not mention them in 1641, but rather referred to Independents from Holland and New England in general.[1] There is no evidence that the five Apologists were a close group on their return to England around 1641; dissensions had arisen between them in Holland, and it might take a while before mutual aims against the Presbyterians overcame past differences.[2] Others were as important at this stage in promoting the Independent cause, and some credence is given to Masson's faith in an indigenous semi-separatism by the fact that Henry Burton may have been more important. It was his work against the Protestation that sparked an exchange of pamphlets between Presbyterians and Independents, and his distinct views on religion were sufficiently recognised by contemporaries to encourage one of the London "sects" to be dubbed "Burtonist".[3] Hugh Peter, Nathaniel Homes, Samuel Eaton and John Ward, all from abroad, were also prominent figures.[4] John Goodwin was

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1. T. Edwards, Reasons against the Independant Government, p.46.
2. Simpson had left the church of which Bridge had been the teacher in Rotterdam, and had gathered a new church, which gained in popularity as Bridge's declined. Sympathisers with Simpson were Joseph Symonds and John Ward; Ward later became pastor of the congregational church at Colchester. D.N.B. (Simpson).
3. H.P. Square - caps turned into Roundheads 1642, E.149 (1). Burton was 64 in 1643; he had lost his ears in the struggle with Laud. See A Narration of the Life of Mr. Henry Burton, 1643, E.94 (10). Burton returned from imprisonment as lecturer to his old parish of St. Matthew, Friday Street, but when the rector, Dr. Chestlin opposed him, Chestlin was removed. In 1643 Burton appears to have gathered a church in the parish. G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, p.52.
4. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.225 observed that there were "no want of Actors on the open stage to carry on your Church way". He cited initials, and I have placed possible names in brackets.

Mr. W. (Ward)	Mr. G. (Greenhill)	Mr. W. (Welde)
Mr. P. (Peter)	Mr. C. (Carter)	W.S. (Sedgwicke?)
Mr. K. (Kiffin) (Baptist)	Mr. A. (Allen and Mr. L. Lambe) (Baptists)	Mr. C. (Caryl?) Mr. E. (Eaton)
Mr. B. (Burton)	Mr. B. (Batchelor)	Mr. C. (Coachman?)
Dr. H. (Homes)	Mr. P. (Philip)	
Mr. L. (Lockyer)	Mr. G. (Goodwin) (John or Thomas)	

later to become important, although the precise date of his adoption of Independency before 1643 is uncertain.[1]

How true was Edward's complaint that the five Apologists had gathered a party for themselves?[2] There was certainly some organisation of men of congregational sympathies in London, since a group of Independents came to a specific agreement with Presbyterians.[3] By 1643-4 the Norwich Independent church was referring to the "Elders in London",[4] suggesting a certralised organisation, although this was doubtless based on individual contacts obtained at home and abroad. Certainly such friendships were important in Essex, Norfolk, Huntingdonshire, Yorkshire, Cheshire and London.[5] But they should not be overemphasised; neither in 1640-43 or later was the Independent ministers organisation to be any more than loose.

The Presbyterians in London were also beginning to organise themselves; ministers were accustomed to meet in the house of Edmund Calamy of Aldermanbury. Chestlin scorned these meetings

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1. John Goodwin had not been in exile. In 1639 he had written to Thomas Goodwin in Holland criticising Independency, which he felt was unscriptural. Thomas obviously converted his "ancient Friend" on his return to London. T. Goodwin, Works (5 vols 1681-1704, with a preface by T. Owen and J. Barron) Vol.IV Letters, p.36-48. Presbyterians later made much capital of John's 1639 letter.
2. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.214 The Independents denied this in An Apologeticall Narration, January 1643-4 p.24, E.80 (7).
3. See below, pp.26-7.
4. J. Browne, History of Congregationalism and Memorials of the Churches in Norfolk and Suffolk, (1877), p.160.
5. John Ward of Colchester had contact with Bridge of Yarmouth and London and Simpson of London; Philip Nye knew these and Thomas Goodwin of London and Robert Luddington of Kimbolton and later Hull. Samuel Eaton had lived in both the Low Countries and New England. See DNB. for Bridge, Simpson, Nye and Goodwin, and for Eaton, A.G. Matthews, Calamy Revised, (Oxford, 1934) p.178.

of the "juncto of ministers" as "a Randezvous of many scandalous and schismaticall Lecturers!"[1] Before long, Sion College, a meeting place for London ministers and lecturers, was to become particularly linked with the Presbyterian cause, but even by 1644 it was not their sole preserve. Baillie observed;

"They are all Presbyterians, except Burton, said to be a Brownist; John Goodwin to be a Socinian, and one scrupling Paedobaptism".[2]

Sion College was however a large institution, and key ministers probably used Calamy's house as a more private forum. We may assume that Cornelius Burges and Stephen Marshall (who frequently represented ministers before Parliament), Calibute Downing and Edmund Calamy were the leading spirits, although others were in attendance. Certainly the "Smectymnuan" ministers were there, as Chestlin specified that "from one of these Clubs came the Smectymnuan Libels".[3] All these ministers were moderate in sympathy, and bore no violent antagonism to semi-separatists, rather favouring a settling of differences. Downing, whose death in 1644 put an untimely end to his career as a leading divine, wrote a pamphlet urging moderation in general in 1641.[4] The fast sermons of Marshall, Newcomen and Calamy reflected a

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1. Dr. Chestlin, Persecutio Undecima, 1648, (reprinted 1682) p.57.
2. Baillie, ii, 24 (7 June 1644). For Sion College, see below, p.447.
3. Chestlin, Persecutio Undecima, p.58. The Smectymnuan group comprised the ministers Edmund Calamy, Stephen Marshall, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen and William Spurstowe, who wrote the first Smectymnuan pamphlet against Laudian Episcopacy and Bishop Hall in 1641, An Answer to a Booke Entituled, An Humble Remonstrance.
4. Downing, pastor of Hackney, wrote Considerations towards a peaceable Reformation in Matters Ecclesiastic, 1641, E.179 (7).

keen desire for reformation, but no hostility towards the Independents. Indeed, Stephen Marshall, who later became such a moderating influence in the Assembly that Baillie commented "he is for a middle way of his own", had family connections with the Independent Philip Nye, and seems to have shown some interest in the Independent system in 1642, as later. Baxter commented that

> "if all the Bishops had been of the same spirit as Archbishop Usher, the Independent like Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs and the Presbyterians like Mr. Steven Marshall, the divisions of the Church would soone have been healed".[1]

Edmund Calamy was praised by his son as "for the Presbyterian Discipline; but of known moderation towards those of other Sentiments".[2] Hotheads like Thomas Edwards were never in the forefront of

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1. Baillie, ii, 62, D.N.B. for Marshall, and E. Vaughan, Stephen Marshall - a forgotten Essex Puritan (1907). Philip Nye's son John married Marshall's daughter. Wood wrongly stated that Philip Nye married her. Wood is also wrong in describing Marshall as a "notorious Independent". A. Wood, Athenae Oxonienses, (1721) vol.ii, pp.31, 502-3. In 1642 Marshall joined in a letter sent by a number of English divines to test the Scots General Assembly on the question of Independency. Although Marshall was to become a strong supporter of Presbyterian clerical power against the Erastians, he always sought to achieve a compromise with the Independents. Fuller asserted that he vindicated Presbyterianism on his deathbed! T. Fuller, Worthies of England, 1662, p.52. Even so, his last sermon in 1655 was on the unity of the saints. Marshall often assumed the air of an unofficial leader of the Assembly, and was in the forefront of public affairs from 1641-8, and served Cromwell's government.

2. D.N.B. for Calamy, Reliquiae Baxterianae, iii, p.186. Calamy is an intriging figure. At first he seems moderate, and allowed Henry Burton to lecture in his church, but after 1645 he may have become less sympathetic to Independents, and Burton was refused leave to preach. Later he opposed army policy and became associated with Love's plot. He did much work for the Presbyterian London Provincial Assembly and was thanked particularly for drawing up the Jus Divinum Regiminis Evangelici in 1653. He was a leader in the Presbyterian negotiations with Episcopalians on the Restoration, but refused a bishopric and chose ejection rather than accept the harsh terms of the Act of Uniformity.

ecclesiastical politics[1] although Edwards found solace in intrigues with the Scots. Presbyterian leaders in contact with Parliament, like Marshall and Calamy, were men of a more moderate temper.

Though groupings of Presbyterian and Independent ministers were beginning, co-operation could still be secured on matters such as William Castell's petition for propagating the Gospel in America.[2] Personal friendships would always transcend party barriers even with the most apparently uncompromising divines. John Vicars and Henry Burton (with their wives) were in the habit of visiting each others houses for a talk until Burton's death in 1647.[3] Certainly, Edmund Calamy's group came to a positive agreement with some Independents in late 1641:-

"About the beginning of the second yeer of ... the Parliament, the Presbyterian Pastors, in London, and the Independents, met together, at reverend and religious Master Calamies House in Aldermanbury, where with mutuall consent, they all entred into an engagement one party to the other, That (for advancing of the publike Cause of a happy Reformation) neyther side should Preach, Print, or Dispute, or otherwise act against others way ... And this to continue till both sides, in a full meeting, did declare the contrary, and by mutuall consent set each other at liberty, touching these things".[4]

It seems that the Independents and Presbyterians agreed to continue using the Liturgy, to discourage lay-preaching and

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1. Edwards was not present at the truce with Independents.
2. Joseph Caryl, of Independent sympathies, signed this along with Calamy, White, Byfield and some Episcopalians, A Petition of W. Castell, December 1641, E.181 (26).
3. J. Vicars, Coleman-Street Conclave Visited, 21 March 1647-8, pp.22-3 E.433 (6).
4. J. Vicars, The Schismatick Sifted, 22 June 1646, p.16, E.341 (8). See also A Letter of the Ministers of the City of London presented the first of January 1645 (1645-6) p.1, E.314 (8). I shall now call this agreement the Calamy House Agreement. It is not known who the Independents were, although Burton, whose house was near Calamy's in Aldermanbury must have been one. Edwards stated that Nye and Goodwin were there, and assumed the other Apologists were. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp.240-245.

rigid Brownism (ie true separatism) and on no account to preach and print about their mutual differences.[1] The Independents also promised to bring in a full account of their views, an agreement which the Presbyterians later claimed was never fulfilled, although the Independents retorted that their Apologetical Narration in 1643, and Reasons of Dissent in 1645, should have satisfied this undertaking.[2]

Presbyterians were later unanimous that the Independents had been the first to break the agreement. Both Vicars and Edwards claimed that sometime before 1644 Nye persuaded Calamy to lend him the document, and then carried it off to Yorkshire, never to be seen again.[3] Independents mocked this story. One Independent ridiculed the Presbyterians for entrusting their reputedly one precious copy to Calamy, "a chiefe opposer of the dissenting party", and plainly partisan.[4] John Goodwin thought the charge against Nye so preposterous that "an apologie for the pretended crime in it, would be but an impertinenc. (sic)".[5] He claimed not only to have seen the copy on its return from Yorkshire, but to have kept it himself for "divers moneths"! We cannot be certain as to the fate of the paper, but it seems likely that had the Presbyterians

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp.240-242.
2. The Independents never did bring in a full model, as will later be discussed. The Westminster Assembly was to cite this agreement as a reason for demanding a model from the Independents. The Answer of the Westminster Assembly unto the ... Copy of a Remonstrance, February 1645-6, p.4, E.506 (11).
3. J. Vicars, The Schismatick Sifted, p.17; T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.243.
4. T.C., The Schismaticke Sifted Through a Sive of the Largest size, 30 June 1646, p.7, E.342 (4). He was rather unfair to Calamy.
5. J. Goodwin, Anapologesiates Antapologias, 27 August 1646 p.252. E.352 (5).

possessed a copy, they would have published it later to discredit Independents. Certainly the Independents had good reason for wishing to forget about the agreement. In any event the Presbyterians seemed to bear a grudge against their opponents for "losing" the paper; John Goodwin commented that

"there have been made so many lamentable complaints and outcries by the tongues and pens of many; as if the Presbyterian cause it self had been wrap'd up in the paper, and so cast into the midst of the sea".[1]

Edwards also charged the five Apologists with deliberately flouting the pact, whilst the Presbyterians virtuously maintained it to the letter. He was incensed that the Independents had preached and printed in favour of their way, whereas he (under protest) restrained;

"For my owne part though for many Reasons I desir'd to have been excepted from the agreement, as being engaged by a former promise in print to set out speedily some Tractates against their way, and never did formally promise silence, yet because my brethren undertooke for me (for without my forbearing to print and preach they would not have yeelded to the Agreement) ... (though I Knew) ... the advantage (the Independents) ... would make by it to encrease a party ... that I might not be guilty of hindering the common ends held out, I did totally both in preaching and printing decline all these points of difference".[2]

He stated that he did not abandon the agreement until it had been declared null and void at a clerical assembly. Since the agreement itself was dated by Vicars to "the beginning of the second year of the Parliament" (ie, after November 1641) and there was a notable absence of Presbyterian-Independent

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1. J. Goodwin, Anapologesiates Antapologias, 27 August 1646 p.252, E.352 (5).
2. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.242. The promise of more tracts was probably in his Reasons against the Independant government, p.20. Edwards was clearly not present at the Agreement, although he was right to think it could not work without his consent.

pamphlets from them until the appearance of the Apologetical Narration, it would appear to have lasted two years, until December 1643.

If Vicars dating of the agreement was correct (remembering he was writing some five years later) it would seem that the agreement was in fact necessitated by a few Presbyterian-Independent pamphlets in May-November 1641.[1] Henry Burton might be reasonably accredited with commencing the pamphlet controversies with his "Protestation Protested" in May 1641, which clearly advocated Independency in its interpretation of the true meaning of the Protestation.[2] Baxter later commented

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1. R.P. Stearns ascribes this "non-aggression pact" to the winter of 1640-1, and then cites these pamphlets as breaking the agreement. I believe that the evidence belies Stearns here. R.P. Stearns, The Strenuous Puritan : Hugh Peter 1598-1660, (Illinois, Urbana 1954) p.210.

2. The Protestation was taken by MPs on 3 May 1641, to defend "the true reformed Protestant religion expressed in the doctrine of the Church of England"; a week later the Commons had to explain this meant a defence against Popish innovations. Commons Journals (henceforth referred to as C.J.) ii, 144-5. Burton's definition of Popery was anything imposed on man's conscience that was not directly warranted by God's word. On July 10, the House of Commons committed the printer, but Burton, still regarded as a Laudian hero, was not reproved. H. Burton, The Protestation Protested, May 1641, E.158 (14). Thomas Cheshire called this "a most viperous proditorious (sic) piece of knavery". T. Cheshire, A True Copy of that Sermon which was preached at St. Pauls the 10th day of October last, 1641 p.12, E.177 (3).

that

"Till Mr. Ball wrote in favour of liturgy against Canne and Allin etc, and until Mr. Burton published his Protestation Protested, I never thought what Presbytery or Independency was nor ever spake with a man who seemed to know it".[1]

Burton's pamphlet spurred defences of the Protestation by an anonymous Episcopalian and by the Presbyterian John Geree, who both defended the principle of a national church. Geree could not accept Burton's stretching of the Protestation to imply an abolition of more than was necessary, "of which wresting I see and feare manifest inconveniences".[2] It is certain that Burton's pamphlet spurred Edwards himself to publish his "Reasons against the Independant Government" in August, which in turn prompted the separatist Katharine Chidley to publish her rejoinder to Edwards in October.[3] Im November the Baptist William Kiffin denied the validity of a national Presbyterian government in print, and Lord Brooke advocated Independency.[4] Little wonder that the moderate divines feared lest this nascent conflict should spread to endanger Reformation, and urged the Independents to agree to a truce.

Edwards complained that books were published for the

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1. R. Baxter, A True History of the Councils Enlarged, 1682, p.91. John Ball's An Answer to two Treatises of Mr. John Canne, dated 20 October 1640 but published in 1642, was a refutation of the separatist view point. Canne had originally written against the Independent John Robinson.
2. Amon, A Survay of that Foolish, Seditious, Scandalous, prophane Libell, the Protestation Protested, July 1641, E.164(8); J. Genee, Judah's Joy at the Oath, which included his Vindiciae Voti, 1641, p., E.170 (8).
3. Edwards often cited the "Protestation Protested" in his Reasons against the Independant Government, eg. p.49. K. Chidley, The Justification of the Independant Churches of Christ, October 1641, E.174 (7).
4. H. Knollys, A Glimpse of Sions Glory, November 1641, E.175 (5) The preface to this was by William Kiffin. Lord Brooke, Discourse opening the Nature of that Episcopacy, 1641, E.177 (22).

Independent way during the life of the agreement. Certainly there were some pamphlets detailing Independent practices and theories, but, as Edwards admitted, these were virtually all by New England divines. It may well have been true, as Edwards claimed, that the Apologists had a hand in the printing of these, especially Cotton's publications, so that they could still maintain the letter of the agreement whilst disobeying the spirit, but the number of works did not approach one hundred, as Edward's extravagantly maintained.[1] Moreover, Cotton's "The True Constitution" specifically stressed the need for unity.[2] It, may also be true that the Independents were busy writing letters and manuscripts about their way, although they did not actually print them.[3] But if this was a failing of the Independents, it was one also of the Presbyterians, who allowed the publication of Scottish treatises and who were doubtless writing manuscripts and letters of their own. No one stopped Thomas Letchford from publishing his denunciation of the New England way, or James Wilcock's challenge to the semi-separatist Edward Bright.[4]

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.220. The one work which was probably native was Robert Coachman's, The Cry of a Stone, February 1641-2, E.137 (32). Such New England works were J. Cotton, The True Constitution of a particular visible Church proved by Scripture, 1642, E.107 (15); J. Robinson, A Briefe Catechisme concerning Church Government, 1642, E.1105(1); The Profession of the Faith of Mr. J.D. 1642, E.135 (39).
2. J. Cotton, The True Constitution of a particular visible church, p.4.
3. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.9.
4. Eg. the Scottish works of Baillie, Gillespie and Rutherford (see before p.10 note 2); J. Wilcock, A Challenge sent to Master E.B., January 1641-2, E.131 (22); T. Letchford, Plain Dealing of Newes from New England 1641)2 E.136 (22). Letchford had come to Boston in 1638 but was soon out of sympathy with the rulers of the Bay colony. Denied political rights, and branded a heretic, he returned to England in 1641. W.L. Sachse, "The Migration of New Englanders to England", American Historical Review, (1958) pp255-6.

Besides printing, Edwards believed the Independents to have broken the agreement by preaching their opinions at large. He moaned that such defaulters included "some who by name were spoken of at the agreement (as Mr. P. and M.W.)"[1] Castigating also Burroughes, Simpson and Bridge for this crime, he mentioned St Margarets' church Westminster as a place where Independent doctrines were broached.[2] Certainly some sermons preached before Parliament made some hints in a congregational fashion, but the most extreme was Henry Burton's sermon in June 1641, and this was before the Calamy House Agreement.[3] Otherwise Independent preachers displayed remarkable moderation at least with Parliament, both before the Agreement and after. Edwards censured Bridge for his sermon in April 1641, but although this urged a full reformation, it made only the barest hint that a more complete reformation than a Presbyterian church

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.242. He meant Hugh Peter and Thomas Welde. In 1641 these two and William Hibbins were sent by Massachusetts as special agents to London, but their failure to secure a patent to the Narragansett territory, their poor efforts at fund-raising and their meddling in English domestic affairs led to their recall in 1645. By that time Hibbins had already returned, and the others decided to stay. W.L. Sachse, op.cit., p.275.
2. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp.201, 215-219. He cited Simpson's preaching at Blackfriars and Fishstreet hill; Burroughes at Cornhill and Mildred's Bread-street, Bridge at London "Bridge-foot" and in Norwich, Ipswich, and Yarmouth.
3. H. Burton, England's Bondage and Hope of Deliverance, 20 June 1641. E.174 (2). He specified freedom of conscience, and that discipline should rest with the congregation,

was intended;

"One man sayes, the government of the Church of England is the best; another that the Scottish government is the best; a third, that a third is best; another, O that I knew what were the government and forme of God's house, prescribed by God himselfe. Well. Wouldst thou know? If you be ashamed of your owne iniquities, God will shew you the forme of his house".[1]

Thomas Goodwin was reproved by Edwards for his sermon in April 1642, but this too was moderate, begging for the completion of the "mystical temple" and only vaguely pointing towards a congregational government.[2] Jeremiah Burroughes and Joseph Symonds also made very restrained comments in their demands for a vigorous reformation.[3] In fact both Presbyterian and Independent ministers preached to Parliament about the need for firm and speedy charges, but were studiously vague about the nature these should take.[4] And if Edwards thought that

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1. W. Bridge, Babylon's Downfall, 1641, p.13, E.163(3).
2. T. Goodwin, Zerubbabel's Encouragement, 27 April 1642 especially p.34 E.147 (13).
3. J. Symonds, A Sermon ... before the Commons, July 1641, J. Burroughes, Sion's Joy, 7 September 1641. E.174 (3). For the fast sermons in this period see E.W. Kirby, "Sermons before the Commons, 1640-42", American Historical Review, XLIV, (1938-9).
4. Dr. Lamont has stressed that the sermons of both Presbyterians and Independents were in themselves radical in so far as they were anti-Episcopal and insisted on a speedy reformation. W.M. Lamont, "Episcopacy and a Godly Discipline 1641-6", Journal of Ecclesiastical History, X, no.1 (April 1959).

Independents were more specific in their private preaching, there is nothing to indicate that the Presbyterians were more virtuous.

Despite the fact that the Agreement did not forbid the "gathering" of semi-separatist congregations, Edwards claimed that such activity continued, although not even he could cite many examples.[1] He accused Independents of having private house meetings, but at the worst could only insinuate that besides the members from Arnheim of Thomas Goodwin's congregation at St. Dunstans in the East, there were some Londoners who

> "have gone to his Church-meetings, ... not actually members (the ceremony may be being forborne that it may be said he hath added none to his Church) yet are ... members in fieri, with their faces to Zion".[2]

In fact there was restraint on the gathering of congregations in 1640-3, as Independents were willing to wait for the restructuring of the national church, at least for a time. It is true that the five future Apologists mostly accepted extra-parochial positions, with the exception of Philip Nye, parish minister of Kimbolton, Huntingdonshire. Jeremiah Burroughes was recommended as lecturer at Stepney on 6 September 1641, and was never to gather a congregation, being content with his lectureship here and another

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp 8-9, 222-223. He thus claimed the Independents were trying to subvert the national church into tolerating their way. It may have been understood that congregations should not be yet gathered, although no specific statement was made.
2. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp.222-223. For this congregation see W.Wilson, The History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches, (1808) vol.i.,pp.214-219,(4 vols.).

at Cornhill. William Bridge was appointed town preacher at Yarmouth in 1642 and Simpson resumed his lecture at St. Margaret's, Fish Street. William Bridge was called to be minister of a congregational church that gathered in Norwich in 1643, but this was formed largely of returning exiles. Otherwise only two Apologists, Thomas Goodwin and Philip Nye, have connections with the gathering of churches in this period. Even John Goodwin was to remain a parish minister until he was removed in 1645, as well as being pastor to a gathered congregation.[1]

There is evidence for very few semi-separatist congregations in England as a whole during this period. Thomas Edwards seemed to think there might be only five or six congregations in 1641, and was only concerned lest the numbers should multiply (Independency being, in his opinion, a most divisive way).[2] Samuel Eaton's church at Dukinfield was formed in 1641, and has been claimed to be the first church of its kind, although this is not the case.[3] A congregation was formed at Llanvaches in Monmouth in 1639, and was associated with a church in Bristol formed in 1640.[4] There

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1. For Burroughes, the most moderate Apologist, see C.J.ii,755; Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 103, and J. Burroughes, A Vindication, 23 July 1646 p.13, E.345 (14). For Bridge, see D.N.B.; A.G. Matthews, Calamy Revised, (Oxford 1934), p.74, and J. Browne, History of Congregationalism and Memorials of the Churches in Norfolk and Suffolk, (1877) p. 210. For Simpson, see D.N.B. For Philip Nye, see D.N.B. Nye's patron at Kimbolton was the Earl of Manchester. On 22 August 1643 seven people from Hull came to Kimbolton to form themselves into a gathered church, and Nye's curate at Kimbolton, Robert Luddington, later became their pastor.
With the exception of Thomas Goodwin, all the Apologists had been parochial ministers before their departure for Holland.
William Dell, was another example of a more radical Independent who retained his parish cure until the Restoration. John Owen was to remain vicar at Coggeshall until the 1650s.

2. T. Edwards, Reasons against the Independant government, pp34-35. He wondered if the Independents would accept a toleration limited to five or six congregations.

3. For this church see A. Gordon, Historical Account of Dukinfield Chapel (Manchester 1896). The claim that ~~this was the first~~

(con'd overleaf)

was also the continuation of Henry Jacob's church in London, which had divided into two congregations in 1640, one under Henry Jessey, and the other under Praise-God Barebones.[1] John Ward was called to a congregational church at Colchester in 1642 that was probably already in existence prior to that date.[2] The church at Wrentham may also have been congregational at that time, with the return of John Philip in 1642.[3] In 1643 a Royalist newsbook exulted that

"It was advertised from London that Doctor Homes and Master Burton, two great advancers of the faction, have set up their independent Congregations, and will admit no man unto the Sacrament ... but of such as shall enter their new Covenant".[4]

(3 continued.) Independent church was made by T. Edwards, Gangraena Part III, 28 December 1646, p.165, E.368 (5).

4. For the Llanvaches church see G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, pp.34-5. The Bristol church became Baptist later, but did not insist on baptism (ie. adult baptism) as a condition of membership. See ed. E.B. Underhill, The Records of a Church in Broadmead, Bristol, 1640-87, (Hanserd Knollys Society, 1847). The congregation fled to London when Bristol was captured by Prince Rupert in 1643. I. W. Wilson, The History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches, vol.i, p.46. Jessey became a Baptist in 1645, but did not make baptism a condition of membership. G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, p.118.

2. E.A. Blaxill, History of Lion Walk Congregational Church Colchester, 1642-1937, (Colchester, 1938) p.3. A newsbook referred to Colchester in 1642 as "a towne arrived at that high degree of madnesse, that the independent church is openly practized in it". Mercurius Rusticus, Oxford 1643, p.128, E.70 (26), Ralph Josselin, minister of Earls Colne near Colchester, said he was troubled by some "in matter of separacon", ed.E. Hockcliffe, The Diary of Ralph Josselin, (Camden Society, 3rd series vol. XV 1908) p.12.

3. J. Browne, History of Congregationalism, p161.

4. Burton as pastor and Dr. Nathaniel Homes as teacher, set up an Independent congregation at St. Matthew, Friday street. See Mercurius Aulicus, Oxford 1643, E.99 (22) and above p.22. Vicars explained that Homes had used trickery to gather an Independent church in his own parish of St. Mary Staining, but the date of this is uncertain. J. Vicars, The Schismatick Sifted, pp.26-28.

Otherwise, apart from known semi-separatist activity in Kent, the evidence remains sparse; certainly the Independents were not widely advertising their practices.[1]

Edwards finally maintained that the Independents had consistently promoted their way politically by converting MPs to their "party", pleading for a toleration, and suggesting that Parliamentary power would be diminished if the Scottish church government was accepted.[2] But he only cited Nye speaking thus at Hull, where the M.P. was Sir Henry Vane junior, who already had congregational sympathies and had been active in New England. Certainly there were MPs who wanted the New England way to have a fair hearing at the Assembly, as is proved by the fact that "divers Lords" and some 30 of the Commons urged Cotton, Hooker and Davenport to travel to England to attend the Westminster Assembly. There is no evidence however to prove Dr. Foster's claim that these MPs constituted an Independent political party.[3] There were also MPs who were definitely congregationalist, as Lords Brooke and Saye, "with their new rules of independent government', two leading Captaines of that faction".[4] Edwards

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1. See James Wilcock, A challenge sent to Master E.B. a semi-separatist from the Church of England; Edward Bright was appointed lecturer of Brenchley and Cranbrooke, Kent in May 1642. C.J. ii, 569, 596.
2. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.223. Such Erastian arguments are interesting as a presage for the future.
3. For the letter to New England, see below p.82. The claim of an Independent political party was made by S. Foster, "The Presbyterian Independents Exorcised", Past and Present, XLIV (August 1969), especially pp.68-69, and effectively demolished by articles by B. Worden, V. Pearl, D. Underdown, G. Yule and J.H. Hexter, in "Debate : Presbyterians, Independents and Puritans". Past and Present No. XLVII (May 1970) (See particularly, D. Underdown pp.128-129.)
4. G. Williams, The Discovery of Mysteries, Oxford 1643, p.11, E.60(1).

stated that the Independents meddled in politics, attended daily at Westminster, and actively worked against a scheme of ministerial "county-committees" to replace Episcopacy until the new church-government had been established, because they feared them to be the shadow of a Presbyterian system.[1] He provided no evidence for his claim, but was presumably referring to Dering's modified Episcopal scheme of June 1641, which specified such ministerial "constant" presbyteries. Edwards probably castigated the Independents because of Vane's rival Erastian plan, which was based on lay and clerical county commissioners, and which was modified by the Commons so that all commissioners were to be laymen. But in fact many Presbyterians disliked both schemes, not merely because of the latter's Erastianism, but because both would "shrinke up the power into a few hands".[2] Probably Independent ministers were seeking to influence M.P.s, but little evidence survives. Independents were influential in city politics at this stage; Hugh Peter, Jeremiah Burroughes and "Mr. Goodwin" helped to promote a city petition against an unsatisfactory accommodation with the King, and Hugh Peter promoted a petition in April 1643:

> "Peters, one of the Amsterdamians that now rules the rost, and passeth in the number of their best Divines, stood at the hall doore, and earnestly pressed every man as he went in to have a care of that Petition".[3]

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1. T. Edwards, Reasons against the Independant Government, introduction, and T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.222.
2. W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, vol.i, p.92 ff. See also W.M. Lamont, Godly Rule: Politics and Religion 1630-1660, (1969) p.103 note.
3. The True and Original Copy of the First Petition, delivered to the House of Commons, 1 December 1642, E.130(26). It was not explicit whether the "Mr. Goodwin" was Thomas or John. The April 1643 petition was mentioned in Mercurius Aulicus No.14, Oxford 1643, pp.170-171. E.97(20).

Presbyterians too had their Parliamentary contacts. Chestlin said that Calamy's house was the place

"from whence the Faction in Parliament received informations concerning Religion, and hereby did they communicate their intelligence, and designes with directions, how these their Ministers might by degrees prepare the people for their worke that I have heard their Auditors say, that by the Sundayes Sermon, or a Lecture, they could learne, not onely what was done the weeke before, but also what was to be done in Parliament the weeke following ... "[1]

The Earl of Warwick's house in Essex was reputedly "the common Randezvous of all Schismaticall Preachers".[2] Marshall and Burges preached on the first Parliamentary fast day, and together with Calamy were active in assisting Parliamentary committees.[3] William Twisse, John White and Thomas Hill joined them in aiding the influential Lords committee for innovations in religion.[4] Marshall was particularly favoured by M.P.s. (according to Fuller);

"He was their Trumpet, by whom they sounded their Solemn Fasts ... In their Sickness he was their Confessor in their Assembly their Councellour, in their Treaties their Chaplain, in their Disputations their Champion".[5]

He was active in the promotion of the Root and Branch bill in June 1641, meeting with Pym, Hampden and Sir Robert Harley to discuss tactics, and urging D'Ewes to ensure he took his seat in the House

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1. P. Chestlin, Persecutio Undecima, p.57. Calamy's house was decried by a Royalist as a breeding ground of rebellion, as were the St. Antholin's lectures and Artillery Gardens. A Letter from Mercurius Civicus to Mercurius Rusticus, Oxford, August 1643, p.27, E.65 (32).
2. Ibid, p.8. Warwick was the patron of Stephen Marshall at Finchingfield, Essex, and Marshall convalesced at his house. S. Marshall, Coppy of a Letter, 1643, p.1, E.102 (20).
3. Eg, the committee for Deans and Chapters, May 1641. Burges presented a ministers petition to Parliament in December 1641. C.J. ii, 350.
4. W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, i, p.66. Episcopalians also attended the committee.
5. T. Fuller, Worthies of England, 1662, p.52.

for the debate.[1] Not surprisingly, he was awarded the key appointment of lecturer of St. Margaret's Westminster in 1641, and both he and Calamy were voted plate from the House.[2] Thomas Case led some ministers into the Commons in 1643 to deliver, on behalf of the city, some reasons against a ceasefire, and informed Dering in 1641 that his efforts for moderate Episcopacy betrayed his former good conscience.[3] Yet Edwards did not blame them for their close connection with M.P.s and political advice!

There is evidence that some Independents were preparing to petition Parliament for a toleration of their way, and according to Edwards, the Apologists were again responsible;

> "When you were come over, did you not in the first yeare of the Parliament sitting, consult together, and debate about a Petition, and was there not one drawne to be presented to the House of Commons for a Toleration of some Congregations to enjoy a Congregationall government".[4]

He deliberately drew up his "Reasons against the Independant government" because of "the credible information given me of some Petitions drawne, to be presented to the Honourable House of Commons, for a Toleration".[5]

He hoped such petitions would never be presented, and due to the

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1. W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, vol i, pp.81-82 (extensively quoting from D'Ewes' Diary).
2. C.J. ii, 440, C.J. ii, 353.
3. I owe this point to W.M. Lamont, Godly Rule, p.81. Dering referred to Case as one of "our Parliament-pressing Ministers". E. Dering, A Collection of Speeches, 1642, p2, E.197(1).
4. T. Edwards Antapologia, p.221. This may have provided additional cause for the Calamy House Agreement.
5. T. Edwards, Reasons against the Independant government, introduction.

Calamy House Agreement, it would appear they were not. Certainly one petition was being circulated amongst Independents in Cheshire by Samuel Eaton, that stressed independent congregational power but did not apparently demand toleration.[1] But the petition to which Edwards referred may well have been the one printed in Amsterdam and sold in London in 1641, which reflected the hopes of returning exiles. This petition, which when printed was juxtaposed with an opposing demand for synodical government, was trying to prove the merits of a congregationally based system according to Scripture, and denied any authority to synods beyond a purely advisory function. The petitioners rejected the parochial discipline because it admitted scandalous sinners to church fellowship, but did not reject the Church of England as a totally false church. They specifically stated that they hoped Parliament would reform the church according to their model, and that a conference should be held (in writing) with their opponents, to be judged by Parliament. Failing this, they trusted Parliament would allow some of their ministers to attend any proposed synod on church discipline. But if the worst occured, and their way was dismissed, they simply begged to be allowed to return to live in peace under a tolerant government.[2] This semieseparatist plea for consideration and toleration was not to be repeated during the life of the Calamy House Agreement, although the separatists issued a separate demand.[3]

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1. Sir T. Aston, A Remonstrance against Presbitery, 28 May 1641, p.2. E. 163 (1). Eaton, pastor of the Independent church at Dukinfield, returned from New England in 1640, and was interestingly confused by Aston with a Presbyterian (Ibid, pp.2,6.). The petition was circulated by the common people without the knowledge of the gentry.
2. A Copie of two writings sent to the Parliament, Amsterdam, 1641, E. 238. (12), no pagination. The title may just mean "prepared to be sent"?
3. The Humble Petition of the Brownists, November 1641, E.178 (10).

Clearly Independents showed remarkable forbearance until the calling of the Westminster Assembly, when both sides hoped for accommodation and a settlement more lasting than the Calamy House Agreement.

Theoretical Conflicts: Pamphlet Literature 1640-3.

Presbyterians and Independents did reveal clear differences in their hopes for the reformed church, and the basis of the Independents' later pleas for toleration were clearly present in pamphlets as early as 1641. But with the historical ambivalence and democratic impetus of Puritanism, it is not surprising that many Presbyterian works stressed the importance of congregational reform and popular consent in government hardly less vehemently than Independents. For opposition to the Laudian hierarchy had always emphasised the necessity of the people having an interest in the church, and even moderate Episcopalians could stress congregational consent in government.[1] Before 1643 not all Presbyterians were as dogmatic as the Scots. One writer assigned to synods a purely advisory role and stressed congregational autonomy, but he was not necessarily an Independent, just anti-prelatical. Milton, who thought himself a Presbyterian at this stage, also advocated a similar system of co-equal congregational presbyteries.[2]

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1. Daniel Featly, promoting the idea of congregational bishops, argued that "authority to handle Controversies belonged to every severall Congregation". D. Featley, The Equallity of the Ministery Plainly Described, 1641, p.9, E.205 (11).
2. The Petition for the Prelates briefly examined, 1641, p.32, E. 160 (2); J. Milton, of Reformation in England, 1641; Reason of Church Government, 1642.

Hierarchical views of Presbyterian power, restricting congregational authority, were appearing, such as "The Beauty of Godly Government in a Church Reformed," which delineated clearly the spheres of control between the parochial congregation and the local, circuit and national presbyteries.[1] But two Presbyterian petitions to Parliament showed how close some Presbyterians could still be to the Independent concept of complete power within a congregation. One announced that Christian liberty meant that a congregation must be free to choose its own minister[2] and another stressed congregational autonomy within a hierarchical system of synods to support and advise;

"Every particular Church to have its owne right of ordinary Discipline within it selfe, allowed ... by the judgement of the Presbyters with concurrence of the Congregation (either at large, or contracted into some few chosen persons".[3]

This last clause indicated the basis upon which Presbyterian notions of popular consent would diverge from Independent. Ultimately most Presbyterians would come to accept the Scottish view that popular consent was delegated to the officials of the various presbyteries, and that synodical discipline was not a violation of congregational power, but an extension of it.[4]

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1. The Beauty of Godly Government in a Church Reformed 1641-2, E.205 (5). Accounts of the Scottish, French and Channel Islands churches also favoured a hierarchical power structure.
2. A Forme of Ecclesiastical government ... humbly presented to the High Court of Parliament, 26 August 1642, pp.16-17, E. 114 (22). This hoped lay patrons would listen to the opinions of congregations.
3. A Petition presented to the Parliament from the Countie of Nottingham, June 1641, p.24, E. 160 (4).
4. For the argument of "aggregate power" see below pp. 232-4.

Baillie went so far as to say church government was never to be democratic;

"a Presbyterie is not a Democracie ... the reason here proceeds alone from the authoritie of a Master to plant in his owne house what Government he will, without libertie for servants to dispute the qualitie thereof".[1]

But in 1640-3, when Presbyterianism was still a revolutionary democratic concept, not many English Presbyterians would have entirely agreed; Baillie knew full well that after Episcopal tyranny, men were bound to be over-scruplous about the bounds and extent of synods.[2] A perspicacious Anglican was to observe that logically the arguments used against bishops must discredit synods too;

"For if ... there be nothing to be done without the expresse or tacit consent of the congregation ... How then shall Jurisdiction and Ordination belong onely to the Elders ... they will say, that what is done by the assembly of the Elders is done either by the expresse or tacit consent of the whole congregation. And may not others say ... that ... (of) the Bishop?"[3]

The arguments to be used in the Presbyterian-Independent pamphlet controversies in later years can mostly be found in works before 1643. In many ways the semi-separatist ideal of a true church differed little from a separatist's, except in their attitude to the national church. Katharine Childley's separatist

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1. R. Baillie, The Unlawfulnesse and Danger of Limited Episcopacie, 1641, p.33-4, E. 174 (4).
2. Ibid, p.9.
3. Iranaeus Philalethes, (J. Hall), Automaxia, 18 March 1642-3, p.21, E. 93 (17).

account of the true church was much the same as Henry Burton's or Robert Coachman's, for all stressed the holiness of a visible church,

"where Christ's Ordinances are administred in their purity, and so where none are admitted members of the Congregation but such as are approved of by the whole assembly for their profession and conversation".[1]

To such a visible congregation of saints, Christ had given all power of government, although other churches and even synods could assist in a brotherly way. But they could never govern that church, for

"it cannot be imagined with any shew of reason, that there is any universall Ministery since the Apostles dayes, neither any that can execute their office out of that particular flocke whereof the holy Ghost hath made them overseers, no more than the Lord Mayor of London may goe and execute justice in the Citie of Yorke".[2]

Every individual congregation had the right of ordination and "the power of the keys", or church-censure.[3] Independents did stress the advisory capacity of synods however, and the 1641 petition maintained that they were lawful and even necessary for Christian welfare.[4] The Independent Nathaniel Homes was very cautious not to oppose Presbyterians when he preached before Parliament, and by vague terminology made it appear that the Independents allowed more to synods than was actually the case;

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1. H. Burton, The Protestation Protested, p.15. See also K. Chidley, The Justification of the Independant churches of Christ (her definition of Independent included separatist as well as semi-separatist).
2. R. Coachman, The Cry of a Stone, February 1641-2, pp.5-6, E. 137(32). Coachman denounced the rigid separatists, for he did not believe all parish churches were false. Little is known of Coachman except that he was a member for 2 years of such a pure church; he may have been in New England or the Low Countries, or a member of Henry Jacob's church.
3. See below pp. 243-50. See J. Robinson, A Briefe Catechisme concerning Church Government, 1642 n.p. E. 1105 (1). Eaton was preaching at Knutsford how Christ would demand an account of their preservation of the keys of power from every church member. T. Aston, A Remonstrance against Presbitery, p.6.
4. A Copie of Two Writings sent to the Parliament, postscript.

"still the particular Church or congregation is subject to Christ's Apostles, and all lawful Synods orderly and lawfull gathered according to the Scriptures, in the nation where the Church hath her being, to rectifie them where they are wrong, to excite them when deficient".[1]

Independents rejected the separatist idea that Church of England congregations were antichristian, and not to be attended without sin. Lord Saye and Sele knew he was no separatist, a word he believed to be a "Theologicall scar-crow";

"the Brownists ... differ with us in no fundamentall point of doctrine or saving truth as I know ... Their failing is this, they hold there is no true Church in England ... they distinguish not betweene the bene esse or puritie of a true Church, and the esse or true being of it ... I hold no such opinion, but doe beleeve to the contrary, that there are in England many true Churches".[2]

But Burton was already showing how Independents would question a national church which could not achieve their ideal of pure congregations. If parish churches, with their mixed communions and profane ordinances, were not drastically reformed, then

"surely God's people must bee separatists from the world, and from false Churches, to become a pure and holy people unto the Lord".[3]

Although not denying that there were saints in the Church of England, Burton was sceptical that a national church could ever achieve purity. By all means, said he, let Parliament set up a new national church, and let it try to achieve as much purity

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1. N. Homes, The New World or New Reformed Church, May 1641, p.53, E. 173 (4).
2. Two Speeches of the Rt. Hon. William Lord Viscount Say and Seale, 1641, pp.15-17, E. 198 (16). The Independents' view of the national church will be discussed more fully below, pp.225-9.
3. H. Burton, The Protestation Protested, p.12.

as is possible in that kind of church. But he begged Parliament to allow semi-separatists their liberty still to enjoy

"Christs ordinances in such a purity, as a nationall Church, is not possibly capable of. And what ever Liturgie, or Ceremonies, or Discipline, are left to accompany this Nationall Church-government, tis indifferent with us, so we may injoy our Christian liberty in the true use of such ordinances".[1]

Other Independents did not go so far as Burton in denying that a national church could ever be pure - did not New England approach that ideal? Although they would later accept that any church government could be endured as long as they were allowed their liberty, they saw no reason at this stage to be so pessimistic about the Reformation.

But critics of the Independents, separatists, Episcopalians and Presbyterians, felt that the semi-separatist position was illogical. Separatist Katharine Chidley certainly believed that

"those (whom you call Semi-Separates) do deny the truth of your Church also ... and so farre as they be Separates, they must needs deny the Church from which they separate".[2]

James Wilcock challenged semi-separatist Edward Bright to categorically deny the truth of the English church, since his practices implied it.[3] One of Burton's opponents called him an outright separatist and libertine, and thought that only Episcopacy could preserve England from such men whose every reformation consisted of denial.[4] The Presbyterian John Geree asked Burton

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1. H. Burton, The Protestation Protested, p.11, p.20 (quoted).
2. K. Chidley, The Justification of the Independant Churches of Christ, p.36.
3. J. Wilcock, A Challenge sent to Master E.B. a Semi-Separatist from the Church of England, p.11. Wilcock claimed that Bright and his followers had scorned him and his ministry.
4. Anon, A Survay of that Foolish, Seditious, Scandalous, Prophane Libell, the Protestation Protested, pp.7,23.

"why it is necessary that the members in a particular Church should be a better metall than the members of a National Church ... no more is required of the members of Christian particular Churches, then of the members of the Jewish Nationall Church called holy or Saints, as well as be commanded to be so".

Geree felt Burton's lack of care for whatever Parliament would establish (providing his freedom was assured) to be most uncharitable;

" a little more care of the soules of Christians might better suite with those that so far transcend others in outward reformation".[1]

Certainly the seeds of future conflict between Presbyterian and Independent over the national church and the impurity of mixed parish communions were sown in the pamphlets of 1640-43. But the arguments of a few pamphlets must not hide the fact that most Presbyterians and Independents were not publicising the difference, and that Independents were to maintain until 1644 their desire for an accommodation within the national church structure. They were to strive vehemently to reject a completely separatist solution.

Burton's plea for toleration, echoed by Lord Saye and Sele, and more obliquely by Jeremiah Burroughes, would stand nonetheless as a presage of later Independent demands.[2] Similarly, Thomas Edwards defence of uniformity against toleration in 1641[3] would herald later Presbyterian arguments, although even Edwards was more conciliatory in 1641 than later. His recommendation that the Independents should make the family their pure church, covenanted to Christ, and come to the public church as well was certainly a

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1. J. Geree, Vindiciae Voti (annexed to Judah's Joy at the Oath), n.p.
2. Two Speeches of the Rt. Hon William Lord Viscount Say and Seale, p.17; J. Burroughes, Sions Joy, sermon to the Commons, 7 September 1641, p.27, E. 174 (3).
3. T. Edwards, Reasons Against a Toleration, pp.21-55 of Reasons against the Independant government.

novel and sincere suggestion. But Edwards was rigidly opposed to any toleration and made a grim prophecy of the evil effects of such a national mistake. He believed that all kinds of errors and heresies could claim toleration on better grounds than semi-separatists, for heretics and sects would claim that the English church was completely antichristian! He therefore predicted,

> "if ever the dore of Tolerations should be but a little opened, there would be a great crowding by al (sic) sorts to enter in at it ... in the belly of this Independancie they tolerate and make way for Libertinisme, Heresie, and whatever Satan and the corrupt hearts of men have a pleasure to broach and fall into".

A toleration would imply that the Independent church way was unanswerable. He begged the Independents to accept the national church, believing that once it was reformed, they would find little to offend them. Otherwise, they would do better to return to Holland or New England rather than disrupt the church in their mother country. For

> "I have had long thoughts of this Church way, and I doe apprehend more evil in it, than men doe see at first or than the Independants can see, it being their owne cause, and they many wayes engaged in it".[1]

Unfortunately, Edwards was to be proved only too right.

However, it must be stressed that most Independents disliked the idea of a full toleration no less than Edwards;

> "Ah and alas, that this Land which heretofore hath been a Sanctuarie for true Religion ... should now become a common receptacle for Atheists, Neuters, Hypocrites, luke-warme professors and Popish wanderers: can (we) be safe in the tolleration of all these religions?" [2]

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1. T. Edwards, Reasons Against a Toleration, pp.33-4, 42-47, 54 of Reasons against the Independant government.
2. J. Tillinghast (a future Independent), Demetrius his Opposition to Reformation, 1642, p.30, E.151(26).

Potentially dangerous as this issue was, Independents were not totally opposed to Presbyterians - and moderate Independents never would support a universal toleration.

Voices were heard to question the Independents' loyalty to the civil government - would not a "semi-separatism" in the church produce disorder in the state? Wilcock believed that pleas of conscience must of necessity reduce loyalty and obedience to the civil magistrate.[1] One Episcopalian believed that a libertine like Burton would soon be suggesting "that the propriety of all goods is your owne"[2] Another argued that the Independents' favouring popular consent in the church must lead them to extend the same principle to the state;

"We cannot but expresse our just fears ... how these (principles) shall be reducible by Parliaments, how consistent with a Monarchie, and how dangerously conducible to an Anarchie".[3]

In fact in 1640-3 Presbyterians and Independents found little quarrel in their views on civil matters. Erastianism had not yet risen sufficiently to complicate the issue of church government, although Henry Parker was already warning that no reformation could be allowed to appropriate

" a sole, independent, perpetuall power of Church Government ... to Ecclesiasticall persons only: and whereby Princes, etc. are excluded as incompetent for the same".[4]

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1. J. Wilcock, A Challenge sent unto Master E.B. a Semi-Separatist from the Church of England, pp.14-15.
2. Anom, A Survay of that Foolish Seditious, Scandalous, Prophane Libell, the Protestation Protested, p.14.
3. Sir. T. Aston, A Remonstrance against Presbitery, p.2. He was really writing against Eaton the Independent.
4. H. Parker, The True Grounds of Ecclesiastical Regiment set forth in a briefe Dissertation, 1641, p.7, E. 176 (18).

As yet Independent apologists had little cause to advocate their way as more amenable to the power of the magistrate than the Presbyterians. For in these early days of hope of a national reformation under a godly Parliament, both groups, unlike the separatists, stressed the importance of the magistrate's role in church affairs, views that would later be condemned by Coleman as no less Erastian than his own.[1] In fact this did not mean that Presbyterians and Independents favoured magisterial as opposed to clerical authority in the church, nor that God could not achieve a Reformation without Parliament: exactly the contrary was true.[2] But they certainly acknowledged the importance of the magistrate's guiding of reformation.

Both groups agreed that magistracy was pleasing to the Lord, instituted by him, and obedience to it expected. Stephen Marshall stated

> "it is agreeable to Gods will, that in all Countreys ... Magistracie be set up ... among the divers kinds of lawfull governments, Monarchy, Aristocracy, and Democracy, no one of them is so appointed of God, as to exclude the other from being a lawfull government".[3]

So the Independent John Goodwin agreed, although he was careful to put the basis of magisterial authority in the people, not the Almighty:

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1. See below, p.495.
2. W.M. Lamont, "Episcopacy and a Godly Discipline 1641-6", Journal of Ecclesiastical History X (1959) pp.76-85.
3. S. Marshall, A Copy of a Letter, 18 May 1643, p.3, E. 102 (20).

"Kingly power or authority is directly and properly the creation or ordinance of man, though there bee that in it also, which ... may give it the denomination of an Ordinance of God ... (that kind of government, Monarchical, Aristocratic, Democratic): which every Nation or People chooseth for it selfe, should be obeyed and submitted unto by those that have chosen it ..."[1]

There is discernible however a variation of emphasis between an Independent and Presbyterian interpretation of the justification of the civil war and the nature of magisterial responsibility. Goodwin's words provide the key to this difference, which was more subterranean than explicitly stated. On the vital issue they were unanimous in their conviction that the civil war would be an upholding, not an overthrow, of magisterial sovereignty, as a necessary defence of Parliamentary authority and the balance of power against a tyrannical monarch. In fact later a dispute arose as to which side had been the speediest to defend Parliament's cause![2] But it is not surprising that the distinction of emphasis should be identical to that in their religious theories, namely that the Independents should place the ultimate basis of power in the people, whilst acknowledging the necessity of Parliament, whereas Presbyterians emphasised that power should be in the people's representatives, not the people themselves.

Charles Herle, a moderate Presbyterian, stressed that the government of England consisted of a balance of power

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1. J. Goodwin, Anti-Cavalierisme, October 1642, p.8, E. 123(25).
2. John Goodwin later claimed that the Apologists defended the Parliament's cause in print before the Presbyterians. This was untrue, although Independents were among the leading defenders of the Parliamentary cause. M.S. to A.S. with a plea for libertie of conscience in a Church way, 1644, p.83, E. 45 (3). Not all Presbyterian ministers agreed with the war; John Geree for one did not. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 34.

"compounded of 3 Coordinate Estates, a King, and two Houses of Parliament; unto this mixt power no subordinate authority may in any case make resistance".[1]

When men took up arms against the King, they were exercising Parliament's joint sovereignty for the defence of popular safety;

"Now the end or purpose of this mixture of the 3 estates in this government, 'tis the safety of its safety ... So then the government by Law its rule, unto safety its end, is ordinarily betrusted to the King, wherein, if he faile and refuse, either to follow the rule Law, or its end safety, his co-opdinates in this mixture of the supreame power must according to their trusts supply".[2]

Stepnen Marshall shared this view; appealing to the Law and right reason he stressed that King and rulers should value their prerogatives no further than their advancing of the public good.[3]

Marshall and Herle were careful however not to carry this concept of popular safety to extremes. Marshall entrusted Parliament alone with the ("salus populi", not the people themselves. His sole justification for assuming the King required deliverance from evil counsellors for the benefit of popular safety was

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1. C. Herle, A Fuller Answer to a Treatise, written by Dr. Ferne, December 1642-3, p.3, E. 244 (27). At this time there was a pamphlet war between Parliamentary divines and Dr. Ferne, who was opposed to the taking of arms against Charles. Herle wrote two pamphlets against Ferne; the other entitled An Answer to Dr. Ferne's Reply, entitled Conscience satisfied, May 1643, E.102 (3). William Bridge, Jeremiah Burroughes (Independents) and Stephen Marshall also engaged in the controversy. There was also a long treatise written by many London divines against Ferne, Scripture and Reason Pleaded for Defensive Armes, April 1643, E.247 (22).
2. C. Herle, A Fuller Answer to a Treatise, pp.7-8.
3. S. Marshall, A Copy of a Letter, p.8.

"the Parliament judged so; the judgement of a Parliament of England was never questioned till now by a people of England ... all controversies betwixt the King and Subject receive their finall determination in the Parliament; the judgements of all other Courts are ratified or nullified by a Parliament".[1]

Herle was also convinced that the power of the people was valid only in the context of the decisions of their representatives, with which the people must rest content;

"A ... question begg'd is that in case the King and Parliament should neither discharge their trusts, the people might rise and make resistance against both, a Position which no man I know maintaines, the Parliament is the people's own consent, which once pass'd they cannot revoke ... the people have reserved no power in themselves from themselves in Parliament".[2]

Independent theorists did not of course presume that the people would revolt against Parliament, but they emphasised that the centre of popular safety was the populace. Bridge insisted that Parliament should be trusted by the people;

"it is according to the fundamentall Lawes of the Kingdome ... That the Parliament are trusted by the Commom-weale with the welfare and security thereof ... then are they to looke to it, and to use all meanes for the preservation thereof as well as the King".[3]

But since he maintained that the people had the right to break their covenant with the King for their own safety, logically there was no reason why they should not resist Parliament too; "for did not the people sometime in Israel take up armes against some of the Judges?"[4] He repeated;

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1. S. Marshall, A Copy of a Letter, p.22.
2. C. Herle, A Fuller Answer to a Treatise, p.25.
3. W. Bridge, The Wounded Conscience cured, February 1642-3, pp.3-4, E. 89 (8). This was against Ferne.
4. Ibid., p.41.

"though power abstractively considered, be originally from God himselfe, yet he hath communicated that power to the people, so as the first subject seat and receptacle of ruling civill power under himselfe, is the whole people or body politicke".[1]

Jeremiah Burroughes actually admitted (albeit reluctantly) that a degenerate Parliament could be resisted, although this would be a sorry event.[2]

Bridge made a vital comparison between the church and the civil state when he stated

"the Church hath excommunication granted to it by Christ himselfe for its owne preservation ... from evills and errors ... the Commonweale also by the like reason ... have a power to deliver itselfe from its burden ... (and) in time of danger to helpe themselves".[3]

In church government, Independents placed the basis of power in the congregation, the people, although they accepted advisory synods. This tendency is also evident in their theories on civil government, where they stressed that the real centre of power was not Parliament but the people. But this distinction of emphasis from Presbyterian theories of the civil State must not be overstressed; the Independent ministers were far from advocating a popular overthrow of their rulers, and the difference was more of potential significance for the later army actions of 1647-8 than of actual importance in 1643. It was a period of Parliament-worship, and both groups would echo Burton's words;

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1. W. Bridge, The Truth of the Times Vindicated, 24 July 1643 pp.4-5 E. 61 (20). This was also against Ferne.
2. J. Burroughes, A Briefe Answer to Doctor Fernes Booke, bending to resolve Conscience, about the Subjects taking up of Arms, 1643, pp.9-10. John Goodwin also stressed the people's liberties in his Anti-Cavalierisme p.38.
3. W. Bridge, The Wounded Conscience Cured, p.33.

"The Lord strengthen and direct the Parliament in so great and glorious a Worke".[1] (i.e. Reformation).

Hope in a Synod.

The pamphlet literature of 1640-3 revealed actual and potentially explosive differences between Presbyterians and "semi-separatists" or Independents, but above such disagreements, there were earnest pleas for accommodation and a general effort at restraint. There was clearly hope that a decisive split could be avoided when Thomas Edwards, the most strongly anti-Independent English Presbyterian throughout 1640-48 could in 1641 still hope that the Independents would "come and grow into one body, joining in one way with us".[2] Thomas Carter cleverly skated over distinctions between national and congregational theories in his sermon to the Commons in June 1643:

"by Baptisme, we ... are united to Christ, and one to another, by mutuall covenant, if not actuall and formall, yet vertuall and interpretative, and thereby also made members of particular visible Churches, nationall and congregationall".[3]

Individuals did not necessarily as yet conform rigidly to either theory; it was a period of ferment and discussion among divines searching for a true Reformation.[4] There was a partial identification between the two concepts and thus a basis for unity: both

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1. H. Burton, The Protestation Protested, p.20.
2. T. Edwards, Reasons against the Independant government, p.54.
3. T. Carter, Prayers Prevalencie for Israel's Safety, 1643, p.13, E. 60 (2).
4. For example, William Fenwick advocated congregational power that was nearly as absolute as the Independents, accepted a three tier Presbyterian organisation and felt the universities could keep their ancient right of presentation - three positions he did not regard as contradictory, W. Fenwick, Zion's Right and Babel's Ruine, 1642, E. 143 (20).

sides accepted the basic verity of the English national church, the use of synods (despite conflict over the exact extent of their authority) and popular consent. Basic issues such as the officers and doctrine of the church were not in dispute, and even Edwards admitted the respect divines had for each other.

Moderation was the keynote of several sermons. Calibute Downing thought it prudent that few things should be found jure divino as essential to the ("bene esse" of the church;

> "For as fundamentals in point of beliefe are few, and fully revealed ... Let the things be few that are required, and then let them be strongly commanded. For many indifferent things have cost too deare".[1]

Joseph Symonds claimed that

> "Different opinions are no just excuse of dissenting affections ... And true peace ariseth not as much from inforced uniformity, as from a Candid unanimity".[2]

Thomas Wilson hoped that the reformed church would regain those who

> "went away, but went not from us, but were scattered, they love the assembly of Saints, without separation from them, when offences bee taken away, they being driven away will be gathered ..."[3]

From the outset it had been hoped that a synod of divines would meet as soon as possible to debate differences and effect the national Reformation.[4] Edmund Calamy begged Parliament to "command ... the faithfull and learned Ministers of this Kingdome to meet in a free

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1. C. Downing, Considerations toward a Peaceable Reformation in in Matters Ecclesiasticall, December 1641 p.4.,p.8. E. 179 (7).
2. J. Symonds, A sermon lately preached at Westminster, July 1641, dedicatory epistle, E.165 (10).
3. T. Wilson, Jerichoes Downfall, sermon to the House of Commons, 28 September 1642, pp.43-44, E. 124 (37).
4. The London ministers had petitioned for a free synod in 1641; the House of Commons mentioned it in their Grand Remonstrance, of November 1641.

Nationall Synod", although he added,

"your Wisedomes will be carefull to make such qualifications both of the Persons that are to choose, and to the chosen, that no Minister lyable to any just exception, should have a voice in this Synod, for fear lest our greatest remedy prove to be our greatest ruine".[1]

Independents could nevertheless expect a fair hearing at the Assembly, and moderate Independents were included on the lists of divines for the synod. Significantly, in the very month that arrangements for the Assembly proceeded in earnest, April 1642, two Independent divines, Thomas Goodwin and Joseph Caryl, preached at the Parliamentary fast.[2]

Baillie, David Buchanan and Thomas Edwards all maintained that the years delay in the meeting of the Assembly was due to Independent tactics.[3] But Independents (as revealed by the Humble Petition) wanted a synod in which their way could be discussed, and it is more likely that the stress and exigencies of war postponed the calling of the Westminster Assembly from July 1642 - July 1643.[4] It could well be argued that the calling of the Assembly in July 1643, when several military disasters had rendered Scottish aid essential, and thus made Scottish Presbyterianism more likely, meant that delay had actually disadvantaged the Independent cause. But Parliament was in fact determined to have church government discussed when convenient,

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1. E. Calamy, England's Looking Glasse, December 1641, E. 131 (29) pp.47-8.
2. On 19 April 1642 the Commons ordered the names of suitable divines to be brought in; on 9th May the bill for the Assembly was introduced. On 26 May the Bill passed both Houses, and waited for the King's assent, which was not forthcoming.
3. Baillie, ii, p3; D. Buchanan, An Explanation of some Truths, January 1645-6, p.42 E. 314 (15); T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.224.
4. A Copie of two Writings, no pagination. Charles raised his standard on 22nd August 1642.

and it is possible that they called the synod in 1643 to deliberately evade the Scottish demands for a direct Presbyterian establishment.

Great hopes were placed in this synod, which could achieve a healing of the breaches between religious groups by the light of God's Word.[1] England's Reformation was frequently described by an allegory of child-birth, with apocalyptic overtones that the "man-childe" (Reformation) would overthrow. Antichrist forever.[2] Some divines however stressed that twins (Jacob and Esau) were travailing for the first birth, and that God's word, deliberated by the Assembly, must bring the elder twin to his birthright of the national church.

> "Then, and then onely is Truth like to triumph in Church-Assemblies, when God's Word is there advanced ... Poore England hath long beene in a travelling condition, felt many bitter pangs, findeth now twins in her wombe, Jacobs and Esaus, wrestling for the birth-right ... Great things are come to the birth..."[3]

Yet ironically the very advent of an Assembly would mean that religious differences would be brought into the open, whereas up to 1643 the Calamy House Agreement had fairly successfully avoided this. As Herle declared,

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1. Reconciliation and agreement were stressed as the aims of the Assembly in G.T., The Method of a Synod, 1641-2, p.10, E.134 (22).
2. Presbyterians and Independents alike used the child-birth allegory - to give but two examples, H. Wilkinson, Babylon's Ruine, Jerusalems Rising, 25 October 1643, dedicatory epistle, E.77 (12); and W. Bridge, Sermon before the Commons, 29 November 1643, preface, E.79(11). The Apocalypse had predicted the deliverance from Antichrist in terms of the rescuing of a newly delivered woman from the red Dragon. Such apocalyptic visions were indicative of the millenananism of many divines. See W.M. Lamont, Godly Rule for an extensive account of such millenarianism.
3. T. Hill, The Trade of Truth advanced, sermon before the Commons, 27 July 1642, p.32. E.110 (13).

"These three last yeeres, England hath been the busie, the varying scaene of almost every day new Plots of mischiefe, the Children (like Jacob and Esay) in an emilous contention, which should come into the world first ... but through this strength of our God, they have not had strength to bring forth".[1]

Divisions in religion would now have an intellectual forum; the Independents would never have accepted the Calamy House Agreement if it had extended to the Assembly. They recognised that the Assembly was "the medium through which this Independency ... had to assert themselves (sic) and press for a hearing".[2] and certainly resolved to exploit its debates. Thus, if the Assembly failed to quickly accommodate the variations of thought amongst its members, it was likely that these would be exacerbated. Root and branch divines in 1640-43 had stressed the necessity of a speedy reformation, but haste and the Assembly might prove incompatible. Thomas Edwards, a born pessimist, was to be proved remarkably accurate when he wrote that Independents might use delaying tactics in the Assembly, and a de facto toleration while it met, to increase support for their way before a national church government was settled. In his view, the longer the Assembly deliberated, the greater the Independents' hopes. In this event, Edwards darkly hinted that his 1641 attack on the Independents was but a "light skirmish, before I draw up my Forces to the maine Battell".[3] This can serve as a general comment on the nature of the Presbyterian-Independent literature between 1640-1643.

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1. C. Herle, David's Song of Three Parts, sermon to the Lords, 15 June 1643, p.23, E.56 (4). He referred to religious conflicts in general.
2. D. Masson, Life of Milton, vol.ii, p.603.
3. T. Edwards, Reasons against the Independant government, p.20.

Chapter Two

FAITH IN ASSEMBLY AND COVENANT : July - December 1643.

"Church-Reformation may prove a compendious way to compose State-commotions. Hereby poore distracted England may yet finde two supporting Staves, Beauty and Bands, a Beautifull union established in Church and State".

T. Hill, The Militant Church Triumphant,
sermon to Parliament 21 July 1643, dedicatory epistle, E.64(1).

"Truth is brought into the world with pain, it's born in bloud; there never was, nor never shall be a thorow Reformation without troubles, for the most are alwayes the worst, and will not indure it".

S. Simpson, Reformation's Preservation,
sermon to the House of Commons shortly after the opening of the Assembly, 26 July 1643, p.20.

"O that England would make use of Israel's covenant, it may be it would prove a divine balsome for the curing of her bleeding wounds".

R. Hollingworth, An Answer to a Certain Writing,
11 September 1643, p.44. E.67 (5).

The opening of the long-awaited Westminster Assembly on 1 July 1643 was duly acclaimed by contemporary newsbooks.[1] As Baillie commented, it was a remarkable body;

"The like of that Assemblie I did never see, and as we hear say, the like was never in England, nor any where is shortlie lyke to be".[2]

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1. Eg, Certaine Informations, No.25, 3-10 July 1643, E.59 (21). The Assembly met at first in Henry VII chapel, Westminster, but on the arrival of colder weather withdrew to the Jerusalem Chamber. Lords Journals (henceforth referred to as L.J.) vi 230.

It may be convenient to give an account here of the records of the Assembly. The MS. minutes (in 3 volumes) are in the custody of Dr. Williams Library, from which a late nineteenth century transcript was made by E. Maunde Thompson. The transcripts are also available in Dr. Williams Library on microfilm, and I have used these extensively; they are referred to in this study as TSS. The third volume of the Minutes only has been reprinted by A.F. Mitchell and J. Struthers, Minutes of the Sessions of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, (Edinburgh 1874) (henceforth referred to as Mitchell and Struthers). Much of the unprinted minutes deal with the contention between Presbyterian and Independents and gives evidence of the frustration and delays from August 1643-November 1644. The minutes are not complete, and some omissions are perhaps deliberate. But they provide an illuminating record of the Assembly, especially when read in conjunction with Baillie's Letters, and the accounts of Lightfoot and Gillespie. Lightfoot's Journal of the Assembly is printed in vol. XIII of The Works of John Lightfoot, ed J.R. Pitman, (1825) (henceforth referred to as Lightfoot); it covers the period July 1643 - December 1644. Gillespie's notes of the Assembly cover February 1643-4 to January 1645-6 and are to be found in The Works of Mr. George Gillespie, published as volume two of The Presbyterian's Armoury, (Edinburgh 1846); (henceforth referred to as Gillespie, Notes). When these notes refer to debates in sub-committee rather than the Assembly proper, this will be specified. Thomas Goodwin is known to have written 14 or 15 octavo volumes of a diary about the Assembly (T. Goodwin, Works, (1681-1704) vol. v. p xviii). Unfortunately these are not known to be any longer extant.

2. Baillie, i, 398, which gives a splendid description of the Assembly debating chamber.

Yet it was not a "synod" in the strict Scottish sense, that is, a body with authority to legislate for the church; it was not even clerically elected, although its inspiration owed much to clerical demands. As Baillie said,

"this is no proper assembly, but a meeting called by the parliament to advise them in what things they are asked".[1]

It was merely a deliberative body in subservience to the civil magistrate, and had a number of lay assessors.[2] One or two of its divines were Erastian in sympathy and all the rest sympathetic to the rôle of the magistrate in Reformation, although most would strictly limit this role when it conflicted with clerical discipline. Hetherington observed

"The true theory of the Westminster Assembly comprises two main elements - there was a Christian Church in England, but not organised: and the civil power, avowing Christianity, had called an assembly of Divines, for the purpose of consulting together respecting those points of government and discipline which require the sanction of civil authority for their full efficiency".[3]

The Assembly was in the tradition of the English Reformation, which from its inception had been lay-dominated.

Liberty of discussion was not therefore absolute, despite Mitchell and Struthers' eulogy that

"It secured to all liberty of discussion, required that dissents, and the reasons of them, should be reported along with the resolutions ... and enacted almost nothing in matters of faith which had not been passed unanimously by the divines".[4]

The Assembly could discuss only such matters

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1. Baillie, ii, 20.
2. Selden observed that the laymen were essential to stop the Assembly encroaching on Parliamentary privilege. S.W. Carruthers, The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly, p.22.
3. W.M. Hetherington, History of the Westminster Assembly of Divines (New York, 1843) p.100.
4. Mitchell and Struthers, introduction, p xxii. Presbyterians and Independents were not divided on doctrinal matters.

"as shall be proposed unto them by both or either of the Houses of Parliament ... and to deliver their opinions ... to both or either of the said Houses from time to time ... the same not to divulge by printing, writing or otherwise without the consent of ... Parliament".[1]

Baillie's later imputation that the Independents had caused Parliament to insist upon these restrictions was unfounded, and ignored the fact that Parliament had no wish for any clerical assembly to usurp its own power.[2] Nevertheless it is true that within Parliament's own limitations, the Assembly regulations ensured a fairly free discussion on church affairs. For they stipulated firstly that

"Every member ... shall make serious and solemne protestation, not to maintain anything but what he believes to be truth in sincerity, when discovered to him",

and secondly that

"no man (was) to be denied to enter his dissent from the Assembly, and his reasons for it, in any point, after it hath been debated in the Assembly".[3]

As a debating institution, the Assembly would provide a forum for varying opinions within the framework of a national church. Yet the existence of procedure for dissent would mean that major disagreements would be clearly revealed to the prejudice of that national church. The Assembly always offered both a promise and a threat, both the hope that moderation between

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1. The Ordinance for the calling of the Westminster Assembly, 12 June 1643, p.5, E. 105 (34).
2. R. Baillie, A Dissuasive from the Errors of the Time, (second edition), 22 January 1645-6 p.90, E. 317 (5).
3. Lightfoot, p.4.

Presbyterian and Independent would be maintained, and accommodation achieved, and the fear that differences would be magnified into an irreparable breach. The Royalists were certainly relying on the latter as the most likely outcome; one wrote

"I believe they can never fully agree ... For their discipline and government, some would have the Scotish Synods ... but most of them like better of the manner of Amsterdam, where every Church is independent, and every Pastour is a Pope in his own Parish".[1]

Yet the very real euphoria amongst Parliamentary divines at the opening of the Assembly, seemed to defy restraint. Assembly members begged each other to lay aside preconceived opinions and to seek the truth of the Word of God in catholicity. Matthew Newcomen and Oliver Bowles, preaching before Parliament and Assembly soon after Assembly debates commenced, echoed each other in such sentiments. Parliament was to be praised for choosing divines of different judgements,

"to whom a liberty is not denied to plead every one for his own party ... Love calls upon us as to be zealous for the truth, so to make it our work to endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace".[2]

Such peace and unity could be achieved by

"denying yourselves and laying by all pre-ingagements to your own opinions, desires, ways ... willingly and unanimously consent to that which upon just and pious debate shall be found to be the way and truth of God ... Beleeve it Brethren, in your Union will be laid a happy foundation of Union through the whole Kingdome".[3]

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1. G. Williams, The Discovery of Mysteries, Oxford 1643, p.51, E.60(1).
2. O. Bowles, Zeal for God's House Quickned (sic) 7 July 1643, dedicatory epistle, pp.3,26, E. 63 (6).
3. M. Newcomen, Jerusalem's Watchmen, 7 July 1643, p.33, E. 63 (7). Similar sentiments were revealed by Herbert Palmer in his Sermon to Parliament, 21 June 1643, pp. 56-7, E. 60 (3), and by the Independent Sidrach Simpson in Reformation's Preservation, 26 July 1643. The latter sermon does not have the crucial significance as an Independent document assigned it by B. Hanbury, Historical Memorials Relating to the Independents (1839-44), vol.ii, pp.205-15, and was just advocating (in general terms) a full reformation.

Hetherington has claimed that Presbytery was bound to be the result of the Assembly.[1] Certainly many of its members favoured some kind of Presbyterianism, but it is too easy in retrospect to assume that a Scottish-type Presbytery was the inevitable conclusion. The Parliamentary ordinance stated only that the Assembly should endeavour that

> "such a government shall be settled in the Church as may be most agreeable to God's Holy Word, and most apt to procure and preserve the peace of the Church at home, and nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland, and other reformed churches abroad; and for the better effecting hereof, and for the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the Church of England from all false calumnies and aspersions".[2]

Parliament did not intend to offend Scotland, and the Scottish alliance would undoubtedly increase pressure for a Scottish-style of Presbytery. But Parliament stated that reform was to be judged according to God's word, and only "in nearer agreement" to reformed churches, which could include the more tolerant Dutch churches quite as much as the Scots. Contemporaries clearly believed that moderate Episcopacy or Independency might have an outside chance in the debates, or at least be accommodated in the final solution. It might be as the "well-wisher" hoped, that

> "the three severall Governments (could) be well surveyed, the Episcopall, the Presbyteriall, and the Independent ways in England, to refine them all in a Church Assembly".[3]

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1. W.M. Hetherington, History of the Westminster Assembly, p.117.
2. The Ordinance for the calling of the Westminster Assembly. It is worth noting that the Lords objected to the reference to the Church of Scotland, but the Commons insisted upon it, as vital to Scottish good will. W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, (1900), vol. i , p.124 note.
3. Anon, The Plot Discovered and Counterplotted, 1641, p.26, E.171(25)

But primarily the Word of God and England's needs were to prevail;

"in case such a Church Synod or Assembly, doe finde a Presbyteriall, or Pastorall, and independent Jurisdiction to be more nearely agreeing with the Word, ... incourage that way which comes next to the mind and will of God, and suits best with the present state of times".[1]

Just before the opening of the Assembly, the Independents decided to publish a pamphlet to increase the credibility of their way. This gave the replies of New England divines to certain questions posed by English ministers, who had been distressed by reports that American churches forbade the Lord's Supper to those who were not covenanted saints, administered baptism only to the children of church members, and gave chief power in the congregations to the church members.[2] This timely publication was intended to quell speculation of the Independents' separatism; its preface, signed by Hugh Peter, declared.

"Presbytery and Independency (as it is cal'd) are the ways of worship and Church fellowship, now looked at, since (we hope) Episcopacy is crossed out ... We are much charged with what we own not, viz. Independency, when as we know not any Churches Reformed, more looking at sister Churches for helpe then ours doe, onely we cannot have rule yet discovered from any friend or enemy, that we should be under canon, or power of any other Church; under their Councell we are".[3]

The Presbyterians wasted no time in publishing their version of the same questions and answers, with the addition of a Presbyterian

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1. Some moderate ministers, Unitie, Truth and Reason, 1641, p.12, E. 170(1).
2. Thirteen English ministers posed these questions in 1637, and John Davenport had replied to them on behalf of his fellow ministers in 1639. The questions also concerned the lawfulness of a set form of prayer and liturgy. Davenport's answer was published for the first time on 15 June 1643, as Church-Government and Church Covenant discussed, in an Answer of the Elders of the severall Churches in New England, 1643, E. 106 (8).
3. Ibid, preface.

rejoinder despatched to New England in 1640, but conveniently omitted by Peter. The editors of this Presbyterian work, Ashe and Rathband, commented

"These differences betwixt the loving Brethren of old England and New, had not been made thus notorious, if some who cry up the Church way in New England, as the only way of God, had not been forward, to blow them abroad in the world. But surely the providence of God is remarkeable in bringing these questions into debate at this time, when the Ministers of the Gospell from all the Counties in the Kingdome are called together by both houses of Parliament, to consult about the healing of our breaches, which are very many and very dangerous".[1]

These two versions of the same questions and answers reveal the desire of both Presbyterians and Independents to publicise their opinions before the Assembly deliberations began in earnest, and show the basic inability of the Presbyterians to accept the Independents idea of power in the people and not a synod. In the 1640 reply the Presbyterians sighed,

"here lyeth the stone at which they of the Seperation stumble, and which we conceive to be your judgement and practise, wherein we required your plaine answer with your reasons, but have received no satisfaction".[2]

Yet as if to discount such underlying disunity, two more highly significant pamphlets appeared close to the Assembly's opening. One was concerned with vindicating the lawfulness of

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1. Ed. S. Ashe and W. Rathband, A Letter of Many Ministers in Old England, 10 July 1643, introduction, E. 59 (20).
2. Ibid.

mixed parish communions consisting of both visible saints and sinners, and with emphasising the truth of the Church of England. Its author claimed that he had been begged to publish this work to reconcile separatists and semi-separatists, and only one friend feared the work would actually widen church differences.[1]

The second pamphlet, Charles Herle's "The Independency on Scriptures of the Independency of Churches", whilst pointing out the differences between Presbyterians and Independents, stressed that these were small and almost inconsequential. He insisted;

> "I have striven neither to make the difference greater then it is, nor this Treatise of it greater then it needs ... for the difference betweene us and our brethren that are for Independency, 'tis nothing so great as you seemed to conceive it, we doe but ... take severall wayes ... our difference 'tis such as doth at most but ruffle a little the fringe, not any way rend the Garment of Christ, 'tis so farre from being a fundamentall, that 'tis scarce a materiall one".[2]

Herle appeared more concerned with the growth of Socinianism[3] than of Independency, and although he gave an account of the Independents' tenets, he commended the academic excellence and other personal attributes of the Independents, begging men to pray that the differences should become less, rather than "argue them more". His own aim was "Verity" not, "Victory".[4] Herle's minimising of the conflict was undoubtedly why he took the liberty (or was permitted) to break the Calamy House Agreement, since his

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1. W.L., The Bramble Berry, 26 June 1643, E.56 (8). W.L. was a moderate Presbyterian who even in 1647 favoured unity with Independents, see his The Sacramental Stumbling-Block Removed, February 1647-8, E. 425 (16).
2. C. Herle, The Independency on Scriptures of the Independency of Churches, 2 May 1643, preface, E. 100 (14).
3. Socinianism was the name given to the doctrines of the sixteenth century Italian theologians, Laelius and Faustus Socinus, who argued against the Trinity.
4. C. Herle, The Independency on Scriptures ... , preface and p.37.

work would provide useful food for thought for his fellow Assembly members. So the stage was set for the hopeful reconciliation of differences in a national church system, if Scottish pressure and a hardening of attitudes did not render this impossible.

Assembly-members and their objectives.

Clarendon's aspersion that most members of the Assembly were ignorant and scandalous was effectively demolished by James Reid's biographies, by contemporary testimonies, and by the debates themselves, which prove that the divines were among the most learned and pious ministers in the country.[1] Royalist calumnies that the divines were all radical extremists, "Brownists, or Independents, or New-England ministers, if not worse", were equally unmerited.[2] For Parliament ensured that the Assembly included men of different opinions, and the initial spirit was one of catholicity, invitations being sent to certain Episcopalians, as well as to

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1. James Reid, Memoirs of the Lives and Writings of those Eminent Divines, who convened in the famous Assembly at Westminster, in the Seventeenth Century, 2 vols, (Paisley 1811 and 1815), (see p.xxiv in particular for a refutation of Clarendon). Reid's work (available in the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh) is little known, but provides useful accounts of 107 of the Assembly members, despite the shortage of information for certain ministers. However, neither his material nor the list of the works of each divine is exhaustive, and Reid has deliberately intended that his readers should be inspired with moral courage as a result of the biographies. There is still a great need for modern accounts of leading Assembly members, particularly Marshall, Calamy and Burges.
2. E.g. B. Hanbury, Historical Memorials of the Independents, vol.ii, p.200, quoting Laud.

the future Apologists.[1] But since most M.P.s at this time and later were moderate Presbyterians in the widest sense of that term, wishing a reform of Laudian Episcopacy under the control of the state, it was scarcely surprising that their choice of divines should be predominantly men of reforming spirit, but desirous of religious unity.

For the selection of Assembly members was made by Parliament. The Common's order as finalised on 12 April 1642, stipulated the nomination of divines by the respective knights and burgesses of each county - two ministers to be named for each English and Welsh county, two for each university, and four for London. In due course M.P.s presented the names of their choice for Parliament's approval and despite the fact that they may have discussed the matter with leading constituents, it is clear that the Assembly was not a truly representative body of the English clergy.[2] It

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1. W.M. Hetherington, History of the Westminster Assembly, p.99. The Episcopalians included Drs. Brownrigge, Hacket, Hall, Hammond, Featley, Holdsworth, Morley, Prideaux, Westfield, Ussher. Only Dr. Featley served for several sessions before being eliminated for collusion with the Royalists. A Perfect Diurnall, 25 September - 2 October 1643, E.250 (16). Other Episcopalians did not attend, as the King denounced the Assembly.
2. C.J. ii, 524, 535. No evidence exists as to whether M.P.s consulted the counties concerned. Divines were often selected for the counties in which they ministered - to give but two examples, John Arrowsmith for Norfolk, Charles Herle for Lancashire. But this was not always the case. Two Independents, William Carter and William Bridge, were nominated for Northumberland and Cumberland respectively, areas which were traditionally short of learned divines. M.P.s could make exceptions to the choice of any divine, particularly the nominees of Royalist M.P.s, and this was done in the case of the selection for Cumberland. Bridge was a substitute. C.J. ii, 541.

would have been a grave disappointment to the petitioner who had asked

"that the chusing of these able and godly Divines may be ... by the suffrage of all the Ministers of the Land, they being left liable to exception (both of the Choosers and Chosen) who shall be thought unmeet".[1]

Criticisms that the Assembly ought to have been clerically elected were to be voiced, although one pamphleteer retorted

"And when we find the House of Commons able to judge of and discover the inabilities, defects, and errours of the last Convocation Divines chosen by Divines, and to convince them of their folly and wickednesse, shall we question their ability to judge of the abilities of Divines, and their fitnesse to nominate them to consult of Discipline and Government of the Church?" [2]

Thus it was that most Assembly ministers demanded a change from the old Episcopacy, but were not the most uncompromising of the reforming divines. Neither extreme advocates of a Scottish-type Presbyterianism like Thomas Edwards or James Cranford, nor outspoken Independents like Henry Burton (and the unorthodox John Goodwin) would find a place. But moderate Independents could be included, although ministers favouring a moderate Episcopal or Presbyterian settlement might be expected to constitute the majority.[3] It is a very important fact that during the whole meeting of the Assembly, both Presbyterian and Independent Assembly

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1. Anon, A Petition for Peace, directed both to the King and Parliament, October 1642, Article 8, E.121 (20).
2. Anon, A Disclaimer and Answer of the Commons of England, May 1643, p.11, E. 100(23).
3. It is interesting to observe that Independents were not chosen together for any county, but paired with more "conservative" divines. Bridge was chosen with Dr. Hoyle for Cumberland, Philip Nye with Thomas Bathurst for Huntingdonshire, and Jeremiah Burroughes with Calibute Downing for Middlesex.

members were relatively restrained in their published works. With very few exceptions, individual members did not engage in vituperative pamphlet controversies with either fellow members or non-members, but instead confined their publications (apart from sermons) to official Assembly statements, or Independent group pronouncements such as the Apologetical Narration.[1] It would be the London Presbyterian ministers who would put forward strong Presbyterian statements, not the Assembly, although certain divines belonged to both groups! In general, and with the exception of the Apologetical Narration, the exacerbation of controversy was achieved by hotheads in both the Presbyterian and Independent camps, who were outside the Assembly. Debates in the Assembly might grow fiery, but the conflicts there were moderate in comparison to the pamphlet warfare.

According to the newsbook,

"the number that met this day, (1 July 1643) were threescore and nine, the totall number being (including the Members of both the Houses of Parliament, which are but thirty) one hundred forty one, whereof if onely fourty meet the first day, it maketh the Assembly valid".[2]

His figures were somewhat inaccurate. The list published by Parliament in 1642 contained the names of ninety divines, to which

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1. The notable exceptions to this rule are the Scottish divines, Sidrach Simpson's retort to Alexander Forbes in 1644, Edmund Calamy's controversy with Henry Burton in 1645, George Walker and Herbert Palmer's protests against the Erastian Coleman in 1645, and John Ley's pamphlets against the Independent John Saltmarsh in 1645-6. William Rathband's work against Independency in 1644 may have been before his appointment to the Assembly.
2. Certaine Informations, No.25, 3-10 July 1643, E.59(21).

were to be added thirty lay assessors (ten peers and twenty of the House of Commons).[1] Even so, the number of sixty-nine present on the first day did not augur well for the level of attendance at debates. Later, when the novelty had worn away and Assembly debates became interminably slow, when the needs of their cures and financial exigency, not to mention illness, hindered the attendance of large numbers of divines, the Assembly was to have difficulty maintaining a "quorum".[2] For this reason the leading group of divines who became convinced of the necessity for a Scottish style Presbyterianism, were able to dominate in debates

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1. The Names of the Orthodox Divines ... to be consulted with by the Parliament, touching the Reformation of Church-Government and Liturgie, 1642, E.64(4). An extensive list, adding the names of the so called "superadded divines" - i.e. divines who later replaced deceased and non-attending members, is printed in D. Neal, History of the Puritans, (1822), vol. iii. pp.46-8. An additional list can be found in Mitchell and Struthers, introduction, pp. lxxxi - lxxxiv.

2. Divines were paid four shillings a day when they attended from state funds. Naturally the cost of travelling to, and living in London exceeded this figure. Divines with cures some distance from London, found that curates cost far more than four shillings a day, and many divines were soon in considerable financial straits; some were recommended by Parliament for London livings. The incidence of illness was high and seasonal; it must be remembered that many members were no longer young. Other reasons for absence were special tasks, and personal matters. Some divines arrived late (latecomers were reckoned as absent for purposes of remuneration), but others came early, gave in their names, and promptly disappeared. Sometimes the Assembly failed to make the necessary quorum of 40, and so did the sub-committees, although their quorum was lower. In the Assembly minutes for 15th February 1643-4 (TSS. vol.i, f299) there is a list of some members with attendance marks added. From this it appears that 49 out of 81 members had not attended all the marked sessions, and some had not come at all. Payment in 1645 would indicate 80 attending members, but does not prove their regular attendance. See S.W. Carruthers, The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly, pp. 52-4, 180-4.

and achieve votes in accordance with Scottish principles. In addition, the absence - and passivity when present - of many backbenchers, makes it easy to see how the Independents' small numbers did not stop them from thwarting many an Assembly session. Baillie was saddened that four out of five Assembly members, despite their abilities, never spoke in debates.[1]

Apart from the lay assessors[2] and non-attending Episcopal ministers, Assembly members have usually been divided into three groups, Presbyterians, Independents, and Erastians.[3] But what sort of Presbyterians were the Assembly members? Certainly by 1644 the leading divines were largely converted to the Scottish, authoritative, anti-Erastian Presbyterianism, but the opinions of the backbenchers who rarely figured in debates is difficult to evaluate. These divines were probably more uncommitted and may have preferred a moderate Episcopal settlement along the lines of Ussher's "Reduction of Episcopacy" in 1641, whereby the bishops acted in concert with his "presbytery". Most members had conformed before 1640, as Baxter observed, although he stressed that they did so only because they felt "these things (Laudian Episcopacy) to be lawful in case of necessity, but longed to have that necessity removed".[4] Yet they would not oppose the Scottish style of

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1. Baillie, ii, 252.
2. The lay assessors were predominantly Erastian Presbyterians, although Henry Vane and Lord Saye and Sele were Independent. Most favoured a moderate, unifying settlement under Parliamentary guidance.
3. E.g. by W.M. Hetherington, History of the Westminster Assembly, p.123.
4. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 33-4. He added that the Assembly esteemed moderate Episcopalians, as Davenant, Hall, and Ussher.

Presbyterianism argued in the Assembly by the leading ministers, particularly as it was presented as the solution for the increasing religious radicalism and heresy consequent on the vacuum of power in the church. Some backbenchers conformed in 1662, and others may have done had they still been alive.[1] But although some divines may thus appear to have a prudential view of church-government, it must be stressed that many surviving Assembly-members, including backbenchers, would not accept Laudian Episcopacy again in 1662. They were Puritans, and moderate Episcopal leanings must not be confused with a tolerance for "high" Episcopacy.[2] Yet it is probable that many backbenchers were not rigid Presbyterians, and Thomas Manton may well have had them in mind when he told Parliament that men of "middle interest" would never be able to dominate "bodies and assemblies" where disengaged men were

> "always suspected, have a prejudice upon their endeavours; and indeed good men cannot be imagined to be so without all touch and sense of their own particular opinion, as not to dispute, stickle & ingage for it in such bodies and assemblies".[3]

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1. At least 4 backbenchers are known to have conformed in 1662, but because of inadequate information of some divines, this number might be higher. The 4 were John Conant (see the list of members in D. Neal, History of the Puritans, vol iii, pp. 46-8), Thomas Hodges (see J. Reid, Memoirs of the Lives and Writings of those Eminent Divines, vol.ii, p.44), William Mew, (A.G. Matthews, Calamy Revised, p.349) and Thomas Thorowgood. The last , either a genuine moderate or a dexterous time-server, declared in his diary (written as a self-vindication after the Restoration) that he had aided Episcopalians. The diary is printed by B. Cozens Hardy, "A Puritan Moderate", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc. IX, (April 1926) pp.205-218.

2. Ejected backbenchers include Thomas Baylie, Daniel Cawdrey, Humphrey Chambers, Francis Cheynell, Peter Clark, Richard Clayton, Thomas Ford, Gaspar Hickes, John Maynard, William Spurstowe, Edmund Staunton, John Strickland, Francis Taylor, Thomas Valentine. See their respective entries in J. Reid, Memoirs of the Lives and Writings of those eminent Divines.

3. T. Manton, Meate out of the Eater, fast sermon to the Commons 30 June 1647, p.46, E.395 (1). Manton was not himself an Assembly member, but he was a moderate Presbyterian.

One or two backbenchers may even have been more sympathetic to Erastianism than later debates indicated, although only two divines, Thomas Coleman and John Lightfoot, appear to have actively argued for Erastianism in the Assembly.[1] Coleman and Lightfoot, who stressed they were Presbyterians, concluded from their study of rabbinical lore that the Christian church was to be modelled on its "type", the Jewish church, and since there was but one jurisdiction in Israel, governing church and state, they believed that the Presbyterian system should operate only for doctrinal guidance, and leave all authoritative power to the civil magistrate. They thus opposed the rigid Scottish-type Presbytery which advocated a clerical governing power over the church.[2] It is not impossible that other Assembly ministers may have silently acquiesced with the Parliamentary control over Presbyterianism that eventually emerged, whilst not openly propounding Erastian theories. They might have agreed with Baxter that

> "all that the Presbyterians (for the most part of them) desire, is but to have leave to worship God, and guide their Flocks in ways of piety and concord".[3]

Assembly members thus reflected the fact that English Presbyterians were not a united group, and even divines accepting

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1. For definitions of "Erastianism" see Part 2 chapter 6 p.281 note 1. Selden, a lay assessor, also championed Erastianism in debates. Coleman claimed that he had followers in the Assembly; T. Coleman, A Brotherly Examination Re-examined, 1 November 1645, p.4, E.307(28).
2. Clerical is used here in the sense of "church officer." The Scottish Presbyterians stressed the role of solemnly designated lay "presbyters" as well as ministers in governing the church, and the lay eldership became part of English Presbyterian practice, although many English Presbyterians disliked the office. See below, pp.109-111, 262-3, 433, 486, 499, 606-10.
3. Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, 207. He referred to the clergy in general, not just the Assembly.

the Scottish pattern in general could remain individualists on certain minor details. John Goodwin commented in 1646 that the Presbyterians were divided into several "sects", although he exaggerated the extent of Assembly Presbyterian disunity when he inquired,

> "what meane the numerous Anti-Votes in the Assembly it self, and some of these proceeding from persons of the most eminent worth amongst them, if not against all, or the greater part, yet against some of the main and most materiall Doctrines concluded there?"[1]

At one stage Baillie could exclaim

> "The most of the synod were in our opinion, and reasoned bravely for it; such as Mr. Seaman, Mr. Walker, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Newcoman (sic), Mr. Young, Mr. Calamy",[2]

and yet later he feared that without the Scots, English Presbyterians could never have decided on a government for their church![3]

Who were the leading divines who accepted the advisability of the Scottish system?[4] In alphabetical order they were

Simeon Ashe	Matthew Newcomen
Anthony Burges	Herbert Palmer
Cornelius Burges	Edward Reynolds
Richard Byfield	Lazarus Seaman
Edmund Calamy	Obadiah Sedgwicke
Thomas Case	Thomas Temple
Thomas Gataker	Anthony Tuckney
William Gouge	Richard Vines
Charles Herle	George Walker
Richard Heyricke	Jeremiah Whittaker
Thomas Hill	Henry Wilkinson junior
John Ley	Thomas Wilson
Stephen Marshall	Thomas Young.[5]

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1. J. Goodwin, Hagiomastix, 5 February 1646-7, p.71, E.374(1).
2. Baillie, i, 401. This was concerning the issue of ruling elders.
3. Baillie, ii, 11.
4. Mrs. Kirby incorrectly deduced that only 6 Assembly members were wholeheartedly Scottish, by quoting Baillie, ii, 67, when Vines, Herle, Reynolds, Temple, Seaman and Palmer refused to join the committee of accommodation unless the Scots were included. E.W. Kirby, "The English Presbyterians in the Westminster Assembly", Church History, XXXIII.(1964).
5. These were the prominent speakers in Assembly debates as revealed by the Minutes (apart from the Scots, Independents, and Erastians).

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The main criterion for this assertion is their arguments in Assembly debates and published works, although further evidence of their Presbyterianism in general can be deduced from their active participation in Presbyterian classical and provincial assemblies, and in certain cases, by their signatures of documents like the Testimonies[1] and their continuing as Presbyterian ministers after the Restoration.[2]

Yet among these divines it is instructive to note how many were men naturally inclined towards accommodation, although this would not prevent them taking a hard line if they felt it essential to fight heresy. Certainly men like Thomas Case, John Ley and George Walker would later appear more rigid than some of their associates. But of the others, Simeon Ashe was praised by Baxter for being "no disputer".[3] Anthony Burges was known to be of a liberal temper and corresponded with Baxter on the subject of church unity,[4] whilst his namesake Cornelius Burges had originally

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5 cont'd. although other divines would speak occasionally. Even amongst these divines, men like Marshall, Calamy, Case, Seaman were more important than Henry Wilkinson and Thomas Temple. For all these divines see their respective entries in J. Reid, Memoirs of the Lives and Writings of those Eminent Divines. Professor Yule wrongly includes Sedgwicke as an Independent in The Independents in the English Civil War, Appendix C, p. 143, for Sedgwicke was one who praised the extremist John Vicars' efforts against a toleration of Independents. J. Vicars, Coleman-Street Conclave Visited, preface, 21 March 1647-8, E.433(6).

1. See below, p.541.

2. This criterion is not always valid: e.g. Richard Heyricke and Edward Reynolds both conformed, and yet had supported a Scottish-style Presbytery. It must be stressed that these divines did not all believe the Scottish type of Presbyterianism to be the one jure divino form of church government.

3. Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, 278. Ashe strongly disapproved of army policy and was among the divines who went to Breda to meet Charles II.

4. G.F. Nuttall, "Richard Baxter's Correspondence", Journal of Ecclesiastical History 1 (April 1950) p.92. Baxter recommended him for a bishopric in 1660. Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, 283.

favoured a moderate Episcopacy and was unwilling to break with others of that persuasion.[1] Even Herbert Palmer, esteemed by Baillie, and who eventually became a stringent supporter of the Scots Presbytery, had scrupled it initially.[2] Richard Vines' views were considerably in accord with a moderate Episcopacy; he disliked lay elders, and was consulted by Baxter in 1649 about religious unity.[3] Thomas Gataker was similarly consulted by Baxter, sympathised with moderate Episcopacy, and was so concerned with the peace of the church, that he restrained from dissenting in the Assembly over an opinion he held concerning justification.[4] Edward Reynolds was the only Assembly-member to accept a bishopric on the Restoration despite his previous Presbyterianism, since he followed Stillingfleet in believing the government of the church to be variable as occasion demanded.[5] Stephen Marshall and Edmund Calamy have already been shown as moderate,[6] whilst Charles Herle was so accommodating that Baillie considered him a "good friend" of Philip Nye and the Independents.[7] Thomas

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1. Baillie thought Burges was too Episcopal. Baillie, i, 245. Cornelius Burges was an important member, as he was one of the two Assessors, and frequently took the prolocutor's chair owing to the ill health of Dr. Twisse.
2. T. Fuller, Worthies of England, vol. ii, pp.105-6.
3. G.F. Nuttall, Richard Baxter, (1965). p.67. For Vines see W.D. Hillin, Richard Vines (1600? - 1656): A Moderate Divine in the Westminster Assembly. University of Iowa Ph.D. thesis, 1967.
4. G.F. Nuttall, Richard Baxter, p.67; S. Ashe, Gray Hayres Crowned with Grace, (sermon at Gataker's funeral) 1655, p.52.
5. Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, 278.
6. See above, p.25.
7. Baillie, ii.33. Herle was appointed as Prolocutor on the death of Twisse in 1646. For Herle see J.D. Ogilvie, "Earle and Herle and the Microcosmography", Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, IV, no.2, (May 1929), which includes a short biography of Herle, and relates this story about Herle and Nye. (pp33-4). The divines attended the Assembly in black coats and clerical bands, and when Herle appeared one day without his band, Nye mocked him, "How now, Charles, has presbitry so good a face and complexion that it needs no Band?" Herle took his revenge one day when Nye inadvertently wore two bands, saying, "How now, Philip, has Independency so ill a face and complexion that it needs two Bands?".

Hill, who had once lived with John Cotton, was another of Baxter's correspondents on church unity.[1] Thomas Wilson was sufficiently accommodating to Independents to vote with them on one issue.[2] Richard Heyricke is an intriguing figure. He played an active role in establishing Presbyterianism in Lancashire, but conformed in 1660, and Martindale believed him to be

"so perfect a Latitudinarian as to affirme that the episcopall presbyterians and independents might all practice according to their owne judgements, yet each by divine right".[3]

Clearly even the leaders of Presbyterianism in the Assembly included men who would seek for unity with moderate Episcopalians and Independents.

The objectives of the Presbyterians in the Assembly changed (as did those of the Independents) as time passed and circumstances altered. At the outset it can be presumed only that as a group they had one clear aim - a unified church, purged of Laudian Episcopacy, that could win the support of all but separatists denying the validity of any national settlement. With the absence of Episcopalians, (particularly Ussher, who would have been a powerful advocate for moderate Episcopacy), the presence of the Scots, and a growing sectarian problem, the leading divines had accepted by 1644 the virtues and necessity of the Scottish

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1. D.N.B; G.F. Nuttall, Richard Baxter, p.67. Anthony Tuckney, Cotton's cousin, may also have been sympathetic to Independents, although no concrete evidence exists.
2. Gillespie, Notes, p.66. With the Independents, he denied that they had beem afforded permission to bring in reasons against an Assembly report on sectarian meetings. See below p.292. (5 September 1644). Wilson was reputed as "Malleus Haereticorum" but according to his biographer, loved the men who separated from him. G. Swinnock, The Life and death of Mr. Thomas Wilson, (1672), p.46.
3. The Life of Adam Martindale, p.63.

Presbytery which it thus became their aim to uphold, although opinions would vary on the minutiae of the Scottish pattern. Backbenchers acquiesced in the decisions of the leaders, believing with Reynolds that only a form of church government, not a particular form, was divinely ordained. Certainly when Parliament later challenged clerical power in church government, the leading divines would successfully guide the Assembly into a defence of that clerical authority jure divino. One thing is certain; that as the Independents became more intransigent, they forced the Presbyterians to refuse to accommodate on terms that would encourage the growth of separate congregations and endanger the unity of the national church.

In contrast to the Presbyterian group, the semi-separatists formed but a small body in the Assembly. Some New England divines had been invited to attend by certain M.P.s and Independent ministers, but they declined.[1] So the leading Independent ministers were the five future Apologists, or "Holland brethren", Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, Jeremiah Burroughes, William Bridge, and Sidrach Simpson. These were all moderate Independents, although in Assembly debates Nye was to reveal himself as more extreme than his brethren. They all respected, and were respected by, Presbyterian ministers; Thomas Goodwin was regarded fondly by Baillie and was a guest

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1. In 1642, Cotton, Davenport and Hooker had been invited. Hooker commented that he did not see a sufficient call to travel 3,000 miles to agree with three Independent ministers (his figure). They may have believed that the Independent cause would do as well, or as badly, without them, but undoubtedly their presence would have aided the Independent cause. For details of the letter of invitation see J. Winthrop, The History of New England 1630-1649, ed. J. Savage, (Boston 1853) vol.ii. pp91-2. It was signed by Vane, Cromwell, Haselrig and Nathaniel Fiennes, among others.

in his house (at least in 1643). Baillie commented

"It were a thousand pities of that man; he is of many excellent parts. I hope God will not permit him to go on to lead a faction for renting of the kirk. We and he seemed to agree pretty well in most things of the directory".[1]

Jeremiah Burroughes, who never gathered a church, was a lifelong striver after church-unity and had a motto on his study door to that effect.[2] William Bridge remained on friendly terms with John Brinsley the Presbyterian minister at Yarmouth despite some conflict in the 1640s.[3]

These five were aided by Independent sympathisers in the Assembly. Baillie added four names besides the Apologists to the list of Assembly Independents; Joseph Caryl, William Carter, John Philip and Peter Sterry, although he said that in all there were "some ten or eleven in the synod".[4] To these must be added the name of William Greenhill. Only William Greenhill was prepared to openly dissent with the Apologists, although the others were undoubtedly congregational in sympathy and were dubbed "halfe - Independents" by Edwards.[5] Joseph Caryl licensed many Independent

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1. Baillie invited Goodwin to his house after a disagreement in the Assembly on the issue of public prayers. Baillie, i, 414. For Thomas Goodwin, a contemplative and intensely spiritual man, see T. Goodwin, Works, preface.
2. The motto, in Latin and Greek, read "Variety of opinions and unity in opinion are not incompatible". Baxter had commented that if all Independents had been like him, unity would soon have been achieved. Hugh Peter called Burroughes the "morning star" of Stepney for his invigorating sermons (Greenhill was the "evening star"). D.N.B.
3. D.N.B. Bridge did not enjoy good health, yet he rose every day at 4 a.m. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp 3-4; J. Reid, Memoirs of the Lives of those Eminent Divines, p.144.
4. Baillie, i, 401.
5. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.255.

pamphlets although he accepted a parochial cure at St. Magnus in 1645 and always worked within the Presbyterian system.[1] John Philip used his parish at Wrentham to form the basis of a congregational church, and would later join the Independent dissenters on certain issues.[2] Peter Sterry, later chaplain to Cromwell, was an intimate friend of Sir Henry Vane, and a rather mystical man, who did not figure very prominently in Assembly debates.[3]

The assertion that Philip Nye's advice was sought and followed in the nomination of Assembly divines was probably a complete falsehood.[4] It may be correct that the Independents desired to increase their delegation, but if they did exert private pressure to this end, it was not very successful. "Mercurius Aulicus" reported that the House of Lords sought to add "Dr. Holmes and Master Goodwyn" to the Assembly in late 1643, "notwithstanding they professed themselves to be known Independants, and hated the Presbytery as much as Episcopacy". Certainly on 2nd November the Lords did nominate Holmes, Horton and Goodwyn, but by January they changed their minds and voted for Goode and Horton.[5] The Independents

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1. D.N.B.
2. John Philip was the brother-in-law of John Robinson and escaped from Laudian persecution to Massachusetts. He returned to Wrentham in 1642, when the parish church was probably organised on congregational lines. His church was consulted in the summer of 1644 by the gathered congregational church at Norwich, which allowed their members to join Philips' congregation. J. Browne, History of Congregationalism, p.252.
3. D.N.B. Sterry later wrote that Presbyterianism "laboured to hedge in the wind, and to bind up the sweet influence of the spirit".
4. W.M. Hetherington, History of the Westminster Assembly, p.123. Nye may well through his patron Lord Kimbolton the earl of Manchester, have advised the selection of specific Independents, but no proof exists.
5. Mercurius Aulicus, No 47, 25 November 1643, Oxford p.676, E.77(33); C.J. iii 299,376. The charge of the Independents' exerting pressure to increase their number was made by Edwards, in his Antapologia, p252. "Holmes" may be Dr. Nathanial Homes, whereas "Goodwyn" could be the Independent John Goodwin, or a Philip Goodwyn who was admitted to the vicarage of Watford, C.J. iii 343. Goode was certainly not an

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in the Lords may have been seeking additional support for the Independents already in the Assembly, or seeking to balance the Scottish divines now attending debates. However one Independent, William Strong, was added to the Assembly in January 1645-6 on the death of Edward Pele,[1] although like Caryl, Strong was anxious to work in accord with the national church, holding a parochial position and participating in the Presbyterian classes.

The leading Independent ministers in the Assembly did have specific aims at the outset of debates. Conflicts may have existed between them in Holland, but in England their common background would forge bonds of indelible unity, and together they were anxious to convince English ministers of the successful realities of the congregational system. To this end they met privately to discuss tactics in the Assembly, just as probably the leading Presbyterians were doing at Calamy's house.[2] Like the Presbyterians, the Independents would be forced to change their objectives as the Assembly progressed. At the outset, Edwards was convinced that they had a two-fold plan, either to achieve the national establishment of their own system, or to persuade the Presbyterians to accommodate the Independent way within the Presbyterian church. He wrote;

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5. cont'd. Independent, and wrote against toleration in 1645. W. Goode, The Discoverie of a Publique Spirit, sermon to the Commons, 26 March 1645, E.279(14).

1. D. Neal, History of the Puritans, voliii p.48; G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, p.41. Strong was minister of St. Dunstans-in-the-West.

2. It is worth noting that the chief Independent ministers were neatly grouped in a compact area of London from Coleman Street to the Tower. Burroughes and Greenhill lectured at Stepney, where Greenhill formed a congregational church in 1644. Near Stepney, Thomas Goodwin had gathered a congregation at St. Dunstans-in-the East, and not far away was St. Margarets', Fish Street, where Simpson lectured before obtaining the nearby living of St. Mary Abchurch. In the same area was Bridge's London office, in Mincing Lane. (J. Browne, History of Congregationalism, p.109).

"For without doubt you reasoned after this manner. There are some ten for our way in the Assembly, and we hope to bring in more of our mind ... some besides there are of the Assembly fairly inclining towards us, and ready to comply with us, some also but little studied in the points, and other more indifferent about Government; now we in policie, diligence, speech, and parts excelling many others too, may have some hopes to carry it, or at least to qualifie and mbderate the Assembly to our way: (especially having observed the Ministers so desirous of peace, and loth to breake with us almost upon any termes)".[1]

The Independents probably realised that there was only a very slim chance of the national establishment, but in 1643, before debates began to swing to the Scottish Presbytery, there was reason for some optimism.

How would the Independents have altered the national church? It must be remembered that semi-separatism was in essence an ambivalent concept, a national church with voluntary congregational membership. Independent churches fell into two categories - the "gathered churches" formed by voluntary adhesion of Christians without reference to parish boundaries, and the "reformed churches" where the vicar and godly parishioners could form the basis of the congregational ideal. Clearly under an Independent national system, the latter type of church would predominate, with the parishes purged of the ungodly, and all the essence of church government given to the congregation. As Baxter observed, some Independents believed,

"that it was much through the faultiness of the Parish Ministers, that Parishes are not in a better Case; and that is is a better Work thus to reform the Parishes, than to gather Churches out of them, without great necessity".[2]

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia p.252. Edwards clearly thought the Independents could hope for fair support in the Assembly.
2. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 85.

They thus found it logical to operate congregationalism from the existing ecclesiastical structure.[1] But the danger of the Independents' "middle way" was that if there could be no accommodation for their ideas within the national settlement, they would be forced to stress their right to gather churches, and move towards a separatist position.

With the arrival of the Scots and the Covenant, it soon became apparent to the Independents that a national church along their own lines was impossible. They therefore campaigned for accommodation within the national Presbyterian church that seemed inevitable by 1644. Finally, when these accommodation attempts failed, or seemed likely to fail, they changed tactics again to argue for an outright toleration. Accommodation and toleration were not the same thing - although the snag about accommodation as a concept was that Independents and Presbyterians tended to view it in a different light, and the term was deliberately left vague in order to maximise the chances of agreement. By accommodation the Independents meant a national Presbyterian settlement which allowed freedom for semi-separatists to join Independent churches as long as they recognised the validity of the parish congregations, and refrained from criticism of them. This would not be a complete toleration (which would necessitate a freedom for all separatist congregations to exist outside the national church), although it was not too far removed

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1. Dr. Nuttall has observed that a few livings were particularly favourable to congregationalists; e.g. John Goodwins' living at Coleman Street was in the gift of the parishioners; James Fishers' of Sheffield in the gift of the "Church Burgesses". G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, p.23.

from this. But many Presbyterians thought that in an accommodation the Independents would join their parish churches, and virtually accept Presbyterianism in toto. Edwards thought men could be tolerated for differing in opinion, "so long as they keepe Communion with a Church, and submit to the Discipline and Orders so as to be peaceable". His version of accommodation was that the Independents should come to Presbyterian churches, where with luck they may never be compelled to profess or practise anything contrary to their judgements.

> "the greatest inconvenience ... but the forbearing of something you would have, which considering the questionablenesse of the thing ... you may in point of conscience be well satisfied without it".[1]

The most that Assembly Presbyterians would concede was to be an exemption of Independents from parochial communion, and this was only a last minute concession.[2] With such discordant views of accommodation, it was to be little wonder that hopes of unity might prove over-optimistic.

To secure their aims, the Independents decided to use their numbers to maximum advantage in the Assembly by employing any ruse that ensured they received the Assemblys' full attention. The longer they could hold up the Assembly's work by delaying tactics, the greater their hope of increasing support. Baillie, who became exasperated at the Assembly's delays despite exhortations of speed from Parliament and the Scots, was probably censuring the Independents when he wrote,

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1. T. Edwards, Reasons against the Independant government, pp42,53. i.e. that if Independents forebore their own congregations, they might hope to find Presbyterian congregations truly godly, and might never need to submit to a synod.
2. See below, p. 468. For various schemes of accommodation, see below pp. 426-8.

"of those few that use to speak, sundry are so tedious and thrust themselves in with such misregard of others, that it were better for them to be silent".[1]

Although it had been hoped that the Assembly's decisions would be speedily reached,[2] the Assembly became proverbial for its tardiness. It was not unconscious of its own shortcomings, and initiated a committee to discover how proceedings could be expedited; this proposed longer sittings, clear statement of questions, and of differences of opinion, and advised that inconsequential matters introduced as deliberate "red herrings" (usually by the Independents) should not be pursued.[3] But the Independents exploited the Assembly rules whereby everyone had liberty to speak on any issue, and spoke loudly and long, dividing the operation between them. As Baillie said,

"they divided their arguments among them, and gave the managing of them by turns, to Bridges, Burroughes, Nye, Simpson and Caryl ... we found the most they had to say against the presbytery was but curious idle niceties".[4]

On occasions they blatantly ignored Assembly protocol, as when Goodwin brought Nye along to a sub-committee meeting, which Baillie thought "an impudent intrusion, but took no notice of it".[5] Debates often lacked any kind of order, a fact Baillie felt to be the

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1. Baillie, ii, 252.
2. Eg. one writer had said their work would only take "weeks or months at most". Anon, A Disclaimer and Answer of the Commons of England, 4 May 1643, p.11, E.100(23).
3. Lightfoot, p.167. 21 February 1643-4.
4. Baillie, i, 436.
5. Baillie, i, 422.

result of the Prolocutor's lack of authority.[1] Once, when Burges reproved the number of speeches made by certain divines, Goodwin retorted that lengthy proceedings might be necessitated in an assembly of ministers seeking the truth.[2] On another occasion Philip Nye openly protested against a proposal that the Assembly should start an hour earlier.[3] Baillie was forced to derive what comfort he could from delays;

"However their speed be small, yet their labour is exceeding great, whereof all do expect a happy conclusion and blessed fruits".[4]

Assembly Debates I : the Covenant.

Assembly debates began in optimistic mood, for prognostications of unity were at their best from July to December 1643. Certainly, in their consultations with Assembly divines, the leading Parliamentarian, John Pym, and his supporters promoted the cause of a unified state church in which Presbyterians and Independents could accommodate. For the Assembly was always guided in its discussions by the "Grand Committee", or "Treaty Committee", a joint committee of M.P.s, some Assembly members and the Scots,

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1. Baillie felt that Prolocutor Twisse (often ill and ineffectual when present) had been given the chair by "the canny conveyance of these who guide most matters for their own interest". There is however no evidence that the Independents had contrived this. Baillie, i,399.
2. TSS. vol.i, f.87 verso.
3. Lightfoot, p.229, 21 March 1643-4.
4. Baillie, i,440.

which met at least weekly.[1] Nye and Goodwin were Independent representatives on this body.[2] Its influence is not emphasised in the Assembly minutes, due probably to a reluctance to admit to Parliamentary guidance, but Baillie stressed its importance, and Lightfoot suggested that Marshall was the chief intermediary between committee and Assembly.[3] Parliament continued its practice of appointing both Presbyterian and Independent sympathisers to preach on public occasions. A list of preachers between June and December reveals that the Independents were represented for every month except August and September, and even then Nye spoke at the taking of the Covenant by Parliament and Assembly in September.[4] Proportionate to their numbers, their frequency of public duty was quite remarkable. Independents were also represented among the licensers for the press announced by Parliament just before the Assembly met. Whilst Thomas Gataker, John Downame, Calibute Downing,

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1. For Pym's policy, see L. Kaplan, "Presbyterians and Independents in 1643", English Historical Review, (April 1969) pp.246-7. By October, Pym was too ill to take an active part in politics. On 9 September 1643 Parliament agreed to the Scots' request for a joint consultative committee on uniformity in church government between England and Scotland, and it was finally established on the 17th October 1643. S.W. Carruthers, The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly, p.23. This committee is usually referred to as the "Grand Committee" in Assembly records. But its alternative title, the "Treaty" committee, is useful to distinguish it from the "Grand Committee" of the House of Commons alone, which also considered religion. The latter committee is referred to in the Commons Journals as a committee of the whole House.
2. TSS. vol.i, f.39 verso. An attempt to add Bridge failed. Lightfoot, p.27.
3. Baillie, i, 400-1; Lightfoot, p.119.
4. The list is to be found appended to Thomas Case's sermon of 26 October 1642, when it was printed on 25 May 1644. E.127(38). It included preachers before Parliament from 17 November 1640, to 24 April 1644. Other Independents would also be heard by M.P.s; William Sedgwick, preaching at Westminster before "Sundry of the House of Commons" emphasised the semi- separatist view of congregational power, but insisted that this would not affect civil authority. W. Sedgwick, Scripture a Perfect Rule for Church Government, 28 December 1643, pp.4,23, E.79(21).

Thomas Temple, Edmund Calamy, Charles Herle, James Cranford and Obadiah Sedgwicke represented the Presbyterians, Joseph Caryl was an Independent sympathiser or "halfe-Independent", and John Batchelor a definite semi-separatist.[1]

The Holland brethren and their sympathisers were represented on most of the Assembly's own committees, from the committee appointed to divide the first grant of money from Parliament to the Assembly, the committee to discuss Antinomian opinions (both of which included Goodwin among their members),[2] to the committee to discuss Dr. Burges' conduct towards the Covenant (of which Caryl was a member).[3] This trend was to continue through most of the Assembly's existence. Apart from occasional committees, they were as a matter of course upon the three equal committees into which the Assembly was divided by alphabetical order, and by chance of surname, were evenly split between the three.[4]

At first hopes for accord seemed justified, as debates began in harmonious style. However, the first subject for discussion was

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1. The Names of Licensers, authorised by Parliament on 14 June. E.55(9) John Batchelor (Bachelour, Bachiler), appointed lecturer at Lewisham in 1641 (C.J. ii 458), was memtioned by Edwards as having a sudden conversion to Independency in the Low Countries. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.185. Batchelor, like Cranford and Downame, was not an Assembly member.
2. TSS. vol.i, ff.24, 54. 8 and 14 September 1643.
3. Lightfoot, p.12. 1 September 1643.
4. W.M. Hetherington, History of the Westminster Assembly, p.102. The committees were a useful method of sharing the basic groundwork of debate.

the area where agreement was most to be expected - doctrine. Debates on the thirty-nine articles occupied the Assembly until its attention had to be sharply focused on the Covenant from late August to October, and Independent divines joined fully in debates, particularly on the issue of justification. This was important, as it raised the question of a breach with the Antinomians,[1] and whilst Goodwin joined in the general Assembly condemnation of the Antinomians, he appended a liberal plea for the Assembly to refrain from suggesting penalties for them; the magistrate could deal with that issue.[2] Clearly he was anxious to set no precedents for the Assembly to advise punishment for dissenters, and indicated that the civil magistrate might be more lenient! But no sharp clash occurred between Presbyterians and semi-separatists in the early debates.

The major event in the opening months of the Assembly was the debate leading to the final adoption of the Solemn League and Covenant, for on August 28th, "the Parliament recommended the covenant to the Assembly, to take into consideration the lawfulness of it".[3] The Covenant could be advanced as a prime example of Presbyterian - Independent co-operation, and as a major concession to Scottish pressure for a united church discipline according to their model.[4]

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1. Antinomians insisted justification by faith was solely efficacious. Orthodox Puritans believed that importance must be attached to good works and obedience to the moral law. Gataker for one was reluctant to create a breach with the Antinomians, with whose opinions he sympathised. The final statement of the Assembly on the matter in its Confession of Faith was to be cautious and balanced, whilst favouring the orthodox view. TSS. vol.i, f.35; A.F. Mitchell, The Westminster Confession of Faith (Edinburgh, 1867), pp.19-20.
2. TSS. vol.i, f.75 verso.
3. Lightfoot, p.10.
4. W.M. Hetherington, History of the Westminster Assembly, p.108, denied that Scotland intended to impose the Kirk on England, but with the exception of Alexander Henderson, the Scots divines consistently worked to this end.

But it is important to recognise that both Independents and some Presbyterians supported it upon the definite assumption that the Covenant did not necessitate a wholesale copying of the Scottish way. Both Presbyterians and Independents realised that Scottish aid was of paramount importance owing to Parliamentary military defeats in the summer of 1643, and sermons stressed the dangers of a peace forced with the Royalists that would prejudice the Reformation.[1] The Scots were only willing to advance such aid on terms of a covenant offering a concrete base of ecclesiastical unity, as Royalists had insinuated that the Assembly had not been called to settle church government along Scottish lines. David Buchanan admitted no less;

> "all the papers written by the Court against the Parliament, di tell over and over again, that the Parliament did not intend a settled Reformation in the Church, notwithstanding that they had called a Synod".[2]

However, the English commissioners and their chaplains, sent to Scotland to negotiate the treaty, were determined to obtain an interpretation of the Covenant that would be widely acceptable to English divines. It is significant that one of the six lay commissioners was Sir Henry Vane, and that Philip Nye joined Stephen Marshall as chaplains. Baillie commented that the English commissioners "were, more than we could assent to, for keeping of a door open in England to Independency", and was dismayed that Nye had been selected.[3]

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1. For further details on this point see Tai Liu, "In Defence of Dissent; The Independent Divines on Church Government", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc. (1972) p.61.
2. D. Buchanan, An Explanation of some Truths, 3 January 1645-6, p.9. E.314(15).
3. Baillie, i, 372, 381, (quoted) and 388. Baillie added that a sermon of Nye's displeased the Scots.

The concession secured by the English delegation was the insertion of the crucial words "according to the word of God" in the final drafts of the Covenant text. England was to endeavour

"the preservation of the reformed religion in the Church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, against our common enemies; the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, according to the Word of God and the example of the best reformed churches". [1]

This vital phrase afforded to doubters the conscience-saving argument that the Scottish church was to be criticised in the light of the Word of God, and the English church to be modelled by the Word where it opposed the kirk. Vane admitted that he was opposed to a Covenant that necessitated strict uniformity;

"I alwayes esteemed it more agreeable to the Word of God that the ends and work declared in the Covenant should be promoted in a spirit of love and forbearance to differing judgements and consciences". [2]

The Scots accepted the phrase as they could not conceive that the Scottish church could diverge from the Word, because of complementary assurances of nearer unity with the kirk, and in the last resort, because they trusted that their army would assist their arguments. But they soon bewailed they had beem deceived;

"My Lord Balmerino objected against the clause, and said he could not understand the reason why they were not plain and even down. Sir Henry Vane certainly tricked Scotland in that affair; but though the matter was very long debated in their sub-committee, as I have heard some say for part of three days, yet the matter was overruled ... mostly through Mr. Alexander Henderson's authority,

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1. A Solemn League and Covenant, September 1643, E.67(33).
2. H. Vane, Reasons for an Arrest of Judgement, drawn up after his condemnation in 1662 and quoted in J. Willcock, Life of Henry Vane the Younger (1913), p.129.

and the rest of the Commissioners to the Assembly, who urged that there was no ground to suspect the sincerity of the Honourable Houses of Parliament. But in all our bargains, England still has tricked us".[1]

Because of this clause there was no violent dispute between Presbyterians and Independents in the Assembly on the wording and acceptance of the Covenant. Doubts did arise as to the precise meaning of the crucial clause;

> "This clause bred all the doubting ... It was scrupled whether the last words, "according to the word of God" were set for limitation, viz. to preserve it, as far as it was according to the word, or for approbation, viz. as concluding that the Scottish discipline was undoubtedly according to the word. Therefore, after a day's debate almost; it was resolved, that this explanation should be annexed to it; "As far as in my conscience, I shall conceive it to be according to the word of God".[2]

Unfortunately, the Parliament did not officially approve the Assembly resolution, although St. John proposed that there should be a Parliamentary order to "give relief to those tender consciences who scruple to take it".[3] This explanation was therefore left as a later bone of contention between Independents and Presbyterians, the former claiming that St. John's proposal had been conveniently forgotten, whereas the latter retorted that this was because the Independents "laboured to turne it to a wrong use for their private interest and advantage".[4]

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1. Wodrow MSS. (Edimburgh), Anal. MS. vol v, quoted in T. MacCrie, Miscellaneous Writings; Life of Mr. Alexander Henderson, (Edinburgh 1841), p.48.
2. Lightfoot, p.10. Early drafts of the Covenant had the crucial phrase directly applied to the Scottish church, but the Commons amended it to apply to the Reformation in general.
3. Yonge's Diary. B.M. Add. MSS. 18, 778 f.43-44.
4. This dispute emerged in 1645 in the Parliamentary committee of accommodation. The Papers and Answers of the Dissenting Brethren and the committee of the Assembly of Divines (1648), p.p. 93-4, 120 (quoted), E. 439(3).

It was the influence of Philip Nye that encouraged Independents to accept the Covenant. He joined Marshall in a letter to the Assembly praising the Covenant, and it was deemed expedient that he should deliver a speech at the occasion of the Assembly's taking the oath on September 25th. The letter assured the Assembly of the Scots' good intentions and selfless love for God, but Nye's speech stressed that England must find her own Reformation according to the Word and the best reformed churches, including, but not solely, the Church of Scotland. Although warning against violemt religious conflicts, Nye insisted on the necessity of rooting out "every plant his heavenly Father hath not planted".[1] Thomas Edwards believed that Nye had personally written to leading Independents to persuade them to accept the Covenant;

> "I have been told from a good hand, that some of the Apologists had much adoe to bring themselves to take it, and that it was a bitter pill to get downe, and one of some qualitie assured me that Mr. Nye told him in Scotland, that when the Covenant had passed there, and was to be sent to England, he writ with all earnestnesse and possible Conjurements to Mr. Goodwin, Mr. Bridge etc. not to oppose it, or be against it, as much fearing how it would goe downe".[2]

But despite their private fears, in public Independent ministers seemed unanimous with Presbyterians in welcoming the Covenant. Jeremiah Burroughes was asked by Parliament to deliver a speech to that effect at the Guildhall in October.[3] No Independent pamphlets appeared against the Covenant. Secret fears that Nye

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1. S. Marshall and P. Nye, A Letter, 1643; The Covenant, with a Narrative of the Proceedings, October 1643, p.24, E.70(22).
2. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.286. Edwards disagreed with the Independents that a toleration of Independency could stand with the Covenant.
3. J. Burroughes, Speech at Guildhall, 6 October 1643 (not published until 1646). Fellow-speakers were Calamy and Sedgewicke.

had been sent to Scotland by Lord Saye to hinder the treaty seemed unfounded;

"that he went purposely to hinder the Scots from comming in because they would hinder the setting up of an independent Government in Churches; the falsity of that appeares ... by the effects, for the Scots doe come in, and both Mr. Nye and that Lord have taken the Covenant, and are forward instruments in furthering that work all they can".[1]

Not that the public acceptance of the Covenant by all leading Independent divines prevented Royalist pamphleteers from trying to drive a wedge between Presbyterians and Independents. One exaggerated Assembly disunity on the Covenant;

"there it raised so great an heat betweene the Presbyterians and the Independents, each standing stiffely in defence of their own cause that there is little hopes amongst their best friends, of any good accord to be had betweene them".[2]

Another stressed the ambivalence of the Covenant terms;

"stale terms which are capable of a million of Interpretations ... Doth not the Independent meane one thing, and the Presbyterian another? ... Let our independent Brethren and others answere me this question ... Do you all beleeve that the Scotch Discipline and Government is the best ... or do you not beleeve it is in itselfe defective, if not contrary to the word of God in your sense?" [3]

But the truth was that the variety of opinion among English Presbyterians meant that their interpretation of the Covenant was also ambiguous. Although in 1645, when the Presbyterians

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1. Anon, A Copy of a Letter written to a Private Friend to give him satisfaction in some things touching the Lord Say. 1643, p.4. Lord Saye overcame his politico-religious opposition to the Scots' interference in English affairs, although his son, Nathaniel Fiennes openly complained of it and his eldest son James refused it altogether. Yonge's Diary, B.M. Add. MSS. 18, 778, ff. 81,83; C.J. iii 262.
2. Mercurius Aulicus, No. 35, Oxford 1643, p.481. E.67(7).
3. Anon, A Briefe Discourse, declaring the impiety and unlawfulnesse of the new Covenant with the Scots, Oxford, October 1643, pp 11-12, E.73(1).

were divided on the issue of clerical authority, the Covenant was used by the "jure divino" or rigid Presbyterians as their great bastion of support, it had never been uniformly interpreted by English Presbyterians. Despite Scottish claims, they did not all identify the Covenant with the adoption of the Scottish model in toto. Assembly debates revealed that even the conscience-saving clause did not solve the scruples of all Presbyterian divines, especially those who were not against a moderate Episcopacy. According to Baxter,

> "The Synod stumbled at some things in it, and especially at the word (Prelacy). Dr. Burges, the Prolocutor, Mr. Gataker and abundance more declared their judgments to be for Episcopacy, even for the ancient moderate Episcopacy".[1]

Eventually these were satisfied by a stipulation that the Covenant opposed only a domineering prelacy, although Burges' scruples led indirectly to his temporary suspension from the Assembly.[2] Some Assembly members told their parishioners that the Covenant was not contrary to moderate Episcopacy, and certainly in the country as a whole, many ministers like Baxter, must have been opposed to its Scottish implications.[3] In Ashingdon parish registers the record

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1. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 48.
2. Cornelius Burges was suspended since he petitioned Parliament criticising Assembly procedure, when the Assembly reported their debates on the Covenant to Parliament before giving Burges time to present his reasons against certain points. Burges was initially supported by Price, apologised in due course, and was restored to the Assembly. Lightfoot, pp.12- 4; C.J. iii 242.
3. At St. Andrew's Undershaft, the Assembly - member Henry Roborough was asked if the Covenant excluded a "refined Episcopacy", and since most signed, he must have been reassuring. At St. Olave's Hart Street, the minister Haines would only subscribe to the Covenant with the Assembly's explanation, "As far as in my conscience I shall conceive it to be according to the word of God". S.W. Carruthers, The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly, pp.18-20. Baxter prevented much of Worcestershire from taking the Covenant. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 64.

of the Covenant was accompanied by a ditty;

"Three Nations thus are twisted all in one;
Three Nations thus are three times thrice undone".[1]

Many divines would follow the rationale of Richard Ward, who, argued that the real commitment to Scotland was to preserve her religion against overthrow by a common foe.[2] Thomas Case agreed;

"We do not sware to observe that Discipline but to preserve it: I may preserve that, which in point of conscience I cannot observe, or not, at least, sware to observe".

The tenderest conscience need not tremble at this;

"I see not but we might enter into the like Covenant with Lutherans, or other Reformed Churches whose Government, Discipline and Worship is yet exceedingly corrupted with degenerate mixtures".[3]

Another pamphleteer confirmed that no-one was obliged to swear that the Scots' pattern was perfect, and intimated that when God communicated more light to the Scots, they would surely be happy to adjust their discipline.[4] Little wonder then, that when the Scots later complained that the English had not established the complete Scottish Kirk according to the Covenant, an "English Covenanter" retorted that the only promise made had been the promotion of godliness in general, albeit with differences of judgement in church affairs. He told the Scots in no uncertain terms that English Presbyterians were not Scottish Presbyterians;

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1. H. Smith, The Ecclesiastical History of Essex, (Colchester, no date, but around 1936), p.97. The Royalist Fuller counted the number of words in the Covenant, excluding the preamble and conclusion, and found they amounted to 666, the number of the Beast.
2. R. Ward, The Analysis, Explication and Application of the sacred and solemne League and Covenant, 12 October 1643, sig G.3, E.70(20).
3. T. Case, The Quarrell of the Covenant, with the Pacification of the Quarrell, 8 December 1643, pp.42-3 E.78(4).
4. E.W., The Solemne League and Covenant of Three Kingdomes cleared, 17 October 1643, pp.3-5, E.71(13).

"Truly Sirs, your Scotch Independency is as distastfull to us, as that in England or Amsterdam. If you say it is the COVENANTED Religion ... assure your selves, except you will impose your Scottish sense upon our English words (intolerable slavery) we resolve to be, according to our solemne League and Covenant, English Presbyterians, and not Scottish Independents".[1]

Presbyterians and Independents emphasised the responsibilities of the Covenant. In civil terms this meant the protection of the King from his Papal enemies and the defence of Parliamentary authority in whose hands lay the safety of the people. Significantly, a Presbyterian would still stress the role of Parliament in covenant-making, whereas an Independent sympathiser would assign the impetus to the people.[2] But in religious terms a covenant was seriously regarded by all Puritans as a unifying bond between those who professed it and God.[3] Within this unity, different opinions could coexist, as under the Israelite national covenant, the typological significance of which did not escape most Covenant theorists. Such a Covenant, declared Swift, ought to defy separatism;

"we must not for the sins of our fellow worshippers, nor for difference of opinion amongst our selvs make a separation from the true church".[4]

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1. An English Covenanter, The Scottish Mist Dispel'd, 19 January 1647-8, pp2-3, E.423(8).
2. Cf. the Lancashire Presbyterian Richard Hollingworth's answer to queries about the Covenant, An Answer to a Certain Writing, 11 September 1643, p.9, E.67(5), with J. Caryl's sermon on the Covenant of 6 October 1643, The Nature, solemnity, grounds, prosperity and benefits of a Sacred Covenant, pp. 1-2, E.72(12).
3. The crucial concept of a covenant in Puritan thought is explained by P. Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity", Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, XXXII, (1937) pp.259-74.
4. D. Swift, A Pious President to both Kingdomes, for a sacred Covenant, 16 October 1643, p.14, E.71(3).

Whatever their private interpretations of the national Covenant, Independents showed solidarity with their Presbyterian brethren, and praised the religious harmony afforded by such a bond.

Assembly Debates II: Beginnings of Disunity.

The Independents were nevertheless alert and defensive after the Covenant had been accepted. In November, Bridge's sermon to the Commons begging for a thorough Reformation implied a congregational polity, with the people playing an important role in church government.[1] More important, there was a definite emphasis in some Independent writings for a respect to tender consciences. Only a month after the taking of the Covenant, Sidrach Simpson told some M.P.s that desirable though religious uniformity might be, it never had been yet achieved in any church, nor indeed could be in this imperfect life. A forced uniformity was in fact most dangerous to religion, as it necessitated the stretching or rejecting of consciences that could not exactly fit the uniform standard. And who should presume to decide such a uniformity?[2] Nathaniel Rogers wrote from New England to remind Englishmen of the bad times when the consciences of godly congregations were scourged by tyrants. He also warned against misinterpretation of the new Covenant;

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1. W. Bridge, A Sermon preached before the Honourable House of Commons, 29 November 1643, pp.22-8, E.79(11).
2. S. Simpson, A Sermon preached at Westminster before sundry of the House of Commons, October 1643, especially pp.31-3, E. 74(3).

"Give us all with you not to make the emphasis of our Joy, that it is made with the Scottish, but that its made by them and you with the great God of Heaven".[1]

As if to confirm Independent fears, Scottish voices were soon raised to demand the settling of the English church according to their pattern. Significantly soon after the Covenant there was printed a form of the Scottish discipline taken from the old Genevan church.[2] By the 15th November 1643 the Scots divines were taking an active part in Assembly debates, thus beginning their influence and pressure on its members.[3] The establishing of the Grand or Treaty committee to include the Scots did not pass without protests from Assembly Independents, who failed to see the necessity of consultation with the foreigners.[4] The Scots also performed public duties, including preaching before Parliament, when the opportunity was never lost to advance their cause. Alexande Henderson, for example, observed in December that only if the Covenant and the Presbyterian Reformation were perfected, might England expect a blessing, for lukewarmness in religion kindled the

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1. N. Rogers, A Letter discovering the Cause of God's Continuing wrath against the nation, to a member of the House of Commons (Miles Corbet?) 17 December 1643, p.10, E.53(20). The letter was not published until July 1644.
2. The Reformation of the Discipline and Service of the Church ... as it was approved by most Reverend Divines of the Church of Scotland, 5 October 1643, E.69(21).
3. TSS. vol.i, f.194. It is significant that the Scots divines sat nearest the fire in the debating chamber! Baillie, i,398. The Scots Commissioners arrived in September - November 1643; the lay commissioners could attend Assembly meetings and their chaplains acted as full members. They originally resided in the City, but some time before January 1644-5 they moved to Worcester House in the Strand, See below, pp.344-5. They were assigned Antholine's church for worship.
4. TSS. vol.i, f.110 verso.

anger of God.[1] There was certainly good reason to fear that

> "If once the Kirk-men pitch their Tents
> With our Assembly Asses,
> Synods will eat up Parliaments,
> Courts be devour'd by Classes".[2]

Under the influence of the Scottish divines, debates immediately became more heated after the Covenant. On 12th October Parliament had felt obliged (possibly through Scottish pressure) to interrupt the Assembly debates on the thirty-nine articles and enjoin their speedy consideration of church discipline and liturgy, in order to achieve "nearer agreement with the church of Scotland, and other reformed churches abroad".[3] The movement of discussions to the more crucial field of discipline inevitably brought Presbyterian and Independent differences of opinion into view, and clashes occurred. The initial problem concerned which should be the first question to be discussed. Divines anxious to keep debates as friendly as possible, voted that the Assembly should begin with less contentious points of church discipline, such as the kinds of officers instituted by Christ for his Church.[4] But the Independents favoured an immediate debate on the central issue of the definition of a church and the nature of its discipline,

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1. A. Henderson, Sermon before the House of Commons, 27 December 1643, pp.9-10. E.81(24).
2. M. Nedham, A Short History of the English Rebellion, 1661, p.67.
3. Lightfoot, p.17. The 39 Articles were never reviewed, but the report of the Assembly's work on them was ordered to be published, along with the Confession of Faith, in April 1647. S.W. Carruthers, The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly, pp.108-9.
4. TSS. vol.i, ff.109-12. eg. Seaman, Gataker, Newcomen, Walker, and Herle. See also Lightfoot, p.20. Presbyterians and Independents were in basic agreement that the officers of the church should follow the pattern of Calvin and the reformed churches viz. apostles, pastors, elders, deacons and widows.

when they would be able to stress their congregational ideas. Simpson was convinced that

> "our consciences are engaged on both sides which must have satisfaction and cannot be but in this way ... it will save a great deal of labour (for) we must dispute this common question upon every particular".[1]

But after a while, Philip Nye gave way graciously, and Lightfoot observed that the matter "was waived as being too sudden a trial of the differences in opinion that are like to show amongst us".[2]

On the question of church officers the Independents were far from silent. At the very outset Goodwin introduced a "red herring" by announcing that Christ was not a type of all church officers, but this was ruled impertinent and out of order.[3] The debate on the office of Apostleship raised another bone of contention, namely, whether the apostles received the power of the keys (excommunication and church censure) as church officers, or as ordinary church members. Clearly this was a crucial issue between Presbyterians and Independents, as it determined whether a congregation could be self-governing without submission to superior officers. It was finally decided that the keys were given to the apostles as officers, but the Independent divines insisted throughout that the people held the real power, through the democratic election of church officers. Goodwin declared,

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1. TSS. vol.i, f.109. Since the minutes are disjointed I have added punctuation and added words in brackets to clarify the meaning.
2. TSS. vol.i, f.109; Lightfoot, p.20.
3. TSS. vol.i, f.121; Lightfoot, p.25.

"As in democraticall government the power is in the people ... the choyse of an officer is an act of authority, it is the power of the keyes".[1]

Herle sympathised with the Independents' belief that congregational power was the basis of all governing authority, revealing how close Presbyterians could come to the semi-separatist position. He nevertheless stressed that officers alone could exercise this power, otherwise

"The danger is we persue this place too farre the brownists & sepperatists say yt (ie that) the apostle Peter received it (ie. the power of the keys) in the right of the faithfull ... if we setle government upon such a popular way it will be anabaptisme.[2]

Fear of opening a door to separatism emerged again when debates turned to the office of the pastor, but on this occasion the Independents were anxious to avoid the issue. The question arose as to whether the public reading of the scriptures constituted an ecclesiastical office, an awkward point which might confer the pastoral role on a broad section of the populace. The Independents Nye, Goodwin and Bridge, whilst convinced that reading the Word was an ordinance of God, were just as reluctant as Stephen Marshall to declare it an office, for fear it would raise the problem of lay preaching.[3] Eventually the Assembly realised that the question under debate required only the affirmation that preaching and reading were a part of the pastoral duty, and changed the subject.

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1. TSS. vol.i, f. 137. verso.
2. TSS. vol.i, f. 141. verso. For a fuller account of the power of the keys, see below, pp. 243-50.
3. Lightfoot, pp. 37-9. For the Independents' position on lay-preaching (mid-way between Presbyterians and separatists), see below, pp. 253-5.

But concern about the gathering of separatist congregations in London at the time meant that the separatist issue soon re-emerged, and the Independents would be forced to reassure members of their semi-separatism. On November 13th, debates on church officers had to be temporarily abandoned to discuss whether or not the Church of England, as a national institution, could be a true church, as the separatists heartily denied this. Marshall was plainly embarrassed at the emergence of the point, as it would endanger the relative concord with the Independents;

"For the thing itselfe it is unseasonable for us to enter upon the dispute of a nationall church ... in the common use of a nationall church the meaning is only this, the association of perticular congregations in such a profession of faith, manner of worship and rule of government ... they are ordinarily called by the name of the church without speaking of the power in Jurisdictic of over perticular (churches)." [1]

Both he and Calamy tried to demonstrate that the concept of a national church did not exclude a semi-separatist definition of a loose federation of autonomous congregational bodies.[2] Burroughes still feared that a national church might be assumed to imply an authoritative presbyterian tyranny over congregations;

"for yt of associating of churches in the commom sence, ther is more than the associating ... if conjoyned in a body then ther is a power over perticulars we know what".

Nevertheless Bridge hastened to reassure the Assembly that Independents were not opposed to the concept of a national church, and that they believed many parochial units were true churches.[3] Harmony was therefore maintained, and the question eventually voted in terms of the English church being "true" by virtue of

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1. TSS. vol.i, f.180.
2. Lightfoot, p.49.
3. TSS. vol,i, f.181.

profession of faith and not with reference to its discipline and government. It is nevertheless significant that the very next day the Scots Commissioners sent through Marshall a series of testimonies to the excellence of the Scottish church discipline with its authoritative presbyteries.[1]

When debates recommenced on the various officers, the Scots divines, attending the Assembly for the first time, were greeted by a clash of opinion between Presbyterians and Independents over the office of doctor, or teacher. The Independents believed this officer to be equal in status to the pastor but with a distinct calling and function.[2] Although Baillie concealed the fact, the Independent view was shared by some Presbyterians, although the point was not one on which the Assembly or the Scots felt a rigid line to be essential.[3] Accommodation was therefore reached by a statement that there were different functions involved in the two offices, and that when there were several ministers available for one congregation, their employments could be thus divided. Nevertheless, if necessary, one minister could assume both offices.[4] Baillie believed that Henderson had

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1. Lightfoot, p.51. (14 November 1643).
2. TSS. vol.i, ff.207-8. There were Dutch and New England precedents for this. The distinction was particularly relevant to an Independent congregation, where a pastor might be concerned more in government, and the doctor could more effectually serve spiritual needs. It was especially useful in the overseas churches, as there might be several exiled ministers attached to one congregation. For a full account of the Independent position see T. Goodwin, Works, vol.iv, pp.282-9.
3. Baillie, i, 401; TSS. vol,i, ff.188-211. The Independents were supported by De La March, Seaman and Wilson.
4. Lightfoot, p.58.

achieved the compromise.[1] It was understood, however, that the matter could be discussed again at some later date.

It was not long before controversy erupted again, this time over the office of the ruling presbyter or elder. Baillie was right in assuming

"this is a point of high consequence; and upon no other we expect so great difficulty, except alone on Independency".[2]

But it was the Presbyterians who were deeply divided on the question, once again illustrating the diversity of that group. The distinct office of ruling elder as opposed to pastor was based on the text

"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine".[3]

Many English Presbyterians believed that the "presbyter" or elder was not in fact capable of subdivision into teaching elders (pastors) and ruling elders. But the Scots felt that the ruling elder was essential to church discipline, entrusting these officers with the admonishing of offenders and assisting in government, which was one reason why they felt a further subdivision of the office of teaching elder into pastor and doctor to be unnecessary. Henderson was anxious to show the English the usefulness of this officer so alien to their tradition;

"however it be somewhat strange in England, yet that it hath been in the reformed churches, even before Geneva, and that it hath been very prosperous to the church of Scotland".[4]

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1. Baillie, i,401.
2. Ibid, 402.
3. I Timothy V verse 17. This implies two kinds of elder. See also S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, 1644, pp.141-5. E.41(4).
4. Lightfoot, p.60. (22 November 1643). The English lay office of churchwarden never had the censorial powers possessed by elders.

But this was one facet of Scottish Presbyterianism that English divines would not accept without a struggle;

"this is almost the only question yt hath been cryed downe in England as if he ware a mere invention yt came first up at Geneva".[1]

The prime question about the eldership was therefore whether their office was of divine institution. Although many leading Presbyterians, for example, Seaman, Walker, Marshall, Newcomen, Young and Calamy, supported this in the Assembly,

"Sundry of the ablest were flat against the institution of any such officer by divine right, as Dr. Smith, Dr. Temple, Mr. Gataker, Mr. Vines, Mr. Price, Mr. Hall (Herle) and many moe; beside the Independents who truly speak much and exceedingly well".[2]

Before long Baillie was bemoaning the "pitiful labyrinth" the subject of elders was causing, although he praised Gillespie's heroic defences of the divine right of the office.[3] Marshall tried to conciliate, by pointing out that

"in such an assembly wher ther is such a diversity of Judgment, it will be an easy matter to hold up the ball of contention from day to day".[4]

Palmer tried to initiate a committee of accommodation but prejudice against the elder was so great that there were lengthy debates before his proposal was accepted.[5] Dr. Stanton was particularly opposed to the type of compromise that was to become typical of

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1. TSS. vol.i, f. 240. Marshall is speaking.
2. Baillie, i, 401. Richard Vines wrote to Baxter confirming his dislike of ruling elders. Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, 147.
3. Baillie, i, 406 and 407.
4. TSS. vol.i, f. 232, 30 November 1643.
5. TSS. vol.i, ff. 233,240. The committee included Bridge and Goodwin.

the Assembly - one that clouded the whole problem in obscure phrases capable of various interpretations;

"Our worke (is) to hould out scripture truths in cleare expressions ... I suppose accomodations & moderations wch (which) are equivocall to toleration are equivocall acts & properly belong to the parliament. In these generall expressions we leave ourselves & parliament & kingdome in the darke".[1]

But the accommodation eventually agreed was certainly such a compromise. The question of the divine right of the ruling elder as a perpetual and universal office in the Christian church (the "presbyter" theory) was ignored, and it was merely agreed that the Word allowed other ecclesiastical governors to join with ministers in the government of the church.[2] Coleman later claimed that this vote deliberately avoided the divine right of the elder, and Baillie disliked such a prudential institution;

"All of them were willing to admit elders in a prudential way; but this to us seemed most dangerous and unhappy".[3]

In 1646 however, when the "divine right" of church government as a whole was a serious issue, many divines upheld the "presbyter theory" in response to Parliamentary Erastianism.

The Independents, while opposed to a divine institution, were willing to admit elders in the "prudential way"; Philip Nye recognised their value as an aid to an overworked ministry.[4] The Independents main concern was lest the elder should be entrusted with the whole weight of ecclesiastical censure, which they felt

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1. TSS. vol.i, f.254.
2. The text 1 Timothy V.17. was not inserted among the proof-texts for the eldership; Baillie stated that only the texts Romans xii.8. and 1 Corinthians. xii. 28 were accepted, neither of which were believed to testify to a positive divine right. Baillie, i,407; A.F. Mitchell, The Westminster Assembly, (1883), pp.188-90.
3. T. Coleman, Male Dicis Maledicis, 8 January 1645-6, p.33, E. 315 (2); Baillie, i, 401.
4. Lightfoot, p.73.

belonged to the congregation. Some Presbyterians also disliked the Scottish practice of allowing the elder a major role in church censure; as Hill stated,

"though we grant a ruling-elder, yet that when we come to be urged that ecclesiastical censures are in their power, we shall deny it".[1]

In any event, no vote was taken on this matter. But the main bone of contention between the Independents' and the Scottish views on the eldership was that the Independents refused to accept that the office was lay and not ecclesiastical. When the Sanhedrin was advanced as a precedent for lay governors in the church, Lord Saye promptly declared that the Jewish church could not be a useful model for evangelical churches, due to its curious mixture of civil and religious functions.[2] The Assembly accordingly abandoned the matter, leaving it vague whether the eldership was a lay or ecclesiastical office, although the issue was soon to re-emerge in the pamphlet literature.[3] The national settlement would eventually follow the Scottish pattern and afford laymen an authoritative role in church censure, but this was widely opposed among Englishmen in general, not merely the Independents.

Remaining debates in December were no more harmonious. When it was decided that a sub-committee should prepare the Public Directory of Worship, Baillie was optimistic that the Independents would co-operate in the formulation of an alternative along Scottish

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1. Lightfoot, p.74.
2. Ibid, p.83.
3. See below, pp 261-3 , where the distinction between "ecclesiastic" and "lay" elders is discussed.

lines to the mutually hated prayer-book.[1] By debating the Directory in committee contemporaneously with government in the Assembly itself, it was probably hoped to balance unity in the former with division in the latter. However, even in points of the Directory, the Independents were on their guard. When the committee discussed the new psalter prepared by the M.P. Francis Rous, Nye spoke of the limitations of any psalter, and although Baillie preferred Rowellan's Scottish psalter, he observed that the Scots must oppose Nye, since

"the Psalter is a great part of our uniformity, which we cannot let pass till our church be well advised with it".[2]

It was an ominous start. Before long, the Independents were objecting to the ministers' bowing in the pulpit, which Scottish custom was alien to English practice.[3] Soon they were arguing about directories in general and against the expediency of beginning public worship with prefaces, as the Scots did.[4] Goodwin even objected that the Scots ought to pray for the King earlier in

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1. Baillie, i, 407. The subcommittee members were Marshall, Palmer, Young, Goodwin, Herle, the Independent Goodwin, and the Scots divines.
2. Baillie, i, 411. On 12 September 1645, the Assembly advised that Rous' psalms should be publicly sung in churches. The Commons approved the psalter, but the House of Lords, (piqued because Rous was a member of the Commons) preferred Barton's psalter and held the question up for months. S.W. Carruthers, The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly, p.115-119.
3. Baillie, i, 413-4. Support was probably forthcoming from some Presbyterians for the Independents here.
4. In the Scottish kirk, a reader read the prayers from Knox's liturgy and portions of Scripture before the minister entered the pulpit; this was called "prefacing". These readers were so popular with the ministry that they continued, although the office was declared by the General Assembly to be without Scriptural warrant. To the dismay of the Scots, the Westminster Assembly did not approve the readers. T. MacCrie, Sketches of Scottish Church History, (Edinburgh, 1841), p.241.

their church service!"[1] Baillie tried privately to convince Goodwin of the necessity of directories, but it was clear that no field of church affairs would be immune from Independent attack.

Apparent Unity, December 1643.

Professor Kaplan has stated that

"In 1643...the failure of religious differences to split the parliamentary cause was more than good fortune: it was planned".[2]

Certainly there was a conscious effort to accommodate differences between Presbyterians and Independents, even if these differences were very apparent in Assembly debates. In contrast to later disputes, these conflicts seem very mild and the mutual desire to accommodate is clear. Marshall, Calamy, Herle and Palmer were constantly acting as peacemakers. At this stage too, the Scots were keen to avoid open disunity in the Assembly; Baillie commented

"It was my advice, which Mr. Henderson presently applauded, and gave me thanks for it, to eschew a publick rupture with the Independents, till we were more able for them ..."[3]

Besides, the English Presbyterians were themselves a far from united group. The newsbook "Britannicus" was right to assure his readers that the Royalist newsbook "Aulicus'" rumours of ruinous religious divisions were false;

"We can dispute and shake hands at the same time ... we can

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1. Baillie, i,414.
2. L. Kaplan, "Presbyterians and Independents in 1643", English Historical Review (April 1969) p.247.
3. Baillie, i, 407, i.e. "till it please God to advance our army, which we expect will much assist our arguments". Ibid, 402.

warme our Church with Arguments, and not set our Chappell where we sit on fire, we can ... mutually move in our severall Orbes of judgement and discipline without grazing or fretting on each others conscience".[1]

Baillie saw no reason why the Independents should thwart accommodation;

"we are not desperate of some accommodation, for Goodwin, Burroughs and Bridges, are men full, as it seems yet, of grace and modesty: if they shall prove otherwise, the body of the assembly and parliament, city, and country, will disclaim them".[2]

December 1643 was to end with a seemingly impressive display of Presbyterian-Independent unity, since the growing separatism in city and country forced both groups to declare their faith in a national settlement. The vacuum of authority in the English church led not only to complaints about invalid ordinations,[3] but to an increase in gathered congregations, mostly separatist. The Independents had to listen to several complaints in the Assembly about such "Independent" activity, and on November 8th the semi-separatist Nicholas Lockyer was accused of encouraging the gathering of churches.[4] As a result of such complaints Nye

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1. Mercurius Britanicus, 26 September - 3 October 1643, pp.42-3. E.69(6). Britanicus was first published in September 1643, under the editorship of Thomas Audley and Marchamont Nedham, to combat the Royalist "Mercurius Aulicus", edited by John Birkenhead. J. Frank, The Beginnings of the English Newspaper 1620-1660, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1961), p.48ff.
2. Baillie, i, 402.
3. On November 8th there was a complaint that Dr. Homes and John Goodwin, both Independents, had ordained a Mr. Anderson and sworn him to secrecy. Bridge obtained a paper from Goodwin and Homes disclaiming this matter, but it did not help the Independent cause. TSS. vol.i, f. 170; Lightfoot, p.46.
4. Lightfoot, p.46. Thomas Edwards classed Lockyer as a semi-separatist. (Antapologia, p.307). For Lockyer see T.G. Crippen, "Nicholas Lockyer: A Half-forgotten Champion of Independency", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc. IX, (September 1924), pp.64-77. Robert Bostock (a Presbyterian stationer) wrote of him;

"The rarest man we (i.e. the Independents) have, scarce one his peere,
He hints high notions, far above the spheare
Of's owne capacity or those that heare".

R. Bostock, Herod and Pilate Reconciled, 15 March 1646-7 p.3. E.379(7). For another complaint about gathered churches see Lightfoot pp.51-2.

protested that only the "disorderly gathering" of churches should be repudiated, but was promptly advised that any gathering out of Christian churches was disorderly.[1] Soon afterwards there was a letter from the city and country ministers about the confusions of the church, the increase of Anabaptists and Antinomians, and the boldness of some who gathered congregations, whereupon Parliament promised to investigate the matter.[2]

In fact, the Independents were still observing the Calamy House Agreement almost completely, and there seem to have been only three or four new semi-separatist congregations gathered about this time; Lockyer's, John Goodwin's, and the Norwich and Hull churches.[3] But the Assembly decided that such gatherings must be publicly renounced in favour of a national settlement, and the Independents, anxious not to alienate sympathy and conscious that their own reiterated professions of faith in a national church were treated with scepticism, had no objections to signing such a document providing its interpretation of the national settlement was left sufficiently vague. They agreed to a very loosely worded paper formulated by Marshall, but when some Presbyterians objected to this as "giving too much countenance to these who had gathered congregations", the Independents threatened to boycott it altogether,

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1. TSS. vol.i, f. 216.
2. Baillie, i, 402. Antinomianism and Anabaptism were worrying Parliament; see C.J. iii. 237, 271. The letter was presented to the Assembly on 20 November. Lightfoot, pp.56-7.
3. John Goodwin was mentioned by Baillie, i, 402 as having gathered a church before December 1643. Bridge's congregation at Norwich entered into covenant in June 1643 and the Hull church in August 1643. For the latter see R.S. Robson, "Pre-Ejection Foundations", Journal of Presb. Hist. Soc. I (May 1917) p.119 ff.

and absolutely refused to include a clause for the laying aside of all congregations already gathered. In the end Marshall had to use all his powers of persuasion to get the broadly-worded document through the Assembly. Baillie consoled himself that

"if it had been rejected, it would certainly have made a greater heart burning among the dissenting brethren than yet had appeared".[1]

Thus the "Certaine Considerations to Disswade Men from further gatherings of Churches" [2] declared the Assembly's intention of settling religion with all possible haste, and urged all ministers to forbear gathering churches until they saw whether the national settlement would not comment "the right Rule ... in this orderly way". It stressed that Parliament and Assembly would seek to

"preserve whatever shall appear to be the rights of particular Congregations, according to the Word; and to beare with such whose Consciences cannot in all things conforme to the publicke Rule, so farre as the word of God would have them borne withall".[3]

Clearly this phraseology would imply both a national congregational

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1. Baillie, i, 411-2; Lightfoot, p.92.
2. Certaine Considerations to Disswade Men from further gathering of Churches, licensed on 23 December 1643, E.79(16). It was published in the Assembly's name and signed by 21 divines, including all 7 Assembly Independents at that time; Thomas Goodwin, Nye, Bridge, Carter, Simpson, Greenhill and Burroughes. The "halfe-Independent" Caryl also signed. Professor Kaplan regards the "Dissuasive" as an attempt to extend the Calamy House Agreement to the sects, but it seems to have been more specifically aimed at semi-separatists. The sects, after all, would have been unimpressed by any national settlement. L. Kaplan, "Presbyterians and Independents in 1643", English Historical Review, (1969). p.254.
3. Certaine Considerations to Disswade Men, pp.3-4.

settlement, or more practically, an accommodation for Independents within a national Presbyterian church. But at least reiteration was made of the faith that had been rooted in the Assembly and sanctioned by the Covenant, that a united national church was desirable. At least the Independents had made a public profession of their restraint on gathering of churches, although they had privately promised no less in the Calamy House Agreement. It took a Royalist to emphasise the instability of such unity;

> "the Presbyterians grinne upon the Independents and they upon the other, which hath forced their Holinesse to publish a Manifest this week ... that the Assembly and Parliament... will concurre to whatsoever shall appeare to be the Rights of particular Congregations (will not onely pull all to pieces, and set up the Presbytery, but preserve Independency, which will pull down Presbytery)".[1]

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1. Mercurius Aulicus, week ending 6 January 1643-4, p.762, E.29(9).

Chapter Three

THE APOLOGY AND THE BREACH. January - July 1643-4.

(the Apologetical Narration) "tended greatly to prevent the probability of any amicable arrangement in which all parties might agree".

W.M. Hetherington, History of the Westminster Assembly, p.157.

(the Independents) "have been here most unhappy instruments, the principal, if not the sole causes ... why nothing in a whole year could be gotten concluded".

R. Baillie, Letters and Journals, ii,3.

"I shall rebuke hence, persons willing to thwart and crosse proceedings; so when any businesse generally adjudged hopefull, is propounded, they have still doubts to surmise, delays to make, inconveniences to alleadge; and deem it a great commendation to their wit, if they can by arguing puzzle the matter, and divert the businesse".

Humphrey Hardwick, The Difficulty of Sions Deliverance and Reformation, Sermon to the Commons, 26 June 1644, p.21, E2(9).

Already by December 1643 it seemed that the euphoric faith in the possibilities of England's Reformation was fading instead into consciousness of its difficulties. Although St. John and his friends were to carry on Pym's policy of trying to avoid conflict between Presbyterians and Independents, the death of Pym must have created a certain psychological insecurity among both groups.[1] Certainly the Dissuasive, agreed just after Pym's death, provided only a very short-lived reassurance of a united front in the Assembly. This was perhaps not surprising, since both Presbyterians and Independents had conceded more than they wished in this document; the Presbyterians hinting that the liberties of individual congregations would be safeguarded, and the Independents advising publicly against any gathering of churches. In any case, the apparent unity of the Dissuasive was soon shattered by the first public display of the differences between Presbyterians and Independents.

Only one week after the publication of the Dissuasive, the printing presses of Robert Dawlman[2] had produced "An Apologeticall Narration of some Ministers, formerly in Exile: now Members of the Assembly of Divines, humbly submitted to the Honourable Houses of Parliament".[3] Its five authors, Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, Sidrach Simpson, Jeremiah Burroughes, and William Bridge,

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1. The Assembly attended Pym's funeral on 12 December 1643. TSS vol.i, f.261. Marshall, who had tried to smooth over difficulties in the Assembly as Pym wished, preached his funeral sermon.
2. Dawlman often printed material sympathetic to the Independents.
3. An Apologeticall Narration, 1643-4, E.80(7). Thomason inscribed his copy with the word "Independants". This Apology had probably been written in manuscript some time previously.

would thereby win themselves the title of "Apologists". The date of publication of this work is unclear; Thomason's copy was purchased on 3rd January and although printing probably began in December, Edwards' statement that it "came forth in the month of December" was an error of memory.[1] The pamphlet was probably delivered to the Assembly on the 4th January,[2] when the Independents chose to mask its unexpectedness with cordiality, inviting the Scots and Assembly-leaders to a great feast in the evening. This rather subtle manoeuvre may have forestalled immediate conflict, but increased irritation afterwards, as Baillie recorded;

> "they put out in print, on a sudden, an apologetical narration of their way, which long had lien ready beside them, wherein they petition the parliament, in a most sly and cunning way, for a toleration, and withal lend too bold wipes to all the Reformed churches, as imperfect yet in their reformation, while their new model be embraced, which they set out so well as they are able. This piece abruptly they presented to the assembly, giving to every member a copy: also they gave books to some of either House. That same day they invited us, and some principal men of the assembly, to a very great feast, when we had not read their book, so no word of that matter was betwixt us; but so soon as we looked on it, we were mightily displeased therewith, and so were the most of the assembly, and we found a necessity to answer it ... The thing in itself coming out at this time was very apt to have kindled a fire ...[3]

Why did the Independents print this manifesto so soon after the Dissuasive? Samuel Pearson has assumed that Henderson's sermon of December 27th was the vital factor, but there is no supportive evidence for this, and although the sermon advocated Presbytery, it was not specifically anti-Independent.[4] Quite apart

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1. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part II, 28 May 1646, p.50, E.338(12).
2. Baillie recorded that the "Apology" was presented on the same day as the Lords petitioned the Assembly for a divine to assist their House for a time (4 January, according to Lightfoot). Baillie, i, 421; Lightfoot, p.103. Hetherington incorrectly ascribed the tract to late January - early February. W.M. Hetherington, History of the Westminster Assembly, p.156. There is an unfortunate gap in the Assembly minutes between 20 December 1643 and 15 February 1643-4.
3. Baillie, i, 420-1.
4. S.J. Pearson, "Reluctant Radicals: the Independents at the Westminster Assembly", Journal of Church and State, (1969) p.475:

(cont'd overleaf)

from the insecurity in Independent circles engendered by the Covenant and Scottish influence, it is clear that the Independents' main motive in presenting their Apologetical Narration at this time was as a supplement to the Dissuasive. They may have concluded that an extended narrative of their belief in the rights of individual congregations was necessary to counterbalance their public condemnation of gathering churches in a separatist manner. Edwards later complained that the manifesto was

> "hastned to follow upon these considerations to counterballance that act of yours ... that your cause and way might receive no losse and prejudice, and to satisfie your own party (many of them greatly exclaiming against you for your hands to those considerations)".[1]

But primarily they realised that the Dissuasive would not be sufficient proof of their dissociation from the separatists. They had become increasingly alarmed at the growing condemnation of sectarian activity, and of the aspersions that their way was no better. When Edwards said that the Apologetical Narration was sparked by the ministers' letter of November 20th against Antinomians, Anabaptists and gathered congregations,[2] he was correctly intimating that the fear of confusion with the sects was not of sudden origin in late December.

Nevertheless, on the very date that Thomason acquired his copy of the Dissuasive, December 28th, the Assembly was presented

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4 cont'd. A. Henderson, A Sermon ... before the Honourable House of Commons, 27 December 1643, E.81(24).

1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.6.
2. See above, p.116.

with further evidence of sectarian activity. Lightfoot noted

"I was sent for out by a man recommended to me by Mr. Spencer, who brought a bundle of books, or rather copies of one book, directed to the Assembly from Amsterdam, from one of the Separation, in which he pleadeth, that we are bound in conscience to tolerate all sects".[1]

According to Baillie, the work thus delivered contained a denunciation of the Covenant.[2] This was certainly not the first sectarian outburst against the Covenant; Nutt's petition of September 1643,[3] an Anabaptist document, had been published earlier, and according to the Royalist Thomas Ogle, was successfully withdrawn from circulation by Philip Nye.[4] When the December missive arrived in the Assembly, the Independents were again forced to defend themselves from the aspersions it created, and to dissociate themselves from the sects. Baillie observed;

"Here rose a quick enough debate. Goodwin, Nye, and their party, by all means pressing the neglect, contempt, and suppressing all such fanatick papers: others were as vehement for the taking notice of them, that the parliament might be acquaint therewith, to see to the remedy of these dangerous sects ... many marvelled at Goodwin and Nye's vehemency in the matter".[5]

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1. Lightfoot, p.93.
2. Baillie's account is marginally different from that of Lightfoot. He stated that some "Anabaptists came to the assembly's scribe with a letter, inveighing against our covenant, and carrying with them a printed sheet of admonitions to the assembly from an old English Anabaptist at Amsterdam, to give a full liberty of conscience to all sects". Baillie, i, 412.
3. Nutt's petition is in Thomason's collection, B.M. 669 f.8(29). Carruthers believed the missive of December 28th to be Nutt's petition, but this is unlikely. S.W. Carruthers, The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly, p.94.
4. L. Kaplan, "Presbyterians and Independents in 1643", English Historical Review, (1969) p.253. For the plot led by Ogle, see below, p.171.
5. Baillie, i,412.

The Independents managed to persuade the Assembly to consider the missive in committee and not in open debate, where it might have aroused more hostility.[1]

It is impossible to determine whether it was this latest sectarian work that finally drove the Independents to publish their manifesto defining their distinctive church polity, or whether by that date the Apologetical Narration was already at the printers as a counterbalance and extension to the Dissuasive. Its appearance at this time may also be connected with the Ogle plot against Parliament, which would soon be made public. Baillie was unkind enough to insinuate that it was meant to aid the plot;

"it seems the devil and some men intended it, to contribute to the very wicked plot, at that same instant a-working, but shortly after discovered almost miraculously".[2]

In fact, since the Independents helped to discover the plot, it is likely they thought that the manifesto would best be presented at a time when their public reputation was high.[3] Alternatively, they may well have feared the very accusations made by Baillie. Whatever the immediate cause of the Apologetical Narration, it is certain that the Independents felt it was imperative for their way to be explained, since

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1. Lightfoot, p.93.
2. Baillie, i, 421.
3. The Independents were in contact with Ogle, with the full knowledge of Parliament, to try and uncover his plans. See below, pp. 171-2.

"Our eares have been of late so filled with a sudden and unexpected noyse of confused exclamations (though not so expresly directed against us in particular, yet in the interpretation of the most, reflecting on us) that awakened thereby, we are enforced to anticipate a little that discovery of our selves which otherwise we resolved to have left to Time and Experience of our wayes and spirits, the truest Discoverers and surest Judges of all men and their actions".[1]

The Independents seem to have genuinely believed that this manifesto, by distinguishing their "middle way" from the taint of Brownism, would speed accommodation and enhance the spirit of the Dissuasive. Charles Herle, who licensed the Narration and is said to have confessed to modifying many of its expressions, certainly shared their view. He wrote

"'tis so full of peaceablenesse, modesty, and candour; and withall, at this time so seasonably needfull, ... That however for mine own part I have appeared on, and doe still encline to the Presbyteriall way of Church Government, yet doe I think it every way fit for the Presse".[2]

Couched in terms readily assimilated by the educated public, the Apologetical Narration or "Apology" emphatically denied the charge of schism, asserted the Independents' affection for the true church called the Church of England, and desired that they should be allowed to pursue their congregational principles within the national framework.[3] It therefore advocated accommodation for the

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1. Apologeticall Narration, p.1. The Apologists were also worried about the appearance of Presbyterian tracts from abroad, see below p. 202.
2. Charles Herle's license affixed to An Apologeticall Narration. A Royalist pamphleteer claimed that Herle confessed to the modifications; Anon, A True Account and character of the Times, 9 August 1647, p.4, E.401(13). Edwards claimed that Herle, Cheynell, and other supporters of the manifesto were deceived by the Independents' flattery and seemingly sincere professions. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.54.
3. An Apologeticall Narration, pp.6, 24, 31.

Independents within a national Presbyterian polity, since by this time the advent of the Scots and incipient Assembly divisions had convinced the Independents of the impossibility of the national establishment of their own way, if they had ever seriously thought this was possible. Despite Edwards' claim that they were suing for a toleration,[1] they were in fact hoping that accommodation would render such a toleration unnecessary. The manifesto stressed the similarity between the Presbyterian and Independent systems, which caused a newsbook to comment:-

"There is of late a book set out by our Reverend brethren, but by no independents ... in this you may see how long they hold us by the hand, and where they let go, and take us by the finger ... here is all our difference, they allow a Church to be authoritative over its own Members, but not over a Church, yet they allow an equivalency to our Presbytery and Councells and excommunication of Churches; which is consociation of Churches, and non-Communion with Churches, is it not pitty we should breake for such a little knot in a golden thread?".[2]

Yet the Apology, designed to aid conciliation, had exactly the opposite effect. Edwards was

"told by an intimate familiar friend of yours, that one of you five told him, it proved quite contrary to your expectation, and you admired at it, it should be so ill taken by the Assembly etc. It is the worst evil that ever befell you since your returne from your exile ..."

It seemed to Edwards that God's providence had thus "turned all to the contrary, taking the wise in their owne craftinesse", and he prophesied that the Apologetical Narration would turn out to be the biggest mistake ever made by the Independents.[3] Since the manifesto

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.237.
2. Mercurius Britanicus, No.20, 4 -11 January 1643-4, p.160. This observed that the Independents' exile had left them unaccustommed to a national system, and they would soon broaden their horizons.
3. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.246.

was directed to Parliament rather than the Assembly, it inevitably drew upon the Independents the charge of violating Assembly protocol, prejudging its debates, and appealing for special favour, "a latitude to some lesser differences", from the civil magistrate.[1] When the Wallacheren classes wrote to the Assembly criticising the manifesto, the Assembly assured the classes in its reply that it had no prior knowledge of the work and the same information was passed to Parliament.[2] Although the Apologetical Narration praised the Assembly, and promised that the Independents would argue fully and scholastically there about their opinions, it reserved the right of dissent from Assembly conclusions, and tried openly to curry favour with Parliament by saying that Independent principles could offer as much, if not more power to the civil magistrate than could the Presbyterian.[3] Little wonder then, that Assembly debates immediately became more divisive after its publication.

Moreover, the appearance of the Apologetical Narration ended the Calamy House Agreement, although the Independents could claim that it was the fuller narrative of their way promised in this pact. Sometime between January and July the agreement was declared

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1. An Apologeticall Narration, p.31. For these aspersions on the Apology, see below pp. 204-11.
2. TSS. vol.1, f.362; S.W. Carruthers, The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly pp.38-9. After hot Independent opposition, another clause in the Assembly's reply to the Wallacheren classes was omitted. This had insinuated that the Independents had not kept the House of Commons' order that the Assembly should publish nothing without its consent. The reply was approved by the Commons on 14th March 1644.
3. An Apologeticall Narration, pp.19-30. Herle's license tried to link this claim with Protestants in general; it said the Apology would help "towards the vindication of the Protestant party in generall, from the aspersions of Incompatiblenesse with Magistracy".

null and void by a "full Assembly", since Edwards and some other more extreme Presbyterians declared that they could no longer be bound by their promise.[1] Thus immediately after the publication of the Apology, the pamphlet war between Presbyterians and Independents began, with all the verve and venom that was to become its major characteristic.[2] The manifesto was thus the first direct outbreak of pamphlet controversy after the Calamy House Agreement, and Gustaffson has claimed that

> "It was above all the publication of 'An apologetical narration' that caused the cleft between Presbyterianism and Independentism to become all at once definitive. It has been said of this apology ... that it destroyed the possibilities of any agreement in the Westminster Assembly and that it instantly operated like 'a declaration of war' ".[3]

Certainly the Apology was the direct cause of both the increased divisions in the Assembly and the outbreak of pamphlet hostilities, although it is likely that these would have emerged sooner or later. It heightened tempers, and made accommodation more difficult, although by no means impossible.

Increasing Breaches in the Assembly.

Assembly debates swiftly manifested the aggravation of the Presbyterian-Independent conflict that was the consequence of the Independents' manifesto. Pym's successor as the leader of the

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.242. This assembly may have been in Calamy's house, or Sion College.
2. For the pamphlet controversy consequent on the Apology see below, Part I chapter 4.
3. B. Gustaffson, "The Five Dissenting Brethren, a study on the Dutch Background of their Independentism", Acta Universitatis Lundensis, N.S. Avd I, LI (1955) pp.9-10.

"middle group" in the Long Parliament, Oliver St. John, carried on Pym's policy of trying to submerge Presbyterian-Independent differences in a unified state church, and continued the policy of consultation with leading divines to try and preserve the Assembly peace.[1] For its part, Parliament continued to give its patronage to both Presbyterian and Independent preachers.[2] But the appearance of the Apology, coupled with the Independents' policy of obstruction and delay in debates convinced many Assembly members that a harder line was necessary - a reaction which only made the Independents more intransigent in return. Serious clashes resulted, although efforts for accommodation persisted.

Another major factor in the increasing breaches in the Assembly was the persuasive arguments of the Scottish divines on behalf of their own particular form of Presbyterianism, which they recommended as the most efficacious cure for the growing numbers of sects and heresies. Baillie confessed that he was himself a rare participant in Assembly debates, and that the main weight of defending the Scottish polity fell upon Gillespie and Rutherford,[3]

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1. For Oliver St. John and the middle group see Dr. Pearl's study, "Oliver St. John and the 'middle group' in the Long Parliament: August 1643 - May 1644", English Historical Review, LXXXI, (1966) pp. 490-519. St. John probably favoured an Erastian non-episcopal church with some measure of "toleration". But it is clear that he was accorded Presbyterian favour, as a Presbyterian sent him a manuscript showing the origins of the Presbyterian discipline in the primitive church, in the belief that "I hope to restore Presbytery to purity and shall solicit it by a Solicitor, I have known to be a friend to church and state". (St. John was the Solicitor-General). Ibid, p.500.
2. Eg. C.J. iii, 410. On 28th February 1643-4, Nye was included in a list of Parliamentary preachers to hold an exercise in Westminster Abbey. Others, Marshall, Herle and Palmer, were mainly moderate.
3. Baillie, ii,252.

but Baillie was highly energetic in a different means to the same end. There can be no doubt that the Assembly was anxious to obtain the blessing and support of foreign reformed churches for their proceedings and acted under Parliamentary instructions in despatching various missives abroad.[1] Baillie soon calculated that the importance placed on foreign opinion could be a useful bulwark to the Scottish arguments. Despite his own hectic schedule, which afforded little time "for letters, and writing of pamphlets and many other businesses",[2] he wrote constantly to several contacts abroad appealing for letters to be sent to England favouring the Scottish way. Nearly every letter to his cousin William Spang, minister of the Scottish church at Trevere, near Middleburg in Zealand, contained a request for some such missive. Spang was behind the letter from the classes of Wallacheren which

> "spoke so near to the mind and words of the Scots, that some said it savoured of them; but when some such muttering was brought to the face of the assembly .... no man avowing it, the Scots let such a calumny pass, without any apology".[3]

When, on close examination, the Wallacheren letter was found to contain a clause prejudicial to the Presbyterian cause, Spang was urged to see that the letter he was to obtain from the synod of Zealand remedied the evil;

> "You know I wrote to you the great harm of that clause of your Wallachren letter of the entire power of government in the hands of congregational presbyteries, except in cases of alteration and difficulty etc. Not only the Independents make use of it

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1. Eg. Lightfoot, p.104, concerning a letter to the Low Countries. Not all the Assembly's letters were well received: the French church was criticised by the French civil authorities for receiving such a letter and negotiating with England in such contentious times. S.W. Carruthers, The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly, p.39.
2. Baillie, ii.75, where he described the Scottish divines workload; "all the days of the week we are pretty busy. We sit daily from nine till near one; and after noon till night we are usually in committees.

(cont'd overleaf)

publickly against us, but some of our prime men, Mr. Marshall by name, upon it ... If you can get this helped in the Zealand letter, it will be well ... "[1]

Baillie also urged Buchanan to encourage divines from Hesse and Switzerland, Moulin from the University of Sedan and Spanheim from the University of Leyden, to denounce Independency in letters to the Westminster Assembly.[2] Baillie's efforts, which continued all the time he was in attendance on the Assembly, were far from wasted.[3] A Presbyterian newsbook noted that the Zealand letter duly condemned Independency,[4] and John Goodwin bitterly demounced Spang's activities in promoting Presbyterianism abroad to the detriment of the Independents in England.[5]

Not, of course, that the Independents were much less active in attempting to gain support for their cause. On December 20th 1643 John Dury had offered his services to the Assembly and indeed was to become one of its members.[6] But Thomas Goodwin and Philip

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2 cont'd Saturday, our only free day, is to prepare for Sunday; wherein we seldom (rest) from preaching in some eminent place of the city".

3. Ibid, i, 435.

1. Baillie, i, 456.

2. Ibid, ii, 14, "Mr. Buchanan", Baillie's correspondent, is not to be confused with David Buchanan, a pro-Scottish pamphleteer. Moulin and Spanheim were foreign reformist divines much respected in England.

3. For later letters, see below pp289-90 and note 5.

4. The Scotish Dove, No.21, 1-8 March 1643-4, p.165, E.36(6).

5. John Goodwin, M.S. to A.S. with a plea for liberty of conscience, in a Church way, 3 May 1644, p.8, E.45(3).

6. John Dury was originally a Scot, but became a reformer of international fame, devoting himself to the cause of European protestant unity. In this letter he sent a copy of an oath made to the Swedish Chancellor, Oxenstierna, in which he bound himself to this cause. Lightfoot, p.86.

Nye had already secretly written to Dury, in an unsuccessful effort to gain his blessing on the Independent cause, using the pretext of religious harmony. Dury's correspondence with the two Assembly Independents was published in the summer of 1644, to prove that the international reformer was not prepared to support the semi-separatists. It revealed that Dury felt the Independents' professed aim of religious unity was subordinated to

> "a particular Aime ... and not directly subordinate unto the universall end of Publique Edification in the Communion of Saints ... as the Publique Good of many is made up of severall particulars, so I am bound to doe service unto every one; therefore I keep my selfe free from all".[1]

Luckily, letters from New England were more promising. John Goodwin revealed that John Winthrop, governor of Massachusetts had written to Hugh Peter, and that another New England divine had written to a clerical friend in England, both praising the Independent church way.[2] But even letters from New England could damage the reputation of Independency. One from Thomas Parker, published in London in February 1643-4, declared that although the author was in basic agreement with the principle of popular church government, he nevertheless felt that presbyterian power was essential as a counterbalance.[3] Baillie could not conceal his glee from Gillespie

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1. J. Dury, An Epistolary Discourse, 27 July 1644, p.14, E.6(14). Goodwin and Nye's letter to Dury (of which Baillie was ignorant, Baillie, ii,1) had been written shortly after their return to England. Dury's replies are dated 1642. Dury mentioned (p.8) that Goodwin and Nye had already failed to help him in the cause of "Correspondencie in the Communion of Saints", despite their declaration to that effect. Henry Robinson would also write to Dury unsuccessfully on the Apologists' behalf, see below, p.183.
2. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S. pp.8-9. These letters were written in December 1643 and would have reached England by early 1644.
3. T. Parker, The True Copy of a Letter, 19 February 1643-4, E.33(22). Thomas Parker, the son of the old nonconformist Robert Parker, worked as a schoolmaster at Newbury, Berkshire. In 1634 he went to New England with his cousin James Noyes, helped to establish Newbury New England, and became minister there.

on receiving such a timely weapon against the Independents;

"Mr. Baillie, showed me a letter he had received from Mr. Parker, a minister in New England (son to the great Parker), declaring to him that he and his cousin Noyse did now perceive that they had given too much power to the people ... and that there had been an Assembly at Cambridge in the Bay for regulating the people's power".[1]

Amidst such external influences, the Assembly proceeded with its debates. At the end of December the Assembly faced the problem of what they should discuss next. This curious situation first arose on December 18th, when Baillie expressed surprise that the Grand or "Treaty" committee guiding Assembly debates "had prepared no other matter to count of for the assembly to treat on".[2] The matter was temporarily shelved by debating the office of widows at far greater length than was necessary, since it provoked little argument.[3] But the problem was still unsolved after the short Christmas recess [4] and provoked a crisis between Presbyterians and Independents on December 29th. Some Presbyterians desired the discussion of some points of the apostolic power that had previously been ignored, for they felt that they would now strike a decisive blow against gathered churches and prove "the dependency of particular congregations from the apostles in matters of ordination and jurisdiction".[5] Needless to say the Independents

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1. Gillespie, Notes, p.20. This meeting at Cambridge marked a step in the acceptance of New England divines of the necessity of control over the churches that crises such as the Antinomian outbreak of 1637, and the spread of Anabaptism had provoked.
2. Baillie, i, 411; Lightfoot, p.84.
3. Baillie, i, 411.
4. The recess was much disliked by Scottish divines. In 1645 the Assembly worked on Christmas Day.
5. Baillie, i, 412.

were horrified at the prospect of such debates, particularly since the Amsterdam missive had reached the Assembly only the day before, and the insistence on such a discussion can only have strengthened their resolve to publish their Apology to counteract prejudice. They tried strenuously to have the debate deferred, and even Marshall the peacemaker could not prevent a violent clash between Goodwin and Burges, who was in the Prolocutor's chair that day. As Baillie recorded,

> "The Independents, foreseeing the prejudice such a determination might bring to their cause, by all means strove to decline that dispute .... the one party pressing the debate of the apostles power over congregations, the other sharply declining there fell in betwixt Goodwin and Burgess hotter words than were expected from Goodwin. Mr. Marshall composed all so well as he could. Mens humours, opinions, engagements, are so far different, that I am afraid for the issue".[1]

Nevertheless, the Presbyterians had their way and the debate on the power of the apostles commenced, a debate that was not likely to be the less contentious for the delivery of the Apologetical Narration during the discussions. The facets of the apostolic power now raised were twofold; firstly the right of ordaining ministers, and secondly, that of choosing those fit to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. If the apostles held such powers, then, surely, so did pastors and elders, for the dependency of particular congregations upon their officers would be proved. The question of excommunication, which would later become such a contentious issue among Presbyterians due to Erastian opposition, immediately provoked a preliminary skirmish.

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1. Baillie, i, 412-3. Baillie was not present at this clash, as he was "called out before twelve to dine with old Sir Henry Vane".

The Erastian Selden urged that this matter should be considered first, since he believed that there was no such censure in the hands of ministers, but only the civil magistrate.[1] The Scots, who were anxious to avoid any mention of the problem of the authority of the civil magistrate in church affairs,[2] may have been instrumental in having the whole business of "excommunication and censures" referred back to the second sub-committee for consideration, which was an effective postponement of the problem.[3] But in the short debate on excommunication, it became clear that the Independents would also provide strenuous opposition to the Presbyterians, a foretaste of their future exploitation of the Erastian disputes. The Independents objected to suspension from the sacrament, which the Presbyterians held to be a minor form of excommunication, denying that any such censure existed.[4] They also strenuously denied that the pastor, and not the people, had any power to determine fellow-communicants.[5]

The debates on apostolic power were therefore concentrated on the question of ordination, particularly as the committee for the Directory of Public Worship brought in its suggestions about ordination on January 9th.[6] Baillie knew that ordination would

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1. Lightfoot, p.106; Baillie, i, 420.
2. See below, p.148
3. Lightfoot, p.106.
4. Baillie, i, 420. For the two censures of suspension and excommunication see below, p.478.
5. Lightfoot, p.106.
6. Ibid, p. 107.

prove a most awkward issue on which to secure an agreement because ordination embodied the very essence of authoritative power.[1] Where the power of ordination lay, so did the rest of church-government; Marshall admitted that "this is only the keile of the ship, all the rest is yet behind".[2] Presbyterians and Independents were bound to quarrel on whether the power lay with the church officers, or with the congregation. When the very definition of ordination was discussed as "the solemn setting apart of a person to some public office in the church", Goodwin tried to secure the addition of the words "by election", to imply popular choice.[3] In the debates on the Scriptural proofs brought for apostolic ordination, he argued that one "did refer as much, or more, to the people as the apostles".[4] When the question as to "who were to ordain" came under discussion, Nye refused to accept the proposition "preaching presbyters did ordain", as he felt that this implied that any one single presbyter could ordain without further authority.[5] Gillespie tried in vain to convince Independents that the Greek translation of "ordaining" could really mean "choosing", and implied that the people had delegated their powers solely to their officers.[6]

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1. Baillie, i, 420.
2. TSS. vol.ii, f. 16 verso.
3. Lightfoot, p. 108. 10 January 1643-4.
4. Ibid, p.111. 15 January 1643-4. The proof was nevertheless voted as determining apostolic ordination.
5. Ibid, p.112.
6. Baillie, i, 420.

The problem of ordination also raised the question of the role of the lay patron in the choice of ministers;

"Mr. Selden desired (us) to consider ... that there is a subsequent election that follows ordination, viz. the appointing the person to this or that place, which was done by one layman, viz. the patron".[1]

But the spectre of civil control over the church was quickly banished, since not even Selden denied the ministers' right to ordain. It was left to the Independents to create all the trouble that delayed the votes on ordination, and their obstructionist tactics earned them considerable reproach. Baillie noted that

"The Independents, holding off with long weapons, and debating all things too prolixly which come within twenty miles of their quarters, were taken up sundry times, somewhat sharply, both by divines and parliament-men; to whom their replies ever were quick and high, at will".[2]

On January 11th, for example, after Sir Robert Pye "with a great deal of vehemency, did urge us to hasten, and blamed our long debates", Bridge and Goodwin deliberately argued at even greater length.[3]

Eventually, to try and prevent a breach, the moderate divines and the Scots, encouraged probably by leading Parliamentarians, agreed that the vote on who should ordain might be postponed so that the Independents could form themselves into a committee to present their opinions on ordination.[4] Two days later, Nye duly reported two propositions from this committee. The first defined

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1. Lightfoot, p.108.
2. Baillie, i, 420.
3. Lightfoot, p.109.
4. Ibid, p.114, 17 January 1643-4. Calamy and Seaman, backed by Gillespie, proposed this arrangement.

ordination as the solemnisation of an officer's outward call, in which the elders of the church acted for that church in designating the minister to his office. Such an interpretation clearly showed that the real seat of power should be the congregation. The second proposition made this even plainer, as Nye denied that the Scriptures afforded any proof for the Presbyterian claim

> "that the power that gives the formal being to an officer, should be derived by Christ's institution from the power that is in elders as such, on the act of ordination".

The minister's power could only be derived from the church, that is, the people.[1] The Assembly decided that the Independents' propositions contained far too many "scrupulous and ambiguous passages" and laid them aside, taking up the original Presbyterian proposition that ordination should be only in the hands of preaching elders. Marshall and Henderson appear to have tried to persuade the Independents to compromise on the matter, Marshall arguing that the power to ordain should be collectively in the presbytery, not just in one officer, and Henderson declaring that the Assembly's proving ordination by officers need not prejudge arguments that might later be urged on the issue of popular election.[2]

The question of ordination was far more than an academic point. The absence of an ordaining-system since the "fall" of Episcopacy meant that candidates desiring to enter the parochial system were

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1. Lightfoot, p.115.
2. Ibid, p.115; T. MacCrie, Miscellaneous Writings; Life of Mr. Alexander Henderson, p.51.

in an impossible position, which provided many less scrupulous "ministers" with a good excuse for gathering separatist congregations. The question of whether there should be a settled presbytery in London for the temporary ordination of ministers while the final form of the English church was considered, had arisen before in the Assembly and met with great opposition from Independents.[1] On the 23rd January the proposal for a temporary body of ordaining ministers was repeated, and couched in terms of expediency;

"That, in extraordinary cases, something extraordinary may be done, until a settled order may be had, yet keeping as close as may be to the rule".[2]

The Independents were unhappy with this proposition, since it seemed to prejudge the permanent settlement of ordaining presbyteries They frequently interrupted debates, trying particularly and unsuccessfully to amend the clause "keeping as close as may be to the rule", for fear that it promoted clerical usurpation of the rights of the whole church. Nye even tried arguing that England's situation was not extraordinary;

"Though jurisdiction of bishops be taken away, yet it is not their order; for they are presbyters still, and so may ordain; and thus we have not such an extraordinary case".

This was not an argument calculated to obtain wide appeal, and was hastily squashed by Marshall, although Selden did use the point to stress that the laws stating that only a bishop could ordain had not yet been annulled.[3] Selden's claim that they had sworn only to

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1. Lightfoot, p.24; TSS. vol.i, f. 119 verso. 18 October 1643.
2. Lightfoot, p.117.
3. Lightfoot, pp.117-21 (pp.120-21 quoted). Many bishops infact continued to ordain throughout the 1640s.

oppose the jurisdiction of bishops, "regimen ecclesiae", not their powers of ordination, which they were bound by law and the Covenant to uphold,[1] provoked a discussion on whether ordination was a jurisdictional issue. On this matter Gillespie's positive answer was balanced by Nye's negative![2] Seaman tried to redirect the debate to the argument "Every minister, quâ talis, is morally enabled to make one in ordaining", and that therefore the London ministers were already "materially and substantially" an ordaining presbytery. He was immediately opposed by Burroughes, and the lay assessor Mr. Salloway had to remind them that the House of Commons had ordered them to debate the temporary ordaining presbytery with speed.[3]

Eventually Vines suggested that the committee of Independents should present their views on how the candidates for the ministry should be ordained in the present necessity, but insisted that no other way apart from ordination should be proposed.[4] Nye accordingly produced a statement which, contradicting his previous standpoint, argued that since ordination was a jurisdictional power, the Independents could not allow it to be placed in the presbytery without bringing in all their arguments against presbyterian power. Goodwin followed this by producing a paper advocating ordination

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1. The Covenant had included a clause to preserve the laws of England.
2. Lightfoot, p.123.
3. Ibid, p.123.
4. Ibid, p.126. 27 January 1643-4.

instead by ministers and elders in their own congregation only, and in a "concessus", which was left deliberately vague.[1] So the debates dragged on, with the lay assessors appealing for haste.

The Independents next tried the new ruse of currying civil favour and arguing that their way of ordination would afford more power to the magistrate, since the civil powers would be unable to control a standing presbytery.[1] Gillespie rushed to quash this argument, as the Scots were still trying to avoid the problem of the relationship of State and presbyteries. He insisted

> "the presbyterial government giveth more to the magistrate than some others do. Here grew some heat: for the Independents would not be stopped from speaking".[2]

Eventually in February Lord Saye managed to get the whole question laid aside in favour of beginning the debates on the Presbyterian government itself.[3]

Ordination was therefore abandoned until March 12th, when Dr. Burges re-introduced the subject.[4] A report was read in the Assembly on March 18th, and until April, debates on ordination were held concurrently with those on church government itself.[5] The first proposition of the report to be discussed in depth was "That no ordination is to be given except to a particular

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1. Lightfoot, p. 129. 29 January. A "concessus" could imply a number of elders acting as a presbytery, but on 12 February Goodwin interpreted "concessus" as a popular meeting, which was doubtless his meaning here. Gillespie, Notes, p.16.
2. Lightfoot, p.130.
3. Ibid, p.131, 1 and 2 February 1643-4.
4. Ibid, p.207.
5. Ibid, p.218.

congregation or other ministerial charge".[1] Although the Independents were in agreement with the proposition, the Presbyterians were not at all united on the question. Some divines diverged from this Scottish view and its supporters, as they clung to the old English practice of ordination to no particular congregation, but to the church in general, "ordination sine titulo". Calamy led this opposition, fearing that the proposition would necessitate a fresh ordination for every change of cure, and claiming that such moves required only a new election, not a new ordination.[2] He was supported by Palmer and others, who feared that an attack on the traditional Church of England practice of ordination would provide the separatists with additional ammunition. Baillie was surprised at their vehemence;

> "The last four sessions were spent upon an unexpected debate: Good Mr. Calamy, and some of our best friends, fearing the Separatists objections anent (sic) the ministry of England, as if they had no calling ... stifly maintained their own practice: yet we carried it this afternoon".[3]

But the proposition was only passed after Herle explained that ordination to a particular cure still meant that the minister was given authority in reference to the general church. It only passed too in a form of words that allowed individual consciences to deduce their own interpretations; i.e.

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1. Gillespie, Notes, p.43.
2. Ibid, p.43.
3. Baillie, i, 439.

"it is agreeable to the word of God, and very expedient, that such as are to be ordained ministers be designed to a particular church, or other ministerial charge".[1]

The question of re-ordination on a change of cure was left vague, and in fact was never implemented when the ordinance for ordination finally became law.

If the Presbyterians were divided on this proposition, the Independents provided plenty of opposition on the next, which concerned "what things are necessary to the due and orderly calling of ministers in a settled church". Palmer was perhaps trying to appease the Independents when he suggested that a congregation should be allowed to approve its future ministers before ordination. Gillespie felt sure that a fickle populace would abuse this privilege, and the matter raised great heat in the Assembly, with the Independents in fighting spirit. Eventually a compromise was achieved, and a new proposition voted that a congregation had the right to refuse a minister if they could provide sufficient valid objections. But this was not before "divers things over and over again, offered to be debated, which cost us exceeding long time ... "[2]

On April 3rd Dr. Burges reported from the committee which had drawn up all the previous votes on ordination into a coherent whole, ready for despatch to Parliament. But although it was expected that their approval would be a mere formality, the Independents upset Assembly equilibrium by objecting to the

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1. Gillespie, Notes, pp.44-5. 20 March 1643-4.
2. Ibid, p.45; Lightfoot, pp.232-3, (p.232 quoted).

tenth proposition, since it implied Presbyterian government. The other eleven propositions mostly embodied the compromises already achieved.[1] Since debates on the Presbyterian government were running concurrently with ordination, the votes already passed on Presbyterianism were reviewed on April 10th to clarify the tenth proposition. But the Independents violently objected to this, and a committee of accommodation had to be chosen, "to consider how much of the votes of a presbytery is necessary to be added to the proposition concerning ordination".[2] Eventually the decision was made to remit to Parliament only the votes on the Directory of Ordination that did not imply a Presbyterian government, since the Independents threatened that otherwise they would be forced to send in their reasons against Presbytery. The Independents did not really desire an open breach, but its threat was a useful weapon. As Goodwin said,

> "I desire to *manifest* all *sorts of wayes a willingnesse not* to dissent, ... in this case we are in great straights ... I know noe way to acomodate it but to leave out the bringing of yt proofe & carry up only the businesse of ordination".[3]

Baillie, who feared that if the Independents were to openly dissent, accommodation would prove impossible and "we will be forced to deal with them as open enemies",[4] was left to explain the reasons for the omission of the crucial propositions when Parliament received the emasculated Directory of Ordination on

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1. For the list of twelve propositions, see Lightfoot, pp.237-8. The 10th proposition was "Preaching presbyters, orderly associated, either in cities or neighbouring villages, are those to whom the imposition of hands doth appertain, for those congregations within their bounds respectively".
2. Gillespie, Notes. pp.47-9 (p.49 quoted); TSS vol.i, f. 431 verso. The members of the committee were Nye, Goodwin and moderates Herle and Marshall.
3. TSS vol.i, f.431.
4. Baillie, ii,3.

April 18th. He wrote to Spang

"We have given in to the parliament our conclusions anent ordination; whereupon, I think, we have spent above forty long sessions. To prevent a present rupture with the Independents, we were content not to give in our propositions of presbyteries and congregations, that we might not necessitate them to give in their remonstrance against our conclusions, which they are peremptor to do ... We judged it also convenient to delay till we had gone through the whole matters of the presbyteries and synods; to send them up rather in their full strength than by pieces; also we suffered ourselves to be persuaded to eschew that rupture at this time, when it were so dangerous for their bruckle state".[1]

The ordination question thus passed for the moment into the sole hands of Parliament, but delays prevented the enacting of the ordinance for ordination"pro tempore" until October 2nd 1644. Parliament made grave alterations to the Directory, since it omitted all the Assembly's Scriptural proofs for ordination, retaining only a reference that the Directory was an extraordinary measure. Although this may have been partly a move to appease Independents, there can be little doubt that the main motive was to establish Parliament as the controller of church government and to lessen clerical power.[2] The Scots secured a meeting of the Grand or "Treaty" committee as soon as rumours of the "Erastian" alterations reached their ears, and found their worst fears confirmed;[3]

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1. Baillie, ii,5.
2. For the Assembly's reaction to these moves see below, pp.293-4. The Directory for Ordination was under active consideration by the Grand Committee of the Commons by 24 July 1644, but the alterations were manifest before this date. C.J. iii, 569.
3. TSS. vol.ii, f.102 verso. 27 June 1644. Marshall, Vines, Burges, Tuckney and the Assembly delegates met M.P.s together with the Scots. Goodwin was not allowed to join them, despite apparent Independent pressure. Marshall refused to attend, either because of sympathy for Goodwin or an attempt to dissociate himself at this point from criticism of Parliament, Baillie, ii, 30.

"At meeting we found, they had passed by all the wholesale doctrinal part of ordination, and all our scriptural grounds for it; that they had chosen only the extraordinary way of ordination, and in that very part had scraped out whatever might displease the Independents, or patrons, or Selden and others, who will have no discipline at all in any church jure divino, but settled only upon the free-will and pleasure of the parliament ... We, in private, resolved we would, by all means, stick to our paper; else ... if we yielded to these most prejudicial alterations, which the Independents and Civilians underhand had wrought, the assembly's reputation was clean overthrown, and Erastus' way would triumph. What will be the end of this debate, God knows".[1]

No evidence has been found to show that the Independent ministers were involved in Parliament's actions, although the few Independent M.P.s were probably involved. But certainly this was a sample of the Erastian problems to come in the near future, and of the benefits that accrued from them to the Independents.

The Assembly debates on ordination had thus secured an accommodation only at the cost of leaving out the main contentious points. The Independents, though desiring unity, were content to use delaying tactics, argumentative skill, and finally, threats of a breach in order to secure consideration of their principles. But in doing so, they aroused intense dislike, provoked the Scots and many other divines, and merely caused increasing opposition and an aggravation of the disputes. Lightfoot was opposed to the consideration the Independents received on the question of ordination, wondering

"Whether it be fit to delay time to see whether we could give four or five content, which was uncertain, and to neglect to give four hundred thousand or five hundred thousand content".[2]

The situation would be no better on the vital issue of church

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1. Baillie, ii, 30-1; Letter to Spang, 28 June 1644.
2. Lightfoot, p.244.

government, which interrupted the ordination debates in February 1643-4, and continued after the latter were concluded.

Debates on Church-Government.

The Scots made a concerted effort to urge the Assembly to settle church government in January-March, and to challenge the Independents, for above all they feared the consequence of delay. In a February sermon to the Commons, Baillie warned that excessive debates would be counterproductive and prejudice Reformation;

"If Scotland ... had suspended over all their Kingdoms the exercise of any Reformation, till every puntillo thereof had been scholastically debated, in the face of an Assembly; till every Dissenter, over and over, had made to the full, against every part of every Proposition, all the contradiction, his wit, his learning, his eloquence, was able to furnish him: It seemeth apparent, that these tedious delays had casten them so open, and given such pregnant advantages to the enterprizes of their active adversaries ... "[1]

Gillespie told the same story in March, adding that the debates so far proved a clear authority for Presbyterian government, and complaining that as far as the Assembly was concerned, "Heu, heu, quam tarde festino! Alas, alas, how slowly doe I make speed! "[2] By January the Scots divines had prepared papers for the Grand or "Treaty" Committee of Parliament and Assembly about the reasons for the Presbyterian government. The presentation of these papers in the Assembly on January 25th heralded the first major trial of strength between Presbyterians and Independents on church discipline.[3]

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1. R. Baillie, Satan the Leader in chief to all who resist the Reparation of Sion, 28 February 1643-4, preface, E.35(17).
2. G. Gillespie, A sermon preached before the ... Commons, 27 March 1644, p.41, E.43(1).
3. Baillie, i, 422; Lightfoot, p.119. Debates began in earnest on February 2nd. Gillespie, Notes p.9.

But it has already been seen that there was one issue that the Scots wished desperately to avoid - the Erastian question of civil control over church affairs. Melville's "Two Kingdom theory" had meant that the Scottish church recognised the civil powers as its nursing fathers, but strictly limited their rôle in church government, which was to be the prerogative of the clerical presbyteries. Baillie tried his utmost to prevent these facts becoming too publicised before the Parliament had successfully settled the Presbyterian government, after which clerical power could safely be asserted in full. When the Grand or "Treaty" committee discussed the Parliament's alterations to the Directory for Ordination, Baillie still wanted the crucial question shelved;

> "we were in the midst, over head and ears, of that greatest of our questions, the power of the parliament in ecclesiastick affairs. It is like this question shall be hotter here than any where else; but we mind to hold off; for yet it is very unseasonable".[1]

He warned Spang to ensure that letters from abroad avoided mention of the magistrate's power in church affairs, and was very upset in May when, despite all his efforts, the letter from Zealand raised the subject and was banned from publication by Parliament.[2] In fact Parliament was not anxious to press this question at this stage, and the Erastian cause had not yet openly split the English Presbyterians. The issue was therefore quite successfully submerged in Assembly debates in 1643-4, but occasionally its

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1. Baillie, ii, 37.
2. Ibid, ii, 5, and 9.

spectre presented itself (as in the ordination debates), when the Independents were delighted to employ it to their best advantage. Baillie's constant fear was of an Independent-Erastian alliance.[1]

The debates on the relative merits of Presbyterian and Independent church discipline brought into play many interrelated issues, such as the true nature of "ecclesia" (the church), the seat of the power of government and censure, and the scriptural proofs as to the government of the primitive church at Jerusalem. Needless to say, they provoked much heat and invariable delay in Assembly votes. At the very outset[2] the public were informed that all was not well in the "synod" of divines:-

"On Tuesday and Wednesday, were great debates in the Synod, about Church Discipline, between the independents, and the Presbitaries, And divers of the Lords and Commons, were at the conference ... it is more tolerable to indure a Diocen (i.e. Diocesan) Bishops Illegality, then a Parochiall Popedome of Supremacy, for some at this time out of a troubled liberty, take liberty to gather Churches ... God direct our Assembly to establish God's way not mans devices".[3]

Conflicts began, not surprisingly, with a dispute as to the very essence of a church. The proposition initially under discussion was that "the Scripture holdeth forth that many particular congregations may be under one presbyterial government".[4] Goodwin immediately stressed that the Independents' concept of a church could not fit such a proposition, and that "presbyterial government, over many congregations, is inconsistent with the

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1. This was why he blamed the Independents for inciting the Parliamentary alterations on ordination; he also blamed them for persuading Parliament to suppress the Zealand letter. Baillie, ii,14. No evidence can be found for either assertion.
2. The first conflicts on these complex issues began on February 6th and extended until March 8th 1643-4.
3. The Scotish Dove, No. 17, 2-9 February 1643-4, pp.135-6, E.32(12).

(cont'd overleaf).

scripture and principles acknowledged by reformed churches". This was because of its implication that a minister would be responsible for more than one congregation, whereas the Independents held that "the extent of a pastor's power is to one flock, as his whole flock, which he is able to rule and feed constantly".[1] Ministers should only have authority over people who "called" them, which was not the case in the Presbyterian system. He later maintained that Presbyterianism would turn the Christian religion into an ambivalent two-Church organisation in which the congregation remained primarily responsible for worship, whereas the presbytery would exercise discipline. But Christ intended discipline and worship to coexist in his church, and a presbytery could never be a church since "Discipline doth not constitute a church, nor is it a note of a church".[2] Bridge supported the arguments of his fellow Independent, insisting that " 'Ecclesiae' is used forty-eight times in the New Testament; and is never used for a presbytery, but contradistinct to elders".[3] Bridge supplied many reasons for entire and full jurisdiction belonging to every particular congregation. He insisted that any presbytery could only represent the people, for Christ had given the power of the keys to them alone, and that "from presbytery may be an appeal; otherwise there may be no appeal ... if the

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3 cont'd. Its editor, George Smith was a Presbyterian, and the paper may have had connections with the Scots Commissioners. J. Frank, The Beginnings of the English Newspaper, p.55.

4. Lightfoot, p.132.

1. Gillespie, Notes, p.10.

2. Lightfoot, p.151. 14 February 1643-4.

3. Ibid, p.160.

presbytery do err".[1]

The Independents, who followed their practice of dividing arguments between them, Nye and Burroughes also speaking on the issue, were opposed by Gillespie for the Scots. Gillespie was supported by Vines and Seaman when he insisted that even though the presbyter of one congregation did have a particular relationship to that one body, he could still join with fellow presbyters to have authority over many such congregations. He used a military analogy to prove his point;

"It (Goodwin's argument) follows not because many regiments are under one martial government, the commanders of the regiments being joined in one council for managing the war, therefore each, in that council, bears the relation of a commander to each regiment".[2]

Vines, arguing that the churches combined under one presbytery partook of the notion of "totum aggregatum", i.e. a unified whole, took his analogy from the heads of the tribes of Israel and the principals of university colleges. Seaman observed that if Goodwin really believed that a minister could only serve his particular congregation, it would mean that no Independent preachers could ever preach beyond their individual churches.[3] Marshall continued his conciliatory policy and stressed that the catholic church was one whole, but divided into separate societies (called "instituted churches") without losing its essential unity.

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1. Lightfoot, p.160. 14 February 1643-4.
2. Gillespie, Notes, p.11.
3. Lightfoot, p.132 and Gillespie, Notes p.12.

Since "ecclesia" was used in the New Testament in a variety of senses, there was no reason why a presbyterian body could not function as a church and wield church power.[1] But Bridge insisted that the Independents were unconvinced;

"The government wch (which) is according to the mind of Ict (Christ) and his word revealed is this: yt every particular congregation should have power within itselfe ... neither is it of any forraigne presbitery yt lyes without the congregation be (cause) the word ecclesia is not soe used in the old or new testament".[2]

Yet whilst the Independents were diametrically opposed to authoritative power of synods or presbyteries, they did not appear to object to them as bodies to consult over doctrinal matters. Bridge insisted that "I am not against the lawfull use of sinods they (sic) dogmatically".[3] Nye confessed

"how nearly they came to us; as that they held classical and synodical meetings very useful and profitable; yet possibly agreeable to the institution of Christ. But the quaere is in this, Whether these meetings have the same powers that "ecclesia prima", or one single congregation has".[4]

Since the prime power of "ecclesia" in any sense, presbyterian or particular, was agreed to be excommunication, any debate on church government was soon bound to raise this difficult issue. The Independents were adamant that the congregation must have this final power of the keys. Burroughes argued that any presbyterian excommunication was unlawful, since the presbyters could only deliver censure in the presence of their own congregation. He

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1. Lightfoot, pp.133,161.
2. TSS. vol.i, ff. 303 and 303 verso. 16 February 1643-4.
3. Ibid, f.304 verso.
4. Lightfoot, p. 144.

was opposed by Rutherford and Seaman, who both agreed that the people could be present, as at any law court, but that this did not imply that

> "if any of them be absent at sea, or otherwise, they are not obliged to the sentence to which they have not consented, else it is an imposing on their conscience".[1]

In general, the Presbyterians maintained this position that the censure of excommunication could be performed by the presbytery "coram populo" (in the presence of the people) but that their consent to the sentence was irrelevant. Gillespie went a stage further and argued that a presbytery could act "conscia ecclesia" and not "coram ecclesia" (in reference to the church but not in its presence), as the power of censure lay purely in the hands of the officers. This issue cost much acrimonious dispute, with the Independents insisting that "the people had a hand in executing & hindering the Judgment as in Samuells case".[2] As usual the Independents tried to delay a vote on the question as long as possible, and the Assembly divines were so anxious to try and achieve an accommodation that at this stage they were patient;

> "Then was there another great and hot debate, 'Whether we should let the Independents go on in objecting against the proposition brought in by the committee, or go about to prove and confirm', which being at last put to the question, it was voted, the Independents should go on in their objections; and so we adjourned".[3]

The excommunication issue caused the eruption of the Erastian question once again, despite the efforts of the Scots. As in

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1. Gillespie, Notes, p.14.
2. TSS. vol.i, f. 310.
3. Lightfoot, p.143, and also see p.147.

1645-6, when this problem would be of prime importance, Erastians tried to deny that this censure was in the hands of the clergy. When the text Matthew 18 v. 15-17 was cited as indicative of clerical power in excommunication because it stipulated "tell the church" of offences, Selden produced a long, learned argument to prove that this passage related to the ordinary practice of the Jews in their common law courts, which pronounced censures of excommunication.[1] It thus held no authority for ecclesiastical jurisdiction at all, never mind whether this lay properly in the presbytery or particular congregation! Gillespie was vehement in trying to crush this suggestion, insisting that the text had to mean a spiritual court since "Christ would not have sent his disciples for private injuries to a civil court, especially as they living among heathens".[2] Although Selden is reputed to have made the remark that one speech from the young Gillespie had swept away the labours of ten years of his life,[3] he was defended by Coleman, and in practice the Erastian cause was not so easily extinguished.

Needless to say the Independents immediately sieged on this opportune debate to promote their cause, and Nye, always more fiery in debate than other Assembly Independents, rushed headlong into a blind attack on Presbyterian ecclesiastical power. On February

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1. TSS. vol.i, f. 318 verso.
2. Gillespie, Notes, p.26. Gillespie places the debate under the date 20 February 1643-4. Both Lightfoot and the Minutes however, place the replies to Selden under the date 21 February, when the vital breach occurred.
3. W.M. Hetherington, History of the Westminster Assembly, p.173.

20th his arguments against the power of presbyteries on the assumption of "there is no power over another power" so irritated the Assembly that Lord Saye and others had to actively intervene to prevent a vote of censure on Nye for speaking out of order.[1] Undaunted, Nye resumed his argument the very next day and told his audience that the admission of a "power over a power" in church courts could only lead to an ecclesiastical government commensurate to the civil, which would be pernicious for the Commonwealth;

> "Where there are two so vast bodies, civil and ecclesiastical, if they agree as in times of peace, stories tells us that they will practise over the whole, and the ecclesiastical body will interest themselves in the civil power; if they disagree it is as ill".[2]

Seaman instantly retorted to this attempt to alarm Parliament by the phantom "imperium in imperio", but in fact the lay commissioners, far from taking Nye's bait, themselves contradicted the Independents and avoided the dangerous issue of civil versus clerical authority. Whitelocke observed that Independency would prove a far worse inconvenience to the State,[3] whilst Lord Warriston, convinced that "politique inconveniences are not the proper subject of debates of divines",[4] tried to show

> "that the ecclesiastical and civil government strengthen one another. And that one power above another should be two states, is no more (valid) than in the civil, where one court is subordinate to another, and yet but one state; and he spake very

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1. Lightfoot, p.166.
2. Gillespie, Notes, p.27. 21 February 1643-4.
3. Ibid, p.27.
4. TSS. vol.i, f.324 verso.

largely in answer to all the arguments used by the Independents..."[1] It was left to Lord Saye to rescue the Independents and redirect the debates, telling the divines that they must consider what type of government Christ had established for his church, for He alone would be answerable for its inconveniences.[2]

The Erastian issue was thus swiftly dropped, but the temporary violent breach it had caused did not escape public attention. For Nye had become involved in a passionate argument with Henderson, and although neither the Assembly Minutes, nor Lightfoot or Gillespie's diaries recorded this, to try and minimise its relevance,[3] Baillie revealed all. His account shows that Nye's intransigence nearly ruined the efforts of Parliamentary leaders, including Vane and St. John to smooth over Assembly differences between Presbyterians and Independents and

"to remeid these evils, and to satisfy the minds of all ... to essay how far we could draw them in a private friendly way of accommodation, but Satan, the father of discord, had well near crushed that notion in the very beginning ... Mr. Nye was like to spoil all our play ... We were all highly offended with him".[4]

More important, the tale filtered down to certain newsbooks, some of which enlarged the conflict whilst others minimised its importance. The Royalist Aulicus reported with glee

"On Wednesday last there grew so kindly a heat in the Assembly, between Master Nye and Master Henderson (maine sticklers for the two wild factions) that the fiery Moderator could not possibly reduce them to any calmnesse; Master Nye urging eagerly ... against the Scottish Discipline, as not agreeable to the Word of God; and

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1. Lightfoot, p.169.
2. Gillespie, Notes, p.27.
3. Or, because the argument was so impassioned, the Assembly was in uproar, and organised debates were temporarily abandoned? Ironically 21 February was Ash Wednesday, and so these debates took place at the start of the season of self-denial.
4. Baillie, i, 436-7. Baillie gives clear evidence here for the private efforts of M.P.s to achieve accommodation. They met on this occasion in the Scots' residence.

Master Henderson ... pressing hard to have Master Nye turned out of the Assembly, which is Mr. Hendersons usuall way of confutation".[1]

"Mercurius Britanicus" however, stressed that Nye and Henderson had promoted the Covenant together, and that men were mistaken if they thought that Presbytery and Independency were incompatible;

"I hope our Presbytery shall never be accused of such negative persecution of the godly, as if two brethren of two judgements could not live in the same house with the leave of the Master of the family".[2]

But the damage was done, and in the spring of 1643-4 the Presbyterian-Independent split was becoming public knowledge.

Yet ironically, this violent exchange between Henderson and Nye produced a more conciliatory spirit. Accommodation was far from impossible yet. St. John, Vane and other M.P.s encouraged the Scots to ignore the crisis and Nye seems to have repented of his outspokenness and became anxious to regain the respect of Parliament and Assembly. Baillie recorded;

"At last, we were intreated by our friends, to shuffle it over the best way might be, and to go on in our business. God, that brings good out of evil, made that miscarriage of Nye a mean to do him some good; for ever since, we find him, in all things, the most accommodating man in the company".[3]

The Independents' new mood was evident as the votes on the question as to whether the early church at Jerusalem had been congregationally or presbyterially governed came to a conclusion

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1. Mercurius Aulicus, No. 26, 2 March 1643-4, pp.852-3.
2. Mercurius Britanicus, No.27, 11-18 March 1643-4, p.20. Britanicus was mildly pro-Independent at this time.
3. Baillie, i, 437.

against them.[1] On March 8th Nye reminded the Assembly that the Independents had no objection to synods having a doctrinal authority, as long as they held no jurisdictional power, and several divines thankfully used this concession as an excuse to initiate a committee of accommodation between Presbyterians and Independents in the Assembly. Vines suggested the committee, supported by Case, who observed "we sit here to inquire not only for matter of truth but of peace". The Independents were happy to concur, in the hopes that further votes against them might be postponed, and Bridge graciously remarked that his group had "allwayes been very ready to acomodation".[2] Six divines, Seaman, Vines, Palmer, Goodwin, Bridge and Burroughes were named for this committee, and after further discussion, Nye and Marshall were added.[3] Baillie was delighted that the private efforts of M.P.s and leading divines for accommodation were at last showing some promise;

"We were glad that what we were doing in private should be thus authorised. We have met some three or four times already, and have agreed on five or six propositions, hoping, by God's grace, to agree in more".[4]

The accommodation committee had been ordered to consider "the power of particular congregations soe far as anything yt may tend to this acomodation".[5] But shortly after its initiation,

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1. Lightfoot, p.189. 1 March 1643-4.
2. TSS. vol.i, f. 372-3. See also, Lightfoot, p.205.
3. Lightfoot, p.206.
4. Baillie, i, 439. This committee seems to have been an "ad hoc" body to secure unity at this particular time, not a permanent committee.
5. TSS. vol.i, f.386 verso. There had been some dispute as to what the committee should discuss, Lightfoot, p.206.

a final vote was taken on the church of Jerusalem, and texts duly agreed to prove that this had been governed by authoritative presbyteries. The Independents abstained from the vote.[1] This decision did not help accommodation, although the committee continued to meet, and even some moderates began to doubt the wisdom of trying too hard to appease a few men. Vines voiced his worries that it was unnecessary to strive for agreement when there was a rule established, and Gataker stressed that unity might prove impossible.[2] Baillie observed that the Independents were losing a lot of Assembly support;

> "Not any one in the assembly, when they have been heard to the full in any one thing is persuaded by them, but all profess themselves to be more averse from their ways than before. The brethren of New England incline more to synods and presbyteries, driven by the manifold late heresies and schisms ... also the many pens that have fallen more sharply than we on their Apologetick Narration. These, and divers other accidents have cooled somewhat of these mens fervour".[3]

Baillie's remarks prove that the Assembly debates cannot be dissociated from the pamphlet war that was fast gathering momentum.

But Baillie was wrong if he thought the Independents were abandoning the fight. From April to May the debates on Presbyterianism ranged from the power of a congregation, the number of ruling elders per congregation, and the seat of the power of ordination.[4] The Independents argued intensively on all

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1. The texts were Acts xi, 30, and Acts xxi, 17-18. Later Acts xv. was added to prove elders meeting together for acts of government. Gillespie, Notes, pp 38-42. 12-14 March 1643-4.
2. TSS. vol.1, f.421 verso.
3. Baillie, i, 437-8. (Letter of 2 April 1644) Baillie had received Parker's letter from New England, see above, pp.132-3. The Assembly was increasing its activity against Antinomians.
4. Gillespie, Notes, pp.55-61.

counts, and objected to the vote to ascertain church boundaries by means of districts, since this would affect gathered congregations.[1] On May 10th they received a crucial blow when it was voted that "no single congregation, which can conveniently join with others in association, may assume to itself all and sole power in ordination", although this only passed with a majority of eight.[2] But the Independents continued their opposition on the next subject for discussion, the power of presbyterian censure, and the Assembly wrote to Scotland in May bewailing their slow progress because of "contrary windes".[3] Baillie too, was soon reduced to despondency once more. He thought that if only the Independents could be brought to accept that the people had delegated their powers to church officers, "the difficulty would be small in any other matter".[4] But as it was, the Independents seemed to be heading for an open breach, and Baillie knew that their arguments were causing the Presbyterians to reveal their own divisions, as the marginal vote on ordination indicated. He wrote,

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1. Lightfoot, p.257. Goodwin and Nye were supported by Herle in this debate.
2. Gillespie, Notes, p.64. Dr. Shaw considered this the severest blow the Independents had yet received; W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, vol.i,p.174.
3. The Weekly Account, May 1644, E.12(7).
4. Baillie,ii, 38.

"The leading men in the Assembly are much at this time divided about the questions in hand, of the power of congregations and synods. Some of them would give nothing to congregations, denying peremptorily all example, precept, or reason for a congregational eldership; others, and many more, are wilful to give to congregational elderships all, and entire power of ordination, excommunication and all".[1]

In other words, whilst some Presbyterians, led by Marshall, were trying to appease the Independents by allowing a congregational presbytery great powers, others were opposing the Scots on the necessity of having a congregational presbytery at all, since the superior presbyteries could undertake all its functions. No wonder he confessed that the Scots were in "a peck of troubles" on the question.[2]

Part of Baillie's change of mood was due to the fact that the army was becoming sympathetic to Independency,[3] which only gave Parliament extra reason to promote Presbyterian-Independent unity in the summer of 1644. It was therefore no accident that the Assembly was advised to change its debates to the less contentious Directory of Public Worship in June, leaving the question of Presbytery in abeyance until September. But even on the Directory for Worship, the Independents made their presence felt, especially on the issue of the Lord's Supper;

"The unhappy Independents would mangle that sacrament. No catechising nor preparation before; no thanksgiving after; no sacramental doctrine or chapters, in the day of celebration;

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1. Baillie, ii, 11. 9 May 1644.
2. Ibid, ii, 16. Even some Scots believed only superior presbyteries to be valid. Baillie later revealed that Marshall, supported by Vines and Herle and others were drawing "a faction in the synod to give ordination and excommunication to congregations, albeit dependently". Baillie, ii, 62 (quoted), 67.
3. See below, pp. 172-4.

no coming up to any table, but a carrying of the elements to all in their seats ... yet all this, with God's help, we have carried over their bellies, to our practice ... We must dispute every inch of our ground".[1]

But by July 10th, the debate had turned to baptism, where there was little dispute owing to common fears of anabaptism.[2]

In July the Assembly retired for a short vacation, leaving the Commons still debating ordination, and with the question of presbytery unsettled.[3] The debates since the presentation of the Apologetical Narration had been crucial. Firstly, the Independents had used every possible tactic to draw attention to their way and prolong debates;

"it is marked by all, that to the uttermost of their power hitherto they have studied procrastination of all things, finding that by time they gained ... they, and they only, have been the retarders of the assembly, to the evident hazard of the church's safety".[4]

While the Assembly laboured on under such pressure, the vacuum of church government was producing a rapid growth of sectarianism and heresy, and an equally speedy decline in moral standards.[5] Although the Assembly and Parliament were still very anxious for an accommodation, and some Presbyterians sympathised with the Independents on the powers of congregational presbyteries, it is

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1. Baillie, ii,27. On 5 July it was voted that the congregation should receive the sacrament by coming in several companies to the table. English divines in general were slow to approve the Scottish practice; they preferred the congregation to receive the sacrament seated in their pews. Baillie commented that only Cornelius Burges supported the Scots' communion table against Independent opposition. Ibid, ii,31.
2. Ibid, ii,37.
3. C.J. iii, 567. The vacation was necessary owing to the financial difficulties of many divines, Baillie, ii,44.
4. Ibid, i,413 and 430.
5. These were much bewailed by divines, e.g. H. Palmer, The Glasse of God's Providence, 13 August 1644,p.35, E.6(8); Baillie, ii,7.

clear that many divines now became increasingly impatient with the Independents, alienated by a combination of the Apology, their tactics, and a fear of further sectarian expansion. Certainly the leading divines were satisfied with the validity of the Scottish Presbytery by the summer of 1644, and the very intransigence of the Independents probably convinced backbenchers of the value of the authority inherent in the Scottish church.

There can be little doubt that the decisive Presbyterian votes achieved in the spring of 1643-4 were mainly due to the persuasive arguments of the Scots, particularly of Gillespie, who was praised thus by Baillie:-

"very learned and acute ... a singular ornament of our church, than whom not one in the whole assembly speaks to better purpose, and with better acceptance by all the hearers".[1]

Baillie was well aware of the importance of the Scots in rallying the hybrid body of English Presbyterians, and commented

"Had not God sent Mr. Henderson, Mr. Rutherford, and Mr. Gillespie among them, I see not that ever they could agree on any settled government".[2]

It was doubtless the Scots who persuaded the divines that a moderate Episcopacy would leave a door open to Laudian Episcopacy, for certainly moderate Episcopacy seems to have played little part in Assembly discussions. The absence of Episcopal divines and the wish to come as near to Independency as possible may well have been contributory factors. Richard Vines later wrote to Baxter excusing

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1. Baillie, i, 419.
2. Ibid., ii, 11.

the Assembly for its neglect of this solution, by blaming the Parliament, but in fact this was a poor excuse for its following a Scottish lead. Baxter was shrewder when he observed that the true reason why moderate Episcopacy was forgotten was the disunity of the Assembly divines, who were "not of one Mind among themselves".[1]

Although the Scots were anxious to accommodate with the Independents, Baillie had expressly stated in February that

> "foreseeing an appearance of a breach with the Independents, we used all the means we could, while the weather was fair, to put them to the spurs".[2]

Spurred indeed by constant criticism in debates inside the Assembly and pamphlets without, it was scarcely remarkable that the Independents became even more intransigent in return and dismayed by Presbyterian votes, threatened to dissent openly if Presbytery was finally passed without an accommodation for their way. In case this became necessary, they sought two new directions of argument. One of these, the attempt to form an alliance with Erastianism whenever the opportunity arose, has been clearly illustrated, and Independent pamphlets also stressed the liberty afforded by semi-separatists to the State. The second argument, ironically, was to promote the concept of liberty of conscience against magisterial compulsion in religion. This was less obvious in Assembly debates, more obvious in the work of John Goodwin,[3]

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1. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i,62.
2. Baillie, i,421.
3. See below, p.211.

and clearly evidenced by Baillie, who in May thought the Independents were now arguing more for this than against synods;

"The main seems to be in liberty of conscience ... (they) avow, that by God's command, the magistrate is discharged to put the least discourtesy on any man ... for his religion".[1]

Certainly the rising pamphlet war contained requests for liberty of conscience; for example, one who "holdeth fellowship and communion with the Parochiall congregations" insisted that otherwise "hellish Politicians" would exploit religious differences and prejudice the Parliamentary cause.[2]

The Presbyterian-Independent conflict, its flames hastily fanned by Royalists,[3] was a prime cause of the increasing disillusionment amongst Parliamentary divines in 1644. There were still several sermons and publications that hoped for accommodation. John Brinsley stressed that the Covenant obliged England to preserve, not observe, Scottish Presbyterianism, and begged that "not every withdrawing from some particular act ... with a Church ... should be ... accounted a Schisme".[4] Richard Vines stressed that the Independents were not in favour of license in the church but were "farre off from making the Church to be such a Romulus, his Asylum, a Sanctuary for all commers"; they had

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1. Baillie, ii,17-18. Baillie was wrong in thinking that this would mean a universal liberty of conscience.
2. The author insisted that he was no Anabaptist, Separatist, or Independent, but was probably a semi-separatist. Anon, Good councell to all those that heartily desire the glory of God, 19 July 1644, p.91, E.1199(2).
3. E.g. Anon, A Review of the Covenant, Bristol, 22 July 1644, E.2.(27) argued that the Independents' ideas on toleration and the civil magistrate's authority in religion were better than the Presbyterians.
4. J. Brinsley, The Saints' Solemne Covenant with their God, 18 April 1644, pp.33-4, E.43(9).

much in common with Presbyterians.[1] One pamphleteer was optimistic that unity between the two groups would be achieved;

"These two wayes are but like two streames, taking severall channells, so they run crosse a little time, and then fall into the maine againe, and keepe one way, a direct way for ever".[2]

But voices of hope were becoming rarer as the rising pamphlet war and Assembly conflicts developed. Public sermons took on a harsher tone; Thomas Hill insisted that "Doubtlesse, there is one Soveraigne Soule-saving way which leads to God", rejected the pleas of conscientious objectors and stressed the importance of firm discipline. Alexander Henderson insisted that only by "settling the true government of the Kirk by Presbyteries and Synods" could the growing liberty and license in the kingdom be quelled. The "Scotish Dove" hinted that they must "suffer no Sanballats in your Assemblies, and purge the Achans out of your Campes". Even John Dury, who supported accommodation, observed

"it is no Wisedome to authorize two different Wayes of Church Government in a State, except it be to lay a foundation of Strife and Division therein".[3]

Some Independents were facing up to reality; John Price, later to become a radical supporter of John Goodwin, was commenting that outward blessings were the portion of Esau, not Jacob, and

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1. R. Vines, The Impostures of Seducing Teachers Discovered, sermon of 23 April 1644 before the Mayor and aldermen of London, p.31, E.52(2).
2. A dialogue, arguing that Archbishops, Bishops, Curates, Neuters, are to be cut-off by the Law of God, 26 February 1643-4 preface, E.34(10). Thomason's catalogue ascribes this to Hezekiah Woodward. For Woodward, see below, p.359 note 1.
3. T. Hill, The Good Old Way, God's Way to Soule-Refreshing Rest, 24 April 1644, p.7, p.17, E.48(4); A. Henderson, A sermon preached before the Rt. Hon. the Lords and Commons, 18 July 1644, preface, E.3(2); The Scotish Dove, No.40, 13-19 July, p.315, E.2(19); J. Dury, An Epistolary Discourse, p.21.

Joseph Caryl comforted his supporters with the reflection that Christ could intervene on behalf of his saints whenever he chose.[1] In general, the mood of divines was one of increasing despondency. John Bewick feared

"Indeede we must not looke to see an answer to some of our requests at all in our owne time; we must not think to live to see the accomplishing of the number of God's elect".[2]

Some Presbyterian ministers sent a letter to Scotland saying that they would try to establish discipline despite dissenting brethren,[3] but hopes of a speedy Reformation had been shattered. Gone was the euphoria of 1643; now

"I cannot fancy such an Idea, such an exact constitution of a Church, wherein there shall be no naeve or wrinkle, no discrasy or distemper".[4]

Presbyterian-Independent Activity Outside the Assembly, January 1643 - July 1644.

It was not surprising that the end of the Calamy House Agreement, should herald a slow growth in the number of Independent congregations. Despite the Dissuasive, congregational gathering seems to have been resumed in the spring of 1644, at a time when Assembly debates were decidedly swinging against the Independents.

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1. J.P. (John Price) Honey out of the Rock, 10 May 1644, p.20, E.46(14); J. Caryl, The Saints thankfull Acclamation, 23 April 1644 pp.14-5, E.48(1).
2. J. Bewick, Confiding England under conflicts, 20 July 1644, p.23, E.6(6).
3. A Letter subscribed by divers godly Protestant ministers, dated 22 July 1644; P, E.6(9).
4. G. Hickes, The glory and beauty of God's portion, sermon to the Commons, 26 June 1644, p.28, E.2(10). He felt discipline to be the only answer.

On February 15th many thousands "desiring the liberty of a congregational way" petitioned the House of Lords.[1] On March 17th the Yarmouth church abandoned its compliance with the Dissuasive. and began to enrol new church-members, and by April its pastor, the Assembly-member Bridge, sanctioned the decision that its Norwich members should form their own separate congregation.[2] In August one of the Norwich brethren, John Oxenbridge, was dismissed to form a congregational church in Beverley, Yorkshire.[3] William Greenhill was present at the formation of a congregation in Stepney in the spring of 1644, and became its pastor.[4] By June Baillie was complaining that "The Independents have set up a number of private congregations in the city. They are exceedingly busy".[5] Since the sects were equally busy, contemporaries found ~~that~~ the academic distinction between separatists and semi-separatists increasingly irrelevant when it came to the practical realities of congregational activity. The Presbyterians decided to combat both Independents and sects by appointing that renowned opponent of Independency, Thomas Edwards, to a city lectureship at Christ Church, specifically designed, as Burton later bewailed, "to declaime and decry Independents".[6]

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1. Gillespie, Notes, p.20.
2. J. Browne, History of Congregationalism, pp.160-1; 214-5. The letters of separation between the Norwich and Yarmouth churches were dated May 24th 1644.
3. A.G. Matthews, Calamy Revised, p.377.
4. Henry Burton was also present at the foundation at this church. A.J. Jones, "Notes on the Early Days of Stepney Meeting", (1887), in Tracts on Church History, 1846-88, p.11.
5. Baillie, ii,26.
6. Ibid, ii, 47; H. Burton, Truth, still Truth, though Shut Out of Doores, 9 January 1645-6, p.24, E.315(6).

On the political scene, both Presbyterian and Independent ministers consulted with leading Parliamentarians on the Grand or "Treaty" committee. Certainly, as Baillie realised, Parliament did not wish to offend any "sectaries, whom they count necessary for the time"[1] and it has been seen that St. John and the middle group carried on a policy of accommodation between Presbyterians and Independents in a settlement that would be basically Erastian. Parliament had no hesitation in rewarding the enthusiasm of the Independent Hugh Peter in their service.[2] But even Baillie was convinced that the Independents had very little support in Parliament:

"My Lord Sey's credit and reputation is none at all, which wont to be all in all. Sir Harry Vane, whatever be his judgement, yet less or more does not own them, and gives them no encouragement. No man I know, in either of the Houses, of any note, is for them".[3]

Many M.P.s in 1643-4 and later would be Erastians, favouring accommodation but fearful of a general liberty of conscience.[4] Certainly, no credence can be afforded to Dr. Stephen Foster's claim that the letter of certain M.P.s to Massachusetts in support of Roger Williams' charter of government for Rhode Island indicated the existence in 1644 of a political party sympathetic to religious Independency. Toleration was not mentioned in the letter, and Vane, the one assuredly Independent member of the Commons, did not sign it.[5] Probably the letter should be seen in no religious context

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1. Baillie, ii,42.
2. He had been active in the Western counties, and on June 27th 1644 received Laud's library as a gift from Parliament, C.J. iii,543.
3. Baillie, i, 437.
4. See below, pp.337-8.
5. S. Foster, "The Presbyterian Independents Exorcised", Past and Present (1969) pp.71-2 and the rejoinder by B. Worden in "Debate: Presbyterians, Independents, and Puritans", Past and Present (1970), especially pp.120-1.

at all, or at most as reflecting St. John's policy of accommodation.[1]

It is difficult, if not impossible, to date the precise point in time when the religious terms "Presbyterian" and "Independent" were translated out of context into political usage as a description of Parliamentary groupings. Dr. Pearl and Professor Underdown believe that there is no evidence for this until the winter of 1644, when a decisive shift occurred in political groupings, the "middle group" under St. John losing pre-eminence as the Scots and the peace party formed a new political alliance to be opposed by a coalition of the left and centre. Clarendon would support this view by believing that the terms were first appli to politics by the time of the Army's new modelling.[2] Professor Yule favours the opinion that the Covenant and the calling of the Westminster Assembly caused the use of the terms in politics,[3] and there is some evidence that can be used to support this. Lawrence Whitaker observed that Henry Vane had "a strong party in the House" in December 1643; D'Ewes used the term Independents of the "violent spirits" before then and Robert Reynolds the M.P. said in 1659 that the Westminster Assembly had been "the occasions of the first breach in this House".[4] Another historian believed that a political divergence between radicals and conservatives was first marked in the conference at York, in the spring of 1643-4, between

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1. St. John signed the letter.
2. V. Pearl, "Oliver St. John and the 'middle group'", English Historical Review (1966) p.492; D. Underdown, Pride's Purge, pp. 64-75.
3. G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, pp.42-3.
4. G. Yule "Independents and Revolutionaries", Journal of British Studies, (1968) pp.20-21; L. Kaplan, "Presbyterians and Independents in 1643", English Historical Review (1969)p.244.

Parliamentary generals and Vane as representative of the Committee of Both Kingdoms.[1] As this was exactly the same time as religious differences were becoming marked in the Assembly, it is possible that the religious terms for "right" and "left" could be transferred to politics at this time. It is certainly possible that the terms were used in a political context before the winter of 1644, especially as in word usage there is usually a period of restrained use before the terms gain greater acceptability. But it must be stressed that the terms were not widely used in a political sense until 1645, and even then were not equable to their religious significance.

The discovery of some Royalist plots in January 1643-4 led to insinuations that Independent ministers had been secretly betraying the Parliament's cause. Certainly Captain Ogle, who was behind the most crucial plot, had negotiated with Nye and John Goodwin, and Lord Lovelace had tried to draw Henry Vane into the design, which was based on the exploitation of religious differences by the King's sudden decision to favour "tender consciences".[2] But even John Vicars, no friend to the Independent cause, knew that Nye and Goodwin had only negotiated with Ogle and his associates to ascertain the nature of the plot, and had acted with the full knowledge of Parliament. Although Essex tried later to accuse Vane of high

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1. J. Willcock, Life of Henry Vane the Younger, p.144. The Committee of Both Kingdoms was set up on 17th February 1643, to meet at Derby House, and has been seen as a forerunner of the modern cabinet. David Buchanan insinuated in his A Short and True Relation, September 1645 pp.51-2, E.1174(4) that the religious Independents opposed the creation of this committee as the Scots had a veto. But he was a partial observer and Vane helped to draft the ordinance effecting it.
2. Ogle planned to raise an Independent and sectarian force for the King in London, and betray Aylesbury. Lightfoot makes it quite plain that John and not Thomas Goodwin was involved, Lightfoot, p.128.

treason in relation to Ogle's design, Vane too was acting with the consent of leading M.P.s and his character remained unstained.[1]

How far was Independent support growing in city and country? Baillie in one of his optimistic moods, believed that the Independents' tactics and "light" frivolous arguments had lessened their credit in the city, which appreciated the fair treatment Independents had received in the Assembly. But Baillie was probably only referring to leading city officials, and even he was well aware that in many places Independent and sectarian supporters would glorify the stand of the Assembly Independents to men who had no real knowledge of Assembly debates.

> "farther in the country, who knew not the manner of our proceedings, their emissaries filled the ears of the people, that the assembly did cry down the truth with votes, and was but an Antichristian meeting, which would erect a presbytery worse than bishops".[2]

London was not immune to similar arguments, and Hugh Peter managed to encourage the city to sponsor a message to the Assembly on April 12th in which he advised the divines to respect tender consciences.[3] Certainly Independent support was increasing in the popular press.[4]

Independency was beginning to gain a hold on the army, although as yet it seemed to be confined to certain sections, most notably,

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1. J. Vicars, Magnalia Dei Anglicana, Part III, 1646, p.134. Nye and Goodwin were publicly thanked by Parliament. C.J. iii,378. For a defence of Vane, see Mercurius Britanicus, No.21, January-February 1643-4, p.167. E.31(14).
2. Baillie, ii, 436. April 1644.
3. Lightfoot, p.247.
4. "Mercurius Britanicus", under the editorship of Marchamont Nedham, was becoming open in its praise of Independency. "The Parliament Scout", under Dillingham, which supported St. John and the middle group was also favouring toleration. These countered the Presbyterian "Scotish Dove". "Mercurius Civicus" was more cautious in its Presbyterianism, and "The Kingdom's Weekly Intelligencer", "A perfect Diurnall" and "True Informer" were almost rigidly neutral. J. Frank, The Beginnings of the English Newspaper, pp.58-66.

the army of the Eastern Association. According to Baillie,

"much more than the most part of my Lord Manchester's army are seduced to Independency, and very many of them have added either Anabaptism, or Antinomianism, or both ... The Independents have no considerable power ... (in) the General or Waller's army".[1]

As early as 1642-3, evidence exists that the army was very divided on religious matters, some preferring Episcopacy, others Presbyterianism, and still others Independency.[2] Hugh Peter was already urging the army that "our Religion and Liberties were gone if we lost the day", and spreading Independent principles.[3] But whilst Clement Walker believed that the Independents were deliberately undermining Essex and Waller, there is no evidence to suggest that Independent ministers supported Manchester above these two generals; Henry Burton was supporting Waller in 1643, and in June 1644, Hugh Peter was reported as having lately been with Essex. Essex was supported by many who would be later political Independents, including Lord Saye, and the "middle group" consistently maintained a balance between Essex and Waller in the first half of 1644.[4]

By July 1644, as a result of the army's victory at York, the Independents were widely claiming that the success of Parliament's

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1. Baillie, ii, 19-20.
2. A Copy of a Letter writ from Serjeant Major Kirle, 6 March 1642-3, p.3, E.246(35).
3. The Parliament Scout, no 44, 18-26 April 1644, n.p.
4. C. Walker, The History of Independency, 1648, p.28; Mercurius Civicus, No.9, July 1643 p.71. C.J. iii, 543; V. Pearl, "Oliver St. John and the 'middle group'". English Historical Review (1966), pp.507-8.

cause depended on their faction.[1] But the success of Manchester's army at Marston-Moor on 2 July was generally taken as a notable Independent victory. Baillie knew only too well the importance of military success, and although he wrote that if only the Assembly could settle church-government, the Independents in the army might be quietened, he told the Scottish army.

"that we had no hope of any progress here, till God gave them victories, and them, we doubted not, all would run both in parliament and assembly".[2]

After Marston-Moor, Baillie wrote gloomily that

"the Independents have done so brave service, yea, they are so strong and considerable a party, that they must not only be tolerated, but in nothing grieved, and no ways to be provoked".[3]

The process by which Presbyterian votes in the Assembly were balanced by Independent military success had already begun, and Presbyterians began to realise that actions might speak louder than words.

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1. They promoted the role of Cromwell and the Eastern Association in this victory. Baillie felt such statements to be a "disgraceful relation", full of vanity and falsehood. Baillie, ii, 34.
2. Baillie, ii, 20, 34 (quoted). The Scottish army had complained that their lack of success "flowed most from God's anger at the parliament and assembly, for their neglect of establishing of religion".
3. Ibid, ii, 40-1.

Chapter Four.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE PAMPHLET WAR. January 1643 - July 1644.

I: MUTUAL RECRIMINATIONS: APOLOGIA TO ANTAPOLOGIA.

"How many Replyes in two or three weeks, seemingly have turned the world, if not the Church, upside down; most men seeming to be resolved before the Arguments are solved?"

J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S. with a plea for libertie of conscience in a Church way, 4 May 1644, p.2, E.45(3).

(the Apologetical Narration) "led to the publication of a series of answers, in which, as usual, each disputant was more eager to confute his antagonist than to promote peace and harmony. From that time forward the contest between the Independents and the Presbyterians became one of irreconcilable rivalry, to which the utter defeat of the one or the other was the only possible termination".

W.M. Hetherington, History of the Westminster Assembly, p.157.

"The pamphlet war of 1643 pointed unmistakably to the emergence of public opinion as a decisive factor in public life".

W. Haller, Tracts on Liberty in the Puritan Revolution. 1638-1647, (New York 1934), vol.i, p.46.

Professor Kaplan has stated that

"the Apologetical Narration caused hardly any ... stir in the religious life of England. It brought forth no debates or serious comments in the Assembly or in parliament. In the six months following its publication only five pamphlets appeared which in any way dealt with the questions raised by the Five Dissenting Brethren".[1]

It is clear however that not only were Assembly divisions worsened by the Apology, but that a serious pamphlet controversy developed (involving more than five pamphlets in six months) and marked the end of the Calamy House Agreement. For whereas in the past three years, very few pamphlets advocating either Presbyterianism or semi-separatism had been published, and almost none specifically attacking individuals of either persuasion, in the six months following the Apologetical Narration, there suddenly appeared a remarkable increase in Presbyterian and Independent publications.[2] Since these were often direct attacks on members of the opposing group, either named or not, they provoked replies and counter-replies in their turn. Certainly some pamphlets were restrained and tried to emphasise the underlying unity between the two groups, but these were less forceful than the vituperative accusations and incisive comments of more extreme pamphleteers. The vehemency of the pamphlet war gathering momentum outside the Assembly must have affected, as it was itself influenced by, the growing rifts in

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1. L. Kaplan, "Presbyterians and Independents in 1643", English Historical Review, (1969), p.256.
2. The exceptions to individual attacks are John Geree's complaint against Henry Burton in "Vindiciae Voti", and Thomas Edward's controversy with the separatist Katharine Chidley. See above, p. 30.

the Assembly.

This pamphlet war displayed the beliefs of the Presbyterians and semi-separatists for the first time to the literate public, and whilst Thomas Edwards censured the Independents for trying to increase their party by their publications, he admitted that his tracts were designed for the same purpose; "we (i.e. the Presbyterians) ... need something to awaken us, as having been too much asleepe in respect of you".[1] It is therefore not surprising that the very presentation of the two systems of church government emphasised their distinctiveness and publicised Assembly disagreements. Although even the most violent antagonists, Stewart and Edwards, professed unity to be the purpose underlying their work, the denigration and acrimony which accompanied it inevitably made accommodation more unlikely. The beginnings of the pamphlet controversy in fact reflected a characteristic that was to become typical of the war of words - namely, that although moderates pleaded for restraint, the dominant protagonists were to be extremists, and as a result the pamphlet war represented the worst in polarisation between the two groups. At this stage it is notable that the leading figures in the controversy were the Scottish and New England divines, although extremist English Presbyterians and Independents like Edwards and John Goodwin, and the more moderate Independents

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.7.

Homes and Simpson played their part. It must always be remembered that moderate Presbyterians and Independents had more in common than extremist invective implied.

A survey of the sudden outburst of Presbyterian/Independent pamphlets following the Apology is necessary to appreciate the development and exacerbation of the public pamphlet controversy. The Apologists themselves had maintained that their semi-separatist way was

> "a middle way betwixt that which is falsly charged on us, Brownisme; and that which is the contention of these times, the authoritative Presbyteriall Government in all the subordinations and proceedings of it".[1]

They insisted that their theories were open to progressive illumination of the truth since

> "A second Principle we carryed along with us in all our resolutions, was, Not to make our present judgement and practice a binding law unto ourselves for the future".[2]

Although this "principle of mutability" was to be severely criticised by Presbyterians, the Apologists doubtless hoped that it might hint at further unity and assist accommodation. They reminded readers that

> "if in all matters of Doctrine we were not as Orthodoxe in our judgements as our brethren themselves, we would never have exposed our selves to this tryall and hazard of discovery in this Assembly ... as would be sure soon to find us out if we nourished any monsters or Serpents of opinions lurking in our bosomes".[3]

Although they were now vindicating their way, they trusted to "an happy latitude and agreement by means of this Assembly, and the

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1. An Apologeticall Narration, p.24. Full discussion of the theories of church government revealed in this pamphlet war will be reserved for the following chapter.
2. Ibid., p.10.
3. Ibid., p.28.

wisdome of this Parliament"[1] and stressed that they had kept the Calamy House Agreement for as long as possible, despite disparagement of their tenets, believing that

> "it was the second blow that makes the quarrell, and that the beginning of strife would have been as the breaking in of waters ... dividing the godly Protestant party in the Kingdome that were desirous of Reformation".[2]

If the Apologists thought they were striking merely the "second" blow in the conflict, subsequent attacks were soon forthcoming. Within three weeks of this Apology, the Scots Commissioners had officially published a work entitled "Reformation of Church Government in Scotland Cleared from some mistakes and Prejudices", since they stressed that the Scottish Presbytery was impugned by "the misrepresentations and indirect aspersions of others who do so commend their owne way, that the reformed Churches thereby suffer disparagement". They nevertheless claimed that their aim was to unite, not divide, and to compose, not create impediments to Reformation.[3] Before long, Baillie (who had collaborated with his fellow chaplains and Lord Maitland in the "Reformation ... Cleered") had secured the publication of the timely letter from Thomas Parker observing that excessive power had been afforded the congregations in New England.[4] It is also highly probable that Baillie was responsible for the appearance of the most vituperative pamphlet so far in Presbyterian/

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1. An Apologeticall Narration, p.26.
2. Ibid.,p.25.
3. Scots Commissioners, Reformation of Church Government in Scotland Cleered, 24 January 1643-4, pp.1-2, E.30(5).
4. See above, pp. 132-3.

Independent works, Adam Stewart's "Some Observations and Annotations upon the Apologeticall Narration", which, licensed by the uncompromising Presbyterian and confidant of Baillies, James Cranford, had been published by February 29th.[1] For although John Goodwin observed that the Scots Commissioners disliked the tones used by Stewart (or A.S. as he was called), another defender of the Independent cause remarked that since Stewart had "such perfect intelligence of all or very many materiall passages transacted in the Assembly", it must be that Stewart had been "saddled" for his "hot service".[2] Stewart admitted in a later work that he was not a minister, but a member of the University of Leyden, and was thus suitably criticised for meddling in English church affairs when he was "a stranger to this Nation, and hath no publike businesse here that we cam learne".[3] The connection between Baillie, his cousin Spang and Stewart is further exemplified when, in 1645, Baillie wrote to Spang in the Low Countries, telling him to "advertise Dr. Stewart to keep his colleagues silent, if they be not willing to declare flatly against all the branches of Independency".[4]

Adam Stewart began his attack on the Apology by professing love and affection for the Independents, but soon abandoned this

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1. A.S., Some Observations and Annotations upon the Apologeticall Narration, 29 February 1643-4, E.34(23).
2. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S. with a plea for libertie of conscience in a Church way, 3 May 1644, p.20, E.45(3); Anon, C.C. the Covenanter vindicated from Perjurie, 2 May 1644, p.19, E.44(20).
3. Adam Stewart, Zerubbabel to Sanballat and Tobiah: or The First Part of the Duply to M.S. alias Two Brethren, 21 March 1644-5, dedication and p.66, E.274(14). This work was dedicated to noblemen and politicians in the United Provinces. For the "stranger" criticism see Anon, C.C. the Covenanter vindicated from Perjurie, p.19.
4. Baillie, ii,118. The name Adam Stewart was possibly, but not certainly, a pseudonym. Despite the fact that an anagram of Adam Stewart is Ma.Ta. Edwarts, and that Edwards and Stewart possessed a similar vindictive style, the evidence is against the notion that Stewart and Edwards were one and the same.

ploy for his characteristic contempt and invective. He first insisted that he wrote out of no anger against the Apologists, but merely

> "my dutie and Christian libertie, as a man to oppose my self to five men, then for five men to oppose themselves to the common opinion of five hundred thousand".[1]

But he was soon accusing the Apologists of having struck the first, second, and third moves in the controversy and drawing the conclusion that such men merited no further fellowship from Reformed churches, since they had seen fit to cast such aspersions upon them.[2] As for their claim that their Independent polity was a "middle way", why,

> "this is nothing, but your errour: Veritie consisteth not in the middle of this, or that which ye imagine, but in a conformitie of our conceptions with their object, and due measure; which in this matter, is onely Gods Word revealed in the holy Scriptures; and according to this rule I take Presbyterian Government, rather to be the middle betwixt Popish Tyranny, and Independent Anarchy".[3]

As a parting shot, he declared that if, as the Apologists were at such pains to stress, the difference between Presbyterians and Independents was small, "the lesse it is, the lesse should ye be suiters for a Toleration; and if ye obtained it, the greater should be your Schisme".[4] Stewart's pamphlet was highly significant, as its vindictive tone attracted rejoinders in like style and introduced a new bitterness into the controversy. John Goodwin was quick to observe that it was not only Independents who disliked

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1. A.S. Some Observations and Annotations, sig.A3, verso.
2. Ibid., pp.51,67.
3. Ibid., p.61.
4. Ibid., p.71.

Stewart's work; "A Parliament man said A.S. jeer'd. Another gentleman said, he liked not the spirit of the man, yet neither of them Independents".[1]

Virtually at the same time as A.S' pamphlet emerged from the presses, there came an ominous indication that separatists would seize on the split between Presbyterians and semi-separatists for their own ends. For there appeared certain "Queries of Highest Consideration, Proposed to the five Holland Ministers and the Scotch Commissioners", which John Cotton attributed to Roger Williams, recently arrived in England to secure a charter for Rhode Island.[2] This appealed to Parliament not to slavishly copy the "Patterns of either French, Dutch, Scotch, or New English Churches. We humbly conceive some higher Act concerning Religion, attends and becomes your Consultations ..." This act should be to give liberty of conscience to all, since a national church and Covenant were unscriptural, and God's church not equable with a State;

> "And oh! since the Common-weale cannot without a spirituall rape force the consciences of all to one Worship, oh that it may never commit that rape ... which a stronger arme and Sword may soon ... arise to alter".[3]

It was not long before William's plea for toleration and denunciations of a national church were echoed by Henry Robinson, who hinted that Presbyterian authority would be little better

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1. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., p.2.
2. W. Haller, Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution, p.370, note 21.
3. Queries of Highest Consideration, 29 February 1643-4, preface, p.3, E.32(8).

than the Papacy in overriding the civil state.[1] How could there be such a concept as a national church; "Doe we think that God's salvation is also Nationall?" Freedom of conscience was the only solution to the increasing persecution of Christians by Christians for slight variations in opinion;

> "in England it is ordinary with Protestants to reproach one another with the nick-name of Puritan or Separatist, Presbyterian or Independent, even those which we cannot but acknowledge to be conscientious and jealous of offending God in any thing ... we are so apt to terme (one who differs from us) malignant or Popishly affected, though never any Law was yet made to declare them such".[2]

But moderate Independents were anxious to show that an accommodated national church was indeed possible, and that such universal concepts of toleration were far from the intention of the Apologists. Although the author of the "Coole Conference", which appeared early in March, claimed that he was an "impartiall angell", a "well-willer" to both the Apologists and the Scots Commissioners, it is likely that he was none other than the

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1. Liberty of Conscience or the Sole means to obtaine Peace and Truth, 24 March 1643-4, preface, E.39(1). This is ascribed to Henry Robinson in Thomason's catalogue. Henry Robinson, a merchant, with interests in the Low Countries, believed that England's mercantile interests depended on a peaceful church, but he was also a genuine idealist. He corresponded with John Dury in the spring of 1644, asking him to intervene in the "Clergie war" and to secure a reconciliation between Presbyterians and Independents. In November 1644, he wrote again to Dury, and this letter, together with Dury's reply was published in 1646 as Some Few Considerations Propounded, 18 July 1646, E.345(1). A tract based on a letter in the late 1630s defending pure congregations from the taint of separatism, and now published, was also by Robinson; The Saint's Apologie, 15 May 1644, E.47(21). This can be deduced because this work was identical to the answer to John Dury published in An Answer to Mr. John Dury, 17 August 1644, E.6(21) and ascribed to Robinson in the Thomason catalogue. Besides being a correspondent of Dury's, Robinson also associated with Samuel Hartlib in several utopian schemes. Robinson also possessed a crucial weapon in the pamphlet war - a secret press.
2. H. Robinson, Liberty of Conscience, pp.27,41.

Independent Dr. Nathaniel Homes. Baillie thought so, and Adam Stewart confirmed that the "Cooler" was not an Assembly-man.[1] But Homes tried to act as a mediator, carefully balancing arguments from the Apologetical Narration with those from the Scots Commissioners' "Reformation Cleared", and arguing that the Apologists and Scots must all meet in a

> "common rendezvous ... the best reformed Churches: and that according to the word of God, which is that Standard of perfection that must weigh and measure out unto us our uniformity".[2]

His sympathies nevertheless lay clearly with the Apologists, and he begged that the public should disregard the "Reformation Cleered" and continue to honour the Apology with the respect it deserved;

> "this paper comes abroad onely to beseech that on either side there may be committed no more breaches of the peace Ecclesiastick, and to leave the Apologie (if it may be) under the same candid opinion that rayed forth upon it afore this cloud came and interposed. Sure if the Houses of Parliament allow any of the Assembly differing in opinion touching the matters proposed to them (whereof Discipline is one) to present their judgements with their reasons unto the said Houses; you cannot judge it a crime to send forth a prodromum presented to the Parliament to tell them and you how farre they close with you and other reformed Churches, and dissent from the Separation and Brownists. And therefore have not deserved to be whipt with a reply".[3]

The next pamphleteer, the Presbyterian William Rathband, also stressed that if only the "just latitude of their and our

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1. A Coole Conference between the Scottish Commissioners Cleared Reformation, and the Holland Ministers Apologeticall Narration, 4 March 1643-4, p.2, E.35(15); Baillie, ii, 15; A Stewart, An Answer to a Libell intituled "A Coole Conference", 16 April 1644, p.2, E.43(4). Stewart commented that Parliament had wisely decided not to admit the "Cooler" to the Assembly, cf. above, p.84.
2. N. Homes A Coole Conference, p.1.
3. Ibid., p.2.

differences" could be better discerned, there was much hope that the Presbyterians and Independents could accommodate. But his tone was less friendly, and he published his "Brief Narration of some Church Courses held in Opinion and Practise in the Churches lately erected in New England", because he believed the Apology was not a full exposition of the Independents' position. He therefore tried to clarify the Independent way from letters, papers and manuscripts of New England divines, although he knew that not all New Englanders subscribed to each particular tenet, and that the Holland brethren were less rigid than many New Englanders.[1] He felt obliged to show the true Independent position, since

> "not onely themselves continued in that way, but also others both Ministers and people out of ignorance or inconsideration were daily drawn aside thereto, new Churches were erected according to their module, our Churches and Ministerie, and Gods Ordinances in them began to be neglected, slighted, deserted, yea, contumeliously and scornfully reproached as Antichristian ..."

He hoped his work would stimulate discussion, cause the Apologists to explain their position more fully, and

> "make men pause awhile, and enquire further unto (the Independents) before they were too far ingaged ... (and) give occasion of a more full agitation of all these differences in this venerable Assembly of Divines ..."[2]

Rathband's main complaint against Independency was that the Independents came so close to the Brownists; indeed, in some matters they "doe ... build up an higher partition wall betweene themselves and all other churches than ever the Brownists did".[3]

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1. W.R., A Briefe Narration of some Church Courses, 9 March 1643-4, sig A2 verso, A3, p.55, E.36(11). Earlier Rathband had published A Most Grave and Modest Confutation of the Errors of the Sect commonly called Brownists or Separatists, 5 February 1643-4, E.31(11).
2. W.R. A Briefe Narration of some Church Courses, sig A2 verso, sig A3.
3. Ibid., p.51.

Like many Presbyterians, he felt that there could be no distinction between semi-separatism and rigid separatism;

"They (i.e. the Independents) distinguish of separations, one they call moderate, the other rigid or bitter, this they condemne, but that they owne. But what they meane by a rigid separation, we well know not, for even the Separatists themselves doe condemne each others rigour, ... yet ... all of them complete Separatists, and so may these our brethren be too, notwithstanding that distinction".[1]

But despite Rathband's severe words, he too hoped that some accommodation or toleration might be possible if the Apologists would explain their ideas in more detail;

"That so all misunderstandings and misprissons being removed, and we rightly enformed of the just latitude of their and our differences: we might either more hopefully addresse ourselves to satisfie their judgements, or else (if that cannot be obtained) the more willingly condescend to move (with them) for the favouring of their consciences, according to the rules of Pietie and prudence, in such things as are capable of toleration and indulgence".[2]

By mid-March two New England ministers inadvertently provided a complement to Rathband's survey, and added their voices to the mounting Presbyterian/Independent literature. These were Richard Mather and William Tompson, who were answering Charles Herle's "The Independency on Scriptures of the Independency of Churches", which had appeared shortly before the opening of the Assembly. Although these New Englanders refuted Herle's arguments and praised Independency, they commended Herle's own moderation;

"we do perceive your whole discourse to be carried along without passion and bitternesse, in a spirit of meeknesse and love, which also we are willing to acknowledge before all men".

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1. A Briefe Narration of some Church Courses, p.52. Independents insisted that their acts of communion and fellowship with other churches did make Independency or "semi-separatism" a viable concept e.g. T. Welde, A Brief Narration of the Practises of the Churches in New England, 4 May 1647, p.18, E.385(21).

2. W.R., A Briefe Narration of some Church Courses, p.55.

They too expressed the hope that the truth would finally emerge through the wise and holy labours of the Westminster Assembly.[1]

Unfortunately their moderation was not shared by Adam Stewart, whose inflammatory rejoinder to the "Coole Conference" appeared in April and followed the venomous style of his earlier pamphlet. Stewart scorned the fact that the "Cooler" wrote anonymously, so that none might know his "Sect or Sex", but contented himself with the reflection that the more dubious his views, the more "the Author will needs march under a vezyle and conceale himself".[2] Stewart claimed to answer for the Scots Commissioners, who were too busy to answer every "idle pamphleteer", yet he denounced the "Cooler" for presuming to write on behalf of the Apologists![3] He professed himself mystified by the "Cooler's" use of the bombastic phrase "Quinqu 'Ecclesian Ministers" to describe the Apologists, and declared that he had never heard this term before.[4] Stewart decided that the "Cooler", was clearly of the Apologists' persuasion, and no truly impartial judge, since he was hot for one party and cold to the point of frigidity for the other. Moreover, his work contained many errors, which if the Cooler "had had any prudence, he might have learned the contrary either in the City, or at Westminster Hal".[5] He told the "Cooler"

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1. R. Mather and W. Tompson, A Modest and Brotherly Answer to Mr. Charles Herle, 15 March 1643-4, sig.A2, E.37(19). Pamphlets from New England inevitably involved lengthy delays before publication in England. Mather and Tompson had a personal interest in Herle's parish, Winwick in Lancashire, and attested to Herle's kindness towards them.
2. A.S. An Answer to a Libell intituled A Coole Conference, 16 April 1644, pp.3-4, E.43(4).
3. Ibid., pp.1-2. Stewart claimed that "some men of quality" urged him to answer the Cooler; he usually justified his answers in this way.
4. Ibid., p.15. Cf. N. Homes, A Coole Conference, p.3.
5. A.S. An Answer to a Libell, pp5,9. This drew upon Stewart the taunt that he might be used to lazing his time away in Westminster Hall, but "The Cooler hath beene guided by divine providence, calling him to this citie for publike imployment, which hee industriously followes", Anon, C.C. the Covenanter Vindicated from Perjurie, p.20.

that he was quite wrong if he thought that the Scots Commissioners had tried to exacerbate the quarrel;

"Your judgement is utterly erronious, in thinking that this (i.e. the "Reformation ... Cleered") was intended to disunite the Presbiterians from others, i.e. from Independenters ... for their intention is altogether to unite you with them. Neither are there, for any thing we know, any that disunite you from them, or them from you, save your selves onely".

Since no godly man could doubt of the verity of Presbyterianism, Stewart feared that the Independents' diffidence must accord them "such scrutinie from your Brethren as morally ye can have", but hoped that in the end the Independents would restrain from a breach.[1]

Stewart's diatribe would soon produce bitter responses, but in the interim the Scots Commissioner, Samuel Rutherford showed that he was capable of his own pamphleteering. Rutherford's reply to the manuscript of John Cotton's then circulating,[2] probably appeared in April as "The Due Right of Presbyteries", although Rutherford too made the observation that

"To dispute is not to contend ... The Sonnes of Babylon make out-cries of divisions and diversity of Religions amongst us, but every opinion is not a new Religion".[3]

In time, Rutherford would be answered by Richard Mather, who would defend the Independent church discipline, but share Rutherford's belief that Presbyterians and Independents must love each other on

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1. A.S. An Answer to a Libell, pp. 24,62.
2. This manuscript became The Way of the Churches of Christ in New England, see above, p.18 note 1. Rutherford was also answering Mather and Tompson's recent work against Charles Herle.
3. S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, 1644, preface, E.41(1) No month is given for this publication, but it was probably April.

earth, as they must live together in heaven. But Mather's reply did not reach the presses until 1647.[1]

By the beginning of May, two opponents of Adam Stewart had rushed to the printers in a spirit of contention that Stewart had kindled. The first anonymous work defended the "Coole Conference", attacked a coercive Presbyterianism, and was highly critical of Stewart's arguments. Since this pamphlet was more acrimonious than the "Coole Conference", its author may not have been Dr. Homes although the author was professedly a man of the Congregational way, who had taken the Covenant. It is likely that he knew the five Apologists and Dr. Homes, and was fairly well acquainted with proceedings in the Assembly.[2] He decided to give Stewart a taste of his own medicine, and taunted him with his confusion and ignorance as to the identity of the "Cooler", with his attempts to disunite the "Cooler" and the Apologists, and his feeble efforts to champion the interests of the Scots Commissioners. Unlike "this Incendiary A.S.", the Cooler had done more to honour the Scots

> "with his penne and his publike prayers, then ever the Pamphletters Observations ... or his answer to the Coole Conference will bring to the worthy Nation of Scotts".[3]

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1. R. Mather, A Reply to Mr. Rutherfurd, 8 May 1647, preface, E.386(9).
2. Anon, C.C. the Covenanter Vindicated from Perjurie, 2 May 1644, preface, pp.19-20, E.44(20).
3. Ibid., p.3. "Observations", and "Coole Conference" are abbreviated to "Observat. Consid". and "C. Conf". in the original text.

The author seized gleefully upon an imprudent boast that Stewart had let slip in one of his confident eulogies upon the Presbyterian polity, when he announced that Presbytery "compelled (no man) to be Actor in any thing against his own conscience". In that case, he retorted,

> "we feare not the Presbytery, but shall walk together friendly, till the rule of truth and love hath transformed us into a concent of Spirits, and harmonie of Judgements".[1]

Stewart's second antagonist proved to be even more vehement and contemptuous. Although he called himself M.S., the author was in fact John Goodwin, as both Thomason and Baillie knew.[2] In any case John Goodwin admitted the fact in a later work, and praised himself for M.S.' sober and weighty thoughts![3] But a certain confusion was bound to arise over this pamphlet, for it was evidently rumoured to be the work of one "Goodwin", and some pamphleteers jumped to the wrong conclusion that this "Goodwin" must be Thomas Goodwin, the Apologist. Such speculations were increased by the fact that the second edition of the M.S. pamphlet, in July, carried a new title, "A Reply of Two of the Brethren to A.S.", and contained various additions, omissions, and corrections. This second edition was edited by "two brethren", who claimed they had

> "only for dispatch, joyned in this Reply to A.S. ... forborn also in this second Edition to subscribe their names, though they

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1. Anon, C.C. The Covenanter Vindicated from Perjurie, p.90; A.S., An Answer to a Libell, p.62.
2. Thomason wrote that this work was "by Mr. John Goodwin, Colm. street"; Baillie, ii,15. The work was entitled M.S. to A.S. with a plea for libertie of conscience in a Church way, 3 May 1644, E.45(3). The use of "M.S." may have been a tribute to the printer, Matthew Simmons.
3. J. Goodwin, Innocencie's Triumph, 26 October 1644, p.4 E.14(10).

doubt not by God's grace to make good any thing they have written".[1] One of these brethren was probably Thomas Goodwin. The author of "C.C. the Covenanter Vindicated" certainly believed M.S. to be Thomas Goodwin, as he claimed that M.S. had spoken in the Assembly on the question of the Covenant, and it was Thomas, not John Goodwin who was an Assembly-member.[2] It is likely that John Goodwin was openly collaborating with the Apologists at this time, although later their relations became less friendly owing to John's more radical views. John Goodwin later admitted

> "It is well known, how faint a correspondency I have with the faction which dogmatizeth with me about matters of Church-government. My interest with these men, though it was never much considerable, yet was it much more whilst they were the tail, and the high Presbyterian faction the head, than it hath been since the turning of the wheel".[3]

Although John Goodwin denounced Rathband's "A Briefe Narration of some Church Courses ... in New England", and defended the Independents from Thomas Parker's letter, the object of his attentions was primarily Adam Stewart. He blamed Stewart for the deliberate exacerbation of the Presbyterian/Independent conflict;

> "The grave Commissioners of Scotland had with farre more prudence and soliditie than A.S. said by way of reply so much to the Apologie, Nemine reclamante, none replying till A.S. was abroad."

It seemed that

> "this one single simple A.S. now starts up by himself, peremptorily to state, and determine the Questions, for the resolution whereof the Parliament thought the Assembly of Divines few enough to undertake ... Go then A.S. and carrie, if you dare,

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1. A Reply of Two of the Brethren to A.S., 11 July 1644, preface, E.54(18). "Two of the Brethren" refers to the "Holland Brethren", i.e. the Apologists. This is later referred to as M.S. to A.S. (second edition).
2. Anon, C.C. the Covenanter Vindicated from Perjurie, p.19.
3. W.W. Biggs, John Goodwin, (1961) p.15.

your platform to the Parliament, and intreat the learned Assembly to dissolve".[1]

John Goodwin defended the Apology, which he believed only stressed the unity between the Holland brethren and the Presbyterians, and clarified their close accordance with the reformed Churches. The Apology was moderation itself - yet "see how many stinging flyes are and about to alight upon this youngling newly (w)eaned".[2] He deprecated the fact that certain Presbyterians were deliberately manufacturing censures of the Apology, such as the Zealand letter,[3] but was pleased to note that the Presbyterians were far from consistent in their arguments;

> "A.S. condemnes the Apologists, as guiltie of dissenting from the Churches of New-England. And W.R. condemnes them for agreeing with the Churches of New-England. So that A.S. and W.R. do not agree between themselves".[4]

New aid was soon forthcoming for the Presbyterian cause in yet another tract from the Low Countries. By June Alexander Forbes had sent from Delft a pamphlet which Baillie considered to be "a very pretty piece against the Apologetick".[5] In this "Anatomy of Independency" Forbes criticised the Apologists severely for hiding their tenets rather than disclosing them, and for practising their ways before publicising them, leaving the world to discover these opinions as best it might.[6] In the Apology they were content to dazzle "a popular eye" by specious and rhetorical flourishes, and "pathetic aggravations", rather than to satisfy the reason of an

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1. M.S. to A.S. with a plea for libertie of conscience in a Church way, pp.3-4. James Cranford, the licenser of Stewart's work, was also severely attacked.
2. Ibid., p.1.
3. See above, pp.130-1.
4. Ibid., p.17.
5. Baillie, ii, 15. Forbes may or may not have been the Dr. Forbes whom Baillie censured for evading censure in Aberdeen (Baillie, ii,1.) Baillie certainly approved of this work.
6. A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, 14 June 1644, p.4, B.M. C59. g.20(36).

intelligent reader. What was the point, asked Forbes, of reserving a more exact and scholarly discussion of their opinions for the Assembly, when they had brought out their Apology in supposed vindication of themselves and their views?[1] In that case,

"whereto serves this Apology? *unlesse* it be by big and plausible words to gain the affections of the unstable vulgar, before they shall come to know their wayes, which is to hold out a popular spirit".[2]

Forbes came to the conclusion that "in this plea and Apology for that unwarrantable Government of theirs", the Apologists had revealed themselves to be a party of "faction, singularity and schisme", and bitterly denounced their hypocrisy in signing the Dissuasive when they had already gathered their own churches (a statement which was not true of all the Apologists). Such activities were "factious and a means to disturbe the peace of the Church".[3]

Forbes' attack finally provoked one of the Apologists, Sidrach Simpson, to write a defence of the Apologetical Narration himself. But this "Anatomist Anatomis'd" was deliberately shorter than Forbes' and Stewart's Presbyterian publications, since Simpson decided

"There are two too usuall errours in handling Controversies. One to make the difference voluminous and many-headed, that so it may appeare more horrid, monstrous and irreconcileable: the other to make the Opposites odious, by charging their reall or

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1. A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, pp.7-9.
2. Ibid.,p.9.
3. Ibid.,pp.7,13,14.

supposed faults upon their Tenents".[1]

It was certainly a foul aspersion to call the Apologists "Independants", when this was

"A name which formerly was proper unto those who stood for Presbiteriall government. Under that very Name, they chose to argue against Bishops, above any other, and the Bishops called them by it".

Now this name had become a reproach, and so, apparantly, had the word "Apology". In that case,

"For ever let the name and use of Apologies cease from the world; their maine end is to shew forth the Authors Integrity, to doe which now is judged Guile, Selfe-love, boasting and Partiality".[2]

Simpson was particularly concerned to defend himself from the personal attack launched by Forbes, who had claimed that Simpson was a separatist, whose principles had turned some to Anabaptism, who had no ruling elders in his church, and who did not include conversion among a pastor's work![3] Simpson was adamant that printed attacks on the personal integrity of individuals served no purpose whatsoever;

"What advantage can the Cause or Authors have by these Reports? Think they to get more into peoples hearts with their opinions? God takes the wise in their own craftinesse, and will destroy such wisdom. Needs truth such ways? Either your selves are free from faults or not. If not, you must no more be beleeved, then you would have them whose faults you tell; suppose you be, truth grows not on the heapes and ruines of mens names" ...[4]

Simpson had deliberately timed his pamphlet to appear before another Presbyterian attack on the Apology, Thomas Edwards'

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1. S. Simpson, The Anatomist Anatomis'd, 28 June 1644, p.3, E.52(22).
2. Ibid.,p.4.
3. A Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, pp.7, 25,26. Simpson denied these charges in The Anatomist Anatomis'd, pp.9-12.
4. Ibid, p.8.

"Antapologia", the severest denunciation yet of the Independents, as Simpson well knew. He had warned his readers that there was

> "an Antapology in Presse, or a Collection of such faults as either mens mistakes and malice, or perhaps mens owne infirmities have made ... This Anatomist is a forerunner to that, as some few great drops before a shower".[1]

Edward's "Antapologia" marked the zenith of Presbyterian pamphleteering consequent on the Apology, and its tone was plainly biased from the outset, as Edwards recommended his work as

> "a true glasse to behold the faces of Presbyterie and Independencie in, with the beauty, order, strength of the one, and the deformity, disorder, and weaknesse of the other".[2]

Edwards, who received his lectureship at Christ Church about this time[3] was doubtless encouraged to write by his enthusiastic licenser, James Cranford.[4] He was quick to retort to Simpson's attack on the Antapologia, although he admitted that he claimed no infallible proof for the facts he would present, but only a "rationall probable proofe from Letters and other Manuscripts". He even claimed that whilst he may have made "some mistakes in the reports of some circumstances in matter of order and time, place and number", yet the facts were still true.[5]

Despite the now almost obligatory Presbyterian profession of love for the Apologists, Edwards decreed that to his mind, the semi-separatists were quite the most odious variety of separatists. The Apologists had deliberately understated their differences with the "Reformed Churches" and he could not see why they objected to

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1. Simpson, The Anatomist Anatomis'd, p.4.
2. T. Edwards, Antapologia, 13 July 1644, sig A, E.1(1).
3. See above, p.168.
4. Baillie, ii, 109.
5. T. Edwards, Antapologia, sig.A verso.

the title of "Independency", when

"This Independencie and Independent government, was a name of your own giving, and sure, I, and others might lawfully call the child by the name the fathers and friends gave it".[1]

Edward's tract was packed with three hundred pages of accusation and argument against this semi-separatism, most of which will be discussed in the following chapter. It castigated Lockyer, Carter and Homes for gathering churches, and hinted that others had done the same, but ended upon a more hopeful note than its preceding calumnies merited, by begging the Independents to dissolve their churches and join the Presbyterians, repenting and recalling their Apology.[2]

The "Antapologia" proved beyond a doubt that the pamphlet war caused by the Apology belied the hopes of unity professed by pamphleteers and revealed to the public the increasing rift between Presbyterians and Independents. In six months more than ten pamphlets had been printed, attacking and defending the Apologists, the Scots, Presbyterianism and Independency. The pamphlet controversies would continue, although they would cease to be primarily motivated by the Apology, since they had acquired their own momentum. At the end of July, Thomas Welde's reply to William Rathband's attack on New England Independency had been published, in which he claimed Rathband's evidence was unrepresentative of opinion in New England.[3] An earlier work by

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp. 64,89,201 (quoted).
2. Ibid., p.307.
3. T. Welde, An Answer to W.R., 27 July 1644, pp.4-5, E.3(18).

Thomas Letchford was republished as "New England's Advice to Old England", and denounced the New England way.[1] John Cotton's "The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven" had already been issued in June, with a preface by Thomas Goodwin and Philip Nye.[2] Neither Presbyterians nor Independents would let their cause suffer by giving the other side the advantage of the press.

Inevitably the pamphlet controversies both reflected and exacerbated the increasing divisions in the Assembly. Its members took notice of new publications and sometimes debates were interrupted so that investigations could be made into allegations of libel on the Assembly. The minutes for 6th May 1644 show clearly that examination was being made of two Independent works and two Presbyterian letters inspired by Baillie and Spang;

> "The Committee apoynted to consider of the letters from the classes of Walacria and province of Zealand and the booke intituled the coole conference shall also take into consideration that booke intituled M.S. to A.S. and make report to this Assembly what they find in the said booke that may reflect either upon this Assembly or the Commissioners of Scotland or the churches in Walacria".[3]

It would appear however that the Assembly was more likely to investigate Independent works, since no such committee investigated the aspersions in the Antapologia. Yet on the whole, with the exception of John Goodwin, Independent works were noticeably humbler, more rational and less vituperative than their opponents, which was perhaps inevitable with the Independents' striving for acceptance and accommodation. But, as usual, it was the extremist voices that left the most lasting impression.

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1. T. Letchford, New England's Advice to Old England, 5 July 1644, E.53(17).
2. J. Cotton, The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven, June 1644, E.51(4). This was a statement of New England practice and of Cotton's own beliefs, and was a new version of an earlier work. See above, p.18 note 1.
3. TSS. vol.ii, f.33 verso.

The Apologists Attacked and Defended.

Although individual pamphlets had their own peculiar characteristics and style, the pro and anti-Apologist literature of January-July 1643-4 can be viewed as a whole in its presentation of common attacks and defences on important issues. The first was the question of the personal integrity of the five Apologists. These had taken great pains in their Apologetical Narration to stress their own virtuous careers. They claimed that they had vigorously fought against the evils of Laudian Episcopacy, which "took hold upon our consciences long before some others of our brethren (i.e. the Presbyterians)".[1] Had they not been deprived of their settled ministeries, and exposed to personal violence and persecution - so much so, that they had been forced into exile in order to enjoy the ordinances of Christ?[2] In exile they had every reason to be true to their consciences and follow the church-

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1. An Apologeticall Narration, p.2.
2. William Bridge was silenced by Bishop Wren in 1636 in Norwich, and in the same year Jeremiah Burroughes was suspended from the rectory of Tivetshall in Norfolk. Philip Nye went to Holland in 1633 after suffering for his nonconformity, and Sidrach Simpson suffered persecution from Laud in London, where he had held a curacy and lectureship at St. Margaret, Fish Street. However, not quite all the Apologists were forced into exile; Thomas Goodwin seems to have resigned his vicarage of Trinity Church Cambridge voluntarily and was probably an unattached preacher in London from 1634 until his departure for Holland in 1639. See D.N.B.

The case of Jeremiah Burroughes is especially interesting. Edwards accused him of fleeing to Holland in great haste because of some indiscreet speeches in favour of Independency and his attitude to the Scottish war. (T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.19). Burroughes told his version of his removal to Rotterdam in A Vindication of Mr. Burroughes, 23 July 1646, pp. 19-22, E.345(14). This was that he was deprived by Wren, stayed with the Earl of Warwick for some months, and was then called by a citizen of Norwich, a member of the Rotterdam church, to join William Bridge there "in the work of the Lord". Burroughes claimed that the call came before he was accused of publicly vindicating the Scottish war.

government of Christ, since they were not subservient to political considerations;

"We had no new Common-wealths to rear, to frame Church-government unto ... to cause the least variation by us from the Primitive pattern; We had no State-ends or Politicall interests to comply with ... No preferment or worldly respects to shape our opinions for ..." [1]

They had been respected by the Dutch churches as fellow brethren, and accorded the full privileges of orthodox churches.[2]

The opponents of the Apologists thought little of such claims, and sought to use them to discredit the five. Adam Stewart felt that even if such boasts were true, they would not merit more praise than most Presbyterians, who had suffered in silence.

"Have not other men as good reason as ye, to be true unto their consciences, since they are all bound under the pain of eternall condemnation to that duty? ... Have not these (whom ye call Presbyterians) ... as great reason to be true to their consciences, as ye can have?" [3]

Presbyterians deduced that the Apologists' exile was neither enforced, nor any great hardship. Thomas Edwards and Adam Stewart both accused them of deliberately avoiding hard times in England by fleeing to prosperity in Holland.[4] Dr. Homes, the "Cooler", had denied this, saying that the Apologists'

"exile ... was but as voluntary, as the Seamens casting their lading in to the Sea, to save themselves from drowning. They took no more then Christ gave them: when they persecute you in one place, fly into another, as Christ and his parents did".

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1. An Apologeticall Narration, pp.3-4.
2. Ibid., p.7. See above, p.16.
3. A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, p.10. Roger Williams pointed out that sectarians had suffered as well as Presbyterians and Independents; Queries of Highest Consideration, p.9.
4. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.2; A.S., An Answer to a Libell, p.37.

They escaped so as to keep "themselves for a reserve, to assist the Church at their return".[1] Adam Stewart had an instant retort to this;

"I must say they were very provident in foreseeing such an extraordinary case, and prudent in preserving their persons, whereas the others sacrificed their lives for Christ's truth".[2]

Presbyterians soon discounted the Apologists' claim to have discovered their principles in the peace and political vacuum of their exile. Edwards thought that they had been Independent in sympathy before their departure, since some did not come to the sacraments in England, and

"one of you five told .... some friends that he had found out a forme of Church-government as farre beyond M. Cartwrights, as his was beyond that of Bishops."

Moreover, inquired Edwards, had not some of them, together with other ministers and gentlemen, joined in an Independent way at Missenden in Buckinghamshire, the winter prior to their departure to Holland?[3] Edwards made another interesting but unsubstantiated charge with regard to the Apologists' claim to have had no political motivation for their Independency. He stated;

"You had also, some ends, and interests, and worldly respects to comply with in your going into Holland, rather then New England which you first intended: and these may fitly be termed State-ends, and politicall interests, namely that when some great persons, Lords and others should be forced, through the badnesse of the

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1. N. Homes, A Coole Conference, p.12.
2. A.S., An Answer to a Libell, p.38.
3. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.22. Whether Edwards taunts were valid or not, it is likely that the Apologists had congregational sympathies prior to their exile. In 1633 Thomas Goodwin had conferred with John Cotton, then on his way to New England. Burroughes was known to be of a suitable persuasion to minister to the Rotterdam church. D.N.B.

times (as was expected and feared) to seek for shelter in Providence and Hispaniola, you might be there ready to remove with them, and be taken along into those Countreys, where you hoped to set up new Churches, and subdue those Countreyes and people which should come over, into your mould".1

The relationship of the five brethren to the Dutch reformed churches was also disputed by Presbyterians. Adam Stewart argued that since they had so far enjoyed fellowship in England, the Dutch were merely continuing this precedent, and anyway

"we know not, upon what grounds ye were tolerated in the Netherlands; whether it was not in consideration of your precedent afflictions, hoping that ye might submit your selves to Presbyteriall Government in your own Countrey, if it were well establisht; or in favour of some Merchants; by publike or private authoritie, Ecclesiasticall or Civill, or other wayes. Onely we say, That many Sects are tolerated there ..." 2

Alexander Forbes believed that the brethren were cordially received by the Dutch only because the churches in which they ministered had been formerly Presbyterian,[3] whilst Edwards claimed to have received information from a Dutch minister proving that the magistrates at Rotterdam only tolerated their churches for economic reasons;

"to gather company to them which is for the profit of the place yet the Churches there (I *meane the Dutch*) *never approved of the* course held there by these Brethren and their people".[4]

Having cast these aspersions on the past careers of the Apologists, the Presbyterian pamphleteers sought to disprove the

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.28.
2. A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, p.19.
3. A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, p.24. He cited the church at Rotterdam, which only "declined" into Independency under Mr. Peter.
4. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.55. The Rotterdam church consisted of wealthy clothiers and other merchants.

necessity of writing the Apology at all. The five brethren had stated that they felt compelled to defend themselves against confused outcries impugning their way but their opponents hotly denied the validity of this motive. Thomas Edwards thought that mere "confused exclamations, interpretatively reflecting on you" were very poor excuses for the Apology, whilst Adam Stewart observed that the honour shown by Parliament's nominating them to the Assembly ought to have been sufficient protection against any calumnies and aspersions.[1] Alexander Forbes decided that the only motives the Independents followed were opportunism and their own advantage; previously these were best served by silence, but now it would appear that they necessitated an Apology.[2] The five brethren had in fact specified that certain publications had prejudiced opinion against them, which Edwards clarified as being the works of Paget and Voetius in the Netherlands, Herle's "The Independency on Scriptures of the Independency of Churches", Rutherford's "A Peaceable and Temperate Plea for Paul's Presbytery", and the work of another Scot, probably Gillespie's "An Assertion of the Government of the Church of Scotland".[3] Dr. Homes later claimed that Rutherford's work had perturbed the Apologists, while John Goodwin felt that Rutherford's and Herle's pamphletshad deliberately prejudged Assembly debates, and "set the tongues of men to a warre".[4]

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1. An Apologeticall Narration, p.1; T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.5; A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, p.2.
2. A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, p.16.
3. An Apologeticall Narration, p.15; T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp.232-3;
4. N. Homes, A Coole Conference, p.10; J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., p.25.

But since most of these works had been published long before the Apology appeared, the Presbyterians could with some truth maintain that the reason they were now being answered was pure opportunism. In any case, Presbyterians did not consider that these works had injured the Independents personally.[1]

Opponents of the Apologists were divided as to whether the Apology broke the Calamy House Agreement, or whether it was an inadequate fulfilment of the promise made in that agreement to produce an account of their tenets. In the final analysis, they used both arguments to advantage. Edwards thought the Apologists ought to have forborne "a little longer from telling fine stories of yourselves", yet at the same time he complained that the Independents had constantly failed to produce an account of their church system, although

> "at full meetings of the Ministers they have been spoken unto, and some Ministers have been sent from the Company to some, or one of them, and the Narrative was promised at such a time, and then at such a time, yet it was never performed".[2]

William Rathband was disappointed in the Apology;

> "of late some of the said brethren that had formerly promised the Narrative, published a Narration apologeticall, which seemed in title to me a performance of the former ingagement; but when I had read it, I found it nothing lesse, as being neither full nor cleare as a Narration ought to be".[3]

Alexander Forbes also urged the Apologists to produce "a more exact and scholastique Relation of their judgements in point of difference",

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.233.
2. Ibid, pp.9, 242-3.
3. W. Rathband, A Briefe Narration of some Church Courses, sig. A2 verso.

since he complained that the Apology gave no clear picture of their Independency, being concerned to conceal "most of all their differences from us, and delivering some onely in gernerall termes ..." [1] Thomas Welde duly defended the Apologists from such charges, as he claimed that the Apology was certainly a rational explanation of their way, and was no more a breaking of the Agreement than the Presbyterians' letter to Scotland telling the Scots that they would further their government. He added,

"Now for him to binde our hands, and seale up our mouthes, and then underhand at the same time to fore-determine the matter, and bee ingaged in that way ... and yet to accuse us for breaking Factions, seemes neither rationall nor faire".[2]

The Presbyterians were unanimous that the five brethren had injured the Assembly by their sudden publication of the Apology. Since the Apologists had appealed to Parliament, Presbyterians felt that they had slighted the Assembly and implied that the civil powers were more important in church affairs. Stewart insisted,

"being Divines, ye should rather first have consulted with the Assembly of Divines, your Brethren, then so ex abrupto, gone to the Civill Magistrate, that arrogates not to himself, any directive power in matters of Religion ... who for this effect, hath convocate an Assembly of Prophets, and would not undertake it himself".[3]

Stewart felt that they ought to have made such apologetical professions before they took their seats as Assembly members, and now they had so imprudently published this work, they should quit the Assembly, and appear as open partisans for their cause.

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1. A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, pp.3-4.
2. T. Welde, An Answer to W.R., pp. 1-3 (p.3. quoted). Welde professed that not all the "Independent Brethren in London" had known of the Calamy House Agreement, and could be excused for breaking it!
3. A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, pp.4-5.

For

"what else have ye done, but erected an Assembly in the Assembly, a particular Assembly in a publike Assembly ... and in one word an Assembly to overthrow the Assembly?" [1]

Defenders of the Apologists ridiculed Stewart's logic. The Assembly was meeting in order to discuss church discipline and doctrine, and the Apology was concerned with such matters. If the five brethren should leave the Assembly because they had published their Apologetical Narration, then so should the Scots Commissioners for answering it![2] This provoked a debate as to whether or not the Assembly had publicly thanked the Scots Commissioners for their book "Reformation ... Cleered", and thus intimated their approval, whereas they had never thanked the brethren for their Apology. Dr. Homes believed that the Scots Commissioners had not been thanked for the reply itself, but merely for having the courtesy to hand the book to the Assembly for perusal.[3] Adam Stewart laughed at Homes' feeble argument;

"He would make this grave Assembly very ridiculous ... if it had nothing else to doe, but to imploy so much time in voting thankes for so small a matter, viz. for a two-penny book. If it be so, wherefore voted it not thankes for the Apologeticall Narration, which was a great deale bigger, and sold 6d?" [4]

Stewart decided that in any case, the Apologists were not fit to be Assembly-members, as their Apology, with its plea for a toleration, indicated that they would not accept the Assembly's

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1. A.S. Some Observations and Annotations, preface (quoted) and pp.1,5. Stewart was echoed by T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.9.
2. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., p.24.
3. N. Homes A Coole Conference, p.3.
4. A.S., An Answer to a Libell, p.20.

conclusions after a fair debate. Meanwhile, they permitted the divines to discuss their opinions day in and day out, as if they had nothing better to do![1] John Goodwin retorted that the Apology was not a demonstration of lack of confidence in the Assembly, but a document prepared in accordance with Parliament's request for information on divisions within the Assembly.[2]

Goodwin could provide cogent reasons not only to prove that the Apologists had not offended Assembly protocol, but also to show that they had not offended the Parliament. This raised the Erastian issue again, which Stewart had tried to evade by saying the civil powers did not "arrogate" authority in church matters. Goodwin immediately seized upon Stewart's words to argue that there was a need for the Apologists to defend Parliamentary power in this respect;

> "Mark how this fellow A.S. supposeth it arrogancie in the Parliament to have any directive power in matters of Religion, in case the Assembly (which God forbid) should mistake. Surely by this bold expression he would not have the Parliament judge of the reasons of the Assembly in case of dissent. Least of all doth A.S. consider that the Parliament are Members of many excellent Churches; That they laid down the Common Prayer book in their houses before some Presbyterians could see reason, to do so".

Goodwin stressed that although Parliament respected the Assembly, M.Ps would not "take things meerly upon trust, but see with their own eyes".[4] Parliament had not seen fit to criticise the Apology, and would not expect Assembly-members to be blackmailed into complying with Assembly decisions.[5]

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1. A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, p.68.
2. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., p.23.
3. A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, p.5.
4. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., p.30.
5. Ibid., pp.19,25.

Thomas Edwards, for the Presbyterians, argued that the Apologists were insulting both Parliament and Assembly in assuming that without their narration these bodies would not "follow the streame of public interest and leave the streame of the Word". He scoffed that the Apologists knew that their party in the Assembly would quickly be outvoted, although he thought Parliament had been overgenerous in giving them such a good representation in the synod, which did not correspond with the national situation.[1] Alexander Forbes judged correctly that the Independents' sudden regard for Parliamentary authority in church matters would soon wither if they were refused their toleration;

> "so the Parliament must cleare and resolve your Ecclesiasticall controversies and differences, judge what is Independencie, what not, what Government is the best, what is Schisme, what not, I can yet hardly perswade my selfe you thinke the Parliament the fittest Judge in such causes".[2]

But John Goodwin and other Independents cannot be blamed for fearing that the Presbyterians would prejudice the Parliament against them; one group was no more acting with impartial regard for Parliament than was the other.[3]

Accusations were also directed against the Apology on the grounds that it was unrepresentative of Independent opinion. Thomas Edwards found it indeed remarkable that the five brethren,

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp.255-7.
2. A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, p.17.
3. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., p.3.

who had disagreed among themselves in the Low Countries, could summon enough unanimity to produce an Apologetical Narration. Although the boasts made in that work might apply to some, they did not cover them all, and certainly not the entire Independent group.[1] Adam Stewart had also wondered whether the Apologists were speaking merely for themselves, or for all who shared their tenets, but had arguments ready for both eventualities;

"And if in the name of you five onely, the Penners and Contrivers thereof; Whether ye five can arrogate a power unto your selves, to maintain these Tenets, as the constant opinion of all your Churches, having no generall Confession of their Faith thereabout? If in the name of all the rest, we desire ye would shew your Commission from all your Churches, by what authoritie ye do it? Or if ye do it without Commission and Authoritie from them, if that be not to assume unto your selves a greater Authoritative power, then that ye call Presbyteriall? yea then ever was the Episcopall?" [2]

Presbyterian pamphleteers also considered that the Apology showed the Independents' total disregard for the Covenant. In the "Coole Conference," Homes had reminded readers that the Covenant did not *enforce obedience to the Scottish church, but* merely obliged men to defend it against the common foe, and to respect it in the light of God's word. Thus

"it is as evident as if written with a Sunne beame, that the Churches of England have not ingaged themselves to come down to you, or do bind you to come to us".[3]

Adam Stewart vigorously opposed the "Cooler's" reasoning; just because the Covenant allowed of some fallibility this did not mean that Scottish Presbyterianism was erring on every point disputed

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp.13-5. E.g. some might not have gathered congregations, but others had.
2. A.S. Some Observations and Annotations, p.3.
3. N. Homes, A Coole Conference, p.1.

with the Independents! By the same logic "we might as well conclude our Brethren should quit their Tenets, and come to us".[1] But Homes was defended by another Independent, who was sure the "Cooler" had only interpreted the Covenant in the sense intimated to him by "divers eminent men in the Assembly of both judgments". He added,

> "It is a hard bone to swallow, to sweare absolutely to a reformation of Religion ... without explayning it by the words ... according to the Word of God ... Therefore the worthy Commissioners of Scotland doe favour that our interpretation in their Cleered reformation, in their grave profession that their Church may admit of further reformation".[2]

Yet although Edwards agreed with Stewart that the Covenant and a toleration of Independency were opposed, he did state that

> "the Commissioners of the Church of Scotland were not sent hither to put their government upon us ... the Covenant ... doth not tye us to the Reformation of the Church of Scotland".[3]

He was clearly trying to appease those Presbyterians who feared Scottish dominance, but such a statement was later to prove rather embarrassing. It was not only the Independents who interpreted the Covenant loosely.

The opprobrious Apology was generally regarded by Presbyterian writers as highly schismatical. Adam Stewart cited the "divisions and immortall hatreds" Independency had bred in New England, and was

> "perswaded im my conscience, that your opinion of Independency, etc. if it were admitted ... could not but prove the root of all sort of Schisme, and Heresie, and consequently the utter overthrow of Christ's Universall Militant Church here upon Earth".[4]

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1. A.S., An Answer to a Libell, pp.12-3.
2. Amon, C.C. the Covenanter Vindicated from Perjurie, p.15.
3. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp.259 (quoted), and 286.
4. A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, p.13, sig. A verso.

The Apologists had strongly denied that they intended to separate from the national church or raise a division in the kingdom, and claimed they were free of "such spirit of faction and division or of pride and singularity, (which are the usual grounds of all Schisme)".[1] But they failed to convince Thomas Edwards, who recited the divisions in their exile congregations and announced that they were the root of all schism in "forsaking our publike Assemblies ... notwithstanding all the Reformation begun, and that which is likely to be perfected".[2] Dr. Homes and John Goodwin tried desperately to defend the Apologists from the charge of schism;

"in New England that which you call independency, hath not procured, but cured, or purged out heresies, schismes, formalitie, prophanenesse, more then some other Kingdoms that so hate and hitt at mis-called Independency".[3]

But Adam Stewart considered that the Independents were as bad as the Anabaptists, whom he thought many Independents held in good esteem.[4] In hotly denying Stewart's claim, one Independent used a clever logical ploy to twist Stewart's arguments to the Independents' advantage;

"Anabaptists and independents agree in all things save one (says. A.S.) and by and by after takes away quite almost that one difference too. So that if A.S. his forme of argument bee good that way against the Independents, it is as fully good ... against the Presbyterians".[5]

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1. An Apologeticall Narration, p.24.
2. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp36-7, 199 (quoted). Edwards cited a dispute in Thomas Goodwin's Amheim congregation over a service of anointing the sick with oil, and hymn-singing (relatively minor matters).
3. A Coole Conference, p.9; J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S. (quoted),p.18.
4. A.S., An Answer to a Libell, pp.3-4.
5. Anon, C.C. the Covenanter Vindicated from Perjurie, p.10.

Finally, claimed the Presbyterians, the Apology represented a suing for toleration on the part of its authors. The final paragraph of the Apologetical Narration had requested

"a subsistance ... in our own land ... with the enjoyment of the ordinances of Christ ... with the allowance of a latitude to some lesser differences with peaceablenesse".[1]

John Goodwin insisted that this was a plea for accommodation within a national settlement, which would preclude the need for toleration. He argued;

"Friend A.S. Toleration is of things unlawfull. We are not friend A.S. come to that yet ... You tell the five ministers that to live quietly without troubling the State, they may have it appearingly unsought. Let the world judge, whether there be not a saucie jeere ... I would A.S. had made use of that toleration, and then he had not so intolerably troubled a Kingdome".[2]

But whereas Stewart had distinguished between a public toleration (erecting separatist churches without incurring legal penalties) and a private toleration (living quietly without their own churches and not interfering in religious or political matters), Goodwin ignored such different types of toleration. For if the Independents were to fail in their bid for accommodation, they would require the public toleration.[3]

Both Presbyterian and Independent pamphleteers put the onus of unity upon their opponents. John Goodwin felt that since the Independents desired union in the truth, it was the duty of the Presbyterians to tolerate them and "not offend the consciences of brethren".[4] Alexander Forbes believed that the Independents should

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1. An Apologeticall Narration, p.31.
2. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., p.28.
3. A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, p.3.
4. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., p.18.

give way, since the Apology stressed that they expected to receive progressive illumination of the truth;

"I grant this is a good Principle where men are so uncertaine and jealous as they were, and hope this Principle may be a meanes of their union with us in the end, which is the thing our soules breathe after".[1]

Yet both he and Edwards thought that this "principle of mutability" could also prove most dangerous, since it was

"excellent for unstable men ... libertins, and running heads that love no fixed nor setled government ... but pernitious and sad for Nationall Churches and Kingdomes".

Edwards hoped that Parliament would realise the danger of tolerating such men who could change their views overnight. Now they might hold much in accordance with the established rule, but what of the future?[2] In brief, unity could not be expected whilst both sides expected it to come through the surrender of their opponents.

The Significance of the Pamphlet Controversy, 1643-4 and later.

When he replied to Samuel Rutherford's "The Due Right of Presbyteries", Richard Mather observed that he would rather bring "Prayers and teares" to quench the fires of controversy than "fewell or oyle for the increasing thereof".[3] But the tragedy of the pamphlet war begun in 1643-4, was that the many tracts now published were fuel to the controversy. Moreover, the conflict

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1. A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, p.29. (cf. An Apologeticall Narration, p.10).
2. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp.85-6.
3. R. Mather, A Reply to Mr. Rutherfurd, 8 May 1647, preface, E. 386(9).

was exacerbated in full view of the public. Due to the Calamy House Agreement, the people of London and the country had been kept in ignorance of the theoretical divergencies between the two groups, although individual ministers might have imparted some information verbally to their flocks. So far they had been obliged to rely on newsbooks for tales of Assembly debates, unless they happened to be acquainted with an Assembly-member. Yet the people would hear of gathered congregations in certain areas, and the divines in the Assembly knew that there were "great divisions about the setling of the Church; amongst those good Christians whom they deerly love in the Lord".[1] Now the people's curiosity could be satisfied.

As soon as the differences were explained in lengthy and well annotated pamphlets, the educated public could read and digest them at their leisure, checking the Scriptural references provided. It cannot be proved how far the pamphlet literature was read by the literate public, but it is fair to assume that the constant stream of pamphlets was motivated by rather more than clerical demand. A clerical faction-fight alone would not necessitate one thousand copies of the "Coole Conference" to be printed,[2] nor merit such frequent references in the popular newsbooks. Adam Eyre was certainly an eager student of Saltmarsh and Ley's later pamphlets on the Presbyterian-Independent dispute, and was in the

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1. Remarkable Passages, No.8, 29 December 1643, ultimate page, E.79(26).
2. Anon, C.C. The Covenanter Vindicated from Perjurie, p.8.

habit of exchanging tracts with his friends,[1] Almost certainly it would not be just the ministers who gathered in the City or in Westminster Hall to pass on the latest religious gossip.[2] If only ministers were involved, why should Forbes be so concerned that the "popular eye" should have rational arguments on which to feed, for fear that it would be misled by the specious arguments of the Independents?[3]

Participation in the Presbyterian-Independent disputes certainly cannot be limited to the well-educated classes. Pamphleteers constantly (and patronisingly) stressed the necessity of protecting the "weaker brethren" from their opponents. Adam Stewart certainly believed that some "common people" would learn of John Goodwin's work, and censured him for writing anonymously and thus hindering "the common people .... in reading of hereticall and unsound instead of Orthodox and sound Books".[4] The common folk, frequently criticised in pamphlets for their Brownist learnings,[5] were doubtless less interested in academic theological proofs for one way or another, and more guided by emotional commitments to preachers and dislike of clerical

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1. Adam Eyre was a captain in the Parliamentary army. A. Eyre, "A Dyurnall, or Catalogue of all my accions and expences from the 1st of January 1646" in Yorkshire Diaries and Autobiographies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, (Durham, Surtees Society, LXV (1877) pp.10,23-4.
2. A.S., An Answer to a Libell, p.5.
3. A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, pp.7-9.
4. A. Stewart, Zerubbabel to Sanballat and Tobiah: or The First Part of the Duply to M.S., alias Two Brethren, 21 March 1644-5, p. 71, E.274(14).
5. E.g. The Brownists' Conventicle, 1641, E.164(13).

pretension. Soon their tastes would become an important factor in the emergence of the Marpriest tracts and similar scurrilous literature, which simplified the Presbyterian-Independent dispute into an attack on clerical power and a defence of individual religious liberty.

The pamphlet controversies were also eagerly devoured by ministers, particularly in the many areas where Independent ministers were few and their principles almost unknown. John Owen, who counted himself a Presbyterian in 1644, would directly attribute his conversion to Independency to his study (sometime between 1644-6) of John Cotton's "The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven";

> "I set myself to inquire into the controversies then warmly agitated in these nations. Of the Congregational way I was not acquainted with one person, minister or other; nor had I, to my knowledge, seen any more than one in my life ... But sundry books being published on either side, I perused them and compared them with the Scripture and one another, according as I received ability from God. After a general view of them, as was my manner in other controversies I fixed on one to take under peculiar consideration and examination... Mr. Cotton's book of the Keys ... (whereupon) I was prevailed on to receive that and those principles which I had thought to have set myself in an opposition unto".[1]

Owen would not be the only minister to study the conflict in this way, although some, like Ralph Josselin, waited until the political situation made the study rather more urgent.[2]

The pamphlet controversy was centred on London where books

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1. Quoted in The Correspondence of John Owen 1616-1683, ed. P. Toon, (Cambridge, 1970) pp.19-20.
2. Josselin read works by Thomas Hooker, John Cotton and Robert Baillie in November 1648! The Diary of Ralph Josselin, ed. E. Hockcliffe, p.60.

and pamphlets were readily available. In the provinces books were less easily obtained, although they could be ordered through friends in London, and evidence exists that "country-carriers" bought material in London for provincial readers.[1] Since some of the ministers in the Assembly had congregations far removed from London, including Nye and Bridge, it is reasonable to presume that a fair demand existed in the provinces for pamphlet literature. Nevertheless, the London public would have the best opportunity to acquaint themselves with the dispute. In the city pamphlets could be bought at the shops of booksellers and publishers, where copies might also be borrowed.[2] Prices were moderate but not cheap; the Apology cost 6d.,[3] although thinner works would cost less: one Presbyterian deliberately produced a concise account of his church-discipline for "such as either want Money to buy, or Leasure to read larger Tracts".[4] There is evidence that the shops themselves became a hub of intellectual ferment. The shop of the Presbyterian publisher Ralph Smith in Cornhill was the scene of "some discourse about Liberty of Conscience and Tolerations", whilst the Presbyterian Ralph Ballamy's shop was renowned for its groans against London heretics.[5]

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1. J. Cleveland, The Character of a London Diurnall, 13 February 1646-7, p.2, E.375(22):- "The Countrey-Carrier, when he buyes it for their Vicar ..."
2. Anon, Tub-Preachers Overturn'd, 16 April 1647, p.7, E.384(7). This recommended a book of Bastwick's that could be "bought or borrowed at the Book-seller shop over against London stone".
3. A.S., An Answer to a Libell, p.20. The Apology was 31 pages long, and other tracts were far longer.
4. Anon, The Main Points of Church Government and Discipline, 17 January 1648-9, E.1182(11).
5. Ralph Smith, who published the "Antapologia" and the "Scotish Dove", among other Presbyterian works, had his shop near the Exchange, itself a centre of gossip. While Edwards was in Smith's shop, Mr. Cole, a bookseller at the Old Bailey, denounced toleration. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, 26 February 1645-6, p.111, E.323(2). The shop of Ralph Bellamy, a Presbyterian elder, was mentioned by J. Burroughes, A Vindication of Mr. Burroughes, 23 July 1646, p.9. E.345(14).

But pamphlets were announced to the London public by more direct methods than shop displays. Streetsellers would tout works, crying out their titles, and adding such appeals as "Buy Mr. Calamie's answer to Mr. Burton!" to the cacophony of the London streets.[1] Many authors would openly advertise their efforts by setting up "Titles in all places of the City, at Church doors, Exchange etc", i.e. by placing advertisements to the doors and walls of public places.[2] Advertisements could easily be removed however, and by 1647 Bastwick was complaining that Independents pulled down his "titles" wherever they were set up.[3]

Thus in 1643-4 the public in London and beyond were treated to their first extensive taste of the clerical dispute. Pamphlets investigated their opponents' theological principles and personal integrity, and extremists threatened to destroy hopes of unity through bitter words and sharp retorts. As clashes in the Assembly grew, pamphleteers were inevitably worsening the polarisation between the two groups. One Presbyterian supporter was so anxious to deprive the populace of the Independents'

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1. H. Burton, Truth, still Truth, though Shut out of doores, 9 January 1645-6, p.1. E.315(6). The stationers complained that sempsters and other "emissaries of such base condition" were street sellers. W. Haller, Tracts on Liberty in the Puritan Revolution 1638-47, vol.i, p.47.
2. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part II, 28 May 1646, p.48, E.338(12).
3. J. Bastwick, The Storming of the Anabaptists Garrisons, 3 June 1647, pp.2,11. E.390(23). Bastwick claimed that one night the Independents destroyed 300 pasted "titles" of his "The Utter Routing of the whole Army of all the Independents and Sectaries" (1646), and altogether pulled down 1100 "titles" over a period of time.

version of the dispute that he removed copies of "A Coole Conference" from the printers, despite Independent assurances that it had been duly licensed according to law;

> "three hundred as the Printer saith were for a time taken by one, it was done by the same illegal violence as the Pamphleter A.S. takes away honest mens good name. Six hundred were sold, and one hundred may yet be bought in open shop ... The other are promised to be restored, or the Law promiseth to fetch them with advantage".[1]

But the pamphlet war defied suppression.

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1. Anon, C.C. the Covenanter Vindicated from Perjurie, p.8.

Chapter Five.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE PAMPHLET WAR. January 1643 - July 1644.

II: PRESBYTERIAN VERSUS INDEPENDENT: WORSHIP AND DISCIPLINE.

"Now first did most Englishmen hear of the dispute between Presbytery and Independency, and learn what it was all about".

ed. J. Bruce, The Quarrel between the Earl of Manchester and Oliver Cromwell, (Camden Society, new series, XII, 1875, p.xxx).

"our difference 'tis such as doth at most but ruffle a little the fringe, not any way rend the Garment of Christ ... 'tis the Character of a close Atheist ... to hate a different opinion more than a contrary religion, nay, than no Religion at all ..."

C. Herle, The Independency on Scriptures of the Independency of Churches, 2 May 1643, preface, E.100(14).

Professor Yule has insisted that although "the theoretical doctrine of Independency was very similar to Presbyterianism", a new form of congregationally based government and the ideal of toleration did separate the Independents from Presbyterians.[1] But he did not further elaborate on the complex details of the two systems that were to occasion such fervent pamphleteering from 1643 onwards. Professor Hexter has stated that "the average Puritan commoner" was unable to "choose between real Presbyterianism and real Independency because those alternatives were never offered him."[2] But what was real Presbyterianism and real Independency? If the terms have any meaning they must refer to the theoretical systems explained by ministers in pamphlets published after the Scottish, Dutch and New England models had permeated English thought, and before the Erastian issue had arisen to complicate Presbyterianism and the necessity of toleration had forced Independents (particularly the radicals) into an increasingly sectarian position. For although neither theory was ever static, and completely fixed, they were more so in 1644 than at any other time in 1640-8. Certainly the average Englishman could never choose "real" Presbyterianism, because when the national church was established along Presbyterian lines, it was the Erastian version of Presbyterianism. Yet men could - and did - choose "real" Independency, as any member of a gathered church who recognised his parish church as valid (if impure) could verify.

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1. G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, pp.11-7.
2. J.H. Hexter, "The Problem of the Presbyterian Independents" in Reappraisals in History, p.180.

Despite the facts that theoretical norms were always adapted by individuals, that the Independents never produced a categorical model of their way, and the Presbyterians were not all united over every aspect of the Assembly's conclusions on church-government, the pamphlets of 1643-4 do present a standard that would be followed in many details by the eventual national Presbyterian church, and by semi-separatist congregations. Inevitably heavily reliant on the Scottish Presbytery and the New England national Independent system, these pamphlets, many written by Scots and New Englanders, both reflected and conditioned the views of the "average" Presbyterian or Independent, allowing those sufficiently intellectually inclined to savour the competing theological theories of "real" Presbyterianism and "real" Independency. They presented to a wider audience arguments that had been already (or would be soon) heard in the Assembly.

John Wilson has tentatively suggested an interesting hypothesis that consistent millenarianism was a theological expression of emerging Independency;

> "Generally it is held that Independency primarily grew out of disputes over specific issues essentially involving church polity and practice; it seems likely that these particular issues should be seen as derived from and sustained by convictions concerning the character of that historical epoch and its significance within sacred history".

Whilst admitting that more work must be done on the subject, he believed that leading Independents betrayed millenarian tendencies.[1]

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1. J.F. Wilson, Pulpit in Parliament, (Princeton 1969), pp.223-9, (p.229 quoted).

Certainly they did - but so did many Presbyterians. As Baillie commented, "the most of the chief divines here, not only Independents, but others, such as Twisse, Marshall, Palmer, and many more, are express Chiliasts".[1] It is certainly true that as a group the Independents were more millenarian than the Presbyterians, and when two competing catechisms were published in 1647, the Independent catechism significantly associated progressive comprehension of truth with an approaching millenium.[2] But the difference between Presbyterians and Independents on this issue was one of degree. Dr. Lamont has shown how widely eschatological ideas pervaded English intellectual life at this time,[3] and J.F. Wilson's hypothesis cannot provide the essential distinction between the two groups.

Nor was the distinction one of theological doctrine, since the Apologists insisted that they were orthodox in doctrine,[4] neither Socinians, nor Antinomians and their like. The Presbyterians and Independents differed in their views on church government or discipline, although the Apologists professed that even

> "in matters of Discipline we are so farre from holding up the differences that occur, or making the breaches greater or wider, that we endeavour upon all such occasions to grant and yeeld ... to the utmost latitude of our light and consciences".[5]

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1. Baillie, ii, 156.
2. The Presbyterian Catechisme, and the Independent Catechisme, both dated 3 June 1647, E.1182(7) and E.1182(8). For an example of Independent millenarianism, see Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes, ed. W.H.D. Longstaffe (Durham, Surtees Society, L,1867) p.132, describing Cuthbert Sydenham.
3. W.M. Lamont, Godly Rule: Politics and Religion 1603-1660.
4. An Apologeticall Narration, pp.28-9.
5. Ibid., p.29.

Church discipline was considered of vital importance to the godly reformation, and disputes about it could render basic theological concord almost irrelevant. Yet even in church government, the Presbyterians and Independents had much in common.

The True Church.

The essence of the Presbyterian-Independent conflict concerned the vital issue of where power ultimately rested in the church - in the church officers, or in the church members; in the presbytery, or in the congregation. This in turn hinged on the complex question of the constitution of the "true church", a matter sustaining most religious controversies in the seventeenth century, and involving many confusions. Thus, although generalisations are valid, the conclusions of individual Presbyterians and Independents cannot always be assumed to be the exact views of all others of their groups.

It would be easy to delineate the Presbyterian-Independent conflict in terms of a "catholic" versus a "particularist" view of the church, and this distinction contains much truth. But it can obscure the complexities of both the Presbyterian and Independent positions. All Presbyterians felt that the true church was catholic in that it was wider than one particular congregation. It is interesting to note that when a Baptist, Captain Freeman, taunted the Presbyterian Gracious Francklin with the epithet "Nationall Presbyterian" in 1647, Francklin replied that

"All Presbyterians (that understand) even those that approve of a Church National, do yet look upon such a Church as much below their principles. They extend a Church ... beyond a Church Nationall: In short they extend it as far as Jesus Christ's Commission is extended".[1]

Samuel Hudson clarified this concept by stressing that the true universal catholic church was the "ecclesia prima" and each congregation and presbytery were the "ecclesiae ortae", forming parts of the total catholic community of the church. Discipline (church government) was the prerogative of the church as a whole, and no one congregation could assume this privilege to itself. Yet an Independent, John Ellis, believed that not all Presbyterians shared Hudson's concept (although he failed to cite examples) and that

"there is not onely no one Presbyterian could hitherto be shewed to be of that judgement, till the sitting of this Assembly ... but also divers evidenced to be against it".[2]

Ellis had a point, since this view of a universal church must have been too reminiscent of Popery for many divines, but all Presbyterians accepted the concept of a national catholic church as the basis for church government, and Ellis himself confessed that the "catholic" view was the main foundation of Presbytery.

The Presbyterians, therefore, had a catholic concept of faith and church government, whereas the Independents had a catholic view of faith and Christian brotherhood, but a particularist

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1. G. Francklin, A Soft Answer to Captain Freeman's Passionate Book, 14 March 1647-8, p.15, E.432(4). For Freeman's taunts, see A brief description of a Conference betwixt a Nationall Presbyterian and an Independent (so called), 1647. B.M. 701 g.65.
2. S. Hudson, The Essence and Unitie of the Church Catholike Visible, 8 March 1644-5, p.25, E.271(19); J. Ellis, Vindiciae Catholicae, Or the Rights of Particular Churches Rescued ... against that meer ... motion of one Catholick, Visible, Governing Church, 24 April 1647, p.78, E.385(3).

notiom of church discipline. The problem was that many pamphleteers did not make the crucial distinction between a church that was "true" by faith, i.e. by its Christian profession, and one that was "true" by virtue of its government. Despite the Presbyterian William Rathband's assertion that "the profession of true faith is that which giveth life and being to a visible Church", most writers in practice assumed a "true church" must be judged by its discipline.[1] This made the Independent position as regards a national church even more obscure.

The Independents believed that a true church consisted of a company of believers, gathered together for worship, and bound together by a mutual profession of faith, who exercised full spiritual privileges including church discipline. Their particularist views on church government rested on their belief that worship and discipline were inseparable in a true gospel church. Christ did not intend a national church and Presbyterian bodies to govern a particular congregation; he had not instituted a congregation for worship and a national or Presbyterian church for government. As Thomas Goodwin had already stressed in Assembly debates, and was later to repeat, if a presbytery was a true church, "then Discipline must merely constitute a Church as a Church".[2] The Savoy Declaration of Faith stipulated in 1658 that Christ had given to each congregation

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1. W. Rathband, A Most Grave and Modest Confutation of the Errors of the Sect, commonly called Brownists, pp.2-3.
2. T. Goodwin, Works, vol.iv, (1696). pp.10, 76(quoted). See above, p. 150.

"all that power and authority which is in any way needful for the carrying on that order in worship and discipline ... Besides these particular churches, there is not instituted by Christ any church more extensive or catholic".[1]

Yet the Independents did not condemn a national church, but rather favoured such a body, whilst believing that a national church could never be a true gospel church, because a whole nation could not be saints. Although some Independents would "semi-separate" from the Church of England before 1643 to secure a purer pattern of worship and discipline, they did not deny the validity of the national church, as did the separatists. The Apologists believed

"that multitudes of the assemblies and parochiall congregations thereof, were the true Churches and Body of Christ, and the Ministery thereof a true Ministery".[2]

In order to maximise the chances of accommodation with the Presbyterians, Independents left their exact relationship to the national church in some doubt, but this only discredited their cause. For the Presbyterians consistently maligned them as separatists; Rathband believed that the Apologists and London separatists were "of profest correspondence and agreement ... only that they (i.e. the Apologists) have advised them to be moderate in their courses".[3] Presbyterians could not accept that Independents believed the Church of England to be true when they semi-separated

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1. B. Hanbury, Historical Memorials of the Independents, vol.iii, p.144.
2. An Apologeticall Narration, p.6.
3. W. Rathband, A Briefe Narration of some Church Courses, p.52. He asserted that Hugh Peter received the Sacrament in a London Brownist church.

from it. Adam Stewart inquired "If ye hold us a true Church, veritate logica, and morally, for a pure Church; wherefore desire ye a Toleration?" He thought the Independents held the English church to be "a true Church, as a Pocky whore, is a true Woman .... (and) in the same Categorie as Rome", that is, true only in the sense that it actually existed.[1] Edwards was convinced that the Apologists only believed parishes that approximated to their congregational ideal to be true churches, and dismissed the Apologists' claims that they held communion with the English church as their past, and not their present practice.[2] A foreigner summarised the perplexity of Presbyterians and others to the Independents' ambiguous professions of agreement with a national church;

> "this pretended Independence ingageth them .... in a manifest contradiction, for since they confesse, that the Church of England is a Body, they must necessarily avow that its parts ought to be united and tyed together, which should be absolutely impossible, should every Church be obliged to make a combination apart, and to stand Independent upon another church".[3]

The Independents' concept of a national church would ideally consist of a collection of self-governing congregations under the aegis of a sympathetic civil magistrate, with a shared Confession of Faith and brotherly meetings to symbolise their unity, similar to the New England way. This would maintain social cohesion, and stress the catholicity of the Christian faith and spiritual

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1. A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, p.17.
2. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp.48-53. The Apologists had claimed to have had their children baptised in English churches, and to have admitted Church of England members to their services, An Apologeticall Narration, p.6.
3. A letter from France to Buchanan, quoted in A. Stewart, Zerubbabel to Sanballat and Tobiah: or The First Part of the Duply to M.S., alias Two Brethren, 21 March 1644-5, p.27, E.274(14).

brotherhood, whilst keeping the particular rights of gospel churches. The Independents did not clearly establish the guidelines for such a national church, and certain inconsistencies in Independent thought were apparent. For instance, whereas many Presbyterians would insist that a minister was ordained to the catholic church, Independents felt that a minister could exercise his authority in, and be ordained to, one congregation only.[1] Yet Thomas Goodwin still felt certain ministerial functions, such as preaching, could be exercised outside the particular congregation.[2] On one occasion this ambivalence caused problems for an Apologist, who was called to preach at Brook-house in London, whereupon a crowd gathered and demanded

> "he must not preach, unlesse they heard, because they were of his flock; and himself was known to affirm, and professe he would preach no where unlesse his own people might be there".[3]

After 1660, it became necessary for Independents to clarify their relationship to a non-Independent national church, which they had deliberately avoided in the 1640s. Philip Nye did so by pronouncing that any national Christian church was ordained for the conversion of sinners, and for the public profession of faith, but only the congregational churches could be the true gospel churches for the worship and discipline of believers.[4] The Agreements of the People in 1647-8 would stress the right of

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1. For debates in the Assembly, and Presbyterian divisions there on this issue, see above, pp. 141-3. See also W. Rathband, A Briefe Narration of some Church Courses, p.42, who mocked the fact that Independent pastors and teachers could "lawfully doe no ministeriall act whatsoever in or unto any other Church".
2. T. Goodwin, Works, vol.iv, (1696), p.379.
3. A.Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, p.13.
4. D.Nobbs, "Philip Nye on Church and State", Cambridge Historical Journal, V(1935) p.43.

the civil magistrate to determine the "public way of instructing the nation".[1] But the Independents never approved of a national church in terms of discipline.

The difference between Presbyterians and Independents over the "catholic" versus the "particular" concept of church discipline was vital because of its relevance to the question of the relative power of officers and church members in a congregation. The Independent view that the "saints" had power of government within themselves was repudiated by Presbyterians, who believed that the only governing authority lay in church officers, who, elected by the people, yet represented the catholic church to the people. Rutherford distinguished the instituted or ministerial church which was "an organicall body of diverse members ... of Elders governing, and a people governed", from a "mystical church" consisting only of believers, to whom no power was accorded by Christ. Without church officers, a congregation was not a true church;

> "We prove that that which our brethren call the onely instituted visible Church of the New Testament, hath not power to administrate all the Ordinances of Christ, and how then are they a Church?".[2]

Even with officers, a congregation must be subject to the wider church of which it was a part;

> "A single Congregation is a Church; but so as it is a part also and a member of a Presbyteriall Church, and because of neernesse of communion with consociated Churches under one Presbytery".[3]

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1. S.R. Gardiner, History of the Great Civil War, (1893) vol. iii, p.393. The Agreements stressed that this "public way" should be non-compulsory.
2. S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, p.5.
3. Ibid., p.306.

Presbyterian/Independent arguments as revealed in the pamphlet war of 1643-4 embodied another confusion about the true church, namely, a question of prior origins. Which came first, the ministry or the church of believers? Clearly this issue of whether the officers created the church, or whether the church elected the officers, was of vital significance to the seat of authority in a true church. Both Presbyterians and Independents felt that officers (ministerial and lay) represented the people, but whereas the Independents believed any church had members first and then officers, the Presbyterians stressed that in the catholic church "A publick ordinary Ministery is before a Church of believers ... (it is) given to the inbringing and gathering of the Church".[1]

Rutherford imputed yet another confusion about the true church to the Independents. This concerned the nature of the visible and invisible church, the latter consisting of the saints that would sit at Christ's right hand in Heaven but the former, existing in a sinful world, consisting of both the pure and the ungodly, because only Christ knew those who would be saved at the last. Rutherford and Rathband both argued that the Independent concept of the true church approximated more to the invisible church than the visible, since they urged professed Christians to withdraw from "impure" parishioners. Rathband uttered a favourite Presbyterian argument when he insisted that Christ had compared his church to both a fish-net which drew bad fish with

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1. S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, pp.175-6.

the good, and to a field where wheat and tares grew together until the harvest.[1] Rutherford added

"But truely hypocrites are within the Church, and when their hypocrisie doth breake out into grevious scandals, they are to be cast out of the visible Church; but they cannot indeed be cast out of the invisible Church, because they were never within the same".[2]

Yet the semi-separatists never claimed that their congregations were a complete mirror of the invisible church; they knew too well that their "saints" were not always saintly. They did believe however, that their churches approximated more to the invisible church than did parochial congregations.

The debate over synodical power.

Synodical jurisdiction, often supposed to be the main Independent grievance, was important because it raised their crucial difference from the Presbyterians over the matter of whether governmental power lay with the people or with church officers. Herle put the Independent view quite fairly;

"The Independents deny to a Synod (as the name of a Church) so all manner of power of jurisdiction, either to determine, decree, censure ... for matter of jurisdiction or power of the keyes, either in excommunication, ordination or whatever censure, they hold that it is entirely, and onely, in every single Congregation (though but of two or three beleevers) and there collectively in every member thereof".[3]

Since the people elected their officers, the Independents argued that they must hold the seat of all governing authority.[4] The

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1. W. Rathband, A Most Grave and Modest Confutation of the Errors of the Sect, commonly called Brownists, p.3.
2. S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, p.277.
3. C. Herle, The Independency on Scriptures of the Independency of Churches, p.1. "Synod" is here taken to mean any presbytery higher than the congregational. The Independents did not make the same distinction as Presbyterians between classes and provincial assemblies. See below, p.310 note 1. However the pamphlet literature did not stress this point.
4. This had already been argued in the Assembly see above pp.105-6.

Presbyterians, on the other hand, believed that the congregation delegated its power to its officers, and these officers, meeting in assemblies or presbyteries, could exercise authority over a congregation. Herle had admitted in Assembly debates that the congregation was the base of authority, but could not exercise it, "the church must be the primum susceptium not of yt exercise but of yt power".[1] For he felt that synodical or presbyterian jurisdiction bore a moral validity;

> "the morall necessity of such a dependency is the thing in question, Whether it be necessary to the well-being of such a single Church or Congregation that where it stands in neighbourhood with other Churches (especially under the same civill government) that it be equally and mutually co ordinated with the rest in a dependence on the Ministeriall government of a Synod or Assembly of them all? this they deny, and we affirme".[2]

Presbyterians tried to maintain that they were not implying that one church was subordinate to another. The Scots Commissioners stressed that

> "Wee are very farre from imposing or acknowledging any such collateral power of one particular Church over another, May not of the greatest in all respects whatsoever over the smallest: for God hath made them equall one to another. The power which we maintaine, is aggregative of the Officers of many congregations over the particular members of their Corporation".[3]

This concept of "aggregative power" meant that Presbyterian authority was intrinsically derived from the congregations, and not externally imposed like Prelatical jurisdiction.

Edwards stressed that

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1. TSS. vol.i, f.141 verso.
2. C. Herle, The Independency on Scriptures of the Independency of Churches, p.4.
3. The Scots Commissioners, Reformation of Church Government in Scotland Cleered, p.24.

"particular congregations having power in themselves and amongst themselves equall power, doe in Classes and Synods conferre and execute in common their owne power, even as those who are colleagues and equall members of some politicall societie".[1]

But power in aggregate was superior to the authority of one congregation;

"every single Congregation hath equall power, one as much as another, but not one as much as that one and all the other(s) in a Synod".[2]

Rutherford believed that Christ had given power to each congregation, presbytery, provincial and national synod "according to the capacity of every part".[3]

Independents claimed that the Presbyterian idea of synodical authority being congregational power in aggregate meant that they acknowledged the congregation held real power. This fact made synodical jurisdiction irrelevant. On this issue Herle came very near to the Independents; he argued

"where there is no consociation or neighbourhood of Congregations or single Churches, ... whereto in cases of publique danger, or mutuall difference, the particulars (i,e. single churches) may have recourse, or appeale to the whole neighbourhood; there, a single Congregation must not be denied entireness of jurisdiction".[4]

But when he insisted that this instance was extraordinary, and not applicable to the ordinary rule that Christ had intended for the church, Mather and Tompson retorted that Herle had logically proved the Independency of churches. For if

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.116. The "aggregative" power argument had also been used in Assembly debates, see above, p.151.
2. C. Herle, The Independency on Scripture of the Independency of Churches, p.3.
3. S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, p.305.
4. C. Herle, The Independency on Scriptures of the Independency of Churches, p.1.

"that power of Jurisdiction doth immediately and necessarily flow from the very essence of a Church, and so belong to a Church, as it is a Church, then it will follow that this power must not be granted to be in such a Church as hath no neighbour Churches, and be denied unto one that hath".[1]

Independents also denied the concept of aggregative power because of their particularist notion of church discipline; congregations chose their own officers to rule over them, but they did not choose "their Officers to rule over themselves and others".[2] But Adam Stewart stressed that it was valid for officers to minister to other churches because their general vocation to the universal church was distinct from, although compatible with, their particular election to serve one congregation. He therefore based aggregative power on four principles; firstly, that all the presbyters had power to rule all the churches in combination, secondly, that in this combination, every presbyter or elder governed or "fed" his own church, thirdly, that all the collective body of elders had power to rule every church separately, and finally, every single elder in the combination had the power to rule all the churches in the grouping.[3]

The main argument used by Presbyterians to defend synodical power was its necessity to maintain discipline in the church. They believed that if a congregation had absolute power, it could err grossly without incurring censure, despite the Apologists' claim that they expected "to give account" to others, and desired

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1. R. Mather and W. Tompson, A Modest and Brotherly Answer to Mr. Charles Herle, pp.3-4.
2. N. Homes, A Coole Conference, pp.16-7.
3. A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, pp.30-5.

"onely a ful and entire power compleat within our selves, until we should be challenged to erre grossly".[1] Presbyterians also deplored the fact that an injured church-member could not appeal against the decision of an Independent congregation. Under the Presbyterian system appeals could be made "by either Congregations, or Members in cases of possible partiality in the said severall Congregations", to the classis, then to the provincial synod, and thence to the national assembly.[2] This would eliminate another possibility afforded by the Independent way, namely, that two or more Independent churches could mutually censure each other,

> "for if two Parish Churches have any difference, they submit themselves both to the Colloque, or to the Provinciall Assembly: if two Provinciall Synods or Assemblies differ, the Nationall Assembly judgeth betwixt them both".[3]

Surely, argued the Presbyterians, only their way could provide impartial justice.

The final Presbyterian defence for synodical discipline lay in their belief that the combined decision of Presbyterian courts against offenders was unlikely to be wrong. But Mather and Tompson disagreed - a national assembly was just as likely to make a mistake as was one congregation. Moreover, if the Presbyterians were correct, they must logically accept a truly international church, since

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1. An Apologeticall Narration, p.14.
2. C. Herle, The Independency on Scriptures of the Independency of Churches, p.1; A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, p.26. Herle believed that it was contrary to the light of nature for a congregation to act as sole judge of one "erring" member, when it was also a party to the dispute. He was opposed by R. Mather and W. Tompson, A Modest and Brotherly Answer to Mr. Charles Herle, p.4.
3. A.S., An Answer to a Libell, p.51.

"by the like reason a man may prove that the Church of a Nation must not be Independent neither: ... offences may arise between divers Nationall Churches".[1]

In countering this argument, the Presbyterian Samuel Rutherford destroyed his own party's position on greater truth lying within assemblies;

"An universall and oecumenick councell of all the visible Churches on earth ... (cannot be supposed) to bee in that morall perfection of soundnesse of faith, of concord and unitie, that some one Congregation or classical presbytery of Elders ... may bee in ... I conceive these sixteene hundred yeares there never was an integrall and perfect oecumenick councell of all the Churches on earth".[2]

Independents were quick to defend themselves from charges that their system encouraged indiscipline. William Rathband had argued that the lack of a set platform of church government in New England (and the want of synods to enforce it) meant that differences had arisen to trouble the churches.[3] Thomas Welde retorted that in fact they did not hold set platforms unlawful, although "we see no Grounds to impose such a Platforme upon Churches", but denied that this freedom caused divisions in New England.[4] Such conflicts within the New England churches had arisen instead through

"certaine vile opinions brought to us from England (which I feare) is your own case this day and yet no blame (you will say) ... When these divisions did FALL, it was whiles our discipline STOOD, which shewes that our Discipline bred them not, but destroyed them rather".[5]

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1. R. Mather and W. Tompson, A Modest and Brotherly Answer to Mr. Charles Herle, p.27.
2. S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, p.416.
3. W. Rathband, A Brief Narration of some Church Courses, p.2.
4. T. Welde, An Answer to W.R., p.11. In fact the churches in New England were to enforce platforms of church government, such as the 1648 Cambridge Platform. As early as 1634 the General Court ordered that "one uniforme order of dissipline in the churches" should be discussed. Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, ed. N.B. Shurtleff, (Boston 1853) vol.i,pp.142-3.
5. T. Welde, An Answer to W.R., p.12. The Antinomian crisis of 1636-8 had caused problems for Massachusetts.

But Presbyterian writers often contradicted themselves for while they complained of New England's "libertinism", they also argued that the discipline there was very severe! William Rathband observed

> "if a tyrannicall and imperious imposition of a Platforme be so evill in their eyes ... then why do they so vigorously presse others (that come amongst them) to such a perfect conformitie to their president ... Is not this really a more rigid imposition of their pattern, then any Church ever used in urging of their Platforme?" [1]

He commented that the fact that a new church could not be established in New England without the knowledge and consent of other churches amounted

> "to little lesse in substance then a compound Presbyterie set up amongst them ... they have also agreed amongst themselves that no man shall preach or vent any new or uncouth tenents, untill he have first communicated them with the neighbouring ministers". [2]

Independents did in fact rely on synodical meetings as consultative or doctrinal in function, although they denied them authoritative power to govern. Agreeing with Herle that church unity was a moral necessity, they stressed that synods could achieve this unity, providing they did not usurp "authority over those Churches they feed and teach not ordinarily". [3] John Cotton argued that synods could give counsel and advise, but their authority "to determine, declare and injoyn such things as may tend to the reducing such Congregations to right order and peace" was strictly limited.

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1. W. Rathband, A Brief Narration of some Church Courses, p.2.
2. Ibid., p.21. The founding of a new church in Massachusetts can be instanced from the church of Newtown. Mr. Shepherd, who wished to start this congregation, "acquainted the magistrates therewith, who gave their approbation. They also sent to all the neighbouring churches for their elders to give their assistance, at a certain day, at Newtown, when they should constitute their body". J. Winthrop, The History of New England, vol.i. p.214.
3. C. Herle, The Independency on Scriptures of the Independency of Churches, p.37; An Apologeticall Narration, pp.14-5 (quoted), 29-30. For Assembly debates on this subject, see above, p.152.

Their power was

"but a dogmaticall or doctrinall power ... whether in judging of controversies of faith ... or in decerning matters of fact and what censures they doe deserve: but ... they are to leave the formall act of this censure to that authority which can only execute it, placed by Christ in those Churches themselves".[1]

Mather and Tompson explained that this consultative synod could best be described as "rather a teaching then a governing Church",[2] and Homes made the interesting point that a national synod was acceptable as an advisory body, but not a "middle classicall Presbyterie" since this was not wholly representative of all churches.[3] Welde denied Rathband's contention that the doctrinal advice of such synods had the same authority as a presbyterian order;

"Suppose many Godly Ministers in London should agree among themselves that every one should preach downe the superstition of ... Christmas; and promise each other that ... they would not preach for or against discipline: would W.R. call this agreement a Presbyterie, or a Canon?" [4]

But some Presbyterians failed to accept the subtle distinction between a teaching and a governing synod. Surely, said Rutherford, to decide on matters of faith

"is more properly governing; as to make Lawes and rules of governing, is a more noble, eminent and higher act of governing ... then the execution of these Lawes and rules".[5]

New England placed great importance on the consultative synod,

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1. T. Goodwin and P. Nye's preface to J. Cotton, The Keyes of the Kingdome of Heaven, n.p.
2. R. Mather and W. Tompson, A Modest and Brotherly Answer to Mr. Charles Herle, p.7.
3. N. Homes, A Coole Conference, pp.15-7. By a "middle classicall Presbyterie" he meant both classes and provincial presbyteries.
4. T. Welde, An Answer to W.R., p.36. He may have been referring to the Calamy House Agreement.
5. S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, p.414.

although synodical meetings tended to be occasional rather than regular. There does seem to have been some reluctance to accept a regular synod since in 1637, when a synod at Newtown condemned some eighty errors,

"it was propounded by the governour ... if it were not fit to have the like meeting once a year, or at least, the next year, to settle what yet remained to be agreed, or if but to mourish love, etc. This motion was well liked of all, but it was not thought fit to conclude it".[1]

But synods met whenever necessary to decide on contentious issues, and although in theory the distinction between a teaching synod and the dreaded governing synod remained, in practice a New England synodical pronouncement had virtually the force of a governing edict. This was particularly true when the synod sought civil sanction - the Cambridge Platform was recommended by the General Court. Although in 1646 it was stressed that a synod met to advise churches, not to govern them,[2] and congregations were able to criticise the Cambridge Platform, the point at which advice turned into orders remained obscure. Thomas Letchford was aware of the trend;

"Every Church (in New England) hath power of government in, and by it selfe ... saving that the generall Court, now and then, over-rule some Church matters; and of late, divers of the Ministerie have had set meetings to order Church matters; whereby it is conceived they bend towards Presbyterian rule".[3]

Presbyterians, fairly logically, thought that by accepting any

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1. J. Winthrop, op.cit., vol.i, p.187.
2. Ibid., vol.ii, pp.323-4.
3. T. Letchford, New England's Advice to Old England, p.14.

kind of synod the Independents had acknowledged that their church power was not wholly independent. Stewart insisted,

"Then your power is dependent upon some others; then it must give an account, and be subject to some other: If subject to some others, then that other is superiour ... I pray you, Brethren, agree these two Propositions, how a Church can have a full and compleat Government, and yet not (be) independent: it should seem to me, that either you contradict not us, or (you) contradict your selves within the compasse of two lines".[1]

He believed that a purely consultative synod was a synod deprived of its true essence,

"for without an authoritative power, they sit in quality of private persons onely, or of Ministers gathered together by chance ... and not in quality of Synods".[2]

Alexander Forbes wondered why the Independents could not extend their principle of unity between churches to include "communion in Government".[3]

Herle and Mather and Tompson engaged in a pamphlet dispute over the scriptural proofs for the powers of synods that echoed arguments urged in the debates of the Westminster Assembly. First of all, the Presbyterian Herle argued that the Jewish church had been governed by Synods, and if Gospel churches could not have the same "mutuall helpe in government ... how much more defective and improvident were the Gospell then the Law?"[4] Mather and Tompson retorted that the Jewish assemblies were not synods at all, but

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1. A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, p.27.
2. A.S., An Answer to a Libell, p.49.
3. A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, p.45.
4. C. Herle, The Independency on Scriptures of the Independency of Churches, pp.4-8(p.4. quoted). Herle's scriptural proofs for the government of the Jewish church by synods were Deuteronomy 17 v.8-10; 2 Chronicles 19 v.8-11; and Psalm 122 v.45.

standing courts which heard civil as well as ecclesiastical cases, and consisted of no delegates from the various congregations.[1] Herle's second move was to justify Presbyterian government by Christ's own institution, claiming that when Christ told his followers to take their disputes "to the church", he had meant "tell a Synod".[2] Mather and Tompson immediately declared that Christ had obviously meant a particular congregation, because synods met infrequently, whereas "this rule of our Saviour is of very frequent use".[3] Finally, Herle cited the practice of the Apostles, claiming that Paul and Barnabas met delegates at a synod in Jerusalem, but Mather and Tompson announced that this synod mentioned in Acts.15. was a teaching, not a governing synod (to determine whether circumcision was essential to salvation). Goodwin and Nye would not even concede that it was a synod, but merely a meeting of the church of Jerusalem and messengers of the church of Antioch![4] The nature of the church of Jerusalem under the Apostles was to occupy pamphleteers both now and later, as it occupied many Assembly debates.[5] Was this early church one single congregation, or was it composed of many congregations under a synodical government? Presbyterians maintained that sheer volume of numbers must have necessitated the latter; Independents could not accept that the Apostles waited for sufficient numbers to make a synod viable before setting up church discipline.[6] The Independents argued that

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1. R. Mather and W. Tompson, A Modest and Brotherly Answer to Mr. Charles Herle, pp.11-2.
2. C. Herle, The Independency on Scriptures of the Independency of Churches, p.10. His Scripture reference was Matthew 18 v.15.
3. R. Mather and W. Tompson, A Modest and Brotherly Answer to Mr. Charles Herle, p.23.
4. C. Herle, The Independency on Scriptures of the Independency of Churches pp.19-20; R. Mather and W. Tompson, A Modest and Brotherly Answer to Mr. Charles Herle, p.40; Goodwin and Nye's preface to J. Cotton, The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven, n.p.
5. See above pp.149-59.
6. An Apologeticall Narration, p.13.

since the Jerusalem church met in one place, then it could only be considered as a single congregation.[1]

The problem was that these scriptural texts could be variously interpreted. Presbyterians insisted that prudence must supplement the scriptural rule on doubtful points. Edwards commented that

> "the perfection and sufficiencie of the Scripture is principally meant in matters of doctrine, and in points necessary to salvation: And for policie and externall order wherein the Scriptures doe reach to them, it is to be understood of the Essentials, Substantials, and Fundamentals of Government and Discipline, and not of the accidentals, accessaries and circumstantials".[2]

He believed that it was foolish to slavishly imitate the Apostles in all matters[3] and Forbes wondered

> "if we may find a rule for it in prudence, which Scripture doth not crosse, nor it Scripture, must we there suspend all practice when the case urgeth something to be done, and prudence furnisheth reasonable and equitable grounds and wayes to proceed in?" [4]

John Goodwin disapproved of deviation from the literal sense of the Scriptures; if the Presbyterians could not find sanction for their church in plain texts, then evidently Christ had not authorised it. He did not expect the Presbyterians to find a rationale for their way in the Law of Nature either, since Stewart could not justify it "to the understanding and conscience of learned, pregnant and apprehensive men".[5] The early nonconformists

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1. E.g. R. Mather and W. Tompson, A Modest and Brotherly Answer to Mr. Charles Herle, p.32. This argument was answered by S. Rutherford in The Due Right of Presbyteries, p.428.
2. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.73. Edwards believed this to be so vital an issue, that he needed to write a separate tract about it.
3. Ibid., p.77.
4. A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, p.28.
5. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., pp.70-1.

together with the reformed churches of Holland and France were claimed by Presbyterians to favour their church government, but this was denied by Independents.[1] Perfect, irrefutable truth was unobtainable on the contentious issue of synodical jurisdiction.

The Power of the Keys.

Wherever lay the power of the keys, there lay also the "true church", whether this should be congregation or synod. Christ had given these "keys" to the Apostle Peter, with the words

> "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven".[2]

The "keys" thus appertained to the church's power of censure, and the contentious issue was whether Christ had given the keys to Peter as the representative of one congregation, or to Peter as the representative of the collective power of the church, which could be embodied and expressed in synods. John Cotton held that the former was the case, and that in Peter, each governing body or "presbytery" of a particular church, and each congregation of professed believers, received their share of church power. People and their elected church officers both bore the responsibility for censure; the elders could only rule with the concurrence of the people. The result was

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1. An Apologeticall Narration, pp.12-3; A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, p.36; W. Rathband, A Brief Narration of some Church Courses, p.54; T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.107; N. Homes A Coole Conference, p.12.
2. Matthew 16. v.19.

"a Church of Brethren only, could not proceed to any publique censures, without they have Elders over them, so nor in the Church have the Elders power to censure without the concurrence of the people; and likewise so, as each alone hath not power of Excommunicating the whole of either, though together they have power over any particular person or persons in each".[1]

Elders thus did have an important part in government - even Edwards admitted that the Independents granted more authority to church officers than the Brownists.[2] But associations of elders and churches could not exercise the keys, for even if a congregation misused its power, a synod could only "assist, guide, and direct them, and not ... administer it for them (i,e. the congregation) but with them, and by them ".[3]

The Presbyterians, on the other hand, felt that the keys belonged to the eldership alone, believing that the consent of the people was implicit in their election of these officers. Cotton and his editors could not accept that elders could thus meet in synods and usurp congregational rights of censure;

"this Jurisdiction of a common Presbyterie of severall Congregations doth ... swallow up, not only the interests of the people, but even the votes of the Elders of that Congregation concerned, in the major part thereof".[4]

But Presbyterians could find plenty of reasons, including some from Independent practice, to justify placing authority in the hands of officers. Firstly, they argued that it was contrary to

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1. T. Goodwin and P. Nye's preface to J. Cotton, The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven, n.p. This "share and interest of power" was likened by Goodwin and Nye to civil government, "as in some of our towns corporate, to a company of Aldermen, the Rulers, and a Common-Councell, a body of the people, there useth to be the like ..."
2. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.206.
3. T. Goodwin and P. Nye's preface to J. Cotton. The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven, n.p.
4. Ibid.

the Law of Nature and to scriptural order for the people to rule and not obey, since God had distinguished between "the shepheards and the flock, those who are to obey, and these who are over them in the Lord".[1] Secondly, Rathband argued that a weak, fickle populace was not fitted to hold supreme church power, to which Welde retorted that at least some church members would be capable and willing to bear such responsibility.[2] Thirdly, Rathband reasoned that logically congregational authority must involve the donation of power to female and child church members, but Mather and Tompson quickly squashed this argument. They insisted

> "the liberty ... is of the whole body communiter, or in generall, but not of all and everie member in particular, as you conceive us to hold; for women and children are members, and yet are not to act in such matters, the one being debarred by their sex, and the other for want of understanding and discretion".[3]

Presbyterians tried to point out other illogicalities of the Independent position. Rathband observed that it was irrational to give the keys to the people when they were not allowed to administer the sacraments.[4] But this argument was not very fruitful, since exactly the same could be said of a governing synod. Adam Stewart believed that in practice

> "Our brethren holde, that the absent part of the Church may give over, or remit their power of Judging to them, that are present, and that the lesser part are bound to acquiesce with the major part in voycing; wherefore then may not all the People give over, or remit their power of Judging to a certaine number of the wisest, such as the Representative Church is, or acquiesce unto their Judgements?"

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1. S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, p.481.
2. W. Rathband, A Brief Narration of some Church Courses, p.23; T. Welde, An Answer to W.R., p.37.
3. R. Mather and W. Tompson, A Modest and Brotherly Answer to Mr. Charles Herle, p.8. Women were accorded a subservient place in seventeenth century society. See also below, pp.388-9.
4. W. Rathband, A Brief Narration of some Church Courses, p. 23.

Stewart also remarked that if all the people were supposed to rule, it should not be necessary for the Independents to have specific ruling elders.[1] Thomas Letchford made yet another criticism of the Independents' inconsistency in practice when he stressed that the people did not rule in New England; for "what power ordinarily have the people to contradict the ministeriall works and acts of their Officers?"[2]

Since the Independents believed excommunication to be the prerogative of one congregation, they were obliged to reprove erring congregations in a way that fell short of the power of the keys. This was "non-communion", or a withdrawal of the "right hand of fellowship" from the congregation at fault. For they held that neighbour churches could only with-hold from an erring congregation the friendship they had afforded it, since no synod or classis could "take away that which they never gave, or had power to bestow (which is the excommunicate's membership in their own Church".[3] Mather and Tompson believed that the Presbyterian system made it difficult to distinguish where the final power of the keys lay;

"For you know there are divers sorts of Synods ... And we should be glad to know, which of all these it is in whom the ultimate power of these things doth reside, and why it may not reside in any of the rest: yea - and why the ultimate power of censures may not reside in the Congregation, as well as in any of them".[4]

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1. A.S., Zerubbabel to Sanballat and Tobiah, 21 March 1644-5, pp. 97 (quoted), 99. E.274(14).
2. T. Letchford, New England's Advice to Old England, introduction.
3. T. Welde, An Answer to W.R., p.66.
4. R. Mather and W. Tompson, A Modest and Brotherly Answer to Mr. Charles Herle, p.9.

Presbyterians accorded the congregational presbytery power to excommunicate, although they were not wholly united on this issue.[1] But they insisted that appeals could be made to higher presbyteries, as they felt it inequable that part of a congregation could presume to censure another part without certain safeguards. The Independents replied that there was no more equity in one presbytery excommunicating another presbytery![2] But the Presbyterians saw excommunication in wider terms than one congregation, for

"excommunication is not a cutting off af a person from one single Parishionall Church onely ... but a cutting off of a person from all the visible Churches consociated".[3]

Stewart insisted that withdrawing fellowship was no adequate punishment "to reduce a Church, or Churches, that fall into Heresie, or Schisme etc", and it allowed no adjustment of the penalty to fit the crime, whereas "all punishments should be commensurate unto the severall offences".[4] Worse still, Presbyterians decided that withdrawal of fellowship could prove tyrannical, since it enabled one Independent church to withdraw from all the reformed Presbyterian churches in England. As Forbes said, "since our Brethren call this sentence no Excommunication, by what rule can they break off totall Communion from Churches not Excommunicated".[5]

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1. See above, pp.160-1.
2. A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, p.38; A Coole Conference, p.15.
3. S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, p.187. This is the second page 187, due to an error in pagination. Page 185 follows page 493 and continues from "page 185" for another 200 sheets.
4. A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, pp.37,39.
5. A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, pp.49-50.

Independents defended their theories with two arguments, both appealing to Erastianism. Firstly they maintained that the sentence of withdrawing communion was just as effective as excommunication, since both censures depended on the support of the civil magistrate. With civil backing, both punishments would be effective whereas

> "without the Magistrates interposing their authority, their way of proceeding will be as ineffectuall as ours; and more lyable to contempt, by how much it is pretended to be more authoritative; and to inflict a more dreadful punishment, which carnall spirits are seldome sensible of".[1]

Secondly, they preferred the civil magistrate to impose physical punishments upon offenders, rather than to damn immortal souls for trifling offences. Excommunication was such a dire penalty, it was better that it should not be abused.[2] Presbyterians objected to this insinuation that their synods misused the power of the keys, and hotly denied that they might be tempted to excommunicate whole congregations.[3] Alexander Forbes retorted that this was a fine Independent claim, since it was well known that they censured people "for some such causes as no well Reformed Church would censure any", and denied the Apologists' profession that they only excommunicated sins of obstinacy, impenitency, and errors against the church members' own conscience.[4] Presbyterians were also appalled at the prospect of two or three church members gathered

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1. An Apologeticall Narration, p.19. For Stewart's reply, see below, p.267.
2. N. Homes, A Coole Conference, pp.13-4. In Massachusetts, civil sanction was often given to church censure. In 1634 the General Court authorised fines or imprisonment for persistent absentees from church. Records of the Govenor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, ed. N.B. Shurtleff, vol.i, p.140.
3. A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, p.42.
4. A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, p.27.

together in an Independent church wielding the power of the keys, although Mather and Tompson stressed that seven church members was the minimum number that could properly effect censure.[1] Rutherford also believed that the Independents were missing the whole point of church censure, since they could only excommunicate the converted "saints" of whom their congregations were composed, whereas "the object of excommunication by Christ is one which refuseth to heare the Church, whether he be converted or not converted".[2] Altogether, the Presbyterians were convinced that synodical power of excommunication was a far more just and effective penalty than non-communion.

The Independents' experience in exile was quoted by themselves as proof of the efficacy of non-communion, and by Presbyterians as evidence of its failure. The Apologists boasted that when Ward was deposed from the church of Rotterdam following the major split between Sidrach Simpson and William Bridge, the neighbour churches promptly called the church to account. As a result, Ward was restored, the breaches healed, and the sentence of non-communion avoided.[3] But Edwards told a different story. He claimed that Ward had been deposed for two years, and was only restored because his replacement, Burroughes, returned to England. Bridge had apparently confessed that "there were no such sharpe tongues nor bitter divisions as these", and Edwards believed the trouble had caused the

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1. C. Herle, The Independency on Scriptures of the Independency of Churches, p.1; R. Mather and W. Tompson, A Modest and Brotherly Answer to Mr. Charles Herle, p.2.
2. S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, p.278. The Independents, however, insisted that church censures could only be for church members; the heathen would find punishment enough in another world.
3. An Apologeticall Narration, pp.16-21. See above, p.22, note 2.

death of Mrs. Bridge and the ill-health of her husband. Other churches had taken little notice of the squabbles, and Edwards thought that the censure of Rotterdam had been largely a matter of chance. Certainly Presbyterianism would have resolved the matter sooner.[1] Forbes concluded that

"our Brethren's Government ... hath alwayes beem accompanied with Rents and Schismes, strife and debate, multiplying of Churches out of Churches; and the peoples casting off their Pastors at their pleasure by their Independent liberty".[2]

The Independents refused to concede the point. Errors and splits existed under the Presbyterian system too; for "What flaming sword is there in the hand of a Classicall Presbitery to keepe men out of errours which may not be in a Congregation?" [3]

Ordination and Lay Preaching.

The pamphlet literature amplified the controversy over ordination which had already occasioned much delay in the Assembly.[4] Independents insisted that the people played a vital part in the choice of ministers, since they elected him, and the elders or representatives of the congregation then ordained him, as was the practice in New England.[5] Without prior election, ordination was

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp.143-6. (p.143 quoted).
2. A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, p.5.
3. S. Simpson, The Anatomist Anatomis'd, p.10.
4. See above, pp.135-46.
5. In New England John Cotton's institution to church office had become traditional. He was made teacher of Boston in 1633, and was first invited to exercise his gifts (i.e. preach). Communicants then fasted and called him to office by unanimous consent. "First he was chosen by all the congregation testifying their consent by erection of hands ... Then the pastor and the two elders laid their hands upon his head, and the pastor prayed, and then, taking off their hands, laid them on again ... Then the neighbouring ministers which were present did ... give him the right hands of fellowship, and the pastor made a stipulation between him and the congregation".

(cont'd overleaf).

meaningless to Independents, for as Mather and Tompson stressed, ordination was the accomplishment of election. This being the case, although church officers should ordinarily ordain as the representatives of the people, Independents saw no reason why, in exceptional cases, the people should not ordain as well as elect;

"Now if the people may elect Officers, then in some cases, they may ordain them also, because ordination is lesse then election, and depends upon it as a necessarie antecedent; by vertue whereof it is justly administred".[1]

After all, who was to ordain the very first church officers, if not the congregation?[2] Certainly synods could not be solely responsible for ordination, for

"there must be Presbyters afore there can be Synods; and thence it must follow that all Presbyters are not ordained by Synods, but some by other men".[3]

Welde cited scriptural precedent for the lay ordination of priests, since according to Numbers 8 v. 10, the children of Israel laid their hands upon the Levites.[4] Ordinarily however, ordination was

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1. cont'd. J. Winthrop, The History of New England, ed. J. Savage, p.136. The significant fact was that the power to ordain lay in any representatives of the congregation, duly chosen as such. This ordination was a sign of a "call" to a particular church, and was not an invalidation of previous ordinations in England.

1. R. Mather and W. Tompson, A Modest and Brotherly Answer to Mr. Charles Herle, p.47.
2. Ibid., Mather and Tompson cited (p.48) various instances of when ordination might have to be performed by the people.
3. Ibid., pp.8-9.
4. T. Welde, An Answer to W.R., pp.55-6. Rathband had claimed that this was merely an approbation of God's choice of Levites, and in no way approximated to ordination. W. Rathband, A Brief Narration of some Church Courses, p.41.

to be effected by church officers.

Presbyterians and Independents were nearer in their views on ordination than many believed. Presbyterians allowed people the right to elect, for as Rutherford said, the Word of God prescribed this. He even conceded that "In cases of necessity, election by the people onely may stand for ordination, where there be no Pastors at all".[1] Rathband stressed that in parish churches the faithful consented to their new pastor by virtue of not actively opposing him, and the Assembly had voted that a congregation had the right to refuse a minister.[2] Even the right of a patron could be reconciled with the notion of popular choice. In practice both Presbyterians and Independents allowed for patronage rights, although this question was not overstressed, since both sides found it an embarrassment, but were obliged to accept patronage. The Presbyterian Rathband argued that the people had delegated their rights to the patron, as they did to M.P.s[3] and the Independents took such "patronage" or "recommendation" from congregational members or from a sister congregation, provided the people had no objection.

The difference between Presbyterians and Independents lay in the emphasis placed upon election. Most Presbyterians refused to accept that election was more important than ordination. It could not be so, since ordination represented not election but God's calling of a minister.[4] Although some Presbyterians

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1. S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, pp.187 (quoted), 201.
2. W. Rathband, A Most Grave and Modest Confutation of the Errors of the Sect commonly called Brownists, p.36.
3. Ibid.
4. S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, p.205.

favoured ordination by a congregational eldership, most Presbyterians accepted that synods should ordain, since the synod represented the whole church on earth, and was ordaining not just to one congregation, but to the universal catholic church;

> "Every Church chooses, i.e. elects its owne Ministers, but it calleth them not, nor sendeth them; It giveth them not their generall Vocation nor Mission into the Ministery, but that is an act of the whole Church ... of greater consociations, in a representative body of many particular Churches".[1]

Rathband mocked the Independent practice of allowing officers to serve only the church to which they were elected, although Independent ministers did assist in other churches by virtue of "the right hand of fellowship".[2] Since the Independents stressed the prime importance of election, they insisted on a new election to every congregation, but unlike the sects, did not force ministers to repudiate their Church of England ordination.

If the people had the right of election and the power of the keys, it seemed logical to Presbyterians that the Independents should also grant them the privilege of preaching, as the sects did. Presbyterians condemned all such preaching, except in a private family.[3] But characteristically, the Independents assumed a position midway between the two extremes, although Rathband and

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1. A.S., An Answer to a Libell, pp.58-9. For the Assembly divisions on this issue see above, pp.142, 161.
2. W. Rathband, A Brief Narration of some Church Courses, p.42.
3. A wellwisher, Lay Preaching Unmasked, 14 March 1643-4, E.37(14).

the Scots Commissioners tried to attribute indiscriminate lay preaching to the Independents.[1] The Independents held that gifted brethren might exercise the privilege of preaching in exceptional circumstances only, with the consent of church officers, and "so as their Doctrine be subjected ... in an especiall manner to the Teaching Elders of that Church". As Goodwin and Nye stressed,

> "when it is thus cautioned, wee see no more incongruity for such to speake to a point of Divinity in a Congregation, then for men of like abilities to speake to, and debate of matters of religion in an Assembly of Divines".[2]

Independent opinion was not unanimous on this point, some taking a stricter, and others a more liberal attitude. Thomas Welde held that lay preaching was permissible only in a complete absence of church officers, whereas the Presbyterian Alexander Forbes eagerly reported that the issue had divided the church at Rotterdam, when six or seven members who disliked lay preaching threatened to tell the magistrates that the church was becoming Brownist.[3] Thomas Letchford thought that most Massachusetts divines believed that lay preaching should be restricted to candidates for the ministry.[4] But the English Independents' midway stand was revealed in 1652 when they proposed that laymen equipped with their pastor's testimonial could preach, and when in 1658 the Savoy Declaration of Faith observed that preaching was not to be the sole prerogative

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1. W. Rathband, A Brief Narration of some Church Courses, p.45; Scots Commissioners, Reformation of Church Government in Scotland Cleered, p.12.
2. T. Goodwin and P. Nye's preface to J. Cotton, The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven, n.p. This was a subtle reference to the lay assessors in the Westminster Assembly.
3. T. Welde, An Answer to W.R., p.38; A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, p.27.
4. T. Letchford, New England's Advice to Old England, p.16.

of ministers.[1] No Independent, however, believed in illiterate and unapproved men having a liberty to preach.

Other Aspects of Church Life.

Presbyterians were scathing in their attacks upon the qualities Independents required in their church members. Admittance to an Independent congregation usually involved acceptance of the church covenant, a binding statement of Christian profession and dedication, which united members one to another. Rathband quoted in full the covenant of the Rotterdam church as a sample of Independent practice;

"We whose names are here-under written, having a long time found by sad experience how uncomfortable it is to walk in a disordered and unsettled condition, etc. I. Doe renue our Covenant in Baptisme, and avouch God to be our God. 2. We resolve to cleave to the true and pure worship of God, opposing to our power all false wayes. 3. We will not allow our selves in any known sin, but will renounce it, so soon as it is manifested from Gods Word so to be: the Lord lending us power. 4. We resolve to carry our selves in our severall places of government and obedience with all good conscience, knowing we must give an account to God. 5. We will labour for further growth in grace, by hearing, reading, prayer, meditation, and all other wayes we can. 6. We meane not to over-burthen our hearts with earthly cares, which are the bane of all holy duties, the breach of the Sabbath, and the other Commandments. 7. We will willingly and meekly submit to Christian discipline, without murmuring, and shall labour so to continue, and will endevour to be more forward, zealous, faithfull, loving and wise in admonishing others. 8. We will labour by all our abilities for the furtherance of the Gospell as occasion shall be offered to us. 9. We promise to have our children, servants, and all our charge taught the wayes of God. 10. We will strive to give no offence to

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1. F.J. Powicke, "The Independents of 1652", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., IX (April 1924) p.26; A. Peel, The Savoy Declaration of Faith and Order (1939) p.24. Independent church practice in England (see below, p. 626) revealed that churches insisted on approving brethren before permitting them to preach.

our brethren by censuring them rashly by suspitions, evill speakings, or any other way. 11. Lastly, we doe protest not onely against open and scandalous sins, as drunkenesse, swearing, etc. but also against evill compamie, and all appearance of evill to the utmost of our power".[1]

The Presbyterians complained that such a strict covenant afforded only the saintly a chance of entry. Rathband felt that in admitting "not common but choice Christians", the Independents were mistaking the visible church for the invisible;

"Reall and internall holinesse is doubtlesse required of all Church-members, viz. in foro interno, and unto acceptation with God, but not in foro externo, and unto admission unto the Church". Christ had made no such rule to prevent ordinary Christians from entering his church; here was a greater tyranny than the Bishops'![2] How was a just judgement of true holiness to be made? The Presbyterian system was believed by its supporters to be much fairer, since it acknowledged that the scandalously wicked should be removed from the church, bht it accommodated the "middle sort ... (of whom) the Church have not a positive certainty of the judgement of charity, that they are regenerated, (but) so they be knowen".[3] Yet the Independents insisted that their way did give allowance to weaker brethren, and that although they admitted only the faithful, "the Rules which we gave up our judgements unto ... were of that latitude as would take in any member of Christ, the meanest ...".[4] Welde insisted that "fearfull and bashfull" women

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1. W. Rathband, A Brief Narration of some Church Courses, pp.17-8, quoting "the Covenant of the English Church at Roterdame ... renewed when Mr. H.P. was made their Pastour". For English Independent covenanting see below, p.621.
2. Ibid., p.5(quoted), 6-7. Alexander Forbes made a false and contradictory statement that the Independents' rules of admission were too severe, and yet accommodated Brownists and Anabaptists! Anatomy of Independency, p.32.
3. S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, p.251.
4. An Apologeticall Narration, pp.11-2.

could avoid the embarrassment of openly professing their faith if they gave private testimonies to the elders and members.[1] It was certainly not the case that the Independent way excluded the unknown reprobate. But the Independent system was far stricter in admittance than the Presbyterian, and required conscious effort to join, whereas the Presbyterians merely adapted the parochial structure. In New England time proved that the covenant would have to be relaxed if the churches were to survive.[2]

The Independent church covenant was declared by Presbyterians to be quite different from the Covenant of Grace, by which Christ would save all those who believed in him, for "God is in covenant with six believers before they sweare a Church-covenant".[3] Rutherford therefore denied that a church covenant was a necessary part of a visible church, so that without it Christians "want all right and title to a church membership, to the seales of grace, and censures of the Church".[4] But the Independents never maintained that the covenant was a substitute for Christ's Covenant of Grace, "for wee professe freely wee know no meane or instrument of union to Christ, but faith in the Covenant of grace".[5] But a church covenant was still desirable for a pure congregation, and could not contradict the Covenant of Grace, otherwise "all lawfull

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1. T. Welde, An Answer to W.R., p.19.
2. As time went on, not enough saints came forward, and the "Halfway Covenant" had to be adopted in 1662 whereby the second generation was admitted to church membership by a mere profession of obedience, and thus enabled to have their children baptised. A Simpson, Puritanism in Old and New England, p.35.
3. S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, p.180.
4. Ibid., p.88.
5. T. Welde, An Answer to W.R., p.24.

particular Covenants,whether Corporationall, Military, or Nationall, be contrary to the Covenant of grace".[1] The Independents were again nearer to the Presbyterians than the latter believed.

Another problem of the Independents' stricter code of admission was that it opened the Anabaptist debate. In fact it must be stressed that Independents did not differ from Presbyterians on the question of infant baptism; both accepted this, although of course neither refused baptism to adults. But Anabaptist sects were growing in the country, and fervent pamphleteering for and against infant baptism (paedobaptism) was in progress.[2] It was scarcely surprising that some Presbyterians were amazed that the Independents' strict admission policy allowed baptism to infants, who could neither profess their faith, nor take the church covenant. But Rathband still thought the Independents' criteria for infant baptism were too harsh, as they only baptised the children of known church members, which he considered "cold comfort to Christian parents (not of their way) and cold charitie to their infants".[3] This does seem to have been English Independent practice; Yarmouth church only baptised children "upon the account of their parents' faith," although Altham allowed "predecessors"

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1. Anon, C.C. the Covenanter Vindicated from Perjurie, p.35.
2. E.g. S.C., A Christian Plea for Infants baptism, 8 February 1643-4, E.32(2). An anoymous work begged the Assembly to dispute with Baptists, but not to suppress their books. The Summe of a Conference held at Terling, Essex, 11 Januarie 1643, published by 7 October 1644, E.12(2).
3. W. Rathband, A Brief Narration of some Church Courses, p.31. Such was the practice in New England, although only one parent needed to be a member, and the Half-way Covenant made baptism easier.

of infants to covenant for them.[1] Thomas Goodwin believed that an Independent minister could baptise the child of a non-member outside the congregational framework, but it is not clear how many other Independents shared his view.[2]

If Presbyterians thought it too hard to get into an Independent congregation, they certainly believed it to be too hard to get out. Independent members wishing to remove their dwelling-place were required to obtain "letters of dismissal" from one congregation and of introduction to another.[3] (Removal for a scandalous offence was, of course, quite another matter, as it was for Presbyterians). Presbyterian churches required no such letters, because of their reliance on the parochial network. But as New England divines explained in their letter to England in 1639, dismissal was a serious business, for church members had taken solemn covenants. It was therefore necessary that enquiries should be made by fellow-members about the reasons for departure, so that a member should either be blessed on his way, or advised as to his fault.[4] But as a result, some Presbyterians charged

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1. J. Browne, History of Congregationalism, p.224; The Note-Book of the Rev. Thomas Jolly, with Extracts from the Church Book of Altham and Wymond houses, 1649-1725, ed. H. Fishwick, (Manchester, Chetham Society, new series, XXXIII, 1894), p.121.
2. T. Goodwin, Works, vol.iv, p.378. In August 1644 Baillie complained unjustifiably that Goodwin had encouraged Baptists in a lecture undertaken to refute them. Goodwin had been explaining the Corinthians text "Your children are holy", which was the ground for paedobaptism, but had denied the concept of federal holiness (i.e. that infants were associated with the covenant of grace through the faith of their parents). Baillie claimed that Goodwin "could no ways clear himself, and no man took his part. God permits these gracious men to be many ways unhappy instruments". Baillie, ii,49.
3. See below, pp.622-3.
4. B. Hanbury, Historical Memorials Relating to the Independents, vol.ii, p.36.

Independents with tyrannically preventing members from leaving their church, although this was usually unjustified.[1] New England ministers denied such tyranny;

"if his sin be not apparent, and danger imminent, we use rather ... to suspend our vote against him; as not willing, against his will, to detain him: adborring to make our Churches places of restraint and imprisonment!" [2]

The issue of qualifications for admission to the Lord's Supper (Holy Communion) was later to cause grave divisions among Presbyterians, but in 1644 most Presbyterians were unanimous that the Independents' policy was too restrictive. Although the Apologists insisted that they allowed some Church of England members to take the Sacrament in their churches as visitors,[3] the Independents ordinarily limited admission to the Lord's Supper to their own church members. Even the right of refusal of members of "sister churches" was reserved. Presbyterians exploited the ambiguities of the Independent position; Rathband wondered how Independents could reconcile their practice with statements "that Sacraments do rightfully belong to all visible beleevers and their seed, as such".[4] It was certainly difficult for the Independents to insist that they regarded other churches as "true" when they imposed restrictions on inter-communion. As Adam Stewart said,

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1. W. Rathband, A Brief Narration of some Church Courses, p.32. Rathband claimed that a man who left without letters of dismissal would be virtually excommunicated, "there being ... a tacit agreement amongst them to receive no members from one Church to another, unlesse they bring with them letters of dismission and recommendation".
2. B. Hanbury, op.cit., p.36.
3. An Apologeticall Narration, pp.6-7.
4. W. Rathband, A Brief Narration of some Church Courses, p.35. He cited the Apologetical Narration and the letter from New England in 1640.

"howsoever ye pretend this reall Profession of Communion with us, yet ye overthrow it by your restriction ... ye will not admit all the Members of our Churches, but such as ye onely judge, not we, to be Members of our Church".[1]

But many Presbyterians were becoming conscious that the parish communions had to be purged of the truly scandalous, for "can you blame godly men for going out of such Churches, which can hardly come within the definition of a true Church of Christ?" [2] The Scots Commissioners insisted that scandalous parishioners were not to be admitted to the Sacrament.[3] Thus although in theory the Presbyterians would always have a less stringent admission policy than the Independents, in practice communion could be fairly strictly limited.[4] The gap between Presbyterian and Independent was less wide than it could appear.

Upon the ministers, or officers of the Church, there was much agreement between the two groups, but certain significant differences, as Assembly debates had already revealed.[5] It must be remembered that unlike the Presbyterians, Independents believed that church officers could act only in relation to one congregation, and would not allow a man to be elected to serve a church unless he was first a member of that congregation.[6] But the Apologists acknowledged

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1. A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, p.18.
2. Anon, Satisfaction concerning Mixt Communions Unsatisfactory, 18 October 1643, p.9, E.17(16). This pamphlet was in answer to a work advocating that it was no sin to communicate with the ungodly; Anon, Satisfaction coneerning Mixt Communions, 8 July 1643, E.59(16). The answerer may well have been Independent, but his reasoning was followed by many Presbyterians.
3. Scots Commissioners, Reformation of Church Government in Scotland Cleered, p.14.
4. See below, pp. 608-11.
5. See above, pp.108-12.
6. See above, p. 228; A Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, p.26.

the same church officers as other reformed churches, including the Presbyterians, that is, pastors, teachers, ruling elders and deacons.[1] Important differences of detail nevertheless emerged between Presbyterians and Independents. The first was the distinction between the pastor and teacher, already satisfactorily resolved in the Assembly, but which Rutherford and Edwards resurrected to denounce the Independent view.[2] Edwards insinuated that the Independents held the office of widows (deaconesses) to be essential in a church, although this was not the case.[3] A more serious conflict erupted again over the ruling elder, the Presbyterians and Independents quarrelling over whether this was a lay or ecclesiastical office, a matter left vague by the Assembly. In New England and the Dutch Independent churches, the office was regarded as ecclesiastical, a position now advanced by the Apologists. The distinction between ecclesiastic and lay was subtle; to the Independents "ecclesiastic" implied a person not engaged in secular pursuits, but to Scottish and English Presbyterian defenders of the eldership, it meant any person carrying out church work. So

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1. An Apologeticall Narration, p.8. The Savoy Conference also stressed this basic agreement.
2. S. Rutherford, The Due Right of Presbyteries, p.140; T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.62.
3. Ibid., p.61. For Independent practice on this and other church officers, see below, pp.626-8.
4. An Apologeticall Narration, p.8. In New England the office of ruling elder was kept for barely fifty years, although it persisted in a few churches until 1750, much reduced in importance, and barely indistinguishable from the office of deacon; J. Winthrop, The History of New England, vol.i, p.37. Gustaffson is of the opionion that the Independents' insistence on this as an ecclesiastical office (as their insistence on the pastor/teacher distinction) was due to the numbers of exiled ministers. B. Gustaffson, "The Five Dissenting Brethren, a study on the Dutch Background of their Independentism", Acta Universitatis Lundensis, (1955) p.22.

to the Presbyterians, "lay" elders were still ecclesiastics,

> "solemnly elected and ordained, although they do maintain themselves upon their own means, and attend their own particular callings, which is not incompatible with their office".[1]

Edwards slyly wondered whether all Independent elders had given up their trading careers to hold this office![2] Ruling elders did exist in Independent congregations, but were less important than in Presbyterian churches; Forbes' insinuation that Sidrach Simpson omitted elders in his church as unnecessary since the people held the "keys" was successfully denied by Simpson. Simpson was nevertheless quick to add that not all Presbyterians agreed with elders, a fact abundantly proved in the Assembly.[3]

How should a godly minister be maintained? There was a growing criticism of tithes, but it should not be presumed, as radical pamphleteers later liked to pretend, that Presbyterians were avaricious tithemongers.[4] Many Presbyterians disapproved of tithes, and recommended instead that a set wage should be paid to ministers, although the method of raising this was left unclear. Tithes were of doubtful gospel validity, and Ephraim Paget, writing in 1645, was to stress their inequity and observe that the

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1. Scots Commissioners, Reformation of Church Government in Scotland Cleered, p.12. See also A.S., Some Observations and Annotations, pp. 19-20. Elders were originally meant to be paid full-time officers in Scotland, but this proved too expensive to implement. Professor Trevor-Roper has shown that only in England was the elder regarded as "lay" as opposed to ecclesiastic. H.R. Trevor-Roper, "Scotland and the Puritan Revolution", in Historical Essays, 1600-1750, ed. H. E. Bell and R.L. Ollard, (1963), p.112, note.
2. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.63.
3. A. Forbes, An Anatomy of Independency, p.26; S. Simpson, The Anatomist Anatomis'd, p.12.
4. See below, p.288. Tithes were to be a major grievance throught the Interregnum.

Independents were not to be blamed for seeking an alternative, considering the poverty of many London livings.[1] Independents were generally believed to favour voluntary contributions by the congregation, payable to the pastor, yet Rathband observed that the Independents were relinquishing these theories in favour of the Presbyterian idea of a set wage.[2] Indeed, Thomas Goodwin later insisted that he favoured a wage for ministers that could be augmented by voluntary contributions.[3] Even New England practice had never really been one of "voluntary" contributions, but of a fixed salary, partly met by contributions, not all freely given.[4] Once again, Independents and Presbyterians were nearer than they believed. Moreover, in default of a better system, which did not materialise even under Cromwell, most Presbyterians were content to accept and even defend tithes as a necessary means of support.[5]

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1. E. Paget, Heresiography, 8 May 1645, p.71, E.282(5). One 1644 work against tithes was Christ's Order, and the Disciples' Practice concerning the Ministers' Maintenance and Releeving of the Poore, E.54(23).
2. W. Rathband, A Briefe Narration of some Church Courses, p.45. Rathband attributed this to the lack of generosity of Independent congregations!
3. T. Goodwin, Works, vol.iv, (1696) pp.324-7.
4. At first the State paid ministers' wages and collected money from plantations, but as congregations developed, they took over payment by keeping a treasury. Welde revealed that in practice church treasuries were filled by people's contributions "according to their general estate". The weekly collections were for the poor, not the ministers, although the residue often found its way into the treasury fund. Letchford described how in Salem, non-church members were obliged to contribute to the ministers by a house to house collection! J. Winthrop, The History of New England, vol.ii, p.144; Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay, ed. N.B. Shurtleff, vol.i, pp.55,73; T. Welde, An Answer to W.R., p.59; T. Letchford, New England's Advice to Old England, pp.18-9.
5. Cornelius Burges pursued defaulters, C.J. iii, 202.

And while radical Independents hurled abuse at tithes long after 1644, some Independent parish ministers accepted tithes, as Francklin observed, "as well content to feed upon these sweet morsels as any of the Presbyterians".[1] In 1660, William Dell's parishioners at Yelden, Bedfordshire, complained that he had exacted excessive tithes![2] It is also worthy of note that tithes were augmented by voluntary contributions in some parishes, as in Earls Colne, where Ralph Josselin ministered.[3]

A minor controversy existed over the use of set forms of prayer. Independents claimed that a stipulated liturgy was not allowed by the Scriptures; Welde challenged Rathband to "shew us the like warrant in the word for a Liturgie or set forme of booke prayer for a congregation".[4] Presbyterians held that set prayers were permissible,

> "set-formes of Prayer, lawfull for their materials, and established by a lawfull power to be used in the publick Assemblies, may lawfully be practised by Ministers, and the people safely joyne in them".[5]

But the Apologists stressed that they did not condemn the practice of others, and that the Presbyterians also permitted public prayers to be "framed by the meditations and study" of ministers "out of their own gifts".[6]

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1. G. Francklin, A Soft Answer to Captain Freemen's Passionate Book, p.17. Most Independent lecturers and ministers of gathered congregations were, however, immune from such criticisms.
2. A.G. Matthews, Calamy Revised, p.161.
3. A. Macfarlane, The Family Life of Ralph Josselin, (Cambridge, 1970) p.17.
4. T. Welde, An Answer to W.R., p.31.
5. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp.98-9. He claimed that Philip Nye had written a manuscript against prescribed forms of prayer.
6. An Apologeticall Narration, p.12.

The Civil Magistrate 1643-4.

The issue of the power of the civil magistrate in religion was to be of crucial significance to Presbyterians, who divided over the issue publicly in 1645. This enabled Independents to exploit the differences of their rivals, and raise the spectre of clerical power, which had already occured in the Assembly despite Baillie's efforts to avoid it. The pamphlet literature of 1643-4 contained deliberate attacks by Independents on the Scottish system in which the magistrate's powers in church affairs were strictly limited. In return, Scottish pamphleteers tried to prove that they allowed the magistrate all that God allowed him, and in practice, more than the Independents! But not all English Presbyterians would have accepted the Scottish theories. In practice, both Presbyterian and Independent divines were still professing complete reliance on Parliament, which infuriated Baillie, who complained that English divines preached "before the parliament with so profound a reverence as truly took all edge from their exhortations and made all applications toothless and adultorious".[1]

Both in 1643-4 and after the Independents consistently claimed that their way allowed more to the civil magistrate "then the

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1. Baillie, ii, 51. August 1644.

principles of the Presbiteriall government will suffer them to yeeld".[1] The Scots reaction to such Independent "Erastianism" was vehement;

> "What shalbe rendered unto the Magistrate by others whose particular tenets are not yet knowne either to the Church or Magistrate, unlesse it be in a hid and secret way ... we cannot determine ... nor do we measure the power of the Magistrate by the principles of Presbyteriall Government, but both of the (m) by the word, and therefore deny not unto the Magistrate what God giveth them; and more then this, dare we not professe ..." [2]

The Scots' limitations on magisterial authority in church matters hinged on the argument that the civil power had no spiritual mandate. Stewart insisted

> "in Spirituall matters, we grant him his externall power ... And for intrinsecall Spirituall power ... It is not in your power to grant him any at all ... The Civill Magistrate acknowledgeth himself to be a Politicall, and no Ecclesiasticall person, since he is neither Pastor, nor Doctor, nor Ruling Elder in Christs Church; and therefore arrogateth no Spirituall Authority to himself".[3]

Stewart was surprised that Independents could profess to allow so much more power to a civil magistrate than a synod;

> "they acknowledge the Civill Magistrate to be above them, but all the Churches of the Christian World nothing but about them .. Here ye symbolise with Erastus in many things".[4]

But the Independents pressed their arguments. Nathaniel Homes felt that Presbyterian synods must usurp the civil power since they

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1. An Apologeticall Narration, p.19.
2. The Scots Commissioners, Reformation of Church Government in Scotland Cleered, pp.12-3.
3. A.S., Some Observations and Anmotations, pp.47-8.
4. Ibid., p.52. Stewart jeered (p.48), rather unfairly, that Independents intended every J.P. to judge ecclesiastical affairs.

could discipline parishioners for some civil crimes:-

"When a classicall Presbyterie, of many Ministers and laymen, and those of great place and power in the Commonwealth, shall authoritatively rule all matters of sixtie or an hundred Parishes that are but mixtly Ecclesiasticall but partly secular or civill, if some of them not so altogether, one would think now that here were left lesse to the Magistrate, then when every one of those severall Parishes regularly gathered into a Church way do meddle with nothing, as Churches, but things purely Ecclesiasticall, leaving the rest to the Magistrate who is the civill power over them all".[1]

Stewart tried hard to counter this suggestion that the Independent censures left more scope for the magistrate than Presbyterian. He stressed that presbyteries only judged civil matters when they doubled as ecclesiastical concerns;

"they judge not of civill matters formally ... but ... in so far as they ... conduce to a spirituall end, under the which they belong not ordinarily to the Civill Magistrate".

Thus religious and civil censures were completely different, and not to be confused. The magistrate could exile a man for a civil offence, but had no power to cast him out of the Church, no more than Church censures had power to deprive a man of his State citizenship as well.[2]

But the fact remained that the Scots allowed the magistrate no authority over the presbyteries. As Rutherford said, the magistrate was unable to make church laws, or hinder the meeting of a synod;

"For the church of herself, hath from Christ her head and Lord, power of conveening without the King, beside his knowledge or against his will, if he be averse".

In particular, there could be no appeal from a presbytery to the civil authorities;

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1. N. Homes, A Coole Conference, p.10.
2. A.S., An Answer to a Libell, pp36 (quoted), 42.

"there is no appeale from the Presbytery to a King; but it followeth not, that there can bee no appellation from a Presbytery to a provinciall, or to a nationall assembly".[1]

It was on the question of appeals to the civil power that the imminent Erastian conflict was to centre, and divide English Presbyterians.

Nevertheless there were many inconsistencies in the Independents' position, as a result of which they were no more justified in claiming that their way favoured the magistrate than were the Presbyterians. First of all, as Edwards observed, the Independents would not even admit the magistrate to one of their congregations, if he was not judged a visible saint.[2] Secondly, the Presbyterians insisted that the magistrate should have

"a coercive and coactive power, to suppresse heresies, schisme, to correct troubles and unruly persons in the Church, to tie and bind men to their authoritie to the decrees of Synods made according to the word of God".[3]

The Independents, on the other hand, both agreed that the magistrate had power to enforce religious unity in a kingdom, and yet claimed that the State must tolerate <u>their</u> way (which to the Presbyterians was heresy and schism!) Their view on the extent of magisterial authority in church affairs was entirely dependent on its effect on themselves.

Certainly the Independents' confidence in the role of the civil magistrate distinguishes them from the separatists, for in a national Independent church of semi-separatist congregations, the magistrate would provide the one unifying bond between them.[4]

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1. S. Rutherford, <u>The Due Right of Presbyteries</u>, pp.420,450.
2. T. Edwards, <u>Antapologia</u>, p.159.
3. <u>Ibid.</u>
4. D. Nobbs, "Philip Nye on Church and State", <u>Cambridge Historical Journal</u>, V (1935), p.59.

The extent of their reliance on the magistrate was to be revealed in 1652, when in the "Humble Proposals", Independent ministers supported the State's supervision of congregations, and their pastors.[1] Yet in New England, the theory of the magistrate's relationship to the church was much the same as in Scotland;

> "As it is unlawfull for church-officers to meddle with the sword of the Magistrate, so it is unlawfull for the Magistrate to meddle with the work proper to church officers".[2]

Edwards believed that the Independents only seemed to give the magistrate more power because they lacked authoritative synods, so that the magistrate was forced to punish errors "not as heresies and such opinions, but as breaches of the civill peace, and disturbances to the Common-wealth".[3]

The problem was that the Independents genuinely believed that the civil powers could protect the "true" religion and suppress tha false; in this they were in complete accord with Presbyterians.[4] As Edwards observed, in a national Independent system as New England, the civil authorities were accorded full power to deal with Roger Williams, Antinomians, Familists and Anabaptists and other such "heretics". The Apologists claimed that the magistrate should enforce a sentence of non-communion.[5] But the situation was

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1. The Humble Proposals of John Owen, Thomas Goodwin, Nye, Simpson and others are reprinted in F.J. Powicke, "The Independents of 1652", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., IX (April 1924) pp.21-8.
2. W. Walker, Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism (New York, 1893,), p.236. The Cambridge Platform (chapter 17).
3. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.165.
4. This is clearly evidenced by Philip Nye at Whitehall, See below, p.571.
5. An Apologeticall Narration, pp.17-19.

different where the "true" religion was not the established Church. After 1645, when the Presbyterian government seemed assured, Independents had to ensure toleration, and denied the power of the State to suppress their true way. As a result, radical Independents would move into an increasingly separatist viewpoint, realising that ensuring toleration of the "true religion" would mean that the magistrate must tolerate all peaceable religious groups whatsoever. John Goodwin was already moving in that direction. He denied the magistrate's ability to persecute any religious group branded as heretical if they "be otherwise peaceable in the State, and every waies subject to the Laws and lawfull power of the Civill Magistrate".[1] It must be stressed that moderate Independents did not share Goodwin's opinions. But the change of emphasis on the civil magistrate's authority in church affairs was certainly beginning in 1643-4. Edwards observed that the Apologists' views were not universally held among Independents;

> "A Gentleman, a prime member of one of your Churches immediately after the comming forth of your Apologeticall Narration disclaimed and renounced that power of the Magistrate expresst by you, in the hearing of a Minister, a members of the Assembly, who related it to me".[2]

The Independents and Presbyterians both with reason emphasised that each others reliance on the magistrate was extremely limited. John Goodwin said that the Scots were telling the magistrate that unless he supported the Presbytery, he had no right to any power! So

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1. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., p.54.
2. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.164.

"The Civill Magistrate is much beholding to the Presbyter, for giving him a consecrated sword to fight the Presbyterian battels ... I perceive Presbyterie is policie in the highest; and seeks to put the Magistrate between it self, and the envie and discontent of the people; and yet nevertheless hopes to gain from the hand of the Magistrate such an interpretation of this practice, as thereby to be esteemed the best and faithfullest friend it hath, in all the world".[1]

But the Independents were no better. As Edwards said, how could they give authority to the magistrate to repair and build the house of God when

"they allow private men to gather and make Churches and Ministers, to do such publike workes, and that without leave, nay against the mind and laws of the supreame Magistrate, I question ..." [2]

In 1643-4 and later, all Independents and all but Erastian Presbyterians would accord the magistrate only powers that did not prejudice their own church system.

Toleration 1643-4.

In accordance with the increasing desire to stipulate limits on his suppressive powers, whilst still maintaining a clear role for the magistrate in religion, the pamphlet literature displayed specific demands for tolerance that Independent writers had not displayed so clearly before 1644. Presbyterians were appalled at the very suggestion, and immediately announced that it would open the door to all kinds of errors. When Simpson remarked that Presbytery had produced plenty of errors in the Law Countries, Edwards immediately retaliated by claiming such a situation was due to the toleration of

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1. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., pp.33 (quoted), 58.
2. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.160.

Independents there.[1] John Goodwin tried to obviate such criticisms by making it plain that if Independency could be accommodated within a national system, toleration would be unnecessary:-

"Apologisme, in case it be tolerated, must needs become a Schisme in that Religion which is established in the Land. Wee conceive, that every difference in Judgement doth not make a schisme ... we shall then find abundance of the weed growing in the Presbyterian field it selfe. I myself know differences not a few amongst that partie, and some not of the lightest consequence ... as yet we have no Presbyterian Church or Government amongst us; and so, if the toleration be granted before such a Government be established, it is apparantly ... out of the reach of such an imputation for ever".[2]

But if accommodation failed - and Goodwin's tone was that of a man who could see the inevitability of a Presbyterian triumph, then toleration was essential. It would be risky for a magistrate to try to pluck out the truth which God had planted, especially as

"Frequent experience shews, that a minor part ... of godly persons in a Church or State, may have the mind of God and of Christ amongst them in some particulars, before the generalitie or major part of this Church, comes to be enlightened or interessed (sic) in it".

God had allowed toleration in Old Testament days, for

"Though God gave no such Toleration ... by a Law, yet he did actually tolerate for a long time together with much patience, not onely a minor but a major part of the Jewish Nation, and that not onely in some opinions and practises, which were disputably false or sinfull, but even in such which were notoriously and unquestionably such".

How much more should a toleration be allowed to the Independents, whose practices accorded with God's Word.[3]

Edwards asked the Independents whether they desired a general toleration for all dissenters, or just for themselves.[4] It was a

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1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp.291-2, 298-9; S. Simpson, The Anatomist Anatomis'd, p.10.
2. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., p.87.
3. Ibid., pp.57,89.
4. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.301.

good question. Goodwin seemed to imply that an extensive toleration was warrantable by Scripture, a position he would later elaborate in the Whitehall Debates. But Goodwin, and particularly the Apologists, found it advisable at this stage to leave the limits of their toleration vague, in order to gain as much support as possible from the Presbyterians on the one hand and the sects on the other. Contemporaries believed the Apologists to have only a limited concept of toleration; even Baillie wrote in 1644 that the five would not advocate such a wide toleration as John Goodwin, although the latter "is of as great authority here as any of them".[1] One writer bewailed that since the Apologists did not advocate freedom for all sects;

> "the Seperatists thus (was) left in the lurch, and likely to be exposed to greater dangers than ever by the endeavours of these men".[2]

Certainly the Apologists had to be more circumspect than Goodwin in their public statements. But it was clear in 1644 that neither the Apologists nor Goodwin advocated liberty for gross heretics. Goodwin's editors carefully established that they did not

> "approve a toleration of the broaching of all opinions ... that apparently tend to Libertine - licencious ungodliness, (these) ought not quietly to be permitted".[3]

John Goodwin admitted that men as sound and orthodox in doctrine as the Apologists were as

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1. Baillie, ii,18. He had changed his mind by 1646!
2. The Compassionate Samaritane (reputed to be by William Walwyn: see W.H. Haller, Liberty and Reformation, p.132) supported the separatists. The first edition appeared in June-July 1644 and was censured by Newcomen in a September sermon for its denial of the "jus divinum" of the ministry. M. Newcomen, A Sermon tending to set forth the Right Use of the Disasters that befall our Armies, 1644, p.38. E.16(1). The second edition appeared on 5 January 1644 and is included in the Thomason tracts. The quotation is from this second edition, p.3. E.1202(1). Walwyn, like Henry Robinson, claimed to be an adherent of no specific religious group, but a devotee of love and reason.
3. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., (second edition),p.25. E.54(18).

"carpenters prepared ... on purpose by God, for the cutting down of the horns of false doctrines and opinions; if they be suffered to work".[1]

But what was a limited toleration; liberty just for semi-separatists, or for all those who accepted the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, which could include many separatists? By definition, an accommodation within the national church could only extend to semi-separatists, so as long as this remained the major goal of Independents, they could not be said to desire a wide liberty. Yet if accommodation failed, and toleration became the Independents' aim, it would be illogical to exclude any but the gross heretics from its compass. In 1644 it was not clear whether the Apologists would extend their toleration as far as this, but by 1646 their position became plainer.[2]

With regard to accommodation, at one point both Edwards and Stewart seemed to drop alluring hints of possible Presbyterian generosity. Edwards automatically assumed that the Independents would misuse such goodwill;

"supposing the Parliament should make a proposition to them; Wee will grant you this and this, and so (which be the present principles you hold forth) but if you bring in anything more or goe farther, then your Churches shall be dessolved, and we will recall what we granted you ... I doe not thinke the Apologists would accept of a Toleration upon those tearmes, and such a condition".[3]

When Adam Stewart hinted that the Apologists should not be pressed to go against their consciences, John Goodwin observed that Stewart's pamphlets belied his words, and that his more

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1. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., (first edition), p.84.
2. See below, pp.535, 573-4.
3. T. Edwards, Antapologia, pp.295-6.

extreme brethren would disagree with him;

"It may be you are but of the ordinarie Presbyterian stature and pitch, and so your mercies though somewhat severe, yet possibly may not be very cruell: But ... we fear a partie amongst you of hyper-presbyterian spirits, whose spring-tydes may swell beyond your low-water marks".[1]

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Despite the acrimony of many pamphleteers, and the real divisions between Presbyterians and Independents, the two groups were in basic agreement on many vital issues. It was upon the implications of these points that quarrels arose. Firstly, they believed that the basis of power was in the people (whether this power should be congregational or synodical) and secondly they agreed on the necessity of synods (although they disagreed as to whether these should be "teaching" or "governing" bodies). They believed that church officers should play an important role in church government (if they quarrelled as to whether the officers should share their power with the congregational body) and they both advocated some sort of censure to be necessary by neighbour churches against an erring congregation (whether synodical censure or a withdrawal of fellowship). In the second edition of "M.S. to A.S.," an editorial expressly stipulated that on the point of synodical censure "the difference is not in ente sed modo: not in the thing, but the manner rather".[2] Both Presbyterians and

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1. A. Stewart, An Answer to a Libell, p.62; J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., pp.92-3. John Goodwin was soon to find plenty more evidence of such "High Presbyterians".
2. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., (second edition), p.23. E.54(18).

Independents admitted the lawfulness of popular election, although they disputed the importance of election in comparison with ordination; both accepted the Covenant of Grace as necessary for salvation, if they quarelled over the necessity of a church covenant. Neither denied infant baptism (although the Independents would only baptise the infants of professed church members) and both wished to exclude the scandalous from the Lord's Supper. Considerable agreement existed on church officers, and both groups advocated set wages for ministers. Finally, both acknowledged the role of the civil magistrate in church affairs, although with strict limitations.

Independents had not yet abandoned all hopes of accord with the Presbyterians. John Goodwin hoped that the Westminster Assembly would not advocate an irrational uniformity, and jeered at Stewart for fearing that all efforts "to deny the Apologists a Toleration, might fail and prove ineffectuall that way".[1] Goodwin's editors tried desperately to undo the damage the bitter pamphlet dispute had done, by recalling Christians to brotherly concord;

> "when shall we see an end of these disputes in the world? and when shall the names of Presbyterian and Independent (with all others of the like troublesome and jarring importance) cease from amongst us?"

No one group, they argued, had the prerogative of truth; nobility of spirit and the "mind of God revealed in the Scriptures" must turn contrary opinions into the "sweet calm of a universall unity".[2]

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1. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., p.107.
2. J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., (second edition) pp.31-3.