

"JACOB AND ESAU STRUGLING IN THE WOMBE":
A STUDY OF PRESBYTERIAN AND INDEPENDENT RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS
1640-1648

with particular reference to the Westminster Assembly and
the pamphlet literature

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ROSEMARY DIANE BRADLEY

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PART TWO

"THE TRIUMPH OF PRESBYTERY"

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PART TWO.THE "TRIUMPH" OF PRESBYTERY.

"we are neither so cold as by publique indulgence to tolerate all opinions, nor so hot as to suppress one Sect. Not so cold as not to admit of Presbyteriall government upon triall, and in part; nor so hot as to receive it wholly in the power, and practice. 'Twere well if in these things we were more then almost persuaded to be Christians".

L. Seaman, The Head of the Church, the Judge of the World.
24 February 1646-7, p.29, E.372(11).

Chapter Six.THE HASTENING OF A SETTLEMENT AND THE OPEN BREACH.August 1644-July 1645.

"Affairs had now reached so much maturity that a crisis had become inevitable; for every point having been very fully debated between the Presbyterians and the Independents, they must either unite, or adopt some new course which should render union impossible."

W.M. Hetherington, History of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, p.181.

"The controversie is not now onely betwixt congregational and classical Divines (who are called Independents and Presbyterians) in point of Church government ... But with some others also ... such who would have nothing jure divino, nothing stand by divine right in Church affairs, but resolve all wholly into State power ..."

T. Hill, The Season for England's Selfe-Reflection, and Advancing Temple-Work, sermon to the Lords, 13 August 1644, sig A.3, pp.33-4, E.6(7).

"In 1644 ... this natural distribution of the Parliamentarians into the moderate or cautious party and the party of energy and movement ... had identified itself in great measure with that ecclesiastical division of the Parliamentarians into PRESBYTERIANS and INDEPENDENTS which had meanwhile occurred".

ed. J. Bruce, The Quarrel between the Earl of Manchester and Oliver Cromwell, (Camden Society, new series, XII, 1875, p. xxxvi,).

August-July 1644-5 was a crucial transition period in Presbyterian-Independent relations. Firstly, as the Assembly divisions worsened and the pamphlet war grew ever more acrimonious, the intransigence of both sides caused the failure of accommodation negotiations. The Independents accordingly declared their breach from the Presbyterians by openly dissenting to the Presbyterian recommendations prepared by the Assembly. Although the two sides would still profess their hopes of accommodation, the Independents were now convinced that the likelihood of such unity without a sacrifice of their vital tenets was negligible, and, encouraged by the increasing success of the Independents in the army, were moving towards a demand that Parliament should openly tolerate their way.

Secondly, the approaching Presbyterian national settlement appeared to be clearly at the mercy of Parliamentary Erastianism, which was both a source of hope for the Independents, and of division for the Presbyterians. For the Presbyterians, never a uniform group, were splitting into two sections. The first comprised those who supported the divine right of the Presbyterian church officers to enforce discipline in the church according to the Scottish pattern; these became known as the "rigid" or "~~jure~~ *jus divinum*" Presbyterians by 1645-6, when the divisions became even more pronounced,¹ and were a powerful

1. For a full discussion of the implications and confusions of the "*jus divinum*" claim, and for the use of the adjective "rigid", see below, pp. 431-6.

lobby in the Assembly and amongst the clergy. The other section of Presbyterian interest (although hardly organised as a group), consisted of those who believed that the civil magistrate must achieve what the ministers had so far failed to accomplish and enforce the discipline of a godly reformation.¹ This "Erastian" opinion had clear approval from only two Assembly divines, Thomas Coleman and John Lightfoot, although there may have been tacit support from a few backbenchers.² But it had much approval from Parliament, and probably fair sympathy among laymen, who would appreciate a Presbyterianism that avoided the danger of clerical tyranny. Erastianism had certainly spread into Warwickshire, where a horrified journalist reported the existence of a "secular sect" which believed that excommunication and church discipline should be carried out by local J.P.s, who were bound to let many sinners escape just censure!³ The greatest lay advocate of Erastianism at the time was William Prynne.

Independents were thus able to continue their policy of appealing to Erastianism in Parliament by exploiting the

1. Erastianism was widely understood as the claim of the civil power to control the church. But Erastus' primary motive in supporting such magisterial power was to oppose clerical discipline in the cause of moral reform. Dr. Lamont has emphasised Figgis' point that Erastianism became misunderstood, and was associated with a secular indifference to moral questions. That this occurred was in fact largely as a result of the efforts of "jure divino" Presbyterians to discredit their opponents in the 1640s. W.M. Lamont, Marginal Prynne, (1963), pp.155-6; J.N. Figgis, "Erastus and Erastianism", Journal of Theological Studies, II, (1900). I have used "Erastian" in the sense of opposition to the "jure divino" power of church officers, and support for the disciplinary powers of the magistrate to deal with sinners. From now on the term "Presbyterian" will still be used generally, and where "rigid" or "Erastian" groups are meant this will be specified.

2. See above, p.77, including note 1.

3. Anon; The Warwick Scout, 14 May 1645, E.284(4). (In manuscript in Thomason's collection).

Presbyterians' divisions, although this would be more noticeable in 1645-6, and is traced in detail below.¹ Goodwin and Robinson both wondered why Prynne was not silenced by his own party, since

"The truth is, that Mr. Prynne's opinion concerning an Ecclesiasticall spirituall Jurisdiction in the Civill Magistrate ... overthrows the main grounds and principall foundations upon which the Doctrine of Presbyterie is built by all her ablest and most skilfull workmen".²

No wonder the Presbyterians would later be accused of making "a great busling in the Citie and Kingdom about they know not what".³ As the Independents reasoned, if the Presbyterians differed so widely amongst themselves, it would not hurt them to compromise with the Independents as well.⁴

Thirdly however, the Independents were also becoming increasingly divided between the "moderates" and the more radical advocates of their cause, such as Hugh Peter, John Lilburne, and John Goodwin. This was inevitable, as the failure of accommodation in the Assembly and the increasing emphasis on toleration meant that the more extreme Independents became virtually indistinguishable from the sects. More moderate Independents would still uphold the validity of a national church and even though John Goodwin had no such qualms, he still tried to differentiate between Independents and sects by

1. Chapter 8.

2. J. Goodwin, Calumny Arraigned and Cast, 31 January 1644-5, pp.44 (quoted), 51-2, E.26(18); H. Robinson, The Falsehood of Mr. William Pryn's "Truth Triumphant", 8 May 1645, p.8, E.282(11).

3. A well-willer, A New Petition, 16 June 1646, p.7, E.340(24).

4. Anon, The Ancient Bounds, 10 June 1645, p.27, E.287(3).

stressing that certain congregations within the national church could be "true".¹ But although some Presbyterians recognised that the Independents were still not true separatists,² the more the Independents demanded a toleration, the more correct would Adam Stewart become when he observed that the semi-separatist position was being eroded into separatism - if not in intellectual theory, at least in contemporary opinion;

"For if ye be not separated from us, but entertain union and communion with us, what need ye more a Toleration rather than the rest of the members of our Church?"³

There is evidence that at least one conference between Independents and separatists took place at this time, and although this ended in complete disagreement, its purpose had been to try to secure unity.⁴ Thomas Edwards maintained that a member of William Carter's church openly announced that "he and divers other Independents ... are not of the Apologists minds" regarding the validity of a national church.⁵

1. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer to Master Prinne's Book Called, "A Full Reply", 27 January 1644-5, pp.28, 47, E.26(20). Goodwin also said that he disapproved of those who "wholly separate" from the Church of England; J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, 8 January 1644-5, p.37, E.24(8).

2. E.g. D.P.P., An Antidote against the Contagious Air of Independency, 18 February 1644-5, p.9, E.270(3).

3. 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.53, E.274(14). Stewart was later to be echoed by Pryne and John Bastwick, among others.

4. The conference was held in July 1645 between Henry Burton's congregation and some separatists, but was kept a secret for five years owing to Independent reluctance to divulge it. In fact the Independents took a hard line in the conference, and talks collapsed over the issue of the Independents' preaching in some parish churches. The details were published together with an account of another conference in 1648 between John Goodwin's congregation and the separatists, in David Brown, Two Conferences between Some of those that are called Separatists and Independents, 21 May 1650, E.601(11). It was clear that the separatists had also conferred with other Independents, including Saltmarsh, Homes and Burroughes; it was claimed that Burroughes had some insight into the separatist position. Ibid., p.22.

5. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part II, 28 May 1646, p.13. E.338(12).

Just as the Independents would exploit Presbyterian splits, so the Presbyterians were keen to insinuate that the Independents secretly favoured the sects. They were aided by the fact that many radical Independents/sectarians themselves identified the Independents and sects,¹ but even more by the disinclination of the moderate Independents to openly repudiate the sects, although the Presbyterians tried to force their hand. As Baillie explained,

"We hope shortly to get the Independents put to it to declare themselves either to be for the rest of the sectaries, or against them. If they declare against them, they will be but a small inconsiderable company; if for them, all honest men will cry out upon them for separating from all the Reformed churches, to join with Anabaptists and Libertines".²

But as the moderate Independents refused to make such a declaration, for fear of losing support in country and army, it was little wonder that Presbyterians were able to convince many readers that the Independents were as bad as the sects. Ephraim Paget's "Heresiography" did just this, and radical Independents believed that it had been deliberately published by the Presbyterians to discredit Independency.³ Ward condemned

"they that pretend for conscience sake to separate from our ordinarie assemblies ... yet will not be perswaded to divide themselves, and stand aside, from those routs of Libertines, whom they cannot but condemne in their judgements, or declare distinctly & openly, wherein they dissent from them as from others: but all meete in one third, and militate under one colours ..." ⁴

1. Eg. Anon, A Helpe to the Right Understanding of a Discourse concerning Independency lately published by William Prynne, 6 February 1644-5, p.6, E.259(2) which stated, "all sorts of Independents, whether Anabaptists or Brownists, or Antinomians, or any other ..."

2. Baillie, ii, 142. 8 July 1645.

3. E. Paget, Heresiography, 8 May 1645, E.282(5). Paget wrote that the Independents despised learning and preached that God would destroy the Church of England, although he distinguished "semi-separatists" from Independents! The complaint against Paget was made by Anon, A Sacred Decretall, Or Hue and Cry, from his Superlative Holinesse, Sir Symon Synod, 5 June 1645, p.21.

Bastwick argued that the Independents were responsible for increasing the number of sects and heresies, since "out of the Independents lungs are sprung above forty severall sorts of straglers".¹ Prynne claimed that all the sectaries and Anabaptists had christened themselves anew with the name of Independents, whilst Baillie moaned that Independency was

"the chief hand that opened at first, and keepeth open to this day the door to all the other Errours that plague us ... after triall it will be found, that this new and middle way (as it is called) is really the extremity of the most rigid Separation: That it is not a semi- but a sesqui-Separation".²

There is evidence that the moderate Independents were starting to call themselves congregationalists, or "of the congregational government"³ to lose the separatist allusions inherent in the term "Independency". The new title did become gradually more common, but as yet it was by no means widely used, and did not succeed in removing the opprobrium of "Independency".⁴

3. cont'd. E.286(15). John Grants' Truth's Victory against Heresie, 9 April 1645, E.277(7) also linked the Independents and sects.

4. J. Ward, (the Assembly member, not the Independent John Ward), God Judging among the Gods, fast sermon to the Commons, 26 March 1645, p.32, E.279(5).

1. J. Bastwick, The Second Part of that Book call'd Independency Not God's Ordinance, 10 June 1645, p.37, E.287(9). Henceforth referred to as Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II.

2. R. Baillie, Errours and Induration Are the Great Sins and the Great Judgements of the Time, fast sermon to the Lords, 30 July 1645, sig. A.3, and p.35, E.294(12); W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring-Blasing Stars, 24 July 1645, p.1, E.261(5).

3. E. Paget, Heresiography, p.69.

4. The earliest use of the term "congregational way" may have been in 1641, in William Kiffin's preface to "A Glimpse of Sion's Glory", E.175(5). See G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, p.8, note.

Thomas Edwards consistently and deliberately used the term "Sectary" to malign Independents and sects alike.

Whilst the Presbyterians were anxious to insinuate that the Independents must be judged by their extremists, they were also keen to show that the Independents were not a united group by revealing the difference between radicals and moderates. (The Presbyterians were of course themselves divided into extremists and moderates, although these were not equable with their jure divino/Erastian groupings). Bastwick explained how the Independents had argued over the necessity to persuade him to remain neutral in the Presbyterian-Independent controversies.¹ Prynne was uncertain as to which section of the Independents was guiding that party; he expected that any statement of Independent policy must come from the moderate Thomas Goodwin, but believed the radical Hugh Peter to be the "Solicitor-generall of the Independent Cause and Party". However, he knew that the radicals were more dangerous, as he suspected them of treachery;

"their very Libels, actions, speeches proclaime a plotted avowed Confederacy among some furious Ringleaders of those Independent Sectaries (though I presume the more moderate are not guilty of it) against the Parliament".²

It was certainly the radical Independents who were guilty

1. J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II, pp. 45-57. Bastwick explained that after he had been released from Royalist capture, the Independents spread a rumour that he supported their way, and tried to bribe him by promising him rich patients for his medical practice. A later pamphlet implicated John Lilburne (J. Bastwick, A Just Defence, 30 August 1645, p.15, E. 265(2)). Moderate Independents begged Bastwick not to publicly denounce their way until they had published their "Reasons", (see below, pp.315-20) but the radicals scoffed at them, saying Bastwick's feeble arguments could not harm their cause.

2. W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandering-Blasing Stars, pp.47,32, sig.A.

of the much publicised attacks on the Assembly during this period. Hugh Peter and John Lilburne initiated a petition drawn up at the Windmill Tavern meeting, which was to be canvassed at the Common council elections and eventually presented to Parliament; its apparent aims included the dissolution of the Assembly and postponement of Presbyterianism.¹ Henry Robinson observed that since the Assembly was meeting without the King's permission, it should disband and save expense and "the disturbance and offence they give their Independent Brethren".² But the most effective attacks on the Assembly came from "Martin Marpriest",³ which together with similar scurrilous libels, were deliberately aimed at a lower class of reader than previous Presbyterian-Independent literature. Martin portrayed the Assembly as a "quagmire of croaking skip-jacke Presbyters", equipped with a "thumping, bumping Presbyterean, Classicall CLUB"⁴ anxious to enthrall the State, Parliament and people in a "Synodean hooke".⁵

1. The Windmill Tavern meeting probably occurred about 1 June. See W. Haller, Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution, p.277; T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, 26 February 1645-6, p.52, E.323(2). Lilburne claimed that it was only intended that the Assembly divines should be sent home to fire their parishioners with new zeal against the Royalists. J. Lilburne, Innocency and Truth Justified, 6 January 1645-6, pp.4-5, E.314(21). Prynne remarked that the clause about the Assembly was so inflammatory, that the Common council had omitted it. W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring - Blasing Stars, p.18.

2. H. Robinson, The Falsehood of Mr. William Pryn's Truth Triumphant, 8 May 1645, p.12, E.282(11).

3. This name was obviously chosen because of its similarities to Martin Marprelate, scourge of the Episcopacy in Elizabethan days. For Martin's author, see below, pp.378-9.

4. Anon, (Marpriest) The Arraignement of Mr. Persecution, 8 April 1645, sig A5 verso, sig A5, E.276(23).

5. Anon (Marpriest); A Sacred Decretall, 5 June 1645, p.6, E.286(15).

He mocked the Assembly for its "pious providence to make sure the Ordinance for Tithes, before you could be inspired with the Directory",¹ and assured its members that he would

"turne up the foundation of your Classicall Supremacy, and pull downe your Synodean Spheare about your eares ... jeare you out of your Black Cloaks ... handle you without Mittins, thwack your Cassocks, rattle your Jackets, stampe upon the Panch of your Villany, and squeeze out the filth and garbidge of your Iniquity, till you stink in the nostrills of the Common-People".²

Such charming sentiments were highly unlikely to persuade the more conservative people as to the godliness of the Independents' cause, a fact upon which the Presbyterians capitalised.³ The more moderate Independents were probably deeply embarrassed by them, since they made the task of Independents within the Assembly increasingly difficult. The radical Independents were also apparently given to boasting about

"their Champions strength in the Assembly, whom they magnified for such great Schollers ... and gloried as if the field were already wonne, and all the Presbyterians vanquished".

One Independent had exulted in a Knight's chamber that "a little handfull of Independent Ministers in the Synod, have given three Kingdomes imployment these two yeares, so that they can do nothing".⁴ It was clear that the radical Independents associated

1. Anon, Martin's Echo, 27 June 1645, p.3, E.290(2). Parliament passed an ordinance authorising the collection of tithes from defaulters on 7 August 1644, C.J. iii, 582. It was printed in November. John Lilburne was so outraged at this that he claimed the Parliament had broken the Covenant! J. Lilburne, A Coppie of a Letter to ... Mr. William Prinne, 15 January 1644-5, p.7, E.24(22).

2. Anon, Martin's Echo, p.6.

3. Prynne for example, believed the Independents to be subverting the ministry. A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring-Blasing Stars, p.12.

4. J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II, pp. 45, 71.

themselves with the moderates, whilst prejudicing their efforts.

Meanwhile the delays and prevarications occasioned by the Assembly Independents were causing the Assembly to be criticised from several quarters. In September Herle reported that many Englishmen believed "the Assembly hath not endeavoured so much as they might reformation, but delays" and would deduce that since many members had sequestrated livings in the city as well as their home cures, they would delay even longer.¹ Parliament and the Scottish General Assembly both tried to speed Assembly proceedings,² whilst Parliamentary preachers emphasised the urgency of a settlement of church government.³ So too did the Scots Commissioners, although Buchanan still blamed them for being too "meal-mouthed";

"Surely I am perswaded, had you been stouter in the Synode, these strong heads, and factious few ones, who hitherto have troubled the settling of Church-affaires, and are likely to trouble the State ... had long ere now been quashed".⁴

Baillie was still devoting every spare moment to the procuring of Presbyterian testimonies from abroad.⁵

1. Gillespie, Notes, p.68.

2. Parliament urged the Assembly to speed e.g. C.J. iv, 133. Parliament received many petitions urging the expediting of church government, e.g. from Hertfordshire ministers in August, and from Suffolk ministers in January, as well as from city ministers in September and March. See the Thomason tracts E.254(20); E.9(7); and E.273(5) for evidence of the Hertfordshire and city petitions, and for Suffolk, see C.J. iv.27. For a letter from the Scottish General Assembly to the divines see E.12(7) in the Thomason collection.

3. E.g. T. Hill, The Season for England's Selfe-Reflection and Advancing Temple-Work, 13 August 1644, E.6(7). However, William Reyner thought delays should be viewed philosophically; Babylon's Ruining-Earthquake, 28 August 1644, preface, E.7(18).

4. D. Buchanan, A Short and True Relation of Some Main Passages of Things wherein the Scots are Particularly Concerned, 14 September 1645, p.11, E.1174(4). A revised edition was published in November, under the title Truth its Manifest, E.1179(5).

Scottish zeal in extra-Assembly intrigues was well matched by the Independents. Henry Robinson was in communication with John Dury to see if he could yet be persuaded to support a toleration, whilst Nathaniel Homes was in contact with John Cotton.¹ As a further strategy to influence or divert the Assembly, pleas were heard from the radical Independents for a public disputation with the Presbyterians.² John Lilburne challenged William Prynne to such a confrontation before any audience in London, provided Prynne gave him a few days notice; the topics for discussion were to include the jurisdiction of synods and the thesis that "to persecute for conscience is not of nor from God, but of and from the Divell and Antichrist".³ John Goodwin had similarly begged Adam Stewart for a conference, which Stewart took to be a jest, since Goodwin was still covering himself by the pseudonym M.S.⁴ But if a public conference was

cont'd.

5. In November he tried to stop a rumoured approval by the Dutch theologian Gijsbert Voet of John Cotton's "Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven" (which never appeared); he secured the services of Apollonij in the defence of Presbyterianism in a tract published in the name of the Wallacheren churches, A Consideration of certaine Controversies, 9 April 1645, E.1155(2).

Baillie also tried to persuade the French to denounce Independency, and the Dutch to denounce Erastianism! For such intrigues see Baillie, ii 71,76,83,107.

1. For Robinson's correspondence with Dury, see above, p.183 note 1. Homes, together with "I.H." published Cotton's "The Way of the Churches of Christ in New England" in April, E.276(13).

2. This would be unlikely to have support from the moderate Independents, who were reluctant to disclose their precise position for fear of losing sympathy.

3. J. Lilburne, A Coppie of a Letter, pp.3-4; Katharine Chidley, a separatist, had asked the same of Edwards, Rutherford, and Stewart. K. Chidley, A New-Yeares Gift, 2 January 1644-5, p.22, E.23(13).

4. A. Stewart, Zerubbabel to Sanballat and Tobiah, 21 March 1644, p.53, E.274(14).

to prove an impossibility, private disputations were going on; Stewart complained "do we not by dayly experience in all places and houses find the Independents wrangling with the Presbyterians about Church controversies?" Goodwin retorted that on such occasions it was invariably the Presbyterians "who generally begin first to find fault, and pick quarrells with the Independents opinions".¹

The Assembly Debates I: Antinomians, Ordination, Sins and the Directory for Public Worship.

Meanwhile the Assembly proceeded laboriously with its increasingly impossible task of attaining a united front. Its first task on return from vacation on 7 August was to prepare a remonstrance to Parliament, lamenting the great increase in Antinomian and Anabaptist conventicles.² This instantly provoked the danger of open rupture with the Independents, since Nye complained that the report could implicate Independents, and demanded a very precise definition of Anabaptism and Antinomianism.³ Burges retorted that the report meant to criticise all those who disturbed the peace of the church, and Walker added that he was sorry that any

1. J. Goodwin's reply to Stewart, quoting Stewart's allegation, A Short Answer to A.S., 3 February 1644-5, p.34, E.27(6).

2. Baillie, ii, 47,49. After the initial remonstrance Parliament requested fuller advice on the suppression of such sects, Ibid., 54-5.

3. TSS. vol.ii, f.163 verso. Nye added that the Episcopalians called all Puritans these names!

should defend such separatism. Thomas Goodwin immediately accused the Assembly of censuring all opinions apart from Presbytery, and insisted that the Independents "hold more things with the reformed churches than many of this Assembly do".¹ Later Independent arguments on this theme appear to have been curtailed by the Assembly, whereupon Goodwin complained "we are much challenged & provoked by severall bookes to give an account ... is it your purpose yt we must answer none".²

As soon as the report was due to be sent to Parliament, the Independents tried a ploy to force the Assembly to change it, by threatening to dissent immediately unless the report was delayed while they presented "reasons" against it. But the Assembly called their bluff, as it allowed them liberty to dissent, but refused to delay the report any longer as false rumours of it were already circulating the city.³ Nye instantly accused the Assembly of refusing to listen to the Independents, and a vote had to be taken "that the dissenting brethren have been left to their liberty this day of entering their dissent and their reasons". Only the Independents and Thomas Wilson voted against this proposition, although Marshall, Herle, Calamy, Corbet and Henry Wilkinson junior abstained, giving

1. TSS. vol.ii, ff.164 and 164 verso.

2. Ibid., vol.ii, f.169. This is clear evidence that the pamphlet disputes affected Assembly debates.

3. Ibid., f.176; Gillespie, Notes, p.66. Procedural rules for bringing in reasons of dissent had to be checked, since this was the first time dissent had been threatened. Seaman told the Independents that the Assembly need not delay the report while reasons of dissent were prepared. Walker and Marshall added that only reasons already argued in the Assembly could be used, otherwise "they may bring in a volume against one vote".

clear proof that they were pursuing a conciliatory policy. But at the last moment the Independents withdrew from the finality of open dissent, and contented themselves with the Assembly's inclusion in the report of their request to enter reasons against it.¹ They may have been anxious not to prejudice Parliament against them for the more vital votes on church government, but the stage was clearly set for future dissent.

During discussions on this report, the Assembly was also preparing its objections against the Parliament's Erastian alterations to the Directory of Ordination.² Baillie scorned the fact that the Assembly was so much the tool of Parliament that it even had to request permission to debate these alterations!³ When the Commons considered the objections, it found that the Assembly was trying to reassert clerical authority by proposing that the people should "obey and submit" to an ordinand as "having Rule over them in the Lord", and by insisting that when church government should be settled, the Assembly's original conclusions should be enforced.⁴ Although the Commons did make a few concessions to the Assembly, the crucial point about "obeying" ministers was omitted from the text of the

1. Gillespie, Notes, p.66. 5 September 1644.

2. See above, pp.145-6.

3. Baillie, ii, 52; TSS, vol.ii, f.155 verso. Marshall and Palmer insisted that permission must be received from Parliament; Nye also seemed to concur. Nye was included on the committee to present the Assembly's objections to the Parliament, Ibid., vol.ii, f.163 (26 August 1644).

4. C.J. iii, 610-11.

"Ordinance for Ordination, Pro Tempore" when it was finally printed.¹ This struggle was to prove but a precursor to future trials of strength between magisterial and clerical power and revealed the growing importance of the Erastian issue. Baillie had clearly underestimated the situation when he believed that Parliament would bow to the Assembly on ordination.² The Royalist "Mercurius Aulicus" observed that the ordinance "clearly deserts the Brethren of Scotland, who hold the Presbyteriall form to be Jure divino".³

The resurrection of the question of ordination in August and September also provoked fresh disputes with the Independents. At a private evening meeting of M.P.s and ministers at Worcester House, Vane and Haselrig disputed two of the Assembly's clauses - the crucial "obeying" clause and another insisting "that Ordination is an ordinance of Christ". Such objections were theological as well as Erastian and provoked the despairing comment from Gillespie that "when these things are opposed, what hopes are there of carrying the whole government and directory?"⁴ In the Assembly, too, the Independents wondered whether ordination was strictly necessary,

1. Gillespie complained that the Lords had blotted out this proposal; Notes, p.86. For the ordinance see An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament ... for the Ordination of Ministers Pro Tempore, 2 October 1644, E.10(25). This was to be in force for twelve months. The Assembly chose 23 ministers to ordain in London, where the proposals were to be first effected. No Independents were selected, but Cranford and other non-Assembly members were chosen. The Assembly had refused to choose any names until some concessions had been achieved; C.J. iii, 630. In November Parliament extended the ordinance to cover Lancashire; C.J. iii, 705.

2. Baillie, ii, 54.

3. Mercurius Aulicus, 19 October 1644, p.1204, E.16(24).

4. Gillespie, Notes, p.67. In the Commons, Vane and St. John had been tellers for the "noes" on the vote of whether ministers should be obeyed. V. Rowe, Sir Henry Vane the Younger, (1970), p.196. The Parliamentary ordinance did concede that ordination was an ordinance of Christ.

since they felt election to be more important.¹ When Palmer informed the Independents that the issue of lay preaching could not yet be considered, Goodwin complained that the Assembly only hurried over matters that the Independents deemed important.² The Independents were also antagonised when the Assembly resolved to request Parliament to include the words "ordination by preaching presbyters, with prayer and imposition of hands" in the ordinance, so as to exclude the possibility of popular ordination.³ Nye declared that the Assembly had not concluded that ordination belonged solely to presbyters,⁴ and Marshall was obliged to conciliate the Independents with the assurance

"all yt is said in the preface doth not amount soe high as to say this way is the only way, it yields noe more but yt this is a lawfull way".⁵

The Independents were doubtless highly delighted when the Parliament omitted the "obeying" clause, as this could have denied popular participation in church affairs.

On 9-10 September an intriguing debate occurred which revealed the increasing frustration of Assembly members with the delays in church government, and the ability of the Independents

1. TSS, vol.ii, f.165 verso.

2. Ibid., vol.ii, f.166 verso, 30 August 1644.

3. Gillespie, Note s, p.71; TSS, vol.ii, f. 193. 13 September 1644. The substance of this was conceded in the final ordinance, although the Assembly agreed not to press for acceptance of the phrase that ordination was an ordinance of Christ, lest it "may breed debate in the House".

4. TSS, vol.ii, f.194.

5. Ibid., vol.ii, f.193 verso.

to capitalise on the Presbyterians' own divisions. The Assembly decided to send a remonstrance to the Parliament on the sins of the nation that had provoked God into allowing the defeat of Essex' army in the west, whereupon Baillie remarked

here we had the most free and strange parliament that ever I heard, about the evident sins of the assembly, the sins of the parliament, the sins of the army, the sins of the people".¹

Calamy bewailed that the Assembly had not tried hard enough to achieve unity in religion and Rutherford criticised the delays in reformation, condemning the failure of accommodation;

"there was an accommodation concluded conceived to be a peaceable and brotherly way for the intended reformation ... it hath been deserted ... it is very prejudiciall to the intended reformation the detracting calumnyes on both sides ..."²

When Palmer complained that the Assembly had not extirpated heresy and schism, and denounced liberty of conscience, Nye hastened to defend the Independents from all these aspersions. He declared that it was difficult to know what schism meant, for surely forbearing some points was not schismatical?³

He reminded the Presbyterians that they were far from unanimous themselves on certain issues;

"the Assembly differeth as much amongst themselves as against his party, for there are divers in the Assembly that think there is no synopsis or institution of government in Scripture; then others deny the institution of ruling elders in Scripture, or that they should vote in presbyteries, communibus suffragiis, and that were the government of Scotland laid before us, he and his party would come nearer to it in many things than divers of this Assembly will do in other things. He added, There are some in the Assembly who deny excommunication".⁴

1. Baillie, ii, 59.

2. Gillespie, Notes, p.68; TSS. vol.ii, f.182 verso (quoted). Gillespie was probably referring to the Calamy House Agreement, although he may also be alluding to the failure of private bargains with Assembly Independents.

3. Ibid., vol.ii, f.186; Nye hastened to add that this did not make him "a patron for anabaptists".

4. Gillespie, Notes, p.68.

His argument reached its target, as the Assembly resolved that it was wiser not to acquaint the Parliament with ~~his~~ shortcomings, and abandoned both the debates and the remonstrance. Baillie was in despair;

"When we were in full hope of a large fruit of so honest and faithful a censure, Thomas Goodwin and his brethren, as their custom is to oppose all things that are good, carried it so that all was dung in the howes,¹ and that matter clean laid by".²

Discussions on the Directory for Public Worship were also continuing, and although these were relatively harmonious, a few clashes occurred. In October a proposal that professions of faith ought to be made by the parents of a child brought for baptism caused the Independents to observe that

"Their covenant (i.e. the Independent church covenant), when members are admitted in their churches, is disputed against upon this reason, that it is an invention of man, and cannot be proved from the word of God; now this explicit covenant and profession in baptism is an invention of man".³

Bridge advised against putting "that now in the Directory which may break us, and offend many thousands".⁴ The Scots divines were still causing trouble over the Sacrament, insisting that it should be received sitting at a table, but eventually a compromise was reached.⁵ A brief eruption of resentment over

1. i.e. "ruined".

2. Baillie, ii, 59.

3. Gillespie, Notes, p.89. 9 October 1644, Burroughes was speaking. Many divines, including the Independents, felt parental professions to be unnecessary; examination of parents should be made for admission to the Sacrament. Nevertheless, the profession of faith was included in the Directory, by a vote of 28 to 16. Ibid., p.91.

4. Ibid., p.91.

5. The compromise said that the elements should be received "about the table; or at it, as in the church of Scotland". Lightfoot, p.326. The House of Lords omitted the phrase "as in the church of Scotland", C.J. iii, 705. The Scots divines were so anxious about this compromise that they begged the Scottish General Assembly not to denounce it, whereupon the General Assembly wrote to England upholding their own practice, but ambiguously declaring that they were prepared to part with some of their other customs. They also insisted that the communicants distribute the elements themselves. Two Letters of Great Concernment published by 28 July 1645. p.12. E.294(A).

Parliament's control of religion occurred when Henderson wondered if the Assembly should accept the preface to the Directory, since it had been formulated by the Commons, and a request was despatched that Parliament should add a suitable acknowledgement of the Assembly's work.¹

After the failure of the Parliamentary committee of accommodation on church government,² tension between Presbyterians and Independents infected the Directory for Public Worship debates as well. The Independents opposed the implied sanction in the preface to this Directory of another liturgy, or set form of prayers, but proposed a compromise, viz. for "studyed & premeditated" prayers as "a middle consideration betwixt set formes of prayer & extemporary prayers".³ This seems to have been adopted,⁴ and was later interpreted as a major Assembly concession to the Independents!⁵ Finally, just as the Assembly was about to submit most of the votes on worship to the Parliament, the Independents decided that the mention of the covenant in the preface implied that a total uniformity in all things was obligatory. They insisted that their "sense of the Covenant is, that it binds us to endeavour a uniformity, but only in institutions" (i.e. things directly instituted by Christ himself, which did not include church

1. Lightfoot, p.306. 20 August 1644. The Erastian Lightfoot dissented from this request, as did one or two others.

2. See below, pp.303-9.

3. TSS. vol.ii, f. 287.

4. Baillie, ii, 73.

5. Anon, Anti-Machiavell, Or Honesty against Policy, 3 July 1647, p.5, E.396(16). This was anti-Independent. One news-book suggested that set prayers could still be used for family worship. Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer, No.82, 19-26 November 1644, p.656, E.19(1).

government).¹ In the end ambiguity again achieved compromise, as Marshall, Cornelius Burges, Calamy and Herle successfully secured the insertion of a phrase in the preface to limit the uniformity intended by the Covenant to "the substance of the worship of God".² Thus most of the Directory passed the Assembly on 20 November, "nemine contradicente", and to prove the divines' unanimity on worship, Thomas Goodwin was amongst those selected to present the work to Parliament the next day.³ Baillie voiced his relief;

"Many a wearisome debate has it cost us; but we hope the sweet fruit will overbalance the very great toil ... when we were at the very end of it, the Independents brought us so doubtful a disputation, that we were in very great fear all should be cast in the hows, and that their opposition to the whole directory should be as great as the government".⁴

Having made their protest, the Independents allowed the few outstanding sections of the Directory for Public Worship - fasting, burial, visitation of the sick, thanksgiving and psalms, to pass without undue debate, although Goodwin made one cavil about marriage.⁵ With the transmitting of these final votes to Parliament by 27 December, the Assembly had concluded its debates on public worship, although the ordinance

1. Mitchell and Struthers, pp.4-5. Since Mitchell and Struthers reprint volume iii of the Assembly Minutes, I have followed their version rather than the transcripts from 13 November 1644 (when volume iii begins).

2. Ibid., p.5. Interpretations could vary as to whether this included government or not!

3. Ibid., p.5; C.J. iii, 701.

4. Baillie, ii, 73.

5. Mitchell and Struthers, p.8. Goodwin suggested that magistrates could perform the ceremony, as in New England, but later Independents agreed that ministers alone should have the privilege. Baillie, ii, 74.

did not pass Parliament until 13 March.¹ It is important to note however that the Directory did not touch on the question of excluding the scandalous from the Sacrament, beyond saying that this was to be done; debates on this crucial issue were to continue in both Assembly and Parliament for many more months, and embodied the essence of the Erastian controversies.² The Directory caused much interest in the country at large³ and was duly denounced by Royalists as trickery on the part of both Presbyterians and Independents, "each deceiving and being deceived by each other".⁴ The radical Independents also mocked the Directory, and were suitably reproved by Prynne.⁵ Meanwhile newsbooks hoped that the Directory for Worship might prove a happy prognostication for unity on church government; whilst the staunchly Presbyterian "Scottish Dove" thought it "a good introduction to an Uniformitie", another hoped that it might at least ensure that accommodation could be considered in

1. This was because approval had to be sought from Scotland; the Commons had passed the Directory as the votes were sent up by the Assembly. It was printed as A Directory for the Publique Worship of God, March 1644-5, E.273(17). Carruthers is wrong to state that the Assembly submitted the Directory in May 1644; S.W. Carruthers, The Westminster Assembly: what it was and what it did, (1943), p.11.

2. See below, pp.331,450-61. On 26 November the House of Commons appointed a committee, including Vane, Selden, Rous, Reynolds, Harley and Rudyard to confer with the Assembly on this issue. C.J. iii, 705.

3. This is revealed in a letter from Ralph Assheton to Col. Moore, Historical Manuscript Commission, Report X, Part IV (1885), p.74.

4. Anon, A View of the New Directory, Oxford, 2 August 1645, p.3, E.294(23) Royalists were still exploiting religious divisions.

5. Martin Marpriest claimed that the Directory caused the loss of Leicester; Prynne replied that in fact Leicester was regained while Parliament was "fortifying the Directory". Martin's Echo, p.8; W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring-Blasing Stars, p.26.

government so "as tender Consciences may have ease".¹

Unfortunately, their optimism was unfounded.

The Assembly Debates II: Church Government.

In September the Grand or "Treaty" committee ordered the Assembly to resume its discussions on church government concurrently with the Directory for Public Worship, rejecting Scottish advice that church government should be debated in sub-committee and not the Assembly proper.² The Grand committee's instructions were that excommunication should be the first subject for debate, but fearing conflict with the Independents (and Parliament) on this vital point of Presbyterian authority, the Scots persuaded the Assembly to disobey the committee and to discuss instead the types of assembly by which the church should be governed, as

"It will be of great advantage for the propositions of peace now to be sent to the King ...³ (and) It is better to begin with these things wherein the Assembly is unanimous, then with the most knotty things wherein difference is like to be

1. The Scottish Dove, 14-21 March 1644-5, p.580, E.274(17); The Kingdome Weekly Intelligencer, No.83, 26 November - 3 December 1644, p.664, E.20(2).

2. Gillespie, Notes, p.65. 4 September 1644. The Scots were anxious to speed debates and avoid Independent harassment.

3. These were to form the basis of the Uxbridge negotiations. It was felt that the four types of presbytery, congregational, classical, synodical, national, should be explained to the King.

4. The Assembly was conscious of the anomalies of its relationship with the Grand committee. Although obliged to accept the committee's guidance, the Assembly was not totally dependent upon it. Since the committee consisted of Lords, Commons and divines, some Assembly members felt it to be not one body, but three! When, on 15 October, the Grand committee officially requested an explanation of the Assembly's action in altering the order of debates, some divines declared that they were not obliged to defend themselves to the committee, particularly since some of the Assembly sat on the committee in any case.



Palmer and Herle agreed, and debates began on the proposition "that the church be governed by severall worts of assemblies", although Marshall feared that even this topic would produce equivocations.¹ He was right, for despite Herle's efforts to promote harmony by reminding divines that they were all striving "to have a government settled & yt presbiteriall ... yt which is right Independency all of us are opposite to",² the Independents soon caused trouble. They first objected to the proposition itself, since it implied that a "church" must be the national church, and such cavils caused no little irritation. Gillespie informed them that they had acknowledged the Church of England in their "Apologeticall Narration", whilst Dr. Hoyle wryly commented that the Assembly had spent "almost a 12 month upon the church & I admire yt we are come to doubt what is meant".³ After the conciliatory Marshall suggested that the word church should be understood "in the most universall notion ... you cannot say it ... (means solely) the church of England",⁴ the Independents consented to the proposition, but not before Carter had tried to have it changed or subjected to greater debate.⁵

4.cont. Eventually Marshall, Nye and Herle secured an answer to the Grand committee that the Assembly was just about to discuss excommunication. Gillespie, Notes, pp.92-3. Carruthers believed that this procedural debate in October was linked with the committee of accommodation, but Gillespie clearly stated that it was about the Assembly's ignoring instructions from the Grand committee. S.W. Carruthers, The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly, pp.9-10.

1. Gillespie, Notes, p.66; TSS. vol.ii, f.173 verso.

2. Ibid., vol.ii, f.172 verso. By "right Independency" he meant separatism.

3. Ibid., vol.ii, ff.178-9 (f. 179 quoted).

4. Ibid., Vol.ii, f.178.

5. Ibid., vol.ii, f. 178 verso. Carter wanted the proposition changed to "the christians in a nation are to be governed by severall assembyes".

The Independents next delayed debates by objecting to the Assembly's proposal to discuss provincial or "synodical" assemblies, since they felt that the powers of congregational presbyteries had not yet been concluded. As Nye declared, "it is not yet voted that a congregation may suspend from the sacrament".¹ Earlier debates on congregational power had indeed been abandoned due to Independent intransigence and Presbyterian divisions,² but the Assembly had no desire to resurrect them, and discussions on the provincial synods were scheduled to begin on 13 September.

Before these debates had commenced, Parliament decided that the time had come to try and assist accommodation, and passed an order on 18 September that the Grand committee of Lords, Commons and divines was to endeavour

"a union in point of Church-Government among those Divines which were of a contrary opinion; and in case it could not bee, then to finde out a way how tender consciences might be born withall, so far forth as might stand with the peace and safety of the Kingdome, and as was warranted by the Word of God, that so the Service of the Assembly might not bee retarded".³

Baillie regarded Cromwell as the initiator of the "high and unexpected order", although Vane and St. John carried it in the Commons,⁴ and was convinced that it was aimed at no less than "a toleration of the Independents by act of parliament, before the presbytery or any common rule were established".⁵

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1. Gillespie, Notes, p.67. See also TSS. vol.ii, f.179 verso.
 2. See above, p.161.
 3. C.J. iii, 626. The order was introduced on 13 September.
 4. Baillie, ii, 55 (quoted), 61. Baillie resented the fact that Vane and St. John had previously seemed so friendly with the Scots.
 5. Ibid., ii, 66.

Although Baillie accused Vane of desiring a toleration for all religions,¹ St. John deliberately worded the order so as not to alarm the Commons by implying a wide toleration, and evidently intended it as a continuation of his policy of accommodation within a national church.² Only if accommodation failed was toleration to be considered, and Dr. Shaw believed that as "only moves in a clerical faction - fight, the attempts at conciliation and toleration set on foot in 1644 seem rotten at the core".³ Unity in the Assembly was even more urgent now that propositions were to be sent to the King; Parliament and leading divines were anxious to avoid a breach with the Independents and salvage an accommodated church settlement. But one newsbook feared that the hint of toleration in "this wise, discreet, religious and politick Order" would "enflame, enrage and imbitter" certain "tempers and spirits".⁴

As its next meeting on September 20, the Grand committee, on the advice of its chairman Marshall, appointed a sub-committee of accommodation to effect Parliament's instructions

1. Baillie, ii, 67.

2. The difference in attitude between Vane and Cromwell, who favoured toleration, and St. John is observed in V. Pearl, "Oliver St. John and the 'middle group' in the Long Parliament", English Historical Review, (1966) pp.500 note 3, 516.

Vane had wanted the order to infer freedom of church government, and not to specify a "contrary opinion". V. Rowe, Sir Henry Vane the Younger, p.195.

3. W.A.Shaw, History of the English Church, vol.ii, p.36. Shaw meant that they were never intended to give a wide toleration, which anyway the Assembly Independents did not advocate.

4. The Parliament Scout, No.65, 12-19 September, pp.518-9, E.9(7).

and discuss Presbyterian-Independent differences.¹ Some confusion existed about the order as certain Grand committee members thought it only applied to existing divisions in the Assembly, whereas Nye, Goodwin and Marshall thought that it must apply to all issues on which differences could arise in later debates.² Then the Scots divines, supported by Palmer, wished the Scottish form of government to be used as the basis of accommodation, but St. John realised that this would not aid his purpose;

"It puts too much on dissenting brethren to give in their differences and objection against the government of Scotland; ... church government is to be looked upon as in fieri; in the Assembly".³

The Scottish divines were even more piqued when they were excluded from the sub-committee by Marshall's "canny convoyance".⁴ Both Gillespie and the official Assembly papers reveal that six divines sat as the sub-committee - Nye, Goodwin, Marshall,

1. This committee of accommodation (henceforth referred to as the Parliamentary committee of accommodation) was a sub-committee of the Grand committee, and as such must be distinguished from the earlier Assembly committee of accommodation, (see above p.158). Gillespie recorded this and other meetings of the Grand committee in Notes of Proceedings in the Grand Committee, appended to his notes of the Westminster Assembly. Vital evidence of the Parliamentary committee of accommodation in 1644 (and in 1645 when it was revived) exists in The Papers and Answers of the Dissenting Brethren and the Committee of the Assembly of Divines, published May 1648, E.439(3). Adoniram Byfield, the Assembly's scribe and editor of these papers, was charged in 1648 with prejudicing them in favour of the Independents in return for private gain, but this charge cannot be substantiated. See the accusation in Anon, Adoniram Byfield (sic) of the Last Edition, 22 May 1648, E.443(32).

2. G. Gillespie, Notes of Proceedings in the Grand Committee, p.103.

3. Ibid., p.103. It is interesting that the term "dissenting brethren" should be thus used before the Independents gave in their open dissent two months later. Gillespie probably wrote this retrospectively into his notes.

4. Baillie, ii,67.

Herle, Vines and Temple;¹ although Baillie added the names of Reynolds, Seaman and Palmer, commenting vaguely that some divines refused to join the committee as the Scots were excluded.² Indeed, Baillie was now thoroughly infuriated with Marshall for conniving with St. John and Vane to try and placate the Independents, and sighed "Marshall miskens us altogether: he is for a middle way of his own ... God help us!"³

By October, Baillie's depression over the Parliamentary order had lifted, for he wrote

"At first the motion did much perplex us; but after some debates upon it, we are now hopeful to make vantage of it, for the truth against the errors of that very wilful and obstinate party".⁴

Indeed, the well-intentioned committee of accommodation succeeded in little else but making differences more apparent and hardening attitudes; its dismal failure to achieve unity in its short life between September and October was to render inevitable the approaching open dissent of the Independents. When the Grand committee considered the propositions brought to it by the sub-committee of divines, it discovered that the Independents advanced four major points of difference.⁵ Firstly,

1. G. Gillespie, Notes of Proceedings in the Grand Committee, p.104; The Papers and Answers of the Dissenting Brethren and the Committee of the Assembly, p.2.

2. Baillie, ii, 67. The punctuation of Baillie's letter implied that Vines, Herle, Temple, Seaman, Reynolds and Palmer all supported the Scots, although according to the Assembly papers, the first three served on the committee. Gillespie also stated that Palmer was nominated so he certainly refused to serve.

3. Ibid., ii, 62.

4. Ibid., ii, 63.

5. The Grand committee considered the propositions from 30 September to 15 October.

they believed that the majority of the congregation must concur before their officers could execute a sentence of excommunication, although they made it clear that women and children were not eligible to vote.¹ They next stressed that elders and not ministers could ordain, and that in default of elders, "the choice ... by the people with approbation of the neighbouring Ministers with fasting and prayer may suffice".² Thirdly, they insisted that although congregations could consult with synods in case of difficulty, the function of the synod was to be purely advisory.³ Finally, they objected to parochial boundaries as the norm for congregational membership, maintaining that if the parochial minister was agreeable, "members may be taken out of other churches".⁴ Baillie was delighted with this statement, since he felt it to be at last an admission that the Independents would separate from

1. G. Gillespie, Notes of Proceedings in the Grand Committee, pp.104-5. For the whole list of propositions, with contentious phrases revealed, see The Papers and Answers of the Dissenting Brethren and the Committee of the Assembly, pp.3-6.

2. Ibid., p.5.

3. Ibid., pp.5-6. The sub-committee suggested, as a plan for the "associating of churches", a scheme identical to Vane's 1641 proposals by which lay and clerical county commissioners would act as governing bodies. Rowe believes that Nye resurrected this scheme on Vane's advice. (V. Rowe, Sir Henry Vane the Younger, p.193). But it is clear that the Independents objected to any bodies having final jurisdictional power over a particular congregation. The Presbyterian members of the sub-committee probably accepted Vane's Erastian plan because its vague wording did not imply that Parliament should have ultimate control over such county boards, and church censure.

4. G. Gillespie, Notes of Proceedings in the Grand Committee, p.104. The Independents later claimed that these points of difference made their beliefs quite clear, although the Assembly disagreed; The Answer of the Westminster Assembly ... to the Copy of a Remonstrance, 26 February 1645-6, p.17, E.506(11).

~~... by the ... and of ...~~

"any congregation in England, though reformed to the uttermost pitch of purity which the assembly or parliament are like to require ... We were glad to have them declare this much under their hands; for hitherto it has been their great care to avoid any such declaration; but now they are more bold, apprehending their party to be much more considerable, and our nation (the Scots) much less considerable than before".¹

Baillie was probably right in believing that this demand, above all others, would preclude an accommodation. The sub-committee as a whole concluded their report with the ominous words that

"We having weighed our Brethrens Principles, do find no probability of accommodation for them, ordinarily to enjoy congregations, unlesse it shall happen in a parish that the Minister cannot administer the Sacraments to all in the Parish".²

The Independents repeated their plea for gathered congregations, but so that this should not totally prejudice their chances of inclusion within a national system, they added at the end of the sub-committee's report;

"If such a liberty (i.e. to gather churches) shall seem in the wisdom of this honourable Committee to be prejudicial to the peace of the Church, as not to be permitted, we humbly desire the doctrinall principles wherein we differ about Church-government may be taken into serious consideration, and some other way of accommodation in practice thought upon, as shall seem fit to this honourable Committee".³

St. John, Vane, Lord Saye and other M.P.s desiring an accommodation for the Independents tried to force the Grand committee to vote on these propositions and submit them to

1. Baillie, ii, 67-8.

2. The Papers and Answers of the Dissenting Brethren and the Committee of the Assembly, pp. 6-7. If the numbers for communion in one parish were too large, the committee suggested that people could seek other ministers, who would be allowed a proportion of the parish tithes "according to the wisdom of the State". It was perhaps hoped that the Independents might compromise along these lines.

3. Ibid., p. 7.

Parliament, where they hoped to use the strength of the "middle group" to conclude a latitude for the Independents before the Assembly had a chance to report its conclusions about Presbytery.¹ But despite Vane's violent arguments, and the insistence of Lord Saye and his colleagues that Parliament, and not the Assembly was responsible for the accommodation order, the opposition of Rous, Tate, Prideaux, the Scots divines and others proved too great, and the Grand committee resolved to send the report to the Assembly, not Parliament, so that "first the common rule of government should be resolved, before any forbearance of these who differed therefrom should be resolved upon".² This defeat for St. John and his colleagues in fact reflected their political decline, as the peace party in Parliament made an alliance with the Scots, who were militarily in a strong position at this time.³ Shortly after the Scots victory at Newcastle, the Scots renewed their pressure for a settling of church government in view of the imminent peace negotiations, and the new alliance ensured that the Commons voted "over the Independents bellies, the dissolving of that dangerous committee which these five weeks has vexed us".⁴

The progress and fate of the Parliamentary committee of

1. Baillie, ii, 68.

2. Ibid., ii, 68. Baillie believed that a paper by Henderson would discredit the Independents and their plots before Parliament and Assembly. The clashes between St. John, Vane and their supporters and the Scots and their allies in the Grand committee occurred on 30 September, 15 and 18 October, G. Gillespie, Notes of Proceedings in the Grand Committee, pp. 104-7.

3. See below, p. 338. The "middle group" then allied itself with the war party.

4. Baillie, ii, 71 (quoted); C.J. iii. 684. The vote was on 1 November.

accommodation must be remembered as the simultaneous Assembly debates on church government proceeded. While the sub-committee was discussing Presbyterian-Independent differences, Assembly debates continued in fairly leisured fashion, with the usual Independent tactics. When provincial synods came under discussion on 13 September, Nye complained that the Assembly had not yet proved the distinction between a classical and provincial assembly to the Independents' satisfaction. Goodwin later confirmed that the Independents felt that a "synod" could be any kind of assembly above the level of a particular congregation, and not just a "third degree" of assembly (i.e. provincial) as the Presbyterians were arguing.¹ The Independents caused further trouble when the text Acts xv was cited to prove a provincial synod, since Goodwin claimed that as this text had already been voted once to prove the existence of any presbytery, it could not now be cited as proof of a synod.² However the next day Goodwin amended his former intransigence by explaining that he objected to the authoritative power of a synod, not to its very existence.³ Eventually the Assembly voted that Acts xv proved the existence of a provincial synod, but not before

1. TSS. vol.ii, ff.191, 202 verso. Presbyterians could also confuse synods and classes; "Mr Seaman acknowledged, That divines use of times promiscuously the names of classes and synods". Gillespie, Notes, p.73.

2. TSS. vol.ii, f.196 verso. (See above p.159, note 1). Bridge seems to have disagreed with his fellow Independent here, as he said "this (is) very scrupleous in my mind & at the passing of yt vote I did conclude actum est for the sinod".

3. Ibid., vol.ii, f.202.

Gillespie had despaired "I desire yt you would see order your debates as not to goe backwards".¹ The Assembly then proceeded to discuss the membership of synods, whereupon the Independents, supported by Reynolds, Vines, Marshall and Herle suggested that any suitable people could belong, a proposal violently opposed by the Scots, Palmer, Seaman and Lightfoot, as being too vague and implying wide popular participation. The proposition was only voted after a compromise wording which stipulated that suitable persons could be included "when it shall be deemed expedient".²

On 23 September, a debate arose as to whether the Assembly should next discuss the most contentious issue, the subordination of lesser assemblies to greater. Nye tried fruitlessly to convince divines that most of the Assembly believed that congregations should have the greatest power of government. Marshall and Herle, who were the leaders of the moderates who sought to appease Independents by giving congregations as much power as possible³ tried once more to mediate. Herle suggested that perhaps they ought to consider whether the power of congregations was less than that of synods, and Marshall seized on Seaman's proposal to discuss the power common to all assemblies. However,

1. TSS. vol.ii, f.203.

2. Lightfoot, p.313; Gillespie, Notes, pp.74-7. The debate was so complex that Gillespie had to insert a memorandum to explain some confusions.

3. See above, p.161, including note 2.

the Assembly decided to discuss subordination of assemblies by the narrow margin of 21-18, and conflicts continued, although Marshall tried to convince the Assembly that "This question of subordination supposeth that whatever power a congregation hath a classis hath the same".¹ Goodwin once again acted as Independent spokesman, declaring that they could not accept any authoritative power in a synod or provincial assembly, and on 27 September producing five arguments in support of this view.² Rutherford retorted that Goodwin really meant to prove that synods could not exist at all, not just that they had no power.³ Marshall again tried to conciliate by suggesting that a congregation need bring no matter before a synod that it could satisfactorily solve itself, and that subordination to synods was created through the voluntary association of congregations.⁴ After a long and involved debate, Gillespie suggested the alteration of the proposition to read only that a subordination was "agreeable and lawful to the word of God", and the question passed in this form on 1 October. Goodwin, however, had even cavilled against this concession, grumbling that something unnecessary "for the government of the church, especially being accompanied with great inconveniences,

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1. Gillespie, Notes, p.78.
 2. Ibid., pp.80-1; TSS. vol.ii, f.219-21.
 3. TSS. vol.ii, f.225.
 4. Gillespie, Notes, p.82.

is not agreeable to the word of God".¹

Despite conciliation, debates were clearly going against the Independents, and Baillie was in an optimistic mood in October.² As the Assembly proceeded to consider a Scriptural proof (Matthew xviii) to strengthen the voted subordination of synods, the Independents continued to oppose a subordination and to insist on a co-ordination of assemblies.³ The text was duly voted on 2 October, although words which would have explicitly stressed subordination as a remedy for erring congregations were tactfully omitted.⁴ Debates then proceeded to the power of the respective assemblies, when it was voted that a synod had authoritative power to call people before it. This was disputed by Independents, who felt that a summons could usually be made only in a brotherly fashion.⁵ The Assembly also passed the proposition that all assemblies had some power of censure, despite Independent opposition.⁶ The divines were just about to turn to the question of excommunication, when the Grand committee demanded to know their conclusions on this matter, which it had ordered for earlier discussion.⁷ There was little dispute over the initial votes that were hastily taken on excommunication,

1. Gillespie, Notes, p.83.

2. Eg. Baillie, ii, 63.

3. Gillespie, Notes, p.85. The Independents were duly informed that if they applied such an argument to the civil state, anarchy might result.

4. Ibid., p.86.

5. Ibid., p.87. Nye seemed to concede that a synod could summon authoritatively in case of offence.

6. Ibid., p.88.

7. See above, pp.301-2.

since these proved that it was a church censure¹ and that the power of suspension from the Lord's Supper should ordinarily belong to congregational assemblies, votes with which the Independents agreed.²

It was at this stage however that the whole tone of Assembly debates changed, with the halting of the Parliamentary committee of accommodation. The ascendancy of the Scots after their victory at Newcastle forced the Commons to take note when a Scottish letter from Newcastle urged the Assembly to end the discussions on government and "to remove these great prejudices raised against our Cause, by the abundance and variety of Sectaries, Separatists, and Schismatics living amongst us".³ Thus, despite the fact that the Assembly debates on government had speeded up amazingly in October, the Commons sent a deputation to the divines on 7 November, ordering extra haste. The Assembly accordingly ordered that all votes already passed on the Presbyterian government should be remitted to Parliament forthwith.⁴ The Independents, their hopes of accommodation or toleration dashed, facing the prospect of Presbyterian votes about to be sent to a Parliament where their allies' power was eclipsed, decided on open dissent and a public breach from the

1. This briefly raised the issue of the civil magistrate's power; Ibid., p.95. The texts I Corinthians v and Matthew xviii were voted to prove excommunication (16-18 October).

2. Ibid., pp.95-6.

3. A Letter ... to the Committee of both Kingdomes, dated from Newcastle 23 October 1644 and published 4 November 1644, p.29, E.16(5).

4. Lightfoot, p.323; TSS vol.ii, f.287 verso.

Presbyterians.¹ The Assembly ordered them to bring in their reasons of dissent from the Assembly's votes, whereupon Nye, in sheer frustration at the failure of his endeavours, proclaimed that "he had entred his dissent, but it was in his liberty whether to bring in Reasons for it or noe".²

The Assembly Debates III: Dissent and After.

The machinery for dealing with this open breach went swiftly into action. When the Assembly informed Parliament on 8 November that they would present their votes in a document entitled "The Humble Advice of the Assembly ... concerning Church Government", they were obliged to add that Messrs. Carter, Bridge, Goodwin, Nye, Burroughes, Simpson and Greenhill had dissented from certain propositions.³ These Independents petitioned Parliament on 12 November for formal permission by dissent, and were ordered to present their reasons for so doing to the Assembly, which they did on 15 November.⁴ On seeing these "Reasons", the Assembly divines were alarmed to notice that the eight sheets of paper were very blotted, and feared that the Independents might later think it a good tactic to accuse the Assembly of deliberately obliterating their arguments. They therefore ordered that "an exact account of all the blottings

1. TSS. vol.ii, f.287 verso. At first (7 November) only 3 Independents, Nye, Burroughes and Carter appear to have firmly committed themselves to dissent.

2. Ibid., vol.ii, f.288. According to Parliament's rules, reasons had to be brought; Nye had no choice.

3. Ibid., vol.ii, f.288-288 verso; C.J. iii, 691.

4. C.J. iii, 693; Lightfoot, p.330.

should be taken, and their own hands subscribed to the number of them".¹ After the Independents had duly read these "Reasons",² Marshall proposed that a sub-committee should consider and answer them, which would "be a work of no small time". This was because the Independents had included arguments that were totally irrelevant to the "Humble Advice", and many indeed that they had never stressed before!³ When the answers had been completed, the Assembly turned itself into a committee on 3 December to examine them, but not before it had deliberately excluded the seven dissenters from this hearing. Great was the Independents' protest; Lightfoot recorded that

"This the Independents, Mr. Burroughs and Mr. Goodwin, were so shameless as to except against; and to challenge to be present at the drawing up of our answers: but Mr. Bridges was more reasonable".⁴

The Assembly finally presented its delayed "Humble Advice" to the Commons on 12 December, and on 23 December Marshall delivered

1. Lightfoot, p.330.

2. Ibid., p.331. This was such a long task that "Mr. Goodwin read as long as he could, and then Mr. Nye took at him".(sic) The Independents discovered several mistakes when they read the sheets, so this fact and the blottings prove that the "Reasons" and the decision to dissent were not long premeditated. Cuthbert Sydenham, the son-in-law of Sidrach Simpson, and a lecturer at Newcastle in May 1645, actively aided the Dissenting Brethren in constructing the "Reasons". Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes, ed. W.H.D. Longstaffe, (Durham, Surtees Society, L, 1867)p.130.

3. Ibid., p.331. The committee consisted of 20 members; Tuckney, Newcomen, Calamy, Vines, Herle, Marshall, Palmer, Young, Whittaker, Reynolds, Seaman, Lightfoot, Temple, Proffet, Burges, Sedgwick, Spurstowe, Smith, Hoyle and Arrowsmith; the Scots divines were to assist. Some of these were notable moderates; Marshall, Vines, Herle, Calamy, Reynolds. TSS. vol.ii, f.293. Appropriately, the dissent concluded the second volume of the Assembly minutes!

4. Lightfoot, p.338.

the dissenters "Reasons" together with the Assembly's refutation.¹ Parliament was so anxious not to overpublicise this breach that it gave strict instructions that no man was to divulge the contents of these documents until he received permission.²

It was this action on the part of Assembly Independents that secured them the title "Dissenting Brethren". Strictly speaking the term should not be used before November 1644, and should only be applied to the seven dissenters, although some historians have misapplied the term earlier to refer to the five Apologists.³ But contemporaries often extended the term to cover all Independents; Vicars included John Goodwin and the extreme Independents in his use of the phrase, and in fact set his "Dissenting Brethren" against the Apologists and "learned and more moderate Independents".⁴ Reactions to the dissent and

1. C.J. iii, 721, 730. The Commons ordered 300 copies of both "Reasons" and "Answers" to be published for the sole benefit of M.P.s. Thomason secured a copy of the "Reasons" however and it is in his collection numbered E.27(14). The official versions of "Reasons" and "Answers" were published in 1648 and are also in Thomason's collection; E.439. Although the Assembly's answer was delivered, the complete refutation to the Independents' reasons against subordination of synods was not completed until 19 August 1646, Mitchell and Struthers, p.270. The Independents were to complain about this delay!

2. Nevertheless, the "Reasons" soon became known, as the Independents probably circularised some copies. Nathaniel White (pastor of a church in the Summer Islands) quoted them in his Truth Gloriously Appearing, 14 October 1645, E.304(26).

3. The Apologists were the same people as the Dissenting Brethren, but minus Carter and Greenhill. B. Gustaffson's title reveals his confusion; The Five Dissenting Brethren, a study on the Dutch Background of their Independentism, Acta Universitatis Lundensis, (1955).

4. J. Vicars, The Picture of Independency, 15 March 1644-5, pp. 7, 10, 12, E.273(11). He even referred to a "dissenting sister".

"Reasons" for it were mixed. Whilst the "Kingdome's Weekly Intelligencer" denounced them as a "faire play ... that nothing may be settled", and the "Scottish Dove" wailed that men who were not satisfied by rational debate must be either ignorant or wilful, the "Weekly Account" observed that the dissenters had not objected to many material points of government, and the "True Informer" stressed that the Assembly still called them "brethren" not Independents like more vulgar people.¹ Nevertheless, the radical Independents seized on the "Reasons" with glee as the answer to all Presbyterian arguments; John Goodwin gloated that Prynne would see their way clearly revealed when the "Reasons" were published, and by July the Independents were spreading rumours that Parliament was only suppressing them because they were unanswerable.²

The "Reasons" did not claim to be a complete model of the Independent way so desired by Presbyterians; they were merely the academic arguments as to why the seven brethren could not agree to three specific propositions in the Assembly's "Humble Advice".³ The first of these was "that many particular Congregations may be under one Presbyterial Government", which

1. The Kingdome's Weekly Intelligencer, 17-24 December 1644, n.p. E.22(9); The Scottish Dove, No. 62, 20-27 December 1644, p. 485, E.22(13); The Weekly Account, No.25, 20-26 November 1644, sig. Ttt 2 verso, E.17(16); The True Informer, No.59, 21-28 December 1644, p.446, E.22(14).

2. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer to Master Erinne's Book Called, "A Full Reply", p.5; J. Bastwick, Independency not God's Ordinance, Part II, p.71. The radical Independents/sects also opposed the Humble Advice, e.g. Anon, Reformed Presbytery Opposing Tyrannicall Presbytery and Prelaticall Episcopacie, 14 January 1644-5, E.1181(5).

3. Many of the arguments contained in the "Reasons" and "Answers" had therefore been covered in the Assembly debates.

the dissenters claimed to be impossible since officers could rule only one congregation, as Christ had fore seen

"that such is the nature of man as nothing occasions more bitter contention then that lusting which is in us to have Authority and Jurisdiction over others".¹

To this the Assembly retorted that all officers acted in relation to the catholic church, and that Christ wished congregations to be associated together for mutual benefit and the suppression of heresy.² The second proposition to which the Independents dissented concerned the subordination of assemblies and its proof text Matthew xviii, by which the claim was made for appeals from an inferior to a superior presbytery. The Assembly insisted that justice necessitated this, but the Dissenting Brethren stipulated that although they were not opposed to synods per se, they could never recognise the "juridicall subordination" of other congregations to them.³ The final disputed proposition was that "no single Congregation that can conveniently Associate, do assume to itself all and sole power in Ordination", when the Independents reiterated arguments that association of churches should not invalidate powers that a congregation would possess were it in isolation.⁴ The Assembly declared that these

1. The Reasons Presented by the Dissenting Brethren against certain Propositions concerning Presbyteriall Government, 6 May 1648, pp.1,3, and 40 (quoted), E.439(1). The Independents also maintained that a Presbyterian government would breed an "incongruous disproportion" (p.4) between a ruling elder and a teaching elder.

2. The Answer of the Assembly of Divines ... concerning Presbyteriall Government and the Proofs thereof, 1648, pp.2-3, E.439(2). They correctly added (p.5), that Burroughes had been unwilling to dissent to government in common for edification, although he had eventually dissented, realising that to do otherwise would prejudice congregational power.

3. Ibid., p.137, ff; The Reasons Presented by the Dissenting Brethren, p.115ff.

4. Ibid., pp.190-1.

arguments had been deliberately borrowed from others and used for the Independents' own advantage.¹

Baillie was overjoyed that the Independents had at last caused an open schism, believing that they might now be forced to submit to majority decisions, which would be "better than a new victory over the King's army".² Gillespie still hoped the Independents might make vital concessions and accommodate with the Presbyterians, and commented

"I wish they prove to be as unwilling to divide from us, as we have been unwilling to divide from them. I wish that instead of toleration, there may be a mutual endeavour for a happy accommodation".³

But the Scots were sadly mistaken if they assumed that the Independents would now lose heart, as the continuing Assembly wrangles revealed. For despite this hastily prepared "Humble Advice", the Assembly spent January-July 1644-5 concluding many outstanding questions concerning church government, the first of these being excommunication.⁴ It had already been decided in October that there was a power of excommunication, but it now remained to vote the "ubi sit"; i.e. in whom this power resided. After trying to postpone this issue by getting the subject changed to the sins worthy of excommunication, and by insisting that the

1. The Answer of the Assembly of Divines, pp.186-193. Herle had suggested this argument in his pamphlet of 1643, see above, p.233.

2. Baillie, ii, 74.

3. Mitchell and Struthers, p.28. Gillespie spoke on the eve of his departure with Baillie for Scotland in early January 1644-5. Gillespie's Diary then came to a halt (Lightfoot also abandoned his journal in December). The Independents even objected to the letter that the Assembly despatched to Scotland with Gillespie, as it spoke of peace being dependent on religious uniformity. Gillespie, Notes, p.100.

4. This subject had been hastily abandoned when the Commons urged speed in presenting the Humble Advice, see above, p.314.

Assembly ought to ensure due admonition before censure,¹ the Independents caused trouble when the divines decided to place the "ubi sit" in the ministers and elders. They entered their dissent to this vote, since they considered that it implied a negative voice in the minister, whereupon

"The whole Assembly cried, That they intend not to give the minister a negative voice. They answered, Though this be the Assembly's intention, yet it will breed a great controversy in the kingdom".²

But the fury and frustration of the Assembly did not prevent the Independents from announcing that appeals could be made in cases of censure from the church officers to the congregation as a whole.³

Meanwhile, Henderson had been busy preparing a report on excommunication which Baillie believed "will please all who are not Independents ... (who) are not so careful to accommodate, as conscience would command peaceable men to be".⁴ In order to avoid troublesome debate, Marshall edited and amended this report before presenting it to the Assembly, but this ploy did not escape the notice of the Independents, who next complained that Marshall's action had prejudiced free discussion.⁵ Marshall explained that he had only intended to avoid further divisions

1. Mitchell and Struthers, pp.24,26. These were blatant delaying tactics.

2. Gillespie, Notes, p.99- Only Goodwin and Burroughes entered their dissent.

3. Ibid., p.99.

4. Baillie, ii, 79.

5. 7 January 1644-5.

which might benefit "another party"¹ since there were

"Three sorts of opinions in this Assembly: some hold it (i.e. excommunication) only in the congregational presbytery; others think that both the congregation and greater assemblies may do it; others, it may be, think that particular congregations may not do it ... These words are so tied down so that all they who can but submit to have the business carried before a greater assembly may enjoy their own way".²

In other words, Marshall had made the report ambiguous to unite the divided ranks of Presbyterians on this issue, and maybe even the Independents. But although Goodwin approved Marshall's ends, he could not approve his means, since Marshall had failed to involve any Independents in the amendments. Goodwin decided that

"the winding up of things in a way of peace and accommodation should not be when things are brought in by a committee or brethren as this was, but after debates of things".³

Marshall protested that he had indeed given a copy of the report to one Assembly Independent, who must have forgotten to tell the others about it!⁴

Eventually Henderson suggested that a new Assembly committee of accommodation should be established to try and salvage unity on excommunication,⁵ but despite its efforts, and the patience

1. Mitchell and Struthers, p.29. It is difficult to know whether Marshall meant the Royalists, or the Erastians, who denied clerical censure.

2. Ibid., p.29. For these Presbyterian divisions see above, pp. 160-1.

3. Ibid., pp.29-30. Doubtless this new distaste of committee plans before Assembly debates sprang from the failure of the Parliamentary committee of accommodation.

4. Ibid., p.31. The Independents probably did know of the report, but it was tactically advantageous to claim that the matter had been accomplished "behind their backs".

5. Ibid., pp.31-2. Committee members were to be the Scots, Goodwin, Nye, Marshall, Vines, Palmer and Seaman. This was a membership almost identical to the earlier Assembly committee of accommodation. See above, p.158.

of the Assembly in suggesting various phrases to appease the Independents, the dissenters would not acknowledge that congregational censures could be repealed by a higher presbytery. Dr. Temple despaired that this question would provide "a seed of perpetual division".¹ Moreover, when the sins worthy of excommunication came under discussion, the Independents denied that making a breach in "the order of the church" should be such an offence; excommunication must be given to none but those shut out² of the kingdom of heaven.² This provoked charges that the Independents would admit Arminians and Socinians to the Sacrament, and Henderson declared "This is a matter of the greatest importance that ever you took in hand ... we might clearly see no church hath gone so far on ..."³ Eventually efforts at accommodation failed entirely and the Independents entered their official dissent to the votes on excommunication on 31 January. Rutherford sighed "I think this is the saddest session that ever I sat in regard of the reverend brethren's renouncing of the whole accommodation".⁴ There is no doubt that the Assembly as a whole was highly critical of the Independents for overthrowing accommodation when they were in agreement with the Presbyterians on many points concerning excommunication.⁵ The

1. Mitchell and Struthers, p.40.

2. Ibid., p.42.

3. Ibid., p.41.

4. Ibid., p.45. The reasons of this new dissent were read in the Assembly on 4 February, the same day as most of the votes on excommunication were sent to Parliament; Ibid., p.46; C.J. iv, 41.

5. The Assembly made this plain in The Answer of the Westminster Assembly ... unto the Copy of a Remonstrance, 26 February 1645-6, p.15, E.506 (11).

Assembly must have been even more aggrieved when it was reported that a rumour was circulating the city to the effect that it was Cornelius Burges and others who had upset the accommodation, not the Independents.¹

The debates on excommunication were still not finished, since appeals from congregations to synods yet had to be formally approved, which gave the Independents the chance to delay the Assembly by resurrecting the old problem of whether a synod was a true "ecclesia" and empowered to deal with excommunication at all. Seaman reproved them for constantly quibbling over the precise scriptural meaning of words; an "ecclesia" was

"a company of this sort or that sort, applied according to the nature of the company and business for which they meet ... It is the weakest argument in matters of divinity to build our opinions upon dictionaries and grammars".²

But the Independents refused to concede that scriptural proofs or natural law afforded any justification for the rescinding by a synod of congregational acts of censure, for "where the power lawfully lies to excommunicate, there is ... a binding in heaven, but this all the powers on earth cannot rescind".³

The Assembly nevertheless voted appeals, and Jeremiah Whittaker

1. Mitchell and Struthers, p.47.

2. Ibid., p.50.

3. Ibid., p.52. Goodwin was speaking, on 11 February. The power of appeals provoked an interesting debate. Simpson observed that an offender could postpone punishment through appeals; he even suggested that the Papal supremacy had been created on the power of appeals. Although Simpson conceded that it was natural to wish to appeal, he denied that natural law could provide a perfect remedy against error. Herle on the contrary, thought that synods would provide a nearly perfect remedy. Ibid., pp.53-5.

observed that to refuse appeals pointed the way to civil anarchy; "It is no government at all, no more than a painted fire is fire, if two or three join in a body and claim all power".¹ Rutherford commented ruefully that when he read John Cotton's "Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven" he had believed the Independents to be close to the Scottish view of censure, but now "I conceive it is a part of our unhappiness when we are upon disputation we fall accommodating, and when accommodating then disputing".²

With excommunication settled for the moment the Assembly returned to the power of various church assemblies, and asked the Independents to "bring into the Assembly what they think fit for the right, and power, and practice of particular congregations not yet concluded in the Assembly".³ But the propositions presented by Nye six days later shocked the divines by contradicting many votes already passed in the Assembly, and by accusing the Assembly of asserting a divine right for Presbyterianism. Marshall was saddened to observe the lack of any suggestion "tending to the constraining of congregations in their numbers",⁴ whilst Henderson protested that "We thought we had been near to the harbour, and now we are sailing out

1. Mitchell and Struthers, p.59. 17 February 1644-5.

2. Ibid., p.60.

3. Ibid., p.70. 21 March 1644-5.

4. This may refer to either some limitation on the numbers of gathered congregations, or to the suggestion that if parochial congregations could have their membership limited, a case could be made for some gathered congregations. The Parliamentary committee of accommodation had already hinted at this; see above, p.308, note 2. Marshall denied that the Assembly was insisting on a "jus divinum" for the Presbyterian model; Ibid., p.72. See also below, p.434.

into the deep". Nye defended the propositions, denying that they belied any votes already sent to the Parliament with which the Independents had agreed, and insisting that the Independents had to "discharge our consciences" on the matter.¹

In any event, the propositions were never considered by the divines.² For, in despair at the Independents' obstinacy, the Assembly resorted to a scheme which would have the double merit of ending all doubt as to the Independents' tenets, and thus avoiding surprises like these proposals, and also of occupying the Independents' time for a good while and thus speeding Assembly discussions. On 27 March the Dissenting Brethren were ordered to draw up their whole "platform of government concerning particular congregations",³ and from then on for the next few months Baillie's letters were full of delight that the Independents were so involved with their "model" that they had very little time to trouble the Assembly.⁴ The Independents were very well aware that this was a mere ruse to keep them quiet for a few weeks, but were unable to avoid the task.

1. Mitchell and Struthers, p.73.

2. The Independent editors of Cotton's The Way of the Churches of Christ in New England, published in April, E.276(13), complained that these propositions were never properly examined by the Assembly, although they would not blame "men whose reasons wee know not" (preface, sig A.2.) The Dissenting Brethren repeated the charge in A Copy of a Remonstrance, 12 November 1645, p.6, E.309(4). The Assembly retorted that the propositions were irrelevant to current debates, and contained matter that had previously been discussed. The Assembly also claimed that the Independents refused to present a copy of the propositions to the divines! The Answer of the Westminster Assembly ... unto the Copy of a Remonstrance, p.18.

3. Mitchell and Struthers, p.73.

4. Baillie, ii, 97,134.

Their own delaying tactics had in fact rebounded on them, for whilst they had used the possibility of producing their model to retard votes on Presbyterianism, they did not intend to effect the idea, as it would probably lose them the support of the radicals.¹ As Baillie commented in July, the delays in the model were due to "their domestick divisions, or their perplexity, whether to take in or hold out from themselves the rest of the sectaries".² Baillie was probably correct when he wrote that the Assembly never intended to debate the model they had demanded of the Independents, but instead proposed to hand it to a sub-committee for answer. Indeed, the Assembly's draft of church-government had been finally submitted to Parliament some while before the divines requested the Independents to present the results of their discussions on the model.³ The Assembly had finally outmanoeuvred the Dissenting Brethren, and Professor Kaplan has missed the point in stating that for a large part of this year

"religious Independents actually provided no opposition to the Presbyterians and they did virtually nothing to prevent the Westminster Assembly from hammering out one plank after another of a Presbyterian church government".⁴

1. For Presbyterian cavils against the Independents for the lack of a model, see below, pp. 383-4. The editors of Cotton's The Way of the Churches of Christ in New England implied (preface, sig A.2 verso) that the Assembly Independents had offered to make themselves a committee to bring in a platform of their views on church government. Although this work was not published until April, the Assembly claimed that its contents had influenced their order; The Answer of the Westminster Assembly . . . unto the Copy of a Remonstrance, pp. 18-19. The Assembly Independents repudiated the claims of Cotton's editors. (One of these editors was N.H., i.e. Nathaniel Homes).

2. Baillie, ii, 139.

3. Ibid., ii, 97. The Assembly did not ask for the model until 22 September 1645, Mitchell and Struthers, p. 132.

4. L. Kaplan, "English Civil War Politics and the Religious Settlement", Church History, (1972) p. 319.

With the enforced absence of the Independents, discussions from April to July proceeded with comparative ease. In fact, debates now became so boring without Independent complaints, that divines had to be reproved for reading newsbooks and talking during discussions, not to mention having a stroll about the chamber.¹ The Independents did put in a brief appearance for a week or so from 16 April, in order to plead for liberty to gather churches if Presbytery was settled by Parliament.² Marshall tried to argue the Independents' case, by using logic the Independents may well not have appreciated; he observed that the Presbyterians ought to permit a latitude for gathering churches as

"by the same rule(if) in the independent way any scruple, they must give them leave to join with the Brownists, and the Brownists with the Anabaptists".³

Baillie duly censured Marshall for encouraging the Dissenting Brethren in these continuing efforts to secure legal toleration before the effecting of Presbytery, but all attempts proved vain.⁴ On 7 July the Assembly finally presented their draft of Presbyterian government to Parliament, with apologies for its long delay; "This Work, though it appears short, yet hath spent much Time, by reason of dissenting Judgements; that, if possible, they might be satisfied".⁵

1. Mitchell and Struthers, p.105. 17 June 1645.

2. Ibid., p.81.

3. Ibid., p.85.

4. Baillie, ii, 91.

5. C.J. iv, 199.

Presbyterianism according to the Scottish model had therefore been voted by the Assembly; as Baillie said, the draft was "according to the doctrine and practice of the church of Scotland, in everything material".¹ Yet as Nye had shown in September, the Assembly Presbyterians had never been unanimous in their approbation of the Scottish model.² It was adopted because the leading Assembly members, with the aid of the Scots, had become convinced that only a strict Presbyterianism could achieve the reformation of morals, good ordering of the church and suppression of heresy that seemed far more vital in 1645 than even in 1643. Although they had earnestly desired accommodation with the Independents, they came to view them, particularly after their open dissent, as hinderers of Reformation and encouragers of the sects. All the efforts of the conciliators, led by Marshall, (whom some Independents were boasting had "turned Independent") had failed.³ As for the opinions of backbenchers, it can only be surmised that they went along with Presbytery as an expedient solution, although they would probably have been as happy with a moderate Episcopal settlement. The Assembly was never particularly well attended,⁴ and many backbenchers were probably absent as often as they were present, but even so, the fact that the highest recorded

1. Baillie, ii, 96.

2. See above, p. 296.

3. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, 26 February 1645-6, p.63, E.323(2).

4. See above, p.74, including note 2.

Assembly vote was 53 shows that many abstained from voting, neither endorsing, nor opposing Presbytery.¹ In their passivity, the Scottish-style Presbyterians prevailed. As for the country ministers, John Cook was probably right in 1647 when he claimed that two-thirds would have preferred moderate Episcopacy,² although most city divines were keen Presbyterians.

With this urgent question resolved, the Assembly divines turned to the Psalms, Catechism, and Confession of Faith, upon which Baillie confidently expected unity.³ From now on Assembly debates seemed set to become more placid. It was thus cruelly ironic that just as the Assembly was escaping Independent cavils, the divines encountered a greatly increased opposition from Erastianism outside the debating chamber. It soon became plain that the Parliaments' settlement of Presbyterianism would seek to subordinate the authority of church officers to the civil state; when the Commons passed its first votes on Presbytery in January a newsbook observed

"the greatest debate was whether this Church Government is JURE DIVINO, and whether subject to the Civill power; the first was resolved in the negative, the latter in the affirmative, and indeed it were sad if Discipline should once be stretcht to Jure Divino".⁴

1. For the highest vote (7 July 1646) see S.W. Carruthers, The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly, p.53.

2. J. Cook, Redintegratio Amoris, 27 August 1647, p.41, E.404 (29).

3. Baillie, ii, 97. These matters had been in the hands of various committees since April.

4. The Parliament Scout, No.84, 23-30 January 1644-5, p.670. E.26(12). On 14 January the Commons voted "that many particular congregations may be under presbyterial government", C.J. iv, 20, and on 23 January that congregations should be grouped according to parochial boundaries, C.J. iv, 28.

From January to July Parliament was actively establishing the Presbyterian government, but Baillie bewailed that

"all the ports of hell are opened upon us ... The most of the House of Commons are downright Erastians: they are like to create us much more woe than all the sectaries of England".¹

He could only content himself with the thought that once Presbytery had been safely voted, the Assembly could complain about any Erastian restrictions.²

It soon became obvious that these limitations would be very real. Although on 17 April Parliament agreed that a congregational eldership could examine the ignorant and scandalous with a view to excommunicating them, on 3 May it qualified that power by excluding capital offenders who would first be dealt with by the civil powers, and far more important, by allowing on 13 May that appeals consequent on excommunication should be heard ultimately by the Parliament.³ This would effectively rob Presbyterians of their control over the admission to the Lord's Supper, which many believed essential to purify the parochial congregations (and, by so doing, obviate the main Independent criticism of these churches). Baillie hoped that Parliament would use its power to force a retrial in the presbyteries rather than force a legal appeal from church to state, but such optimism was ill-founded.⁴ As Whitelocke had shown in a speech the previous September, most M.P.s felt that no one form of church government

1. Baillie, ii, 96. Baillie also claimed that Selden was the leader of Parliamentary Erastianism, Ibid., ii, 107. He asked Spang to set some divines to work concerning the Erastian position, and sighed "It hath been a mighty neglect that no man hath answered Erastus' Reply to Beza", Ibid., ii, 96.

2. Ibid., ii, 97.

3. C.J. iv, 114, 131, 140.

4. Baillie, ii, 97. Henderson shared this hope; A Henderson, Sermon to the House of Lords, 28 May 1645, p. 17, E.286(3).

was divinely ordained, and that the State was free to restrict the presbyters' authority where appropriate.¹

In vain did Henderson condemn Erastianism as the "new Papacy"² and in vain would divines quote scriptural references in favour of the church officers' divine right to control ecclesiastical censure. For on 30 July, Thomas Coleman conveniently reminded Parliament of the theological proofs for Erastianism, based on the Jewish state. Coleman himself admitted that his controversial sermon "Hopes Deferred and Dashed" caused such a furore that

"There was never Sermon preached on these publique Fasts, that was received with such contrary affections, and censures, as this; Some approving above commendation, others disliking below detestation".³

Contrary to the opinion of Coleman's opponents, this sermon did not create Erastianism, which had already erupted in Assembly debates and been lamented in sermons.⁴ But the horror it provoked in the Assembly (which forced Coleman to apologise and promise not to print the sermon)⁵ was proved well-founded when a delighted Parliament instructed Coleman to ignore the Assembly

1. W.M. Hetherington, History of the Westminster Assembly, pp. 207-8.

2. A. Henderson, Sermon to the House of Lords, 28 May, p.16.

3. T. Coleman, Hopes Deferred and Dashed, 30 July 1645, preface to Parliament, E.294(14). Francis Woodcock, who also preached on 30 July, commented on publishing his own sermon, that no-one was now likely to read it. F. Woodcock, Lex Talionis, 30 July 1645, preface E.294(13). Coleman's sermon and the criticisms it received are considered below, pp. 490-6.

4. For the eruption of Erastianism in the Assembly, see above, pp.135, 153-6.

Thomas Hill had recognised the dangers of Erastianism in August 1644, The Season for England's Selfe-Reflection, and Advancing Temple-Work (see quotation on the frontispiece to this chapter).

5. Mitchell and Struthers, p.117.

and retract his apology. To add insult to injury, the Commons invited another Erastian Assembly-member, Lightfoot, to preach before them in August.¹ All the Assembly divines could do was to resolve to fight the "new" Erastianism with all the methods at their disposal. Already in July they were making plans to petition Parliament for power to exclude many more scandalous sinners from the Sacrament than Parliament had so far approved.²

Nevertheless the work of the Assembly was largely realised when the Presbyterian government was set in motion by the ordinance of 19 August regulating the election of lay elders and the division of England into classical presbyteries.³ But no decision had yet been made as to whether or not the Independents could be tolerated, and since the open dissent in November, the pamphlet literature on toleration had been rising steadily. An Erastian settlement meant that a Presbyterian suppression of Independency would be impossible as long as Parliament deemed it unwise, and Parliament soon had good reason to postpone a decision on toleration. Just as the Presbytery was being voted in Assembly and Parliament, the

1. J. Lightfoot, Sermon to the House of Commons, 26 August 1645, E. 298(14).

2. The second draft of this petition was presented to Parliament on 8 August 1645. See below, p. 450.

3. C.H. Firth and R.S. Rait, Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, (1911) vol.1, pp.749-54. This ordinance clearly revealed the direction of the State. A committee of M.P.s was to supervise the election of elders in London, and to prepare letters to the county committees so that they could nominate "persons, ministers and others", to organise the division of the rest of England into classes. The committee consisted of 47 M.P.s including Tate, Rous, Selden, Vane senior, and Haselrig. An example of a letter from the Speaker to the Mayor of Norwich dated 26 September 1645 ordering the divisions of classes can be found in J. Browne, History of Congregationalism, p.162.

fortune of the Scots waned and that of the newly-modelled army waxed strong. The failure of the Uxbridge conference in January-February, the increasing discontent with the Scots and the military prowess of the new army meant that the Independents' failure to secure accommodation within the national settlement mattered very little. The Independents now placed their hopes on the army to plead their cause,¹ and Baillie's enthusiasm for the new Presbyterian government was severely tempered by his anxiety that the Independents would profit from the army victories. By July he was gloomily fearing that the three months' silence from the Independents whilst they prepared their model could only mean that they were plotting a very sharp assault.² The Presbyterian victory was indeed real, but hollow.

Outside the Assembly.

The nascent Presbyterian establishment and Independent dissent only worsened Presbyterian-Independent rivalry in city and country alike. Katharine Chidley accused Thomas Edwards' pamphlets of causing disturbance in the city whilst Presbyterian preachers turned "pulpits . . . into cockpits", and Calamy feared that godly ministers were so discouraged and frustrated by the contentions that they were seeking refuge in their studies.³

1. See below, pp. 345-53.

2. Baillie, ii, 134.

3. K. Chidley, A New Yeares Gift, 2 January 1644-5, sig A.2., p.1; E.23(13); E. Calamy, An Indictment against England because of her selfe-murdering divisions, sermon to the Lords, 25 December 1644, p.16, E.23(5).

The number of Independents in London was growing, although Henry Burton and John Goodwin were ejected from their parochial cures before July 1645.¹ Daniel Taylor observed that "many grave, sober, godly and learned men have falne into that way you call Independencie", whilst Bastwick was appalled that Independent ministers "have all respectfull usage and the onely esteem of the people, and are more followed than all our learned, godly, and painfull orthodox Ministers".² Some congregations in the city meant to stay Independent at all cost; Lightfoot marvelled at the obstinacy of Nicholas Lockyer's congregation in Grace Church, who resolved to call another Independent minister if Lockyer was removed.³

In the country too, Independents were increasing in strength. Edwards was informed that "our countrey Independents begin to brag of their strength in City, Countrey, and Parliament" whilst another Presbyterian feared that "devils agents" were "interweaved into Committees of all Counties, to breed dissention, and to tryannize".⁴ In comparison to the period after 1648,

1. Baillie, ii, 139.

2. D. Taylor, Letter to John Vicars, written 27 January 1644-5, p.7, E.259(3); J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part I, 21 May 1645, p.139, E.285(2).

3. Lightfoot, p.265. Lockyer was accused of constantly preaching of "persecution" in his sermons!

4. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, 26 February 1645-6, p.66, E.323(2); G. Smith, England's Pressures: Or the People's Complaint, 7 August 1645, p.20, E.295(2). Men of humbler origins were coming into the county committees, who could be Independents, or at least maligned as such, but Smith's statements were grossly exaggerated. One of the "new" men who became prominent in the Kent committee was the lay leader of the Kentish Independents, Robert Hales of Bekesbourne. A.M. Everitt, The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion, (Leicester, 1966), p.149.

Independent congregations were still few, but contemporaries saw their spread as remarkable in 1645, although Independent and sectarian churches were frequently confused. In East Anglia, the Norwich congregation, recently separated from Yarmouth, numbered 114 members by November 1645, and a new congregation was formed at Hapton.¹ Edwards reported that Richard Worts was gathering a church in Norfolk, probably at Guestwick.² It was about this time that the curate of Birch in Lancashire, John Wigan, persuaded the people there to adopt congregational principles, after influencing his former parish, Gorton, in a similar way.³ Meanwhile, at Sowerby, near Halifax, Henry Roote (who was well acquainted with Eaton and Taylor at Dukinfield) gathered a congregation.⁴ John Durant gathered a church at Canterbury "in one of the Prebends houses where he lives",⁵ whilst Ralph Josselin observed in September 1644 that

1. J. Browne, History of Congregationalism, pp.254,283. The Norwich church consisted of 83 women and 31 men.

2. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, 28 December 1646, p.95, E.368(5). Worts later combined the rectory of Foulsham with the pastorate of Guestwick Independent church; see G.F. Nuttall, "Congregational Commonwealth Incumbents", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., XIV (April 1943) p.161. In 1646 there was a congregation gathered at Bury St. Edmunds, of which Katharine Chidley and her son were members, but this was separatist, as the church covenant declared that members were "convinced in conscience of the evil of the Church of England ... and being fully separated". Ibid., p.160.

3. For Wigan see A.G. Matthews, Calamy Revised, p.529; The Life of Adam Martindale, p.61.

4. Roote served Gorton for ten years before John Wigan. For Roote and the Sowerby church, see A.G. Matthews, Calamy Revised, p.417; T.W. Hanson, "Henry Roote and the Congregational Church of Sowerby, near Halifax, 1645", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., VI, pp.327-32.

5. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, p.97. The church at Canterbury was founded on 12 March 1645-6, with 9 members, but added 14 more before 25 March, and 29 in 1646. "The Canterbury Church Book," Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., VII, p.181.

the controversy between Presbyterians and Independents was a problem in Essex.¹ Bastwick commented that Independency was a particular hazard in the Home Counties, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and elsewhere, but commended Leicester, Derby, and Chesterfield for avoiding the new menace.² There can be no doubt that congregational growth was encouraged by the failure of accommodation in the Assembly, the Presbyterian establishment, and the fact that as yet no toleration had been forbidden the Independents. One newsbook actively encouraged the growth of Independency in the far north of the country, where godly ideas were more necessary and which would save the city much troublesome contention.³

Whenever the terms "Presbyterian" and "Independent" came to be used in a political context,⁴ they were certainly so applied by 1645. David Underdown has shown that there were M.P.s who were convinced religious Presbyterians, like Edmund Prideaux, and others like D'Ewes and John Crewe who would have preferred moderate Episcopacy, but accepted Presbytery. There were tolerant

1. The Diary of Ralph Josselin, (MSS Essex Record Office, T/B 9/1) ff.33-4.

2. J. Bastwick, Independency not God's Ordinance, Part II, p.7.

3. The Scottish Dove, No.56, 8-15 November 1644, pp.435-6, E.17(8).

4. See above, pp.170-1.

and intolerant M.P.s, and there were moderate Independent and also a few radical religious Independent M.P.s.¹ But, most Parliamentarians would be Erastian, favouring Presbytery as long as Parliament had ultimate control, and whilst prepared to accommodate with the Independents, fearing the anarchy that liberty of conscience might produce. As Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston wrote,

"I could not have imagined that the removal of that (i.e. Episcopacy) ... the great impediment to godliness among us should have produced so bad an effect through liberty of conscience ... Sir I acknowledge my selfe a presbyterion (yet such an one as can and doe hartely love an humble and pious Independant...) and ... I cannot yet see any certayne and generall set form of discipline set downe in the Word of God universally, if there by the Lord discover it to us in good time, But Sir, with Horror and grief I speak it, no opinions and blasphemy is so bad but that our Independants here generally will shelter and countenance it ..."²

In the winter of 1644-5 the preeminence of the middle group in Parliamentary politics gave way to two new alliances - that of the Scots with the peace party, and that of the middle group with the war party.³ These new alliances were named "Presbyterian" and "Independent", although the terms may already have had a political significance. It is easy to see how M.P.s favouring the Scottish alliance could be labelled "Presbyterian", and Denzil Holles later confessed that his party deliberately

1. D. Underdown, Pride's Purge, pp.15-17. Edmund Prideaux wanted the clergy to have full power of excommunication.

2. N. Barnardiston was writing to Winthrop. See Massachusetts Historical Society, Winthrop Papers V, 1645-49, p.145. I owe this reference to A.M. Everitt, Suffolk and the Great Rebellion 1640-1660 (Suffolk Records Society, III, 1960) p.26.

3. D. Underdown, Pride's Purge, pp.64-75. The Independent political party between 1645-8 was thus an alliance between radicals and moderates. Political groupings were still fluid, notwithstanding the new alliances; uncommitted men could support one or the other on the merits of particular issues.

exploited the name because of its religious, emotive content.¹ Their opponents, however inaccurately, could be termed Independents because of their distrust of the Scots, desire to prosecute the war, and disinclination to alienate religious Independents because of their support in the army. But a link with either political grouping did not presuppose a corresponding religious attitude. Underdown has shown that there were religious Presbyterians like John Gurdon, Edmund Prideaux, Zouch Tate, and Francis Rous in the war party, although religious Presbyterians and moderate Episcopalians were more heavily represented in the peace party.² It is therefore not surprising that political Independents could be chosen by Parliament to help organise the Presbyterian religious system in 1645. But some political Independents like Vane and Lord Saye continued their association with Independent ministers, and John Goodwin admitted that he related his actions to friends in Parliament.³ Philip Nye was probably the main intermediary between the Dissenting Brethren and their Parliamentary supporters, since he had connections with Vane and Cromwell.⁴ The role of the latter in securing the

1. L. Kaplan, "English Civil War Politics and the Religious Settlement", Church History, (1972)p.316. Holles himself pleaded for moderate Episcopacy at the Restoration.

2. D. Underdown, Pride's Purge, pp.64-5.

3. J. Goodwin, Calumny Arraign'd and Cast, 31 January 1644, pp.15-6, E.26(18). Goodwin's one-time parishioners at Coleman Street included the M.P.s Isaac Pennington and Owen Rowe; the former became a political Independent.

4. See above, p.37. Nye's own parish was in Huntingdonshire, where Cromwell had his roots.

Parliamentary committee of accommodation has already been discussed. Similarly, Holles, Tate and the political Presbyterians were in contact with the Scots and leading Presbyterian ministers; the political cleavage cannot be entirely divorced from the religious conflict. Nevertheless, it remains true that the religious issue was subordinated in Parliament to political considerations.

Inevitably, political events affected the religious conflicts. Although the Independents had everything to gain from the failure of the Uxbridge conference, since the Parliament's peace propositions were based on a Presbyterian settlement of the church, they were not blamed for the collapse of negotiations. Indeed, David Buchanan maligned them for trusting the King too well, and claimed that only Scottish vigilance had saved the Parliamentary cause from Royalist treachery.¹ The Royalists were endeavouring to split the political Presbyterians and Independents, and since both these groups were in contact with Oxford, opportunities arose for accusations of complicity with enemy plots. The Independents were particularly liable to such charges when Charles had hinted that he might "ease tender consciences",² and when the Hothams were executed in January for treason, two Independent ministers, Philip Nye and John Saltmarsh, were

1. Parliament's peace propositions included a clause that the King should agree to the Assembly votes on church government, C.J. iv, 36. For Buchanan's claim, see D. Buchanan, A Short and True Relation, 14 September 1645, pp.62, 101, E.1174(4). Although the Scottish Dove (No.59, 29 November - 6 December 1644, p.461, E.21(5)) had blamed Henry Burton with praying for the failure of the talks, the Presbyterian Christopher Love, did little less when he told an Uxbridge congregation on 30 January, the first day of talks, not to "dote too much on treaties of peace". He was eventually acquitted by Parliament from charges arising from this sermon on 5 March, 1644-5. C. Love, England's Distemper, Having Division and Error, as its Cause, 21 March 1644-5,

p.9, E.274(15).

2. Charles had made these hints in a letter of September 1644. See The Weekly Account, No.57, 2 October 1644, pp.452-3, E.10(28).

implicated.¹ Bastwick believed the Royalists to have paid some hundred pounds for the encouragement of some "very great Sticklers and Promoters of the Independent party".²

But a letter intercepted from the Royalist Lord Digby to Colonel Legg was used by both political Presbyterians and Independents to malign their opponents, and resulted in various political scandals and trials in the summer of 1645. Baillie, Buchanan and others were convinced that the captured letter proved that some leading political Independents, "three Lords and some Commons",³ including Lord Saye, Crewe, Pierrepont, Vane and St. John, had formed a select sub-committee within the Committee of Both Kingdoms to treat with the King.⁴ The recently defected Royalist peer Lord Savile was rumoured to have met frequently with this group to negotiate peace propositions, based on liberty of conscience.⁵ Although Lord Saye had led a sub-committee,⁶

1. Sir John Hotham was the governor of Hull, where Nye had connections; Saltmarsh was Sir John's cousin. In January 1644-5 Saltmarsh wrote Dawnings of Light in favour of an accommodation between Presbyterians and Independents. He was a preacher at Brasted in Kent, who later became Fairfax's chaplain and a noted army preacher, although the claim was made that he "medled not in the Pulpit with Presbytery or Independency", Anon, Wonderfull Predictions, 29 December 1647-8, p.1, E.421(16). A radical Independent tract later declared that "Smart lash" (Saltmarsh) had discovered all the Presbyterian "trash". Anon, The Presbyterian's Letany, 1647, E.404(25). Saltmarsh may have been theologically unorthodox; T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, p.75.

Nye and Saltmarsh were acting for Parliament in negotiating with the Hothams; B.N. Reckitt, Charles the First and Hull (1952) pp.102-4.

2. J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II, sig.d.

3. Baillie, ii, 110.

4. Buchanan believed that the Independents were annoyed because the Committee of Both Kingdoms could not sit without the Scots being present. D. Buchanan, A Short and True Relation, pp.52, 57, 101. Holles wrote later that Vane and his associates boycotted the Committee in the summer of 1645, after losing control to the political Presbyterians. Memoirs of Denzil Lord Holles, 1699, p.221.

5. Baillie, ii, 125-7.

6. This had been appointed on 12 April 1645 to treat with "such as shall be imployed by them for delyvering up any considerable garisone of the enemies, or bringing over any considerable force, and for discoverie of such as give the enemy intelligence".

(cont'd overleaf).

there was no substance in the allegations, but the animosity between the political groups at this stage was so great that St. John and his followers decided to counterattack. Infuriated that Baillie had encouraged his agent, the fervent Presbyterian minister and pamphlet-licenser James Cranford, to spread rumours about their "treachery" to leading London citizens, the accused M.P.s complained to Parliament and procured Cranford's arrest and imprisonment. Baillie tried to minimise his part in the episode, denying that he "did lay the framing of the propositions upon any of the persons names" and adding sourly that in those times when so many "horrible railings" against whole churches and nations¹ went uncensured, it was strange that his "private discourse to my bosom-friend being all very true and innocent ... should be thus searched after".² He later bewailed however, that the army victories meant that St. John's coterie was untouchable, and

"The matter is so clear, that if it had been rightly timed, a little either sooner or later, by all appearance it had removed that party, which long has obstructed the reformation both of church and kingdom".³

4. cont'd. V. Pearl, "London Puritans and Scotch Fifth Columnists: a mid seventeenth century phenomenon" in Studies in London History, ed. A.E.J. Hollaender and W. Kellaway, (1969) p.319.

1. i.e. the Presbyterians and Scots.

2. Baillie, ii, 114-5.

3. Ibid., ii, 146-7. It seems that Baillie and Cranford hoped that by imparting the tale to certain London citizens, Colonel Thomas Gower, Captains John Jones and Richard Venner, Dr. Edward Alston, and Messrs. Alexander and Lant, the common council would take up the case. Cranford was sent to the Tower and ordered to pay £500 apiece to Crews, Pierrepont, Vane and St. John. C.J. iv, 213, 19 July 1645. Baillie wrote to him in commiseration, and promised to secure his release as soon as possible, which indeed was effected on 18 August. C.J. iv, 245, Baillie, ii, 155. See also V. Pearl, "London Puritans and Scotch Fifth Columnists", Studies in London History, pp.320-324.

The political Independents' more potent line of defence was to implicate Holles, Whitelocke and the political Presbyterians in the self-same negotiations "proved" by Digby's letter. Lord Savile, encouraged by Lord Saye, professed to have written proof of Holles' weekly correspondence with Lord Digby, and on the same day that Cranford was sentenced, Robinson and Lilburne informed the Commons of their suspicions of Holles and Whitelocke.¹ Lords Savile and Saye were examined concerning the matter, while two of the most active promoters of the investigation were St. John and his cousin, Samuel Browne.² However, the Commons voted on 21 July that Holles and Whitelocke "had no ill intention in their proceedings with Oxford", allowed them to prosecute Savile for reparations if they wished, and imprisoned Lilburne and Robinson for spreading malicious rumours.³ Baillie was furious that "It was the Independents' study to cast all the odium of trinketing with Oxford on Hollis",⁴ and was sure that only the Independents' own "complicity" had saved Holles. The Commons were right to dismiss all allegations and to punish all rumour-mongers alike. Yet the "Savile affair" demonstrated and worsened the political and religious animosity between Presbyterians and Independents, and plainly showed collusion and political intrigue between Baillie and at least one extremist city Presbyterian minister.

1. C.J. iv, 212. John Lilburne and Henry Robinson were clearly active in city Independent intrigues.

2. Browne chaired the committee investigating Savile's allegations.

3. C.J. iv, 212-6.

4. Baillie, ii, 145.

It also revealed the influence Cranford exerted on the common council; he even visited the Lord Mayor, Thomas Atkins, to persuade him to reveal the Independents' "plot".¹ In fact Atkins reported Cranford to the Commons, an indication either of support for the political Independents or of efforts to steer the city clear of close involvement with either group.² Baillie was convinced that the city had swung to the Independents in the summer of 1645, a fact attributable to the success of the army and the decline of the Scots.³ Certainly the city was voicing a widespread criticism of the Scots in June, in which political and probably religious Independents were involved.⁴ Buchanan accused enemies of the Scots of reporting that the Scots Commissioners had been deliberately moved from their city lodgings to Worcester House in the Strand to prevent their influence on

1. V. Pearl, "London Puritans and Scotch Fifth Columnists", Studies in London History, p.321.

2. V. Rowe, Sir Henry Vane the Younger, p.68, favours the view that Atkins supported Vane.

3. Baillie, ii, 147.

4. The Scots army was proving increasingly inept. It moved south from Newcastle to Lancashire and Yorkshire, which made its presence more obvious in England, and yet failed to give any support to Derbyshire at a time when Leicester was taken by the Royalists. The city petitioned Parliament to press the Scots to move south against the Royalists and demand an explanation as to their previous neglect of this. The Petition of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons of the City of London, 6 June 1645, p.3, E.286(29). The Scots Commissioners delivered an explanation to Parliament on 24 May, and begged that there should be no breach between the two nations. Buchanan criticised the Scots Commissioners for not publicising this "Manifesto" outside Parliament, and in the end probably published it himself. Buchanan then blamed "malignants" (i.e. recusants, sectaries and "prelatiques") for spreading a rumour that the Commissioners disclaimed the "Manifesto" entirely because they had not published it. A Manifesto of the Commissioners of Scotland, 4 June 1645, p.9, E.286(22); D. Buchanan, A Short and True Relation, p.43. Bastwick claimed Independents were exploiting anti-Scottish feeling; J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II, p.69.

the city!¹ But it must be remembered that the common council also rejected the radical Independents' Windmill Tavern proposal for dissolving the Westminster Assembly in the summer of 1645. City politics, as Parliamentary, were fluid, and city support was not always consistent, although as a rule the city would lean more towards the Presbyterians.

The failure of Assembly negotiations and the open breach of the Dissenting Brethren turned Independents' hopes towards the army, which was rising from strength to strength. Hetherington claimed that after the open dissent, Independents "renewed their intrigues with the Independents in the army, by whose influence they knew they would be supported".² He stressed however, that it had been their army support that had prevented the Independents from uniting with the Presbyterians earlier, since

"Nye in particular was too deeply engaged in the political intrigues of Vane and Cromwell to be willing to relinquish that influence which rendered him a person of importance".³

But this was not the case. The Assembly Independents knew that any dependence upon the army would necessitate an even closer identification with the sectaries than they were already accused of, and although radical Independents such as Peter and Saltmarsh

1. D. Buchanan, A Short and True Relation, p.52. It is uncertain as to when this move took place, as the Scots were certainly in Worcester House in January 1644-5, since their letter to Scotland bore this address. Two letters of Great Concernment, 28 July 1645, p.6, E.294(4). They were probably already there in September 1644; Gillespie, Notes, p.67. Buchanan did not accuse the Independents of organising the move, and claimed that its purpose was so that the Scots' friends in Parliament could visit them more easily, although he agreed that the move severed a close link with the city.

2. W.M. Hetherington, History of the Westminster Assembly, p.181.

3. Ibid., p.177.

were closely involved with the army, the moderates were not. Necessity, not a sense of natural alliance, led the moderate Independents to accept the army as their benefactor.

Meanwhile certain sections of the army were sympathetic to the cause of toleration as an essential part of individual liberty. The troops of the Eastern Association continued to be strongly left-wing in religion and it was even reported that "some in my Lord of Manchester's Army" would "get a power together, joyn with the King against the Parliament, for liberty of conscience".¹ As early as September 1644 Baillie was afraid that if Cromwell achieved greater power, the Independents would use the army as their spearhead, counterbalance the Scots and "overawe the assembly and parliament both to their ends".² But as a journalist commented,

"I know not what Distaste is taken against some honest men in Colonell Cromwell's Regiment whom they call Independants ... neither can I heare of any Souldiers in all our Armies that are more forward or more resolute to incounter with the Enemy in theæ Day of Battaile".³

Cromwell was indeed emerging as the best leader on either side

1. The Parliament Scout, No.70, 17-24 October 1644, p.558, E.14(3). See above, pp.172-4. Baxter recorded that some members of Cromwell's forces wished to form a gathered church in 1645; Reliquiae Baxterianae, 1, 57. In some parts of the army however, there were anti-Independent petitions in January. Mercurius Civicus No.86, 9-16 January, p.786, E.24(23).

2. Baillie, ii, 61. It was rumoured in October that Cromwell would lay down his commission unless he could secure a toleration of Independency; The Parliament Scout, No.68, 3-10 October 1644, ^{p.34b} E.12(12). Cromwell (like Ireton) never joined a gathered church, although he favoured toleration.

3. The London Post, No.26, 4 March 1644-5, p.3, E.271(9).

in the war, and his competency only further exposed the weaknesses of Essex, Waller,¹ and Manchester. With the defeat of Essex' army in the west,² the Parliamentary cause depended on the army of the Eastern Association, and from September onwards Cromwell was carving out a position for himself that the political Presbyterians interpreted as a design against the more conservative generals. In September Baillie deplored the attempt of Cromwell to remove Crawford,³ by October Cromwell's supporters were campaigning for the removal of Essex,⁴ and in December Thomason discovered a paper "written by some Independant against Ld. Gen. Essex and Ld. Manchester, and scattered about ye streets in the night".⁵ The quarrel of Cromwell with Lord Manchester that dominated army politics in the autumn and winter of 1644 was translated into the terms of the religious dispute, although a newsbook insisted that it was an army affair, "not a quarrell between Independencie and Presbyterie, which some would have".⁶ According to Baillie,

1. In August Mercurius Aulicus observed that Waller and a certain Browne were quarrelling with "such unbrotherly language, as if one were an Independent, and the other a Presbyterian".

Mercurius Aulicus, Week 34, ending 24 August 1644, p.1127, E.9(5).

2. September 1644.

3. Baillie, ii, 61,66. Crawford, Manchester's Major-General, was a strong religious Presbyterian. The attempt to remove him was unsuccessful.

4. Ibid., ii, 66.

5. This small paper, on which Thomason wrote the date 9 December, is in the Thomason collection of tracts; E.21(9).

6. The Parliament Scout, No.76, 28 November - 5 December 1644, p.606, E.21(3). The dispute had family origins (see C.Hill, God's Englishman, (1972) p.47) but also all the ingredients of a classic quarrel of opposites, the conservative versus the radical, the lord versus the commoner. Firth maintained that Cromwell intended to turn the dispute into a struggle between the two Houses. C.H. Firth, The House of Lords during the Civil War, (1910) p.145. The quarrel was eventually investigated by Parliament. After the second battle of Newbury, 26 October 1644, Cromwell accused Manchester of disinclination to win a

Manchester accused Cromwell of speaking

"contumeliously of the Scots intention of coming into England to establish their church-government ... (and that) he would draw his sword against them, also against the assembly of divines, and has threatened to make an army of sectaries, to extort by force, both from King and Parliament what conditions they thought meet".¹

But the Self-Denying Ordinance assured Cromwell's pre-eminence, and the New Model Ordinance, which coincided with the first votes of the Presbyterian establishment in Parliament, completed the Independents' hopes.²

Neal was convinced that the new ordinance ruined the Presbyterian cause because so many chaplains saw the dismantling of the old regiments as an excellent excuse to return home.³ Certainly the Presbyterians seem to have made a serious error, for, as Reid observed, whilst the Presbyterian chaplains were with the army, "none of the enthusiastic follies, which after-

3. cont'd. thorough victory. This charge was denied by Simeon Ash, Manchester's chaplain, in A True Relation of ... the late Battell at Newbery, 24 December 1644, E.22(10). For the quarrel see ed. J. Bruce, The Quarrel between the Earl of Manchester and Oliver Cromwell, (Camden Society, new series, XII, 1875).

1. Baillie, ii, 76.

2. The Self-Denying Ordinance, formally moved by the Presbyterian Zouch Tate and seconded by Vane (C.J., iii, 721) forced M.P.s to relinquish their army commands, but did not forbid their reappointment. Cromwell thus retained his command whilst Essex and Manchester resigned theirs. Hill observed that Cromwell took a calculated risk in this Ordinance (which he suggested), and that his command was in doubt for at least six months. C. Hill, God's Englishman, p.72. The first Self-Denying Ordinance was laid aside by the Lords; the second passed on 3 April 1645, three months later.

The New Model Ordinance, passed on 17 February 1645, creating a new army of mercenaries to replace the levied armies of the County Associations. It was placed under the command of Sir Thomas Fairfax, with Cromwell as Lieutenant-General of Horse. C.H. Firth and R.S. Rait, Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, vol.i, p.514.

3. D. Neal, History of the Puritans, vol.iii, pp.228-9. Baxter agreed, but dated the neglect from Edge Hill, Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 51.

ward appeared, and were truly reproachable, discovered themselves".¹ It is significant that Sir Samuel Luke wrote to Stephen Marshall begging permission for Luke's cousin, the Presbyterian minister (and later Assembly member) Thomas Ford to stay with the army and not take up a private cure.² For Luke, an intolerant Presbyterian who strenuously strove to eradicate religious radicalism in the forces under his command,³ was suspicious of the new modelled troops and realised the necessity of orthodox preaching. In the event Independency was encouraged by two factors; the first being the continued ministry in the army of radical Independent divines like Peter, Dell, Saltmarsh and William Sedgwick, who cultivated the army as a matter of policy. The second was that army officers took to preaching themselves, occupied country pulpits where they were quartered, and spread their own radical ideas as a result. Baxter saw in the New Model Army

"a new face of things which I never dreamt of: I heard the plotting Heads very hot upon that which intimated their Intention to subvert both Church and State. Independency and Anabaptistry were most prevalent..."⁴

1. J. Reid, Memoirs of the Lives and Writings of those Eminent Divines, vol. i, p. 77.

2. ed. H.G. Tibbutt, The Letter Books of Sir Samuel Luke 1644-5, (Bedfordshire Historical Record Society, XLII, 1963) p. 77.

The letter is dated 13 February 1644-5. Ford became an Assembly member on the death of Oliver Bowles. Luke was Governor of Newport Pagnell from late 1643 to June 1645, when he laid down his command according to the Self-Denying Ordinance.

3. Ibid., pp. 43, 49, 56-7, 77, 197, 226, 583.

4. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 50. Baxter blamed himself for earlier neglecting a call to act as chaplain to Cromwell's troops, and promptly went to the army, where he became engaged in many disputes. He found that the Scots, ministers, and "dissembly men" (assembly divines) were cried down, liberty of conscience asserted, and the rights of the civil magistrate to interfere in religion denied. Ibid., pp. 51, 53.

It is easy to criticise Presbyterian ministers, but it should be remembered that many country parishes were equally desperate for their services.

An effort was made to counteract the growing number of army preachers (and "tub preachers" in the cities) by the Ordinance for Preaching, which was passed on 25 April 1645 and forbade preaching by the unordained.¹ Independents were divided about the merits of lay-preaching,² and it was only the radical Independents and sectarians that encouraged such activity on a large scale. But Presbyterians clearly hoped that the ordinance would prevent "Independent sectaries" from sending out "their emissaries, captains & soldiers to preach in corners, & giving tickets of the time & place of their conventicles".³ In practice the ordinance was largely ineffectual, and certainly the importance of the army meant that it was rarely applied to soldiers. Almost as soon as the act was passed, Independents could be heard to threaten that Parliament was now becoming worse than the High Commission, and therefore many soldiers would leave the wars.⁴ In any case, defenders of lay preaching could not see that soldiers or others should be prevented from expounding practical and known truths if they did not meddle in questions best suited to trained ministers; men should "blesse God for such

1. C.J. iv, 123. Only candidates for the ministry could officially ignore this ordinance.

2. See above, pp. 253-5.

3. W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandering-Blasing Stars, p. 13. Prynne cited the case of an army captain, a tailor named Hobson, who was called before the Committee of Examinations for preaching near Newport Pagnell with some confederates. Ibid., p. 15.

4. J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II, p. 65.

Commanders and Souldiers, and not envy them for their zeale".¹
 Unfortunately, army preachers were not always so restrained.

The New Model Army came under constant attack on account of its left-wing religious radicals, although one Independent supporter bewailed contentions which

"beget such a disaffection betweene ... the Presbyterian and Independant party, as if the entertainment of both in the Armie were inconsistent with the well being and successe of it".²

Baillie saw the New Model's impressment programme as responsible for the recruiting of raw soldiers who might fall victim to sectarianism, although Bastwick condemned the Independents for opposing impressment.³ Despite Parliament's vote that all soldiers should take the Covenant, they did not wish to alienate Independents by insisting that the army should "submit to the Form of Church-Government, that is already voted by both Houses of Parliament".⁴ Presbyterians were soon observing that many soldiers were evading the Covenant, and Buchanan stated that this fact had so annoyed some Scots officers that they had relinquished their commissions.⁵ It seemed plainly obvious that "the reason why some men are backward to take the Oath, is that they are adverse to the Government of the Church by Presbytery".⁶ But a defender of

1. W.L., The Independants Militarie Entertainment, 24 April 1645, pp.6-7. E.278(28) Another pamphleteer claimed that Parliament would not apply the ordinance to Independents who scrupled the present ordination, and expounding the Scriptures could not be called preaching. Soldiers could still expound Bible texts to their regiments, as could a master to his family, providing that they did not do so at times of public service! Anon., The Cleere Sense, 8 May 1645, pp.2-11, E.282(8).

2. W.L. The Independants Militarie Entertainment, p.1. The author believed the Independents to be noble fighters, and argued that as the Assembly did not condemn them, neither should others.

3. Baillie, ii,95; J.Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II, p.41.

4. For the vote on the Covenant, see C.J. iv, 44, 8 February 1644.
 (cont'd overleaf).

the Independents retorted that the Independents were no less untrustworthy because they refused the Covenant; "for he that feares an Oath & feares God ... his tenents are no way distructive to Church or State".¹ But the ultimate test of trust was to be victory in battle, and here the New Model abundantly vindicated themselves. After the decisive battle at Naseby in June, "Mercurius Britanicus" found victories coming faster than he could write about them, and even Buchanan was forced to admit that God had achieved great things with remarkably weak vessels.² From then onwards the ascendancy of the army in politics was assured, and the Independents did not fail to exploit their valuable ally. On the very day of Naseby, Cromwell wrote a letter to the Speaker concluding

"Honest men served you faithfully in this action ... I wish this action may beget thankfulness, ... he that venters his life for the liberty of his Country I wish he trust God for the liberty of his conscience, and you for the liberty he fights for".³

4. cont'd. Cromwell had been a teller for the "Noes". The Lords had desired that the army should submit to Presbyterianism, but were forced to submit to the Commons, C.J. iv, 47.

5. D. Buchanan, A Short and True Relation, p.75. Common soldiers in particular, were easily able to avoid the oath.

6. Ibid., p.65.

1. W.L., The Independants Militarie Entertainment, pp.5-6. Another pamphleteer begged for liberty of conscience for those who could not swear the Covenant; Anon, Certaine Scruples and Doubts of Conscience about taking the Solemn League and Covenant, 20 January 1644-5, p.3, E.25(11).

2. Mercurius Britanicus, No.91, 21-28 July 1645, p.823, E.294(5); A Short and True Relation, pp.75-6. Naseby was won on 14 June 1645.

3. Three Letters, 17 June 1645, p.3, E.288(27). The Commons had ordered these words to be omitted when the letter was printed, but the Independents printed their own correct version! Thomason believed these words to be an Independent invention!

These words were soon affixed by Independents to church doors, "viz. the Churches of greatest resort of people, as at Stepny at the time of Master Burroughs preaching".¹ It certainly became more viable to hope for liberty of conscience after the battle of Naseby.

The confused situation and uncertain future at the end of July 1645 - a Presbyterian church heralded, and an Independent army gaining in strength, was illustrated by the adroit political and religious tightrope-walking of many newsbooks.² For, on the one hand, Presbyterians hoped that the new religious settlement would be uniformly followed; the "Scotish Dove", praising the Commons' voting of Presbytery, warned that "Christ ... requireth order among his members ... God is not the God of confusion, therefore of order".³ On the

1. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, pp.210-1.

2. Marchamont Nedham's "Mercurius Britannicus" implied support for Presbytery between August 1644 to March 1645, but by the summer of 1645 had adopted a comparatively Independent stance. Less reckless editors than Nedham such as Pecke, Walker, and Rushworth, were careful to antagonise neither side. No newsbook made a great issue of the political scandals in the summer of 1645! By the summer, Richard Collings' "The Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer" and "Mercurius Civicus" were praising the New Model and appearing pro-Independent; even the intolerant "Scotish Dove" felt obliged to commend Cromwell after Naseby, whilst warning people not to adulate "the arm of flesh". J. Frank, The Beginnings of the English Newspaper, pp.74-95.

3. The Scotish Dove, No.93, 25 July - 1 August 1645, p.735, E.294(20).

other hand, there was no positive statement as to the extent of religious freedom that would be allowed to dissenters. The "Parliament Scout" urged Parliament that

"There's a great difference between universall tolleration, then which nothing seems more dangerous to a State, and clubbing men out of one opinion into another ... Why should not then a quiet latitude be allowed, but yet the Magistracy are judge of that".¹

Yet the year had been crucial, because the failure of the Assembly to achieve unity meant that although accommodation would be tried again, amalgamation of Presbyterians and Independents in one church system was not possible. The only solution to the conflict must lie in a toleration of the Independents, and the pamphlet-literature made it clear that by the summer of 1645, the question of liberty of conscience was all-important.

1. The Parliament Scout, No.84, 23-30 January 1644-5, p.671, E.26(12).

Chapter Seven.THE "DEVIDING PEN": THE GREAT TOLERATION DEBATE.The Pamphlet War August 1644 - July 1645.

"I know ... that there is but one true religion, but one faith, one way to Heaven; and why should wee then suffer men and women to bee of so many different waies faiths and religions? For answer hereunto I can bee contented to graunt that there is but one true religion, one true faith and way to Heaven; But who can tell mee the precise and just precincts thereof."

J. Goodwin, A Short Answer to A.S.,
3 February 1644-5, p.25, E.27(6).

"... see what hurrying up and downe, what ingaging of parties, what inquiring after parts and abilities ... what streynings of wits and consciences, what slighting of solid arguments, what evading substantiall and cleare interpretations of Scripture ... what casting abroad of calumnies and reproaches, what incrustations, and misrepresentations of opinions ... what persecutions ... to keep a new-born Truth from ruling over them".

J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together,
8 January 1644-5, preface, E.24(8).

"This (controls over the press) I judge an act of wisdom, and not of bondage ... For might every one speak in publique what the madnesse of his brain and his deluded phansie leads him to, there would be no end of strife, but a world of confusion, who would not plead conscience if that might protect them".

Anon, A Review of a Certain Pamphlet under the name of one John Lilburne, 14 April 1645, p.2, E.278(4).

Amidst the Assembly divisions and army victories the pamphlet war, still dominated by extremists, continued to present all that was bitter and recriminatory in the Presbyterian-Independent conflict. Every month produced its own crop of pamphlets, and despite claims of friendly intent, the "deviding pen"¹ would spare no effort in detailing calumnies against rivals. John Goodwin, maligner and maligned in his extended conflicts with Stewart and Prynne, knew only too well that pamphleteers faced

"a sore temptation upon them to make many a voyage beyond the line of Truth, to fetch Apes and Peacocks, and I know not what monsters both of practises and opinions to bestow upon them . . . to mediate the like disparagement of their judgements in those other matters of difference, in the thoughts and minds of men".²

It was plainly obvious that "the spirit of pride, peevishnesse, passion, perversenesse, mallice, confidence, envy and Emulation" was predominant in "these late times of contention about Church Discipline".³ As Samuel Hudson sighed, "all our practical divinity is turn'd into polemical",⁴ and fresh arguments, reiterated stances, and repeated recriminations

1. I.P., Unity Our Duty, 31 January 1644-5, p.1, E.26(14).
I.P. may be John Price.

2. J. Goodwin, Calumny Arraign'd and Cast, 31 January 1644-5, sig. A3 verso, E.26(18).

3. I.P., Unity Our Duty, p.2.

4. S. Hudson, The Essence and Unitle of the Church Catholike Visible, 8 March 1644, sig. A2 verso, E.271(19).

widened the gulf between the two religious systems. Moderate divines issued their warnings in vain;

"When strife is not heeded soone and speedily moderated, a Gangrene makes it incurable, and nothing but rooting out and cutting off will be the issue ... till one or the other party even bleed to death (and not seldome both) ..."¹

Yet new dimensions were added to the pamphlet war in 1644-5. Firstly, the radical Independents took to using bawdy humour, scurrilous slanders and outright libels in tracts that were directly aimed at a lower level of reader than previous more theologically orientated works. These ribald pamphlets were directed in fact at the men who would soon listen to Leveller doctrines; the journeymen, artisans, young men and apprentices who "flocked from church to church, from conventicle to conventicle ... milled about the shops, taverns and bookstalls of the city and its suburbs".² It was to be some time before the Presbyterians developed the art of answering such "base" tracts in similar style,³ although pamphleteers like Vicars and Goodwin could be venomous enough when they chose. Secondly, such increasing Independent radicalism prejudiced the Presbyterians against Independent extremists and moderates alike, and only further alienated the two sides. Thirdly, there was a pervasive emphasis on liberty of conscience, or uniformity, according to whether a pamphleteer was Independent or Presbyterian. The arguments for toleration were couched in reason and moderation, in order to quell

1. J. Grant, The Shepheard's Farewell to his Beloved Flock of St. Barthol. Exchange, London, 24 February 1644, p.6, E.270(18). Grant was retiring.

2. W. Haller, Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution, p.262.

3. See below, p. 503, 529

doubts as to the social and religious consequences of such unfamiliar liberty. Thus the author of "The Ancient Bounds" insisted that

"the controversie betwixt us, is not in such things as wherein one part must needs be convicted in his own conscience, as sinning against common principles in all men. You have grounds, so have they; you propose Objections, they answer them; you are perswaded that you are in the right, and that this is the meaning, and right understanding of the Scriptures; they thinke no lesse on their own side. Now who shall state the difference, and be the dayes-man between you, but Christ in his owne time clearing the truth, and leaving naked the errors".¹

Moreover, Independents could now complain with some truth that the odds in the pamphlet war were stacked against them. There is evidence that Presbyterians sought for a stricter application of the printing ordinance of June 1643, although complete control of the press would always prove impossible. William Greenhill could not find a license for an almost non-controversial theological treatise, and Independent works were sometimes delayed by printing difficulties,² although Independents did occasionally use licensing problems as a convenient excuse for not answering Presbyterian tracts;³ Joseph Caryl was effectively prevented by London Presbyterian ministers in Sion College from commending Hezekiah Woodward's critique of the "Antapologia", and Woodward was soon to meet with even more trouble securing licenses for his confused but well-intentioned attempts to unite Presbyterians and

1. Anon, The Ancient Bounds, 10 June 1645, p.28, E.287(3). "You" refers to the Presbyterians; "they" to the Dissenting Brethren.

2. W. Greenhill, An Exposition of the Five First Chapters of the Prophet Ezekiel, 10 March 1644, E.272. In 468 pages there are only five or so "Independent" comments, including a mention of liberty of conscience (p.342). The author of The Ancient Bounds complained in his epistle that he had been forced to delay publication for six months.

3. E.g. J. Goodwin, Cretensis, 19 March 1645-6, p.16, E.328(22).

Independents.¹ Bursting with self-righteous indignation, Woodward observed that "The truth is, If the Book bear Independent upon its front, and be thought to speak for that way ... it is silenced before it speaks".² He believed that

"for a Licenser to withdraw his hand, out of prejudice to that, he will not read; or because it may not suit with his judgement, This gives an offence sure, which ought not to be given",

and concluded that since he possessed God's license, he could be nonchalant about his lack of human permission.³

1. Hezekiah Woodward was an eccentric London schoolmaster, a correspondent of Hartlib's, who lived in Aldermanbury and occasionally preached at Calamy's church. In 1644 he had not yet become an Independent, but respected them and was shocked by their uncharitable reception. His efforts at reconciliation only merited him taunts of exceeding his schoolmaster's call and of kindling the fires of contention. He later became an Independent minister, and was given the vicarage of Bray by Cromwell, where he gathered a church. A. Wood, Athenae Oxonienses, vol.ii, pp.540-1; H. Woodward, A Short Letter, (a critique of the "Antapologia"), 14 September 1644, p.4, E.8(36); H. Woodward, Soft Answers Unto Hard Censures, 5 February 1644-5, p.6, E.268(2). Caryl eventually licensed "A Short Letter" without a commendation (A Short Letter, sig. E3). Later, despite his professed willingness to submit his papers for correction by the licenser, Woodward could not secure a license for the first of his six part "Inquiries into the Causes of our Miseries" (the three final parts were never completed). Woodward duly published it without a license, whereupon the Stationers Company, who were responsible for enforcing the Printing Ordinance, obtained a warrant from the Lords to seize half of Woodward's papers. In the end the proceedings were dropped; it is likely Woodward was made an example. But Woodward also published "Soft Answers Unto Hard Censures" without a license!

2. H. Woodward, Inquiries into the Causes of our Miseries, Part I, 23 December 1644, p.2, E.22(1).

3. H. Woodward, Soft Answers Unto Hard Censures, p.3.

Licensing difficulties did not stop Independent pamphlets from appearing, but they gave Independents a cause for grievance. It was no accident that led Milton to publish his "Areopagitica" in favour of freedom of the press and liberty to discover the truth, in November 1644.¹ Independents thought little of Presbyterian claims that the printing ordinance was to avoid division, when William Prynne's and other Presbyterian publications maligning the Independent way were appearing with all due legal approval. Henry Robinson wondered why Prynne's books should have

"inherited the privilege to be cryed up and downe the streets and publicke places, instead of Royall Proclamations, to the great scandall of your most conscientious Brethren, and suppressing truth both Spirituall and Civill".²

An Independent sympathiser demanded six months free licensing for the Independents on equal terms with the Presbyterians, after which he prophesied that brown paper would sell better than a treatise from Prynne.³ For, as Lilburne maintained, Prynne and the "Black-Coate" in the Assembly were not treating their opponents fairly

"in stopping the Presse against us, while things are in debate, yea robbing us of our Liberty (as we are Subjects) in time of freedom".⁴

Yet despite all the Independents' complaints, Presbyterian efforts to tighten press controls seem to have

1. J. Milton, Areopagitica, 24 November 1644, E.18(9). The Stationers Company secured a warrant for Milton's arrest but this action was also dropped. W. Haller, Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution, pp.136-7.

2. H. Robinson, The Falsehood of Mr. William Pryn's "Truth Triumphant", 8 May 1645, sig.A.2, E.282(11).

3. Anon., A Helpe to the Right Understanding of Discourse Concerning Independency lately published by William Prynne, 6 February 1644-5, p.9, E.259(2).

4. J. Lilburne, A Copple of a Letter, 15 January 1644, p.2, E.24(22). For "Black-Coate" read "Black-coats" i.e. divines. For a Presbyterian reply to Lilburne, see the frontispiece to this chapter.

been singularly ineffective. Parliament and the Stationers' Company blamed each other for laxity,¹ but even reforms did not make it any simpler to detect the secret presses that could be easily moved. Richard Overton and Henry Robinson possessed such equipment and the latter, employing printers from Amsterdam, was blamed by Presbyterians for the appearance of most of the "late scandalous, libellous Books".² Some Independent works bore the inscription "published by Authoritie",³ or "licensed, entered and printed according to order"⁴ although this was quite plainly false information. Some pamphlets gave neither the name of the author nor printer,⁵ but just as many unlicensed pamphlets bore the name of either the printer or publisher (or both) as if to secure a printer was, in effect, to obtain a license. There was a group of publishers in Popes-head-alley by Cornhill who were particularly receptive to Independent material, namely Henry Overton, Benjamin Allen, and John Hancock.⁶ These frequently used the services of the printer Matthew Simmons, who could also be

1. C.J. iv, 22; W. Haller, Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution, p.135. For the Stationers' Company's efforts at reform, see a small hand-out in Thomason's collection, To all Printers, Booke-sellers, Booke-binders, Freemen of the Company of Stationers, 13 June 1645, E.288(9). This called a meeting to elicit what reforms had been accomplished.
2. W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring-Blasing Stars, 24 July 1645, p.9, E.285(2). Robinson was sent before the Committee of Examinations for this offence, but freed.
3. E.g. J. Goodwin, Innocencie's Triumph, 26 October 1644, E.14(10).
4. E.g. J. Goodwin, Calumny Arraign'd and Cast.
5. E.g. Anon, A Help to the Right Understanding of a Discourse Concerning Independency.
6. Overton and Allen both published works by John Goodwin; among others. Hancock published Woodward's "Soft Answers Unto Hard Censures".

relied upon to print works not presented through a publisher.¹ Satire and mockery were used by radical Independents to show their contempt of the licensing laws. "The Arraignment of Mr. Persecution" bore on its titlepage the announcement that "This is Licensed and printed according to Holy Order, but not Entered into the Stationers Monopole", and to add insult to injury, printed a supposed "decree" of the Westminster Assembly approving the work.²

At one point Bastwick seems to have become so tired of Independent complaints and propaganda concerning licensing contróls, that he authorised that prolific Presbyterian licenser James Cranford to approve a work by the Baptist Hanserd Knollys.³ Less grudging official approval could also be secured if Independent writers sought the license of John Batchelor, who like Caryl, favoured the Independents, but unlike Caryl, refused to be intimidated by the London clergy. Edwards commented that

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1. E.g. Anon, The Cleere Sense, 8 May 1645, E.282(8).
 2. Anon (Marpriest) The Arraignment of Mr. Persecution, 8 April 1645, E.276(23).
 3. Martin Marpriest reckoned that Cranford's "Imprimatur" was one of the chief weapons of the Westminster Assembly; A Sacred Decretall, 6 June 1645, p.14, E.286(15). Baillie admitted that Cranford encouraged Presbyterian works; Baillie, ii, 109. Hanserd Knollys' reply to Bastwick's "Independency Not God's Ordinance", appeared with Cranford's license, H. Knollys, A Moderate Answer unto Dr. Bastwick's Book, 17 July 1645, E.293(5). Bastwick announced that he had persuaded Cranford to license this, but to give his reasons for so doing; Knollys, however, concealed these reasons from the printed license. J. Bastwick, The Utter Routing of the whole Army of all the Independents and Sectaries, 1646, preface, sig.A. verso.

"If the Devill himselfe should make a book, and give it the Title, A plea for liberty of conscience ... and bring it to Mr. Bachiler, hee would license it ... (with) the commendations of A usefull Treatise, of A sweet and excellent booke, making for love and peace among brethren".¹

Batchelor himself confessed that he felt it his Christian duty to "suffer faire-play on all sides, and to yeeld that liberty of every free borne subject" which the laws of God and England allowed.² In part the problem was that licensers, authors and publishers had no guide as to what constituted an unsuitable pamphlet, and much as the Presbyterians might feel that all Independent works should fall into this category, Parliament had not so stipulated. Thus to the annoyance of Prynne and other Presbyterians, who felt that Parliament should punish the authors, printers and publishers of such "monstrous insolencies" against Presbytery, and in defiance of the Assembly's resolution of 10 June 1645 banning books favouring liberty of conscience, Independent pamphlets continued to appear.³ Clearly licensing controls provided Independents with more a cause for complaint than any real set back; Buchanan believed that the Independents had gained "the most part of the scribbling Pamphletiers about the City, to set forth

1. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, 28 December 1646, p.105, E.368(5).

2. J. Batchelor's license to J. Goodwin, Twelve Considerable Cautions, 17 February 1645-6, E.322(31). On 25 December 1645, Batchelor was called to account by the Assembly for licensing a book by Tombes against infant baptism, although Batchelor himself disagreed with the book. S.W. Carruthers, The Every day Work of the Westminster Assembly, p.102.

3. W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring-Blasing Stars, preface to Parliament. For the Assembly's order (which was merely advice to Parliament) see Mitchell and Struthers, p.102.

lyes and tales for them".¹

Pamphlet Protagonists: New Recruits and Old Antagonists.

A new entrant into the Presbyterian-Independent pamphlet arena was the Puritan hero, the lawyer William Prynne,² who defended the Presbyterian concept of a national church and regarded the Independents as a major impediment to the moral reform of the nation. Prynne's concern for discipline also led him to argue for Erastian Presbyterianism by 1644-5, since he realised that the Assembly's failure to achieve strict moral purity was "a logical consequence of the philosophy of theocratic Presbyterianism".³ But Prynne accepted that the Independents were greatly to blame for hindering reform, since he believed their preoccupation with one congregation alone was the arch-enemy of national purity. So between August 1644 and July 1645 he wrote five works to denounce the Independent way, "a very Seminary of Schismes".⁴ The first,

1. D. Buchanan, Truth its Manifest, 12 November 1645, p.127, E.1179(5).

2. Prynne had lost his ears in 1637 in the struggle against Laudian Episcopacy. His two fellow sufferers, John Bastwick and Henry Burton, were also to join the controversy, although Burton would now oppose Bastwick and Prynne.

3. W.M. Lamont, "Episcopacy and a Godly Discipline 1641-6", Journal of Ecclesiastical History, X, (1959), p.88. Dr. Lamont has shown that Prynne, who had previously opposed "jure divino" theories among the Episcopalians, supported clerical Presbyterians in 1641-4 because of the promise of godly reformation. Their failure to achieve this, their increasing emphasis on "jure divino" theories and a strict admission to the Sacrament caused him to stress the rôle of the civil magistrate in church discipline. See also W.M. Lamont, Marginal Prynne, especially p.165.

4. W. Prynne, Twelve Considerable Serious Questions touching Church Government, 16 September 1644, p.7, E.257(1).

"Twelve Considerable Serious Questions touching Church Government" was written "at the importunitie of some Reverend Friends".¹ Stressing the concept of national religious unity on account of "our mutuall Christian dependency on and Relations one to another ... as Members of the selfe-same state and visible Church", it condemned Independency as springing from

"a Pharesiticall dangerous spiritual Prid(e), vainglorious Singularitie, or selfe-conceitednesse of mens own superlative holinesse (as they deeme it) which makes them, contrary to the Apostles rule to esteeme others better then themselves".²

His second pamphlet was more intransigent, and detailed propositions as to why Independency would subvert the Church and the lawful power of all Christian magistrates, since Prynne had been urged to "render a more particular account of my disapprobation of the Independent Platforme then I have lately done".³

When these works produced accusations of frivolity, bitterness and a lack of charity,⁴ Prynne was thrown into a defensive mood that was reflected in the increasing

1. W. Prynne, Twelve Considerable Serious Questions touching Church Government, p.2.

2. Ibid., pp.7-8.

3. W. Prynne, Independency Examined, Unmasked, Refuted, 26 September 1644, p.2, E.257(3). This followed his first pamphlet by approximately ten days.

4. E.g. J. Goodwin, Certaine Brief Observations and Antiquaeres on Master Prin's Twelve Questions, 4 October 1644, especially pp.2,12-3, E.10(33). In November William Godfrey wrote to Prynne defending the "holy saints of God both Ministers and people whome you are pleased to nickname Independents", and telling him to show more charity. P.R.O. S.P. 16/503, ff.1,3.

intolerance and invective of his next three pamphlets. Within a fortnight¹ he had denounced his first critic, the "Antiquaerist", alias John Goodwin, still seeking refuge in anonymity.² After both John Goodwin and Henry Burton had issued rejoinders,³ Prynne published yet another defence, rich in historical and constitutional allusion, and associating the Independents with all "Anti-Monarchicall, Anti-Parliamentall, Anti-Synodicall, and Anarchicall . . . Papists, Prelates, Anabaptists, Arminians, Socinians, Brownists".⁴ Prynne then retired from the arena for six months, but by the summer of 1645 the increasing numbers of Independents and sectaries and the growing market for libellous pamphlets provoked him to produce his most violent denunciation yet of such activities. In this "Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring-Blasing Stars", Prynne concluded that the "waspsish Generation" which so hated his pamphlets was plotting a confederacy against Parliament and Assembly and warned

1. Prynne worked at a prodigious rate, often into the small hours of the morning. W.M. Lamont, Marginal Prynne, p.1.
2. Prynne's retort accused the Antiquaerist of perjury against Parliament, and unconvincing arguments. W. Prynne, A Full Reply to certaine briefe Observations and Anti-Queries, 19 October 1644, E.257(7). This also answered John Goodwin's "Theomachia", 7 October 1644, E.12(1).
3. Viz. J. Goodwin, Innocencies Triumph, and H. Burton, A Vindication of Churches, commonly called Independent. (see below, pp.372, 376-7).
4. W. Prynne, Truth Triumphant over Falshood, Antiquity over Novelty, 2 January 1644-5, titlepage, E.259(1). Prynne had an obsession with Popish and Jesuit plots. Henry Robinson thought that this work was "antick truth" indeed, derived from Popery! H. Robinson, The Falsehood of Mr. William Pryn's "Truth Triumphant", 8 May 1645, p.1, E.282(11).

Parliament to act against this.¹ Prynne's copious revelations of Independent errors and libels convinced John Lilburne that "the man is out of his wits", since Prynne had tried to suppress the Marpriest tracts, and yet here in his "Wandering-Blasing Stars" "publisheth all the chief things ... to the view of thousands that durst not meddle with them before".²

Prynne professed himself hurt that "Friends are become my professed Antagonists (if not enemies) in print because I have told them the truth".³ He certainly received as much reproach as he gave to others. His opponents derided the fact that this "meer Lawyer" presumed to meddle in church controversy; it would be more suitable if he reformed the legal profession.⁴ Various rude remarks were made about Prynne's weighty pamphlets with their wealth of citations, quotations and marginal references, produced to seduce the ignorant "who more admire a margent full of rusty antick

1. W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandering-Blasing Stars, 24 July 1645, preface to Parliament, E.261(5). This was eagerly heralded by Mercurius Civicus, No.112, 10-17 July 1645, p.998, E.293(7), which shows some pamphlets were publicised before publication.

2. The Copy of a Letter, from Lieu-Col. John Lilburne, to a friend, 9 August 1645, p.17, E.296(5).

3. W. Prynne, A Full Reply, p.2. He was referring specifically to Burton.

4. John Goodwin called Prynne a "meer Lawyer" in Calumny Arraign'd and Cast, p.18 (in reply to Prynne's taunt that Goodwin was a "meer divine"). William Godfrey advised Prynne that lawyers had always caused trouble for Christ; P.R.O.S.P. 16/503, f.2. Another pamphleteer told Prynne he ought to petition Parliament to make the laws comprehensible to all men, since legal fees were extortionate and legal jargon such that "a plaine man cannot understand so much as a Writ without the helpe of Councill". Anon, A Helpe to the Right Understanding of a Discourse Concerning Independency, pp.2-3.

Authours, than whole leaves and chapters of arguments and sound reason".¹ Independents were understandably concerned lest Prynne's fame should mar their cause, and they were anxious to observe that Prynne the persecuted had soon become Prynne the persecutor. One friend of the separatists thought Prynne might now be siding with the rising Presbyterian party to promote his own ends and felt it had already been "too sadly proved that he that did the greatest service (to the country) may live to doe the greatest mischeife".² John Goodwin was convinced that Prynne's fantasies were written solely

"to despite the Spirit of God, to defame the Gospel, to make the Wayes of godlinesse and Religion hatefull unto the world, to increase divisions, to multiply distractions, to bring a snare and evill day upon the Parliament, to expose the whole Kingdome to utter ruine and destruction".³

The Presbyterian cause was also championed by new and familiar combatants, all eager to deal blows against Independency. A certain D.P.P., licensed by James Cranford, wrote two works that supported Prynne's belief that the Independents hindered the reformation, encouraged all kinds of sects and libertines, and bore a distinct resemblance to the Jesuits.⁴ Such

1. E.g. H. Robinson, The Falsehood of Mr. William Pryn's "Truth Triumphant", p.7. Robinson added that since much of Prynne's work was written when he should have been asleep, it was clearly more dreamlike than rational.

2. Anon, A Helpe to the Right Understanding of a Discourse Concerning Independency, p.1. He believed Prynne to be worse than Laud!

3. J. Goodwin, Calumny Arraign'd and Cast, p.17.

4. The first pamphlet was D.P.P., The Six Secondary Causes of the spinning out of this Unnaturall warre, 25 November 1644, E.18(13). This did distinguish Independents from sects, but denounced toleration (p.6.). The second work was D.P.P., An Antidote against the Contagious Air of Independency, 18 February 1644-5, E.270(3); see pp.18-20 for the author's parallel between Independents and Jesuits.

comments won him a place beside Prynne when Woodward named the three men whom he considered to have most stirred the people against Independents, the third being the tireless Adam Stewart.¹ For the latter resurrected his quarrel with John Goodwin in December and March, concerned to show that the Independents were like Sanballat and Tobiah, who pretended to assist the building of God's house while actually doing the exact opposite.² James Cranford probably persuaded John Vicars to publish a letter he had written to John Goodwin bewailing his bitterness and gall,³ and although Vicars received taunts for his trouble, he was sufficiently undeterred to produce "The Picture of Independency", which bemoaned

"all this fruitlesse writing and wrangling ... against the unquestionable heaven-honoured Truths of the Presbyterian - way never to be refuted (though much quarrelled at) by all the New-Speculations of our most unkinde Dissenting Brethren".⁴

Likening the Independents to the soldiers who crucified Christ, Vicars concluded by begging the Independents to end their "willfull and obstinate separation", since Christ would wish

1. H. Woodward, Inquiries into the Causes of our Miseries, Part I, pp.11-2.

2. The December pamphlet was, The Second Part of the Duply to M.S. alias Two Brethren, 4 December 1644, E.20(7). Its March companion was Zerubbabel to Sanballat and Tobiah: or the First part of the Duply to M.S. alias Two Brethren, 21 March 1644-5, E.274(14). Thomason acquired the latter work in March; it may have appeared earlier. Both tracts defended Stewart's previous work, "Some Observations and Annotations upon the Apologeticall Narration", from criticisms by John Goodwin. See above, pp.180-2; 190-2.

3. J. Vicars, To his Reverend and Much Respected Good Friend, Mr. John Goodwin, 11 February 1644-5, E.259(3). The letter was provoked by John Goodwin's sending Vicars a copy of his "Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together". Daniel Taylor, a mercer in Paternoster Row, and a member of John Goodwin's gathered church, answered Vicars' letter accusing the aged Vicars of "speaking sharpe and devouring words against persons and things he knows not". Ibid., p.5. Taylor's reply was published with Vicars' letter.

4. J. Vicars, The Picture of Independency, 15 March 1644-5, p.7. E.273(11).

none to offend "any of his innocent and peaceable Little-ones of the Presbyterian-party, his undoubted beloved ones".¹

Some Presbyterians obviously wished to protect their innocence, and thus concealed their names when writing their far from peaceable pamphlets. The anonymous opponents of John Goodwin and John Lilburne fell into this category.² Defences of Presbyterianism also appeared from abroad, since the French national synod condemned Independency and Apollonij produced his "A Consideration of certaine Controversies".³ But the most fearsome new Presbyterian recruit to the pamphlet war after Prynne was the physician John Bastwick, who presented the two parts of his formidable "Independency Not God's Ordinance" in the summer of 1645.⁴ The first part was more charitable than the second, since it asserted that there was a misunderstanding between Presbyterians and Independents and

1. J. Vicars, The Picture of Independency, pp.14,15-6 (quoted).

2. John Goodwin's "Theomachia" was opposed by Anon, Faces About, or a Recrimination charged upon Mr. John Goodwin, 21 October 1644, E.13(17). Thomason wrote "A Scotsman" upon his copy. This anonymous author was in turn answered by an anonymous auditor of John Goodwin's, one P.P.(i.e. Poore Pamphleteer), As You Were, 13 November 1644, E.16(29). Thomason wrote that the P.P. was supposedly Hezekiah Woodward. John Lilburne was opposed by Anon, A Review of a Certain Pamphlet under the name of one John Lilburne, 14 April 1645, E.278(4).

3. Presbyterians published this Declaration of the Synod of France Touching Independency, in January 1644-5, E.26(8). The rest of the synod's decisions had to wait until 1646 for publication! For Apollonij' work see above, pp.289-90, note 5.

4. Bastwick, who had lost his ears in 1637, was released from a Royalist prison in October 1644. The first part of this work had appeared by 21 May E.285(2), and the second by 10 June, E.287(9). The two parts were reissued in a new bumper edition in 1646, with a different title; The Utter Routing of the Whole Army of all the Independents and Sectaries.

sought, by learned and repetitious discussion of the true nature of the first church of Jerusalem, to show that the Independent way was based on a misconception. But the second part abandoned Scriptural reference and moderation, as Bastwick launched into a vituperative attack on the Independents, accusing them of craftiness, lies, factious plots, corroboration with Oxford, opposition to the civil power, and desertion of the poor to cultivate the rich.¹ He derided them for assuming themselves to be the most godly in the country, although he graciously made an exception of Greenhill and Carter the Assembly-members, whom he admitted were humble and learned.² He related how he had been insulted by Independents as an apostate, incendiary and persecutor, "so that I could not enjoy the very Laws of civility in many of their Companies", and decided that his moderation would only be interpreted as flattery or cowardice.³ Whilst wishing the Independents to return to love and unity with the Presbyterians, Bastwick warned that the magistrate ought "not only (to) lay commands upon such to be silent, but also severely punish them for their contumacy, if they refuse to obey".⁴

Against such intimidating opponents, the Independents were

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1. J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II, sig.d, sig.d.2, pp.38,48,57.
 2. Ibid., sig.d2, p.58.
 3. Ibid., sig. B verso (quoted), sig a2.
 4. Ibid., preface, n.p.

defended by pamphleteers no less learned or acrimonious.

John Goodwin not only continued his running battle with Adam Stewart, but also took it upon himself to refute Prynne.¹ He first appeared as the anonymous "Antiquaerist" in October, endeavouring to show the reader that Prynne's twelve questions were "un-usefull and frivolous ... bitter and unchristian".² In "Theomachia", Goodwin again defended Independency, and begged for its peaceful coexistence with Presbytery;

"If a complete Nationall Reformation be indeed the Garland or Crown that is contended for, let but Presbyterie bestir her self, and act her part within her Jurisdiction, with as much diligence, wisdome and faithfulness, as the Congregationall Way will undertake to act hers amongst her Proselytes, and there will not be the least occasion to fear, but that the whole and entire body of the Nation will shine with the beauty and lustre of a perfect Reformation".³

When Prynne answered both these pamphlets in his "Full Reply", Goodwin was obliged to defend himself against Prynne's personal aspersions and "extraction of so many crooked conclusions of his own out of my streight premises" in a pamphlet modestly entitled "Innocencie's Triumph".⁴ Another answer to Prynne's

1. Goodwin's reply to Stewart was entitled A Short Answer to A.S. alias Adam Stewart's Second Part of his overgrown Duply to the two Brethren, 3 February 1644-5, E.27(6). This pamphlet was anonymous, but Prynne stated that it was by Goodwin; W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring-Blasing Stars, p.4.

2. J. Goodwin, Certaine Brief Observations and Antiquaeres on Master Prin's Twelve Questions, titlepage. Goodwin later admitted his authorship in his A Moderate Answer to Master Prinnes Booke, called, "A Full Reply", 27 January 1644-5, pp.1-2, E.26(20).

3. J. Goodwin, Theomachia: or the Grand Imprudence of men running the hazard of fighting against God, 7 October 1644, p.23, E.12(1). This work was the substance of two sermons preached at Coleman Street.

4. J. Goodwin, Innocencie's Triumph, 26 October 1644, p.20, E.14(10).

"Full Reply" appeared in January, in which Goodwin denied that he approved of separatists yet insisted that he was duty bound to plead for the spiritual liberties of the saints. He also issued a challenge, that if any man could satisfactorily show him how it was holier to be a Presbyterian than an Independent,

"I will soon pull down what I have built, and dwell no longer in the Tents of Independencie, but devote my selfe, and all my strength and might, to the service of that way, which for distinction sake is called Presbyterie".¹

Just in case Prynne might be impressed by labours as continuous as his own, Goodwin published yet a third retort to the "Full Reply" only two weeks after the second,² and a few days later added "Calumny Arraign'd and Cast", his final denunciation of Prynne. For Goodwin had reached the conclusion that Prynne was so prejudiced and determined to conspire against Christ that he deserved no further advice, and resolved to leave him to his "stormes and tempests, whirlwinds and earth-quakes, thundering and lightening, millstones and mountains".³ Whereas Goodwin had feared that the weight of Prynne's reputation might "lay somewhat heavy upon the shoulder of Independencie", he was now sure that Prynne's extravagant lies had ruined his own credibility.⁴

1. J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, 8 January 1644, pp.³⁸29-30 (quoted), E.24(8). Goodwin felt Prynne's arguments were unconvincing, and that if the "Presbyterian fabrique" were not better supported, "it will drop one piece from another, and the honour of it soone lie in the dust". Ibid., p.19.

2. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer to Master Prinnes Booke, called, "A Full Reply".

3. J. Goodwin, Calumny Arraign'd and Cast, p.12. This was specifically written against Prynne's "Truth Triumphant over Falshood".

4. Ibid., p.1.

Daniel Taylor believed that Goodwin's work "found joyfull and bountifull entertainment in the judgements of sober and intelligent men",¹ but it received little welcome from Presbyterians, who heaped criticism upon its author's head. Much capital was made from the fact that John Goodwin was sequestered from his living in Coleman Street sometime before January 1644-5. No matter how hard Goodwin professed that the sequestration was not for neglecting his parish in favour of his Independent congregation, the charge was widely believed.² Thomas Edwards was later uncharitable enough to rejoice in the fact that shortly after Goodwin turned his house into an

1. D. Taylor's reply to John Vicars, appended to J. Vicars, To His Reverend and Much Respected Good Friend, Mr. John Goodwin, p.7-

2. In 1644 John Goodwin came into conflict with certain parishioners concerning his restrictive ideas on baptism and admission to the Lord's Supper, and was eventually sequestered. Prynne remarked in January that Goodwin had been removed, (Truth Triumphant over Falshood, p.107), but in fact he stayed in the parish until May 1645. Prynne claimed that the sentence was for neglecting the parish, gathering a church, and for receiving tithes whilst seldom preaching to parishioners. Truth Triumphant over Falshood, p.106, and A Full Reply, p.21. Goodwin admitted that his Independent congregation had been gathered before his sequestration, but claimed that many parishioners participated in the "exercises" of his Independent church, and the door of his house was always open for them. He added that many parishioners had petitioned Parliament in his favour, and that he had never collected tithes, but only voluntary contributions. J. Goodwin, Innocencie's Triumph, pp.14-9. Many of Goodwin's parishioners did seem to support him, since in 1647 they petitioned Parliament for Goodwin's return, and freely shared the church with his gathered congregation when Goodwin was restored in 1649. See below, pp.529, 640. and E. Freshfield, "Some Remarks upon the Book of Records and History of the Parish of St. Stephen, Coleman Street", Archaeologia, (1887).

Independent church, two of his children died of the plague.¹ Presbyterians were anxious to prove Goodwin's unorthodox theology and thus reveal him as "the most unfit man of all ... in London to lay those undeserved criminations to Mr. Prynne's charge".² Both Vicars and Prynne accused him of Socinian errors long before "this most unhappy and unholy difference of Independency with Presbitery was dreamed of"³ and Vicars denounced his "damnable opinion touching justifying Faith by Christ" which was condemned by "a learned Independent brother".⁴

Goodwin was also charged by Prynne with the self-same offences that he had imputed to Prynne, namely of stirring up "those unhappy flames of contention ... in our Church and State", forestalling a unity in church government and therefore violating Parliamentary privilege.⁵ Prynne was amazed at the sheer presumption of a mere divine judging the

1. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, 26 February 1645-6, p.70, E.323(2). Goodwin later rebuffed such taunts, claiming that God had mercifully spared his children from the poverty that resulted from his lost living and "the undeserved hatred and injustice of my Presbyterian neighbours". J. Goodwin, Cretensis, 19 March 1645-6, pp.37-8, E.328(22).

2. J. Vicars, To his Reverend and Much Respected Good Friend, Mr. John Goodwin, p.3.

3. Ibid., p.3 (quoted); W. Prynne, Truth Triumphant over Falshood, p.109.

4. J. Vicars, To his Reverend and Much Respected Good Friend, Mr. John Goodwin, p.3. One of Goodwin's parishoners published (probably with his licenser, James Cranford's encouragement) a copy of Goodwin's sermons to prove that Goodwin had been preaching the "Arminian" view that God was bound to give grace upon man's endeavours. Samuel Lane, A Vindication of Free-Grace, 1 April 1645, E.275(3).

5. W. Prynne, Truth Triumphant over Falshood, p.109.

Parliament by establishing support for a system before Parliament had come to a decision on church government.¹ Goodwin retorted that in that case Edwards' "Antapologia" had been similarly presumptuous, that divines could be as good judges as lawyers, and that anyway no action (such as persecuting the Independents) "that is sinfull or contrary to the will and word of God, can possibly be a privilege of Parliament".² Accusing Prynne of being far more "Anti-Parliamentarie" than himself, Goodwin proudly detailed a long list of his services to the Parliamentary cause, and was duly defended by William Godfrey, who informed Prynne that if tears, prayers and sermons could assist M.P.s, Goodwin was quite as avid a Parliamentarian as anyone else.³

Goodwin was joined by others anxious to defend Independency. Henry Burton vindicated the Independents from Prynne's first two attacks, although he lamented

"that you and I, having been fellow-sufferers, and spectacles to the world, upon that tragical stage of Antichristian tyranny, should ever come upon the Theatre as Antagonists".

Consoling himself that "as an Antagonist against you I come not, but in the bowells of a brother",⁴ and using a more restrained tone than that of Goodwin, Burton rebuked Prynne for

1. W. Prynne, Truth Triumphant over Falshood, p.109.
2. J. Goodwin, Calumny Arraign'd and Cast, pp. 27,31(quoted) 32-5.
3. Ibid., pp.9,21-3; Letter from Godfrey to Prynne, P.R.O., S.P. 16/503, f.1.
4. H. Burton, A Vindication of Churches commonly called Independent, 14 November 1644, E.17(5), preface to Prynne, sig. A2. Burton seems to have been unable to find a licenser, as he complained to Prynne "it wanted a midwife, whereof you have plenty".

his "subitane apprehensions" and unjust censures.¹ But although Goodwin urged his "brother Burton" to continue the debate, Burton extended his pamphlet controversy with Prynne no further.² John Lilburne however was both more vituperative and tenacious.³ He published a letter to Prynne in January, censuring the lawyer's harshness, upholding liberty of conscience, and challenging Prynne to a public disputation.⁴ This letter provoked charges that Lilburne disobeyed the lawful power of civil magistrates; John Vicars even exulted that Lilburne had been punished for his audacity by receiving a pikestaff wound shortly afterwards.⁵ Yet even when Prynne

1. H. Burton, A Vindication of Churches commonly called Independent, pp.2,44.

2. In Calumny Arraign'd and Cast, p.3, Goodwin had left the latter part of Prynne's "Truth Triumphant over Falshood", to the mercies of Burton, whom it also maligned.

3. John Lilburne illustrates the difficulty of distinguishing between a radical Independent and a sectarian. He had been a lieutenant colonel in Manchester's regiment and was a former friend of John Bastwick, although Bastwick accused him of ingratitude; J. Bastwick, A Just Defence, 30 August 1645, pp.8-17, E.265(2). He associated with radical Independents (e.g. Hugh Peter at the Windmill Tavern meeting) but also supported the sects e.g. J. Lilburne, The Reasons of Lieu-Col. Lilbourne's sending his letter to Mr. Prin, 13 June 1645, pp.2-4, E.288 (12). He later became the leader of the Levellers, a popular revolutionary political party which supported toleration.

4. J. Lilburne, A Coppie of a Letter. Apparently 3 impressions of this unlicensed pamphlet were made, indicating some demand. W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring-Blasing Stars, p.3.

5. Anon, A Review of a Certain Pamphlet under the name of one John Lilburne, p.3; J. Vicars, The Picture of Independency, p.9.

had succeeded in securing Lilburne's imprisonment for this letter, Lilburne celebrated his release by publishing another unlicensed account of the whole affair which reduced him to Newgate gaol again. He could not refrain from protesting about the sufferings of saints as a direct result of "sundrie invective and provoking language divulged both from the Pulpit and Presse".¹ Neither could Henry Robinson, who like Lilburne, was identified with no sect but achieved a position akin to extreme separatism in his toleration demands. Robinson denounced Prynne in two pamphlets, fearful that most Independents lived in daily expectation of

"some sudden sentence of absolute silence or certaine banishment for what is said already, through a most fierce persecution of certaine unquiet Presbyterian spirits".²

Some confusion existed over the authorship of the Martin Marpriest tracts, which brought a new tone to the Presbyterian-Independent conflict. Prynne blamed both Henry Robinson and John Lilburne for these works, but their author

1. J. Lilburne, The Reasons of Lieu-Col. Lilbourne's sending his letter to Mr. Prin, p.5. Prynne censured this pamphlet as a vainglorious recollection of Lilburne's sufferings, and became even more convinced that the Independents were setting a party against Parliament. W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring-Blasing Stars, p.36.

2. Robinson made this comment in his letter to Dury, published in Some Few Considerations Propounded, p.2. (see above p.183 note 1.) His first pamphlet against Prynne was An Answer to Mr. William Prynne's Twelve Questions, 17 November 1644, E.15(5), which included eight queries for toleration. Prynne stated that this was Robinson's work in A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring-Blasing Stars, p.4. Thomason attributed the tract to Burton, confused with Burton's "A Vindication", published a few days earlier. Robinson's second work repeated the eight queries however; The Falsehood of Mr. William Pryn's Truth Triumphant.

was probably Richard Overton, who associated with Robinson and Lilburne and was a later protagonist in the Leveller movement.¹ A Leveller pamphlet hinted that Overton was connected with "that reverend peece of sanctity, usually dignified or distinguished by the name of Young Martin Mar Priest",² and Overton's later Leveller works "share Martin's style, one even bearing the Marpriest legend, "Printed by Martin Claw-Clergy".³ Four pamphlets appeared between April and July, satirising the Assembly, Presbytery, and the Presbyterians' treatment of the Independents.⁴ Although these lewd, defamatory works debased the Presbyterian-Independent religious dispute to the level of rude raillery, they did popularise the idea of toleration as the antidote to sinful persecution. It may have been no coincidence that their appearance marked a time of increasing army importance. Unfortunately however, many readers would assume that these tracts reflected the sentiments of all Independents, and agree with one newsbook that such "ridiculous absurdities and such unchristian language" seemed rather "to fal from

1. Prynne blamed Robinson for these tracts in A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring-Blasing Stars, p.8, but Lilburne claimed that Prynne told the Committee of Examinations that Lilburne was responsible, The Copy of a Letter from Lieu-Col. John Lilburne, to a freind, p.14. The tracts probably came from Robinson's press.

2. Anon, A Defiance against all Arbitrary Usurpations or Encroachments, 9 September 1646, p.25, E.353(17).

3. R. Overton, An Arrow against all Tyrants and Tyranny, 10 October 1646, E.356(14).

4. These four Marpriest tracts were The Arraignement of Mr. Persecution, 8 April 1645, E.276(23); A Sacred Decretall, 6 June 1645, E.286(15); Martin's Echo, 27 June 1645, E.290(2); The Nativity of Sir John Presbyter, 2 July 1645, E.290(17). The last named included a scurrilous poem on the Assembly (sig. A2 verso).

the pen of an Atheist, or Jesuite".¹ Such tracts did not improve prospects for the moderate Independents.

The increasing merger between the radical Independents and sects meant that pamphlets like the Marpriest series promoted the cause of both. The use of the term "godly party" could refer to both Independents and separatists, and pamphleteers stressed that Independents and separatists were alike sufferers for conscience.² It was not surprising therefore that separatists should publicly defend the Independent cause. The Baptist William Kiffin wrote a letter challenging Thomas Edwards to a dispute, and Katharine Chidley echoed this demand for a confrontation with Edwards, whose "Antapologia" she bitterly denounced.³ It was the Baptist Hanserd Knollys who contradicted Bastwick's arguments that Independency was not God's ordinance.⁴ Other radical Independents or separatists also defended Independency

1. The True Informer, No.8, week ending 14 June 1645, p.63, E.288(18).

2. Eg. Anon, A Helpe to the Right Understanding of a Discourse Concerning Independency, lately published by William Prynne, p.6. The author was not himself a separatist, but claimed that his knowledge of their sincerity and patriotism made him their advocate.

3. W. Kiffin, To Mr. Thomas Edwards, 15 November 1644, E.17(16) (a small hand-out); K. Chidley, A New-Yeaeres Gift, or A Brief Exhortation to Mr. Thomas Edwards, 2 January 1644-5, p.22, E.23(13).

4. H. Knollys, A Moderate Answer unto Dr. Bastwick's Book.

and toleration.¹ So it was that the pamphlet war deepened in intensity in 1644-5, and involved divines and laymen, the bold and the anonymous, seasoned pamphleteers, and new campaigners.

Pamphlet Disputes I: Church and State.

The pamphlet controversies of 1644-5 were concerned with four major themes, a continuing examination of the Scriptural merits of Presbytery or Independency, plus a new stress on the questions of a national church, the rôle of the civil magistrate in church affairs, and toleration, which were a direct result of the failure of Assembly negotiations. Although pamphleteers might gibe at the Scots, the army, or the "anti-Parliamentary" spirit of their opponents, political issues were not to figure prominently in the Presbyterian-Independent pamphlet war until 1646-8. In addition, personal attacks and general aspersions continued to pervade the academic disputes. Bastwick almost seemed to dislike the

1. E.g. Mrs. Sarah Jones, To Sion's Lovers, 6 November 1644, E.16(17); Anon, A Short Answer to some Objections against the practises of those who are called Independents, 5 December 1644, E.21(4); Anon, A Letter from a Person of Honour Reconciling the Dissenting Brethren and the Presbyterians, 30 November 1644, E.22(17). Toleration was urged by Anon, John the Baptist, forerunner of Christ Jesus, 23 September 1644, E.9(13), (believed by W. Haller, Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution, p.160, to be the work of Robinson); Anon, A Paraenetic or humble addresse to the Parliament and Assembly for (not loose but) Christian Libertie, 30 November 1644, E.19(10); and by the anonymous Independent author of The Ancient Bounds.

Independents less for their theological views than for their new devotion to fashion and their inordinate love of food, thus succumbing to the temptation to associate opponents with all that was bad in manners and dress. According to him,

"Whereas the ancient Puritan Ministers went with their hair as close clipt as cocks of the game, and their wives went in plain and modest attire ... the Independent Ministers are very finicall and go in their hair and in their habits, out of town like Cavaliers, so that none but meets them would take them for ministers, but rather thinke them a company of ruffians: and for their wives they ordinarily go as brave as the daintiest dames in the Kingdom".¹

He deplored their gluttony, and partiality to custard, beef and venison, and believed that a major attraction in their return from exile may have been the smell of "plum pottage!"²

As the radical Independents became more outspoken, so the Presbyterians emphasised the dangers of sympathising with even the moderates. Vicars maintained that the so-called godly saints were wolves in sheep's clothing, whilst Adam Stewart told readers that although once upon a time the Presbyterians might have suffered the Apologists, they were horrified at Independent pamphlets; "wee never thought, that your Opinions could have been so absurd, as we have since

1. J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II, pp.57-8. He declared that although the Independent ministers rode fine horses, if they met a poor Assembly-member, riding on a horse worth only six shillings, they would salute him with "Good morrow, my Lord Bishop". Since Bastwick was always complaining of his own poverty, he may have been jealous.

2. J. Bastwick, A Just Defence of John Bastwick, 30 August 1645, p.39 (sic. for 31), E.265(2).

found them in your Books".¹ Such taunts were associated with two specific complaints that the Presbyterians made against the Independents. The first was that the Independents had failed to produce the clear model of their way that the Presbyterians so desired, which the Presbyterians correctly deduced was due to their differences and desire to leave the peripheries of their dogma in sufficient vagueness to ensure maximum support.² Bastwick mocked this lack of a platform of government with the words "Lights, Lights, Gentlemen-Independents, hang out your Lights, your New-lights ... That the poore Seekers may finde a Church amongst you".³ Independents insisted that their books clearly revealed their tenets, and Cotton's scheme of church government was at last published in April with the threat that if the Presbyterians failed to accept this model, "wee shall then clearly and fully decerne mens spirits, and decry their intents in challenging us for larger Narrations".⁴ John Goodwin even capitalised on such

1. J. Vicars, The Picture of Independency, p.13; A. Stewart, Zerubbabel to Sanballat and Tobiah, p.58.

2. The charge was made, e.g. by Prynne in Independency Examined, Unmasked, Refuted, p.2. It was still being made in September 1645 when the Assembly Independents were preparing their model, D. Buchanan, A Short and True Relation, p.84. Bastwick observed that their opinions were as varied as the threads in a tailor's pincushion! J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part I, p.137.

3. J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II, p.75. One opponent of Bastwick's felt that this remark deserved cleaning in the "basin" at Tunbridge Wells! J. Sadler, Flagellum Flagelli, 1 September 1645, p.20, E.298(25).

4. J. Cotton, The Way of the Churches of Christ in New England, 4 April 1645, (epistle to the reader by its editors, N. Homes and I.H.) E.276(13). This was answered by the Presbyterians (the precise authorship is unknown) in Vindiciae Clavium, 4 September 1645, E.299(4). In 1646 a New England assembly met specifically to answer such English Presbyterian claims, and as a result Hooker wrote a treatise against Rutherford. A copy was lost in transit, and Hooker refused to send another,
(cont'd overleaf).

accusations, scoffing

"how a man can confute that in an opinion which he knows not to be held in it, and out-argue that he never knew dogmatically resolved on, is beyond my intellectuals to conceive".¹

But the second Presbyterian complaint was difficult to answer, since, based on the Apologists' declaration that they would not make their present judgements binding on the future,² it charged the Independent way with dangerous mutability.³ Prynne doubted that Thomas Goodwin would dare to make the model the Assembly Independents were preparing authoritatively binding on all Independents for all time.⁴ The Independents maintained that they only sought progressive comprehension of God's truth,⁵ but the charge of inconstancy was to remain a recurrent theme in Presbyterian pamphlets against the Independents. No wonder that even a moderate pamphleteer observed that ignorance of their way encouraged gross mistakes about their tenets, and Apollonij warned

"not without cause do the godly conceive that those are hatching some monster, that use shifts, and dare not with open face clearly set downe and maintaine their opinions".⁶

4. cont'd. but after his death it was published as A Survey of the Summe of Church Discipline (1648). See J. Winthrop, The History of New England, vol.ii, p.304.

1. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, p.2. Goodwin also denied the Presbyterian boast that no-one had been able to refute the "Antapologia" by saying that only six months had passed since its publication, and Edwards had taken that long to answer the Apologetical Narration. Calumny Arraign'd and Cast, p.46.

2. See above, p.178.

3. This charge had been made previously, see above, p.212.

4. W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring Blasing Stars, pp.47-8. See also J. Vicars, The Picture of Independency, p.6.

5. H. Robinson, The Falsehood of Mr. William Pryn's "Truth Triumphant", p.16.

6. I.P., Unity Our Duty, 31 January 1644-5, p.7, E.26(14); G. Apollonij, A Consideration of certaine Controversies, 9 April 1645, n.p. (preface to the Westminster Assembly), E.1155(2).

Bastwick felt that the Independent opinions were like rats; "everyone can see and heare them, but none can catch them".¹

Meanwhile, the lack of a clear model did not prevent the Presbyterians from demolishing the Independent claims that their way was most akin to Christ's rule and the Apostles' precept. Appeals to Scripture continued, although Goodwin realised their limitations,

"For what opinion is there, or lightly can be imagined, but that all the words, wherin it is ... conceived, may be found some where or other scattered here and there severally in the Scripture, & so be framed together into a sentence?"²

Nevertheless, the church of Jerusalem was still cited by both sides as indicative of their own theories.³ Yet it is vital to remember that Presbyterians in general never claimed that Presbytery was the one unchangeable form of government. Prynne was not alone in his belief that Presbytery was the most expedient way of church government in accordance with Scriptural rules, since

"The Scripture speaks nothing of such an exact universall Platforme: and we see no image or similitude of it in the

1. J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II, p.3
 2. J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, p.32.
 3. Bastwick thought the varying concepts of the Jerusalem church to be the one major divisive issue between Presbyterians and Independents, and in his defence of Presbyterianism repeated many well-worn Assembly arguments. J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part I. Other vindications of the Presbyterian discipline at this time included R. Hollingworth, An Examination of Sundry Scriptures alleadged by our Brethren, In defence of some Particulars of their Church way, 8 January 1644-5, E.24(6). A radical Independent/sectary denied that the Jerusalem church was Presbyterian, Anon, Reformed Presbytery opposing Tyrannicall Presbytery, 14 January 1644-5, pp.17-8, E.1181(5).

Gospel: Therefore there is no such".¹

Even Thomas Cartwright, the old nonconformist, had agreed with such views,² and Prynne was supported by William Constantine who stressed that whilst circumstantial points had not been stipulated by Christ, Presbytery was approved by all reformed churches. So

"Their zealous contest for it, and unintermitted practice of it, argue it neither dissonant to the Law of God, nor destructive to that of man ... Tis more prudentiall ... to accept that which has been experienced, then run the hazard of a new invention".³

It was however, all too easy for the Independents to make capital out of such "expedient" arguments and to claim that they preferred to follow God and their conscience, since there "was no liberty left to man to alter anything in the worship of God, or in the Church-government".⁴ They gleefully pounced upon Prynne's statement that modified or regulated Episcopacy was as valid a church way as Presbytery, providing that it was established by the civil government. John Goodwin perceived that this opinion was unlikely to be voted orthodox in the Assembly or Scotland, and exulted

"Oh noble hearted Saints, and well bred Christians of England, who have felt so much the power of Episcopacie, which was the Lion let go about without its chaine, think what Presbytery will be, which is but the same Lion in a fetter;

1. W. Prynne, Truth Triumphant over Falshood, p.125. Philip Nye had already observed that some Presbyterians held this view, see above, p.296.

2. T. Cartwright, A Directory of Church Government, reprinted 14 February 1644-5, E.269(17). See above pp.5-6.

3. W. Constantine, The Second Part of the Interest of England Considered, 1 May 1645, p.34, E.281(1). Constantine was moderate, and opposed to the persecution of conscience.

4. H. Burton, A Vindication, p.6.

if ever it break loose, with what redoubled might will it tear and devoure?"¹

The debate over the relative merits of synodical or congregational power also continued unabated along lines familiar to readers of the earlier pamphlets. The Independents would not concede synodical authority, and when Prynne expressed surprise that Independents refused the power of a synod in appeals since they conferred with their own sister churches, Goodwin retorted by twisting Prynne's logic. He expressed amazement at the Presbyterians' refusal to appeal to the Independents; "it is somewhat an uncouth and strange conceit, to make schisme or separation of appealing either unto the one, or the other".² The Presbyterians could not accept that the Independent ideal of congregational power would lead to anything else but anarchy in the church. Apollonij insisted that

"We deny ... that there belongeth to the brotherhood, or body of beleivers in the Church, an authoritative power, whereby they may joine with the Eldership in an Ecclesiasticall Judiciall Act, as Judges authorised with Christ's authority, in judging causes ecclesiastically determined".³

1. J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, p.4, and J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, pp.14-5 (quoted). Prynne had made the comment about Episcopacy in A Full Reply, p.6. It must be remembered that many Assembly members did approve of modified Episcopacy.

2. J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, p.28, in reply to W. Prynne, A Full Reply, pp.13(sic for 15)-16.

3. G. Apollonij, A Consideration of Certain Controversies, p.52.

Adam Stewart claimed that in his experience, popular decision-making conferences produced total chaos; "there happened such a confusion, such partiality and jangling by reason of the pretended equality, that we could reap no profit thereby".¹ In any case, the Presbyterians perceived that despite the Independents' loud boasts and popular propaganda, they really allowed very little power to the congregation. Bastwick reported that the ministers of gathered churches appeared to humour the people, but were regarded as Popes or oracles, easily able to sway the majority with their

"policy, Rhetoricke, and fine Art of perswasion and seemin reasons ... all the ignorant people follow their severall Pastors, as a company of silly Goslings do the old Goose. And the truth is, they make their Congregation but a company of minnies".²

This argument that any respected minister would influence decisions and thus negate popular control had a certain validity. However there can be no doubt that Independent church members held more power than the average English parishioner,³ and it was significant that women, deprived of a voice in most seventeenth century affairs, flocked to

1. A. Stewart, Zerubbabel to Sanballat and Tobiah, p.93.

2. J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, p.14. On the other hand, if anything went wrong, ministers could blame the people, saying that nothing was done without their consent. He also said (p.13) that poor members were particularly vulnerable, as the ministers were responsible for distributing alms.

3. See below, pp. 625-6.

the Independent churches. Although Mather and Tompson denied women church voting rights¹ it is not clear if English Independent congregations applied this ban, and certainly women were allowed to participate fully in meetings and exercises; many congregations had more female members than male.² Bastwick was appalled that women

"set forth and print learned Treatises in polemical divinity with great applause and admiration of the Independent Ministers . . . when the women have gotten Peters Keys at their girdle, and have their voyces in many congregations, and a power of ordering and disposing of things in Church affaires - certainly; nothing but confusion can be expected, for this their doing is against the expresse command of God".³

It was not surprising that there should be a new emphasis in the pamphlet controversy upon the merits and demerits of a national church, since this debate had been previously obscured due to the Independents' firm hope of accommodation within a national settlement. With the increasing unlikelihood of such accommodation, moderate Independents were forced to defend the purity of gathered churches without actively

1. See above, p.245.

2. E.g. Norwich. See above, p.336, note 1.

3. J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part I, pp.110-2. Katharine Chidley, a separatist, was the most prominent woman pamphleteer, and her work was quoted by John Goodwin, Calumny Arraign'd and Cast, p.44. For the role of women in sectarian congregations see K.V. Thomas, "Women and the Civil War Sects". Past and Present, XIII(1958). A later pamphleteer stressed that Jesus dissociated himself from women preachers, who were to remain subject to their husbands: - Anon, A Spirit Moving in the Women-Preachers, 23 February 1645-6, E.324(10).

denouncing a national church, whilst radical Independents assumed a position almost indistinguishable from the separatists. Radicals like John Goodwin were now prepared to openly denounce a national church. Goodwin thought little of Prynne's argument that a national church was proved "jure divino" by the national covenant of God with the Israelites.¹ He retorted that it was just as valid to argue that because there was just one Jewish church, so now there ought to be one church for the whole world. It was no part of the essence of a church covenant, that it had to be national. Indeed, a national church by its very nature would have to include the profane, which Goodwin found quite unacceptable.²

Goodwin also exploited the ironies of the demand of certain Presbyterians for a strict admission to the Sacrament, which would become even more pronounced in a few months.³ For, as he observed, a restriction on communion violated the concept of a truly national and comprehensive church,

"the truth is, this principle will soon lessen a Nationall Church . . . they must cast out the most of their members, as soon as they receive them in. Its the strangest thing to me, and I startle at it many times, what strict rules the Presbyterians have laid down in their Sermons in print".⁴

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1. W. Prynne, A Full Reply, p.10.
 2. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, pp.26,28.
 3. See below, p.437.
 4. Ibid., p.30.

The Presbyterians were already dividing on this issue, which the Independents would later exploit even more effectively. Prynne, who would soon oppose such rigid Presbyterian restrictions as lessening the efficacy of a national church, confined his arguments for the present to Independents. He reproved separation from a church just because some members were sinful, repeating Christ's command that wheat and tares should be left together until the harvest;

"There never was, nor shall be here on earth, any one visible church compacted wholly of reall elected Saints without any mixture of Reprobates; such a church we shall meet with onely in heaven, I am sure you can gather none such on earth."¹

Were there no sinners in Independent churches? John Goodwin asked Prynne to point out any sinners if he knew any, for a little leaven leavened the whole lump. "It seems Heathens and Publicans may be actuall members of Mr. Prynnes Presbyterian Church", which was not as Christ intended.²

In any case, Goodwin claimed that the Independents' withdrawal from the national church was primarily on account of its "false" government, not because of the profane!³ Other Presbyterians tried to convinee Independents that the

1. W. Prynne, A Full Reply, pp.10,11 (quoted). For such arguments see above, pp.230-1. Bastwick insisted that God gathered all who repented and were baptised, J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part I, p.101.

2. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, pp.29-30; J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, p.17 (quoted).

3. Ibid., p.18.

Presbyterian government would achieve greater purity, and that "The order is, to cast off the offender, if hee heare not the Church, not to cast of the Church, if shee heare not thee"¹. If the scandalous were restrained from the Sacrament, what need was there of separation? But such insistence on the necessity of suspension only convinced the Independents that their withdrawal was justified.

According to their respective definitions of "independent", it was difficult for disputants to decide whether Presbytery or Independency would prove more independent in the long term. John Goodwin at first claimed that "independency" meant a non-dependence on God, and thus certainly did not apply to those called Independents, but later accused the national church of the truest "independency", since Prynne had professed that such a church need not refer its actions to other churches.² Yet Presbyterians insisted that nothing could be more outrageous than particular churches in a nation remaining disunited, and following their separate paths. Would not such an independent power

"invest every Independent Conventicle, consisting of never so few inconsiderable ignorant members, with a greater legislative power and ecclesiasticall authority, then you allow to whole Nationall Parliaments, Councils, consisting of most eminent, learned, pious persons of all sorts?"³

1. J. Geree, Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae, 19 October 1644, p.18. E.13(13).

2. J. Goodwin, Innocencies Triumph, pp.17-8; J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, p.34. For Prynne's comment see W. Prynne, A Full Reply, p.13.

3. W. Prynne, Independency Examined, Unmasked, Refuted, p.6. Godfrey later censured Prynne for using the Papist term "conventicle" to apply to the Independents. P.R.O. S.P. 16/503, f.1.

Goodwin replied that Christ had allowed ecclesiastical authority only to those who voluntarily consented to form a church society, just as a "politick body" derived its power from voluntary cohesion. Because of this, a national church was no different from a particular congregation,

"for what makes England as a Church distinct from Scotland ... but onely this, that the members of England or Scotland, have not consented to walk under any other power but their own".¹

Goodwin accused national church supporters of fearing that ministerial power would collapse if the church structure was altered, or that Independency would provide a meagre financial reward!²

The Presbyterians maintained that the Independents' gathering of churches would violate all the "ancient bounds of parishes" and cause chaos in local administration.³ But Burton asserted that since parishes were "of humane, politick and civill constitution, and for civill ends", they could not possibly be equated with God's chosen church.⁴ John Goodwin maintained that he "gathered" his church with the consent of his parish, and informed Prynne that since the congregational

1. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, p.4.

2. J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, pp.43,46. Yet he obviously thought such statements were exaggerated, as he made a swift volte-face and declared that this was a purely academic argument. Some Presbyterians, he conceded, were as conscientiously Presbyterian, as the congregationalists were sincere Independents.

3. W. Prynne, Independency Examined, Unmasked, Refuted, p.5.

4. H. Burton, A Vindication of Churches commonly called Independent, p.56.

way did not violate parishes, it was only

"equall that the bounds of Parishes, should not offer violence, or be houses of bondage unto the consciences of the Saints, nor be as barres of iron against them in the way of their comfort, and spirituall edification".¹

One pamphleteer who sought to reconcile Presbyterians and Independents, observed that since he was allowed to change his parish congregation if he moved house, why could he not enjoy a similar freedom without a removal?² But he had missed the important point that the change of parish did not deny the principle of the national network of churches.

The 1644-5 pamphlet literature also revealed a decided change in emphasis to the question of the religious power of the civil magistrate. This issue had emerged before³ but had not received the same intense discussion that it merited now that Parliament was about to decide in favour of Presbyterianism. For if the Presbyterians desired national uniformity in religion and the suppression of schism, they must rely on the magistrate to achieve it. But many "jure divino" Presbyterians could not accept that the magistrate could be allowed an overriding authority in church affairs,

1. J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, pp. 52(quoted), 61. When Prynne argued that his gathering a church had caused dissension in Coleman Street, Goodwin weakly replied that it was opposition to gathering that had done so. Earlier he had claimed that his parish accepted the gathering of members from other parishes, and denied that he canvassed for members; they all sought him out voluntarily. J. Goodwin, Innocencie's Triumph, pp.16-7.

2. Anon, A Letter from a Person of Honour reconciling the Dissenting Brethren ... and the Presbyterians, 30 November 1644, p.13, E.22(17).

3. See above, pp.266-72.

despite the strong English tradition of such magisterial dominance. They regarded Erastianism with contempt and saw the necessity to cry up the "jus divinum" of government by church officers as essential. The Presbyterian dilemma was matched by that of the Independents. For if the latter desired a toleration for their way amidst a national Presbyterian establishment, they would have to stress that the civil magistrate should freely allow an Independent the freedom of his conscience. Thus they declared themselves to be firmly against the "jus divinum" of Presbyterian power, whilst asserting the divine right of Independency and freedom for a peaceable Christian conscience. So some Independent arguments against civil coercion sounded remarkably like certain Presbyterian "divine right" assertions against the Erastians, and similarly, some Erastian arguments sounded almost identical to the claims of Independents against the dominating Presbyterian assemblies. In this way the basic opposition of Presbyterians to Independents was influenced and subtly affected by the respective attitude of both groups to the civil power.¹

In fact pamphleteers of both groups continued the trend, begun in earlier pamphlets,² of only affording the magistrate

1. For further evidence of this see below, pp. 496-502.

2. See above, pp. 266-72.

powers that would not prejudice their respective ways. The rigid Presbyterian "jus divinum" claims were to pose very real limitations on the civil power. One Presbyterian claimed that civil approval could only be applied to a church government that was authorised by God; "what shall be found to have Gods Royall stamp of Jus Divinum ... feare not to give it your politicall stamp of civill sanction".¹ "Jure divino" Presbyterians tried to maintain the position that the civil magistrate had power to uphold their church discipline, but possessed no authority to interfere with the church itself. Although they insisted that "the Magistracie and Ministry have their distinct bounds and yet are mutuallly to help each other",² it was clear that "the civill Magistrate hath no power intrinsecally Ecclesiasticall over the Church or its members, which of its self is supreme under Christ the King thereof". His function was to preserve church purity "in case of Schismes or dissentions, by punishing the disturbers thereof, which is not in the power of the Church to do".³ The Presbyterians reiterated former

1. E. Staunton (Assembly member), Phineas' Zeal in Execution of Judgement, sermon to the Lords, 30 October 1644, p.28, E.17(19).

2. A. Burges, The Magistrate's Commission from Heaven, 30 October 1644, preface, E.14(18).

3. Anon., A Review of a Certain Pamphlet under the name of one John Lilburne, pp.4-5. See also S. Rutherford, A Sermon preached before the House of Lords, 25 June 1645, p.21, E.289(11).

arguments that if the Independents allowed the magistrate greater powers than these, they were merely currying civil favour.¹

Yet whilst Independents continued to stress their acceptance of magisterial power in religion, their demands for toleration, (however limited that toleration might be), in fact denied the magistrate power over dissenters from the national church. Unlike the separatists, Independents denied the separation of church from state. But radical Independents, in their advocacy of a wide toleration, began to move so closely towards a separatist position that their arguments pointed logically to complete religious freedom from magisterial control - i.e. a separation of church and state. John Goodwin in particular found this logic inescapable, although even in 1648 he was reluctant to overstress it. In 1644 he wrote

"I will not enter into that common place how farre the power of Magistrates may reach in matters of Religion, to the binding of the conscience, though I wish it were rightly stated, that Christ might not lose his due, as they might not theirs".²

Radical Independent pleas for toleration from the State were based on premises not dissimilar to the "jure divino" Presbyterians - that Parliament could not usurp the prerogative power given by Christ to his followers. When Stephen Marshall

1. See above, pp.266-8 and A. Stewart The Second Part of the Duply to M.S. alias Two Brethren. pp.1-47.
E. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, p.18. He still claimed that this allowed more to the civil magistrate than did the Presbyterians! Ibid., p.24.

informed the Parliament that they must not abuse their power in religion, he used arguments familiar in Independent writings;

"matters of Religion are spirituall and heavenly things which pertaine onely to God, the soules and consciences of men, and the communion of Saints ... these are things which cannot be carried along by naturall reason, or civill prudence, but onely by the light of that spirituall and heavenly Rule, the Word of God, and therefore in these things you have no Lordly rule ... you must carry your selves, not as the ChurchesMasters, but as Christ's servants".¹

When John Goodwin stated in reply to the Erastian Prynne that a secular root could never give rise to a spiritual authority, he could cite his usual opponents, "jure divino" Presbyterians such as Edwards, in support!² Such Independent exploitation of Presbyterian divisions between supporters of ecclesiastical and magisterial power in the church was inevitable and would increase.

Erastian Presbyterians varied in their attitude to Independents. Thomas Coleman was an Erastian because he believed that accommodation between Presbyterians and Independents (whom he respected) was impossible as long as both groups over-emphasised church government and the "jus divinum" of their

1. S. Marshall, God's Master-Piece, sermon to the House of Lords, 25 March 1645, p.39. E.279(2).

2. J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, p.90, and Innocencie's Triumph, pp.6-13.

respective ways to the detriment of church unity.¹ Similarly another Erastian, who favoured some concessions to Independents, felt that since the State had power in religion,

"the difference between the Presbyterians and Independents, is not in point of Religion, but in matter of Civill Government, which the Civill Magistrates have power to settle according to the policy of State".²

But others like Prynne saw Erastianism as the means to extinguish the Independents and any others whom they believed to be hindering the national establishment of a godly discipline. And whilst Independents claimed to support Parliamentary power, and approved this conciliatory aspect of Coleman's Erastianism, they could not support the Erastianism of William Prynne. For they objected to any authority, be it civil or clerical, which would usurp their own congregational rights and freedom of conscience.

The Independents thus countered Prynne's Erastian proposal with great vigour. Prynne's main argument was that the Independents were a new generation of "anti-parliamentary soules" who, despite their former support for Parliament, now spread the word that the civil magistrate had no power in religion.³ By detailed allusions and references he proved that historically the civil power had always held authority over the church in

1. T. Coleman, Hopes Deferred and Dashed, 30 July 1645, p.24, E.294(13). See also below, p.491.

2. Anon, A Looking-Glas for the Presbitary Government, establishing in the Church of England, 23 December 1644, p.13, E.21(40).

3. W. Prynne, Truth Triumphant over Falshood, preface, sig.A2 and verso; W. Prynne, Independency Examined, Unmasked, Refuted, pp.2-3. He also accused Goodwin of referring to Parliament as elected by the "Riffe-raffe" of the world; Goodwin denied this in Calumny Arraign'd and Cast, p.4.

England, and if any divine dared dispute such power he would violate Parliamentary privilege.¹ Christ was still head of his Church, but this was no hindrance to the power of Kings and Parliaments to enact ecclesiastical laws, for the Old Testament clearly showed that "Discipline, under the Gospel ... was shewed only to Moses the temporall Magistrate ... not to Aaron or any private Independent Priest or Synagogue of the Jewes".² Independents deplored Prynne's statements that it was "tolerable" that Christ should govern mens' souls in his church, but that he should not have sole control of external church government.³ Whilst asserting that Independency was no impediment to a lawful Parliamentary authority, Independents protested that they could not suit Christ's government to the political ends of the secular state.⁴ Goodwin observed that Christ's rule was everlasting; he had not suddenly become a recluse and abandoned the church to the mercies of the State.⁵ Moses was a special case because he received commands directly from heaven; "let Magistrates shew us what they have received immediatly as the minde of God, and we will as willingly take it from them as any".⁶ However, he granted

1. W. Prynne, Truth Triumphant over Falshood, pp.1-90,109.

2. Ibid., p.117; W. Prynne, A Full Reply, p.4, (quoted).

3. Ibid., p.6. For Goodwin's assertion that this was "horrid blasphemie", see A Moderate Answer, p.17.

4. H. Burton, A Vindication, p.11, J. Lilburne, A Coppie of a Letter, p.5.

5. J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, p.10.

6. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, p.8.

that the civil power must enforce the Word of God, and since this entailed the preservation of Christ's servants, Goodwin slyly stressed that the magistrate should "restraine the violence and unjust proceedings of men against us".¹

The Independents were therefore attacking Erastians when they opposed their liberty of conscience, whilst continuing their previous opposition to the "jure divino" Presbyterians by insisting that their authoritative church government would undermine the State.² In the future the Independents would more positively appear to favour Erastianism, although they would stress the necessity of the magistrate's tolerance of their way. Similarly, the rigid or "jure divino" Presbyterians could only accept magisterial power that did not trample the authority of clergy and eldership beneath it.

Pamphlet Disputes II: Toleration, "that great Diana of Independents".³

The predominant issue in the pamphlet literature was, however, the question of toleration, for whilst this subject had occurred before, it had largely been sublimated by the hopes of accommodation that had now been proved optimistic.⁴ Although

1. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, p.18; J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, p.50.

2. See above, pp.266-9.

3. So called in A Letter of the Ministers of London ... against Toleration, 2 January 1645-6, p.6, E.314(8).

4. The number of fast sermons against toleration increased rapidly between August 1644 and July 1645. This is revealed in the September sermons of Newcomen and Seaman, the October sermons of Sedgwick and Scudder, the March sermons of Arrowsmith, Ward, and Goode, and by the April sermon of Cornelius Burges. One of the most vehement sermons against toleration was by Robert Baillie, delivered after the Presbyterian votes in Parliament and the army victories; Errours and Induration, are the Great

in January John Goodwin was still arguing that Parliament "as yet have settled none, (i.e. church government) and so are still at libertie to choose another, in case they have chosen any",¹ this stance became untenable by July, and the toleration question all-important. The term invented by Roger Williams to refer to persecution - "the Bloody Tenent"² was ironically used by Presbyterians in connexion with toleration, which Arrow-smith considered

"one of the greatest scandals I ever yet met with in print. O bloody Tenent! O speedy way of embroyling states, of massacring Churches, of erecting a Pantheon in every City!"³

Presbyterians observed, with much truth, that it was unfair of the Independents to plead so heartily for a toleration when in fact they had been suffered ever since the overthrow of Episcopacy.⁴ As early as 1641 Edwards had feared that such a de facto toleration would lead to Independent claims that the Presbyterians could not satisfactorily counter their way and result in a permanent liberty.⁵ Certainly Independents were

4. cont'd. Sins and the Great Judgements of the Time, (sermon to the Lords), 30 July 1645, E.294(12). One sermon to the Commons, however, mentioned a forbearance for tender consciences; J. Caryl, The Arraignment of Unbelief, 28 May 1645, E.286(5). Edwards was appalled at this sermon of Caryl's (as he was with some of Caryl's unpublished sermons before lesser audiences); T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, 26 February 1645-6, pp.41-2, E.323(2).
1. J. Goodwin, Calumny Arraign'd and Cast, p.27.
 2. R. Williams, The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience, had appeared in July 1644, and was ordered to be burnt. W. Haller Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution, pp.132,134.
 3. J. Arrowsmith, England's Ebenezer or Stone of Help, sermon to Parliament, 12 March 1644-5, p.13, E.278(16).
 4. E.g. J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part I, p.138.
 5. T. Edwards, Reasons against the Independent Government, p.25.

anxious to prove him right.

It is difficult to assign a general meaning to the words "toleration", and "liberty of conscience" as different writers used them in different ways. Most used the terms synonymously, although the author of the "Ancient Bounds" distinguished between "liberty of conscience" for true Christians, which he advocated, and "toleration" of scandals, which he abhorred, thus using the word "toleration" in a pejorative sense.¹ Toleration as defined by a moderate Presbyterian writer meant in itself five different concepts, (all, in his view, inferior to accommodation). The first three senses he believed to be utterly contemptible, since they comprised "toleration through indifference" (when the magistrate cared nothing for religion), "toleration through policy", (when the magistrate tolerated men in the hope of profit) and "toleration of pretended equity" (the kind demanded by many pamphleteers, who argued that justice should force the magistrate to grant freedom of religious worship). He felt that his fourth concept, "toleration of necessity", was irrelevant to the discussion, as it concerned a toleration when the magistrate was coerced. The only toleration that this author permitted was his fifth type, that is, a "toleration of charity", given freely by the magistrate

1. Anon, The Ancient Bounds, p.67-

in the hope of eventually uniting the dissidents to the national church, and allowable only as far as it did not destroy the established form of church government.¹ Adam Stewart added yet another kind of toleration, the "toleration of indifferent matters", that were not forbidden by law.² To add to the confusion, John Dury believed that a "toleration of charity" (which he called a toleration of forbearance), or a "toleration of necessity" (which he called a toleration of connivance) were both acceptable, but not a "toleration of approbation", that is a toleration in which the magistrate actively commended the allowed opinion.³

What sort of a toleration, then, did the Independents seek? Although Dury did not believe it, by 1645 the Independents had relinquished the hope of a toleration of approbation. They really sought a toleration of charity, whereby they could live and worship peaceably outside the national church, incurring no civil penalties as long as they caused no civil disturbances. This toleration would be "public"⁴ in so far as their churches would be openly allowed, not merely a "private" toleration by which their churches were forbidden but individuals permitted to live without harassment. Despite Edwards' claim that

1. Anon, Wholsome Severity reconciled with Christian Liberty, 8 January 1644-5, pp.30-1, E.24(5).

2. A. Stewart, Zerubbabel to Sanballat and Tobiah, p.68. He left vague the question as to whether this law was ecclesiastical or civil.

3. J. Dury's reply to H. Robinson, in Some Few Considerations Propounded, 8 July 1646, p.12, E.345(1).

4. See above, p.211.

Thomas Goodwin had explained that Independents would not expect civil preferment under such a toleration, this was not the case.¹ But to secure this toleration of charity, many Independents employed arguments for a toleration of policy, (claiming that toleration would increase trade for England as it had for Holland), and for a toleration of equity, (believing that all men had certain inalienable rights, of which freedom of conscience was one). Some also claimed that since Presbyterians and Independents differed only slightly, the toleration might be one of "indifferent matters". The Presbyterians, of course, feared that with the increasing strength of the army, a toleration might be viewed by Parliament as a toleration of necessity, and to obviate this, Presbyterians challenged Parliament to guard against a toleration of indifference, an inexcusable sin in a Christian magistracy.

Moreover, the extent of toleration desired by Independents was still left very indefinite, with the Apologists deliberately obscuring their position. Hezekiah Woodward specified that toleration was to be strictly limited to Independents, whereas most Independents would follow the position of "The Ancient Bounds", and desire liberty for all believers in the fundamentals of Christianity, which would exclude "manifest errors and dangerous scandals" such as Arianism, Socinianism,

1. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, 28 December 1646, p.181, E.368(5). The Independents would not expect their ministers to receive public preferment, but they would not wish for laymen to be denied state offices.

and Familism.¹ One Baptist decided that Independents and Anabaptists could be tolerated, but no others, since all other persuasions concerned differences of doctrine, not of government.² Even John Goodwin could not extend his radical ideas on toleration to Papists, as "their very principles opposeth the secular power, they differ in fundamentalls, and are properly another Religion".³ Yet the logic of Independent arguments drew many radicals like Goodwin near to advocating an absolute freedom of conscience, and tracts like "John the Baptist, forerunner of Christ [Jesus]", would certainly have expected separatists to be included in a toleration.

Amidst such confusions, the various arguments for and against liberty of conscience were propounded. The most frequent appeals for such freedom were made in the name of "Christian Liberty", a dogma much taken out of context.⁴ The Independents tended to see "Christian liberty" as proving that Christ alone was lord of the conscience. John Goodwin commented that in their attempts to subjugate their brethren,

1. H. Woodward, Soft Answers Unto Hard Censures, p.11; Anon, The Ancient Bounds, pp.4,(quoted), 67. Arians, who originated in the fourth century, denied the consubstantiality of Christ; Familists referred to the mystical sect, The family of Love. For Socinians, see above, p.69 note 3.
2. C. Blackwood, The Storming of Antichrist, 28 December 1644, p.29, E.22(15). Most Independents would not have shared his view that baptism was an issue of church government.
3. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, p.45.
4. "Christian Liberty" was the theological doctrine whereby Christ freed his believers from the restrictions of the old Mosaic Ceremonial and Moral Law. The "liberty" given was a liberty born of obedience to Christ, and was in no way to be interpreted as freedom from any kind of authority except Christ. The doctrine could be summarised as "Deo parere libertas est"; to obey God is perfect freedom. See L.Wemocke, Beaten Oyle for the Lamps of the Sanctuarie ... some usefull observations touching Christian Libertie, 1641, E.163(14).

"Free men, Free Christians equall to themselves", the Presbyterians were "sacriledgious to God's bountifullnesse and long suffering".¹ Other advocates of toleration argued that the Independents would not, like Esau, sell their birthright of Christian Liberty for "a messe of potage",² for

"'twas the Lord of life who with the price of his owne blood redeemed us from death, and purchased for us freedome not to be subject unto men, further then we can concurre with our owne consciences and judgements".³

Robinson even suggested that as Christ had purchased the saints' liberties, no civil government could part men from them, not even if civil misdemeanours had been committed.⁴

Presbyterians were anxious to show the Independents that they were wrong to assume that Christ had liberated men from the lawful authority of the Christian magistrate and the established church;

"It is no wayes repugnant to, but very consistent with Christian liberty, to be obliged to obey al honest, just, necessary Lawes, all decent, and convenient things which may advance God's glory, worship, the peace, weele or prosperity of Church, State, our own felicity, and are consonant not repugnant to God's Law".⁵

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1. J. Goodwin, A Short Answer to A.S., p.19.
 2. Anon, A Paraenetick ... for ... Christian Libertie, p.3.
 3. Anon, John the Baptist, forerunner of Christ Jesus, p.23.
 4. H. Robinson, Some Few Considerations Propounded, p.4.
 5. W. Prynne, Truth Triumphant over Falshood, p.12.

John Dury stressed that Christ's liberty was given for edification, not so that his followers could destroy each other.¹

But whether "Christian Liberty" was invoked or not, nothing could assail the Independents' belief in the supremacy of the conscience. John Goodwin insisted that this freedom was absolute, and not conditional on the righteousness of the compeller or of the conscience concerned;

"a man is not bound in conscience to doe any thing that is commanded, though both the authority whereby it is commanded, yea and the thing it selfe which is commanded, be never so lawfull, whilst his judgement and conscience remain considerably doubtfull ... yea, though the grounds of such a doubt or determination bee never so insufficient and weake".²

Never mind if this prove inconvenient to the State, for "Better a thousand men inconvenienced in their temporalls, then one righteous soul wounded in his spiritualls".³ To require a man to practice a way of worship before he realised it to be God's will, was, Goodwin stressed, "to require more then God requires, who would have every man practise according to his light".⁴ A good intention would please God, even if its practise was erroneous, for as Robinson added,

"how can God be angry with me for serving him to my power? or how can man condemne me for differing from him, when I have used all such rationally common principles which he could prescribe to bring me to be of this opinion, without prevailing upon my conscience?"⁵

1. J. Dury's reply to H. Robinson, Some Few Considerations Propounded, p.21. John Brinsley agreed that Christian liberty could never be a cloak for licentiousness, but seemed a little vague himself, and argued that consciences would be set free "from all obligations and bounds, save only such as God himself shall impose". J. Brinsley, The Sacred and Sovereigne Church-Remedie, 17 February 1644-5, pp.28-9, E.269(27).

2. J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, p.22.

3. Ibid., p.39.

4. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, p.19.

5. H. Robinson, Some Few Considerations Propounded, p.8.

However, most apologists for toleration on these grounds did stress with Hezekiah Woodward that a conscience must remain peaceable and not display "evill effects" else it would be liable to civil penalties - but the penalties would be for the effects, not the conscience.¹

The problem was that most Presbyterians viewed any lack of national religious unity as an evil consequence of liberty of conscience. They conceived that the Independents' arguments must logically encourage all kinds of heresies and anti-christian activities, which were already taking cover under the disguise of Independents, "it being an ordinary thing among the wicked, to disguise themselves under the name of such, that are reputed to bee more sincere then themselves".² No wonder moderate Independents left the limits of their toleration vague when they realised that attempts to refute the charge of encouraging heresy and licentiousness must negate their own principles of the supremacy of the human conscience. But Presbyterians felt that it was better to have no toleration at all than one that would prove difficult to limit. As Christ had one body, so the Church must be one united entity.³ They

1. H. Woodward, Soft Answers Unto Hard Censures, p.11.

2. D.P.P., An Antidote against the Contagious Air of Independency, p .12.

3. R. Byfield, Temple-Defilers Defiled, 1645, p.30, E.278(20).

too invoked conscience to their aid, for were they not bound to maintain Presbytery, the practice of the Apostles?¹ Certainly, said Stewart, Presbyterians should try to convince an erroneous conscience, but if that soul persisted in error, it must be suppressed as pernicious.² As Cornelius Burges declared to the Commons;

"Is it persecution and Anti-christianisme to engage all to Unity and Uniformity ... O Heavens! be astonished at this ... such a Toleration ... none but vain destructive Thoughts of carnall men can look upon, without indignation and horror".³

Moderate Presbyterians did insist that some concessions could be made to a genuine conscience; indeed, David Buchanan believed Presbyterians erred "towards lenity rather than austerity".⁴ Edmund Calamy, whilst warning against an "illimited toleration of all Religions", stressed that unity must be achieved in a Scriptural way without tyrannising the conscience, and Simeon Ashe agreed.⁵ Similarly, Robert Harris denounced factions but refused to quarrel with men who truly and conscientiously sought after more light, and even Samuel Rutherford did not "intend the bloody sword should bee drawne against every different opinion holden by the truely godly".⁶

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1. J. Vicars, The Picture of Independency, p.12.
 2. J. Goodwin, A Short Answer to A.S., p.10, quoting Stewart, Goodwin retorted: "How know you which is God's house for convincing of a man?"
 3. C. Burges, The second Sermon preached to the Honourable House of Commons, 30 April 1645, pp.51,54. E.280(2).
 4. D. Buchanan, A Short and True Relation, p.87.
 5. E. Calamy, An Indictment against England because of her selfe-murdering Divisions, sermon to the Lords, 25 December 1644, pp.26,38, E.23(5); S. Ashe, The Church Sinking Saved by Christ, sermon to the Lords, 26 February 1644-5, p.32, E.277(I).
 6. R. Harris (Assembly member), True Religion in the Old Way of Piety and Charity, sermon to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London, April 1645, preface to reader, E.277(4); S. Rutherford, A Sermon preached before the House of Lords, 25 June 1645, p.34, E.289(11).

But the anonymous reviewer of John Lilburne typified many such views by arguing that a true conscience was one that

"is misled and in darknesse, yet willing to receive information and instruction, that it may be enlightened ... I must consider of conscience, as it looks upon truths, represented to it, to be errors, that such a conscience is none of God's deputy".¹

Such a restricted concept of a true conscience would have ruled out the Independents and any others who might not eventually have accepted Presbyterianism, for as Prynne explained, there was nothing in Presbytery "which any well-informed Conscience, can have cause to scruple at".² Most Presbyterians refused to stretch this definition of a true conscience, for they felt it was otherwise all too easy for a deceitful, corrupt conscience to masquerade as genuinely scrupulous. Even the moderate William Constantine urged that certain principles should be applied to distinguish "exorbitancies in the exercise of conscience" from truly meek consciences.³ Independents themselves implied that this was necessary, but as Caryl observed, Parliament was wise enough to "easily finde and discerne the limit-stone, between liberty and libertinisme,

1. Anon., A Review of a Certain Pamphlet under the name of one John Lilburne, p.5.

2. W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandering Blasing Stars, preface, sig.A3 verso.

3. W. Constantine, The Second Part of the Interest of England Considered, 1 May 1645, p.56, E.281(1). Constantine was a moderate Presbyterian who advocated a substantial toleration. John Maynard in his sermon to the Commons suggested that the public should be able to go to Independent churches to prove the members were sincere Christians. A Sermon preached to the Honourable House of Commons, 26 February 1644-5, p.30, E.277(2).

between the humours of men and their consciences".¹ Yet although Caryl warned that it was better to spare some false consciences than afflict any of the faithful, most Presbyterians argued conversely that it was better to spare no conscience than risk perverting others.

Independents argued cogently that the uniformity so urged by most Presbyterians was not to be equated with true unity, which presupposed a forbearance of brethren in love. Uniformity was the sin of the Bishops, and ought to die with them. Certainly, continued the author of "The Ancient Bounds", truth was uniform and indivisible, and known to Christ. But who on earth could presume to know the full extent of that truth?

"I know there is but one truth; but this truth cannot be so easily brought forth without this liberty; and a generall restraint, though intended but for errors, yet through the unskilfulnesse of men, may fall upon the truth".²

John Goodwin knew that uniformity could not be expected in this world, "for as long as men have reason in them, and a free understanding, there will be different apprehensions of things".³ Another pamphleteer reminded readers that

"none of us are so perfectly acquainted with one truth that he needs^{no} further light about the same ... they ought therefore to here on(e) another patiently, and to beare with one another kindly".⁴

1. J. Caryl, The Arraignment of Unbelief, p.47. See also Anon, The Ancient Bounds, pp.2-3.

2. Anon, The Ancient Bounds, preface(quoted), pp.61-2. See also J. Goodwin, A Short Answer to A.S., quoted in the frontispiece to this chapter.

3. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, p.43.

4. I.P., Unity our Duty, p.4.

Henry Robinson thought that persecution kept more souls from knowledge of truth than any differences over discipline or doctrine.¹ Independents generally agreed that the sword of the spirit, not the sword of persecution, must discern truth.² But whilst the Presbyterian Samuel Rutherford accepted that persecution would not achieve truth, he could not agree that the answer must be liberty of conscience.³ The Presbyterians put their faith in synods as the most likely way to achieve truth, and were appalled when the Independents retorted that even a synod was not the Lord of men's faith.⁴ Some were very harsh to Independent pleas for the preservation of the truth by such freedom. Adam Stewart declared that truths apparent to the Church did not have to be altered at the whim of every sect that happened along, and Bastwick thought that such crafty logic that truth could only be achieved through toleration was worthy of the devil himself. As if the Independents were really interested in truth! For

1. H. Robinson, Some Few Considerations Propounded, p.9.

2. E.g. J. Goodwin, Theomachia, p.34.

3. S. Rutherford, A Sermon preached before the House of Lords, pp.32-3.

4. Stewart stressed that majority verdicts of synods (particularly the Westminster Assembly) must be binding on all, but Independents refused to concur. Henry Robinson, however, did insist that Independents would seek liberty of conscience only when a synod erred. A. Stewart, Zerubbabel to Sanballat and Tobiah, p.60; H. Burton, A Vindication of Churches commonly called Independent, p.12; H. Robinson, The Falsehood of Mr. William Pryn's "Truth Triumphant", p.23.

"I have very good reason to believe that they contend not for truth, but for victory, and to make a faction and division in Church and State".¹

Despite the fact that some friends of the Independents derived comfort from the reflection that persecution was a symbol of the true church,² Independents stressed that persecution would make the Presbyterians worse than the Bishops, for "slaves usually are (more violent) when they become masters".³ Bastwick was shocked to find that the Independents were exasperating the people against the Presbyterians by calling them "Esau and Persecutors".⁴ The caricature of the Presbyterians as persecuting monsters of depravity was exaggerated to effect in the grotesque satires of Martin Marpriest. But the Presbyterians were not convinced that persecution was infallible proof of righteousness,⁵ and perceived a great tyranny in the Independent system. Baillie thought Episcopacy and Independency flowed from the same fountain, whilst D.P.P. feared that it would be Independency that proved worse than the Bishops since "if the new way should take place we should have many thousand petty tyrants, domineering over their congregations".⁶ The Independents then

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1. A. Stewart, Zerubbabel to Sanballat and Tobiah, p.49; J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II, preface and p.47(quoted).
 2. H. Woodward, Soft Answers Unto Hard Censures, p.12.
 3. Anon, The Compassionate Samaritane, p.17. (For this work see above, p.274 note 2.)
 4. J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II, p.69. Christopher Love, in his sermon at Uxbridge, condemned those who portrayed the Westminster Assembly as "the limbs of Antichrist, to carry on them the mark of the Beast, that they will be as bad as the Bishops"; C. Love England's Distemper, having Division and Error, as its Cause, preached 30 January 1644, p.39, E.274(15).
 5. Anon, A Review of a Certain Pamphlet under the name of one John Lilburne, p.5.

(cont'd overleaf).

became even more vindictive, claiming that persecution would feather the Presbyterians' nests, whilst the Independents followed their consciences to their own disadvantage;

"the Presbyterians here, which stand upon their pantofles, enjoying all accommodations, may easier be supposed to keep their dispised brethren of the Independent way to such hard taske and measure, to gratifie their private interests".¹

Yet the Presbyterian David Buchanan retorted that "there was never a generation, among men, so nimble and so active about preferment and benefit, as those men are" (i.e. the Independents).²

A convincing argument for toleration was that the points disputed between Presbyterians and Independents were "indifferent" matters, which could safely be left to the individual conscience. But logically the Independents could not argue that their cavils about Presbyterianism were unimportant enough to merit toleration, but important enough to destroy unity within a national church. Dury told Robinson that he and the Apologists should make a public statement to clarify whether the differences were indifferent, since some Presbyterians felt them to be "wholly fundamentall and utterly destructive to the

6. cont'd. R. Baillie, Errours and Induration are the Great Sins and the Great Judgements of the Time, p.35; D.P.P., An Antidote against the Contagious Air of Independency, p.16.
 1. H. Robinson, Some Few Considerations Propounded, p.3; see also Anon, The Arraignement of Mr. Persecution, sig. A5.
 2. D. Buchanan, A Short and True Relation, p.86.

constitution of Churches in the Communion of Saints".¹ The Presbyterians were, however, just as confused as their opponents. Both John Vicars and the reviewer of John Lilburne stated that the differences were not matters essential to salvation, but Vicars had changed his mind by 1647, when he wrote that toleration was so fundamental a difference between Presbyterians and Independents that it would destroy religion entirely.² Both groups also charged each other with potentially adopting a different stance in different circumstances; whilst the Independents claimed that if congregationalism was the national religion, the Presbyterians would seek a toleration,³ the Presbyterians retorted that in that case, the Independents would favour uniformity! New England was still invariably cited to prove the Presbyterians' point, although whilst some opinions were persecuted there,⁴ the Presbyterian churches were allowed to remain by the Cambridge Platform, so that Independents could "convince their brethren of their sinful defects, and duly wait for their reformation".⁵ Yet Baillie still thought that there was "In all New England, no liberty of living for a Presbyterian".⁶

1. J. Dury's reply to H. Robinson, Some Few Considerations Propounded, p.18.

2. Anon, A Review of a Certain Pamphlet under the name of one John Lilburne, p.6; J. Vicars, The Picture of Independency, p.14, compared with his later Coleman Street Conclave Visited, 21 March 1647-8, preface, E.433(6).

3. Anon, A Helpe to the Right Understanding of a Discourse Concerning Independency, lately published by William Prynne, p.4.

4. Thomas Shepard's account of the sins against conscience punished in New England received Cranford's licence; T. Shepard, New England's Lamentation for Old England's present Errours and Divisions, 22 March 1644-5, E.274(18).

5. Williston Walker, The Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism, (New York, 1893), p.198. The synod first called in 1646 to defend New England practice against English Presbyterians produced the

Many were the Presbyterian voices which proclaimed that toleration of any kind of schism was a danger both to Christ's church and the civil state. Sedgwick called it

"a mocking of God himself, such a speedy Grave for the Kingdome and Church that mischief it selfe could not easily digge the like; Such a spirit to revive Arrianisme, Pelagianisme, the Turkish Alcoran, the Popish Hoast, etc".¹

William Goode warned the Commons that this would undo the Reformation; "You have carried out the dust behinde the door, and this opinion would bring all the mire in the streets unto the House of God again".² Whilst both Sedgwick and Goode were referring to a general toleration, Presbyterians feared that Independency encouraged this. The Independents could only make relatively weak replies to the charge of schism, and John Goodwin was hard pressed to defend one statement of his that congregationalism must in time overthrow all other ecclesiastical governments, which Prynne duly deduced to be highly schismatical.³ Taking refuge in obscurity Goodwin claimed he was speaking in a mystical sense, and denied the charge that Independency would open the door to heresy and chaos.

5. cont'd. Cambridge Platform by 1648. New England's Presbyterians had supported the Vassal petition against New England magistracy and church discipline, and this petition produced a pamphlet controversy in England in 1647. John Child, the brother of a petitioner, charged New England with ostracising Presbyterians in New England's Jonas Cast up at London, 15 April 1647, E.384(5). This was refuted by E. Winslow, New England's Salamander Discovered, 29 May 1647, E.390(8). See also J. Winthrop, The History of New England, vol.ii, pp.288,304,312,319, 340, 391.

6. Baillie, ii,3.

1. O. Sedgwick, An Arke Against a Deluge, sermon to the Commons, 22 October 1644, pp.29-30. E.17(18).

2. W. Goode, The Discoverie of a Publique Spirit, sermon to the Commons, 26 March 1645, p.30, E.279(4). See also H. Scudder, God's Warning to England, sermon to the Commons, 30 October 1644, pp.28-9, E.18(20).

3. W. Prynne, A Full reply, p.8, quoting J. Goodwin, M.S. to A.S., (second edition), p.111.

How could it be schismatical to separate from the Presbyterian church, to which Independents had never been united?¹

Independency would not harm the national church; "the gleanings of Independency ... will not hinder the vintage of Presbytery".² David Buchanan could not agree, for he felt that passive hostility was as bad as active disobedience.³

Perhaps the cleverest argument was that of John Saltmarsh who was later to claim that Presbytery, not Independency, was the greatest schism of all time, for "What is a Presbytery over Congregations or a Congregation but a Church gathered out of a Church".⁴ But in the end Independents relied on the plea that their way could not be schism, as it was the true way of God.⁵ No opinion should be denounced as schismatical unless it could be definitely proved that it did not originate from God, for

"It is impossible to prescribe such a way for suppressing new or different opinions whatsoever, which to any State or Church may seeme hereticall, but there will still be left a gap, a possibility of fighting against God; even when such State or Church thinke they fight for him most of all".⁶

1. J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, pp. 13, 24, 33-4.

2. J. Goodwin, Theomachia, p.23; see also J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, p.21.

3. D. Buchanan, A Short and True Relation, pp.65-6.

4. J. Saltmarsh, The Smoke in the Temple, 16 January 1645-6, p.62, E.316(14).

5. Robinson felt it was one of the true ways, whereas Dury said that there could be only one way to salvation! See H. Robinson, Some Few Considerations Propounded, pp.2, 14-5.

6. H. Robinson, The Falsehood of Mr. William Pryn's "Truth Triumphant", preface. See also J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, pp.34-6.

Bastwick thought such reasoning impious and ridiculous, and warned Parliament not "to be deterred from their duties by such poor cavils as these".¹

As in earlier pamphlets,² the charge of schism provoked the inevitable complaint that the Independents had violated the Covenant; Prynne moaned that not only did many Independents claim exemption from the Covenant, but others entered into anti-covenants to destroy the national church.³ In defence, the Independents reiterated their belief that the Covenant permitted different interpretations, "without which liberty, . . . many thousands would have refused it".⁴ The Covenant certainly did not force men to adjure the absolute monarchical power of Christ over the conscience!⁵ Such points were to recur long after 1645, the Independents counterarguing that it was the Presbyterians who were really breaking the Covenant by ensnaring tender consciences and banishing true godliness from England, when there was no word in the Covenant "that looks towards such a thing, as a rigid, fierce, biting, devouring, persecuting Presbytery".⁶

1. J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II, preface, sig.b3.

2. See above, pp.208-9.

3. W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandering-Blasing Stars, p.17. Prynne was referring to the Independent church covenants! Some soldiers were refusing the Covenant, see above, pp.351-2. In the debate on ordination held privately at Worcester House, Vane had objected to the clause in the ordination bill that required ministers to subscribe to the Covenant, Baillie, ii,67.

4. J. Goodwin, Innocencie's Triumph, p.5.

5. J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, p.10.

6. J. Price, The Pulpit Incendiary, 4 May 1648, p.25, E.438(10). This pamphlet gives an excellent interpretation of the Independents' construction of the Covenant.

In presenting a toleration in religion as potentially dangerous to the civil state, the Presbyterians were employing an

"old Method ... to present them (i.e. God's saints) to the world as factious, Schismaticall underminers, of States & Kingdomes ... it will have a rewarde allsoe in the wrath & displeasure of the allmightye".¹

Whilst Independents acknowledged that God's saints must not disrupt civil harmony,² they denied that the magistrate could persecute them for fear that they might. For the liberties of saints and subjects were different,³ and if the saints were peaceable citizens, it was not God's will that their consciences should be fettered. Christ shunned compulsion in the battle for his Gospel;

"returne into the scabberd, says he to the Magistrates sword, I will have none of thee to cut the way for my truth, through woods and rocks, and mauntaines, through stony hearts and implicated reasonings. Not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord".⁴

If he persecuted the saints a magistrate would bear the guilt of executing the innocent, as would any churchman cooperating with him, declared John Goodwin.⁵ The civil powers would not find Independency any more likely to endanger the State than Presbytery, for

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1. Letter from Godfrey to Prynne, P.R.O. S.P. 16/503, f.3.
 2. This would include not actively striving against a national church. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, p.36.
 3. Ibid., p.23.
 4. Anon, The Ancient Bounds, p.41.
 5. J. Goodwin, A Short Answer to A.S., pp.9-10.

"The State gives not Presbytery any power but that it supposeth it is able to restrain and overtop them if they offend, and grow insolent; and it may on the same consideration give a toleration unto others, knowing that when ever it breaks out, it can soon check and bind them".¹

Such references to the "jure divino" Presbyterians' own restricted concept of magisterial authority were not unmerited; Adam Stewart even claimed that the State had no authority to tolerate a new religion!²

If civil chaos resulted from toleration, then the magistrate could punish its perpetrators with civil (not religious) penalties. The Independents agreed with this, but vehemently denied the Presbyterian insinuations that Independency would ruin the country and "un-King, un)parliament, un-church, un-nation them altogether".³ Both Prynne and Bastwick were convinced that the Independents were conspiring to overthrow Parliament and butcher all their opponents.⁴ John Ward though the Independents really intended complete anarchy in the state, "licentiousnesse ... that every man may do what is good and right in his owne eyes".⁵ Prynne envisaged their encouragement of all kinds of intolerable outrages, such as wives disobeying their husbands, children their parents, and servants their masters.⁶ John Dury was a great deal more

1. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, p.50.

2. Stewart's arguments were quoted and refuted by J. Goodwin, A Short Answer to A.S., p.25.

3. W. Prynne, a Full Reply, p.8.

4. W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring-Blasing Stars, preface, sig.A; J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II, preface, sig. d2 verso.

5. J. Ward, God Judging among the Gods, sermon to the Commons, 26 March, p.26, E.279(5).

6. W. Prynne, Truth Triumphant over Falshood, p116.

charitable; he admitted that it was only a possibility, not a certainty, that religious divisions would presuppose civil disorder.¹ Such threats of civil revolution were decried by Independents as a deliberate political weapon to mould the ignorance of the vulgar populace; these

"predictions (or pretences rather) ... are but a kind of politique agents sent forth to negotiate their Cause with the ignorance and simplicity of the generality of men; who being indifferent for matter of Church-government, but of firmly-resolv'd judgements to keep themselves as far from all that which is called trouble or disturbances as possible, they can ... so are made Proselytes of a zealous inspiration for the Classique Consistory".²

Liberty, not persecution would be the true way to achieve peace and prosperity in a country, as Holland had learned.³ For where the government respected all peaceable religious men alike, "there all sorts of judgements cannot but love the government, and esteem nothing too pretious to spend in defence thereof".⁴ Robinson believed that indeed there could be no secure peace in any province, city or town as long as persecution prevailed, since

"Such whose Religion teaches to persecute ... will easily be carried on from one degree unto another, untill their ends be compassed, whether by fire or water, Gun-powder-plots, or Maritim Invasions".⁵

1. J. Dury's reply to H. Robinson, Some Few Considerations, Propounded.

2. J. Goodwin, Innocency and Truth Triumphant Together, p.59. Goodwin added that the frequent differences of opinion in parish vestries did not seem to shake England's stability. Ibid., p.40.

3. The Independents were fond of quoting the example of Holland, especially Henry Robinson, a merchant. John Goodwin argued that England already tolerated merchants of varying opinions! A Short Answer to A.S., p.2.

4. Anon, A Helpe to the Right Understanding of a Discourse Concerning Independency, lately published by William Prynne, p.7.

5. H. Robinson, The Falsehood of Mr. William Pryn's "Truth Triumphant", preface and p.10(quoted).

The Independents continued this more positive secular line of arguing for toleration. Surely Parliament would not deny the Independents their share of the common liberties for which the war had been fought? Were not Independents as free born as the Presbyterians, asked Goodwin?¹ Persecution would be an ill reward for all the loyalty and love expressed by Independents to Parliament and shown in the loss of their estates, livelihood, and blood.² Just in case Parliament might fall into temptation however, blackmail was always a useful weapon. Although they had claimed to be so public-spirited that "no assay of the Synod can make them cease to love and assist their Countrey".³ the Independents hinted that they might be forced to desert the Parliament. Lilburne feared that Prynne's writings might cause "a faithfull, conscientious, and considerable party in the Army and Kingdome ... to lay downe their Armes ... an advantage to none but the common Enemy".⁴ Another pamphleteer thought that this was already starting to happen!⁵ One author reasoned that unless the Independents were tolerated now, they would conclude that only a need of their present service was delaying their persecution, and regard the King's offer of liberty of conscience very favourably.⁶ The Presbyterians thought little

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1. J. Goodwin, A Moderate Answer, p.41. It is interesting to see that such "Leveller" arguments were already being applied to the religious controversy. The "Free-born" argument was used in the radical Marpriest tracts, e.g. Martins Echo, p.4.
 2. Anon, The Cleere Sense, 8 May 1645, p.9, E.282)8).
 3. Anon, The Compassionate Samaritane, p.45.
 4. J. Lilburne, The Reasons of Lieu-Col. Lilbourne's sending his letter to Mr. Prin, p.6.
 5. Anon, A Helpe to the Right Understanding of a Discourse Concerning Independency, lately published by William Prynne, p.3
 6. Anon, Certaine Scruples and Doubts of Conscience, 20 January 1644-5, p.15, E.25(11).

of such threats, but were afraid that Parliament might heed them. Bastwick claimed that such intimidation proved beyond a doubt that the Independents were only fighting for their own ends, and joined Prynne and Buchanan in counselling M.P.s not to be deterred from executing justice on schismatics. For

"if things were tryed, it should be found that their number is far short of what is said of it, and their affection to the publike lesse; for I shall never beleieve, that those who are for confusion in the Church, are for the settled ordering of the State." 1

False Hopes and Fair Words: The Voice of Moderates.

In 1644-5 and later the voices of hostile pamphleteers should not drown those moderates who hoped and prayed that accommodation could be achieved, even at this late stage. But it must be remembered that "accommodation" was largely a different concept to Presbyterians and Independents, and that many Presbyterians saw it in terms the Independents deduced to be little different from uniformity. One Presbyterian, in urging the Apologists to seek accommodation with the Presbyterians rather than a separation with the sects, defined it thus;

"By accommodation I understand an agreement of dissenters with the rest of the Church in practical conclusions, so that if any difference be, it is in their principles, not in their practices, and so not obvious, apparent and scandalous to people ..." 2

1. J. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part II, pp.38-9; W. Prynne, A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandering-Blasing Stars, preface, sig.A3; D. Buchanan, A Short and True Relation, p.67(quoted).

2. Anon, Wholsome Severity reconciled with Christian Liberty, 8 January 1644-5, p.36, E.24(5). The author was still willing to consider toleration, if all else failed.

However, a few Presbyterians could approach the Independent view of accommodation (i.e. freedom for their churches to exist outside the parochial structure), though some imposed restrictions;

"To suffer them in their Church-way, where they live together, I should never oppose; but to suffer them to gather Churches out of our Churches ... is not tolerable".¹

Others implied a liberal interpretation of accommodation whilst avoiding details as to how this would be organised. Thomas Hill decided that the Scriptures must be searched for the latitude permissible in the "one true way of Religion", so that Presbytery and Independency could be reconciled in a system.

"wherein the Presbytery shall have so much power as will helpe to bound the Liberty of the People, and withall the interest of the People bee maintained in such a manner as may best ballance the power of the Presbytery".²

Most moderates in fact contented themselves with rhetorical language in the hopes that words alone could achieve a unity. George Wither even took to epic poetry to express his sentiments

"So in the Church true comlinessse may be,
And Union, without uniformitie".³

Hezekiah Woodward professed that only the vulgar differentiated

1. Anon, Anti-Machiavell, Or Honesty against Policy, 3 July 1647, p.9, E.396(16).

2. T. Hill, The Season for England's Selfe-Reflection and Advancing Temple-Work, 13 August 1644, p.34, E.6(7) and T. Hill, The Right Separation Incouraged, 27 November 1644, p.31(quoted) E.23(1). Others who thought that the Independents could be borne with in the national system (at least in 1644) were Anthony Burges, The Magistrates Commission from Heaven, 28 September 1644, p.10, E.14(18) and John Brinsley, The Sacred and Sovereigne Church Remedie, 17 February 1644-5, p.51, E.269 (27). Herbert Palmer hinted at some concessions to Independents in The Glasse of God's Providence, 13 August 1644, p.56, E.6(8).

3. G. Wither, Vax Pacifica, August 1645, p.131, E.1242. Religious issues inevitably crept into poetry at this time.

between Presbyterians and Independents;

"they will accord, meete and kisse each other ... God will use all this to bring His people to a unity againe, of one love, one faith, one heart, one judgement; and then, they will be all of one lip, Amen".¹

But even moderates were more optimistic before the open dissent of the Independents.

After 1645, a few practical suggestions did accompany the idealistic phraseology of moderate pamphleteers, but, not surprisingly, they were mostly Independent-inspired.² However, one Presbyterian, Edward Bowles, believed that the difference over synodical power

"will finde more dispute in notion then opposition in action, I should wave both the debates of jus divinum in Presbyteries, and the authority of Assemblies, and remit things to the practice".³

One pamphleteer thought that the ministers should compromise on a government somewhere between Presbytery and Independency and set this out clearly in writing.⁴ John Saltmarsh believed

1. H. Woodward, A Short Letter, pp.4,22.

2. Various schemes of wider evangelical unity were also proposed by John Dury, Philip Freher and Samuel Hartlib.

3. E. Bowles, Manifest Truths, 4 July 1646, p.71, E.343(1). Bowles, a moderate Presbyterian with congregational sympathies, and son of the Assembly-member Oliver Bowles, played a vital part in the Restoration and was called "the Patriarch of the North" by Morley. (Bowles was a Yorkshire minister). Yule is wrong to call him an Independent (G.Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, p.150). For Bowles see T. Gray, "Rev. Edward Bowles 1617-1662", Journal of Presb. Hist. Soc. V (1933), and G.R. Abernathy, "The English Presbyterians and the Stuart Restoration, 1648-1663", Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, new series, LV part 2 (1965) p.66.

Bowles' statement about synodical authority, which is similar to one made by Edwards in 1641, meant that since Independents accepted synodical advice, disputes over their authority might well be avoided in practice.

4. Anon, A Word in Season: or Motives to Peace, Accommodation and Unity, 'twixt Presbyterian and Independent Brethren,

5 January 1645-6, p.2, E.314(18).

that banning anonymous pamphlets and allowing free debates might help a peaceful settlement,¹ while Hugh Peter felt that punishment should be given to anyone speaking against Presbytery or Independency without a full knowledge of the distinction between them. He later proposed the establishment of a committee of unity in each county.² Samuel Hartlib proposed a non-compulsory national church with an advisory department to try and effect unity.³ Jeremiah Burroughes, always the most moderate Apologist, believed that congregationalists should allow non-members to some ordinances, and gather churches only when forced to practice things against their conscience;

"Men must not separate from a Church, though there be corruption in it, to gather into a new Church which may be more pure, and in some respects more comfortable".⁴

In 1647 some London citizens suggested an Erastian scheme that was an effectual compromise between Presbytery, Independency, and moderate Episcopacy, which permitted the gathering of churches as long as no families were divided.⁵ Perhaps the most interesting scheme was devised by John Owen, who proposed the continuation of the parochial system, but that within each combination of parishes inside a ten-mile radius,

1. J. Saltmarsh, The Smoke in the Temple, 16 January 1645, p.3, E.316(14).

2. H. Peter, Mr. Peters Last Report of the English Ward, 27 August 1646, p.8, E.351(12); R.P. Stearns, The Strenuous Puritan, p.307.

3. S. Hartlib, Considerations tending to the happy accomplishment of England's Reformation, May 1647, p.47, E.389(4).

4. J. Burroughes, Irenicum, 24 October 1645, p.163, E.306(9). Burroughes supported the orderly, not disorderly gathering of churches.

5. An Humble Remonstrance, 27 July 1647 (a time when the army threatened London), E.400(8).

a church of visible saints could be gathered according to the congregational way.¹ In practice however, the only scheme of accommodation that the Presbyterians would consider (and then only as a last resort) was that the Independents could be excused attendance at the Lord's Supper in the parish church if they worshipped there on all other occasions.²

But although hopes for accommodation persisted after 1645, they were not realistic, as the failure of the committee of accommodation revealed. The frustration of all the hopes of moderates was expressed by a later writer who seriously suggested that a lottery between Presbytery, Independency and Episcopacy might be the one way God could indicate his choice.³ For vituperation between Presbyterians and Independents had, by 1645, reached such a pitch that many observers believed religion had been sacrificed to a desire for temporal supremacy. A Presbyterian claimed that Independents were "bypast with politique ends and ayms in a larger measure than with Truth, and the Churches peace".⁴ I.P. agreed that the dispute was "of policie, not of divinity, and is it policie for the Saints to ruine one another?"⁵ Moderates begged both

1. J. Owen, A Vision of Unchangeable Free Mercy, 29 April 1646, pp.59-61, E.334(15).

2. See below, p.468.

3. Anon, Vox Turturis, 13 July 1647, pp.35-47, E.518(4).

4. Anon, A Review of a Certain Pamphlet under the name of one John Lilburne, p.6.

5. I.P., Unity Our Duty, p.7.

parties, like Jacob, to seek spiritual, not temporal rewards, for at the Judgement Day

"There shall be no more mention of these differing and distinguishing titles ... Certainly there is a grave a digging for all these, wherein they shall be buried in everlasting forgetfulness".¹

But attempts at accommodation would be lost in the abyss of mutual distrust and rivalry between the two parties. The pamphlet literature of 1644-5, with its increasing confusion of sectary and Independent and its vehement toleration debate could only amplify the Assembly proceedings to show that accommodation was not at all likely. No wonder Samuel Hudson feared

"that when the breaches of the commonwealth shall be closed, the breaches in the Church may grow wider ... which having seized upon the understandings and consciences of men cannot be composed by commands nor clubbed down by force".²

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1. J. Brinsley, The Sacred and Sovereign Church Remedie, p.49.
 2. S. Hudson, The Essence and Unitie of the Church Catholike Visible, 8 March 1644-5, p.52, E.271(19).

Chapter Eight.THE FATAL DELAY: A YEAR OF ERASTIAN CHALLENGE
AND RESPONSE.August 1645 - August 1646.

"Surely this Nation is become like the womb of Rebekah ... there are some Jacobs amongst us, who instead of supplanting their brethren, will wrestle, and have power with God ... many overtures and endeavour of Accommodation have been tendered, and yet we cry out in our pangs ... neither have we wrought any deliverance in the earth".

E. Reynolds, Israel's Prayer in Time of Trouble,
5 August 1645, n.p., E.295(1).

"But this string was not harped upon till of late yeers. This opinion of denying of all Church-Government distinct from Civill".

F. Taylor, God's Covenant the Churches Plea,
29 October 1645, p.25, E.307(20).

"Those things which God himselfe ordaines for union (the Sacraments) are by mans corruption made the occasion of the greatest contention in the Christian world".

J. Burroughes, Irenicum,
24 October 1645, sig. A3, E.306(9).

"(Sectaries) have these three last yeares been encreasing and growing very bad, but this last yeare they have been outrageous ... they must be nourished and increase, Erastian principles must be maintained and cried up, prophanenesse let alone, open wicked men joynd with, and all to further Sectarisme and Liberty of Conscience so called".

T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III,
28 December 1646, pp.267,276, E.368(5).

Whereas the past year had witnessed the creation of Presbyterian church government, this year was to clearly establish the limitations of that government, and in their reactions to Erastian restrictions on the exercise of their discipline, the Presbyterians were to reveal the divergence among their ranks more clearly than ever. The term "rigid" Presbyterian, though used occasionally before,¹ now came into vogue, although its meaning could be variously interpreted. It was most commonly employed to refer to those divines who favoured a Scottish-type Presbytery and who were opposed to any toleration for Independents, and was used in this sense by Adam Martindale, Cornelius Burges and others.² It was to become increasingly synonymous with "extreme" Presbyterian, particularly after 1647, and was then used to distinguish the violent spirits from more moderate Presbyterians. Thus in 1647, John Cook divided Presbyterians into "rigid" and "godly" stigmatizing the rigid variety as fanatics of persecution, politicians whose every move was calculated to procure their own ambition, in contrast to godly presbyters who were truly religious (i.e. non-fanatical and non-avaricious).³ But since

1. Ogle used the word in 1643; G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, p.43. In 1644, Christopher Love condemned those who feared a "rigid Presbytery". C. Love, England's Distemper, 30 January 1644-5, p.39, E.274(15).

2. The Life of Adam Martindale, p.63; C. Burges The Necessity of Agreement with God, sermon to the Lords, 29 October 1645, preface, E.307(19).

3. J. Cook, Redintegratio Amoris, or a Union of Hearts, 27 August 1647, p.64, E.404(29). John Goodwin called these violent spirits the "High Presbyterians"; J. Goodwin, Hagiomastix, 5 February 1646-7, preface, E.374(1).

zealous, Scottish-type Presbyterians were those who most vigorously proclaimed "jure divino" theories, a "rigid" Presbyterian was also identified in contradistinction to an Erastian Presbyterian, although moderate "godly" Presbyterians could just as easily be non-Erastian. As one Presbyterian acknowledged, "By RIGED Presbyterians I suppose you mean those who assert a Jus Divinum for that government".¹ Other terms could be employed for the Erastian non-Erastian divisions - John Goodwin called them "secular" and "regular" Presbyterians.² But on the whole, "rigid" was employed to imply a "jure divino" supporter of the authority of presbyters in church affairs, and I have used it in this sense.

Independents and others were confused as to the precise issues in the Erastian controversy. One Norwich Independent thought it was a question as to whether Presbytery was authorised by the State or by God;

"Consider your own difference ... do not some plead for Presbytery under the Erastian nation (sic) as prudential and according to the Judgment of the State? others as jus Divinum and by the will and appoyntment of Jesus Christ".³

But the conflict between rigid and Erastian Presbyterians was more complex than this. The "jus divinum" claim was an attempt

1. Anon, The Pulpit Incendiary Anatomized, 13 May 1648, p.13, E.442(5).

2. J. Goodwin, Cretensis, 19 March 1645, p.20, E.328(22). Professor Yule has called non-Erastian Presbyterians "Melvillian"; G. Yule, "English Presbyterianism and the Westminster Assembly", The Reformed Theological Review XXXIII (1974) p.39.

3. Anon, Vox Populi, or the People's Cry against the Clergy, 25 August 1646, p.27, E.351(7).

to preserve full authority in church discipline for the church officers, and although this included the lay "presbyters" or elders as well as the ministers,¹ the opponents of rigid Presbytery claimed that it raised the spectre of clerical interference in the civil state along the lines of a revised Laudian Episcopacy, denounced by Milton as "New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large".² Not surprisingly, some Presbyterians decided that their concept of Presbytery was more in line with an ecclesiastical form of Parliamentarianism in the English anti-clerical tradition and supported the Erastians.

The Assembly, led by its prominent members, was to argue vigorously for the "jus divinum" of the power of church officers. E.W. Kirby has questioned the fact that the Assembly members (apart from the Erastian Coleman and Lightfoot) were united on the "jus divinum" issue, and cited Reynolds for one as believing no form of church government to be jure divino. But the truth of this argument depends on the precise interpretation afforded to the confused "jus divinum" claims.³ For there is a difference between accepting a form of church government (Presbyterian or

1. See above, p.77. note 2.

2. D. Masson, The Life of John Milton, vol.iii, pp.468-71.

3. E.W. Kirby, "The English Presbyterians in the Westminster Assembly", Church History, (1964) pp.425-6, Mrs. Kirby is wrong to assign the voting mentioned on p.425 to 5 November 1644. Gillespie makes it clear that the debate and voting took place on 5 September, and concerned the report on Antinomianism (see above, pp.292-3.) not the Independent dissent to the Directory of Church Government in November. Gillespie, p.66.

whatever) to be jure divino, and believing the power and government of the clergy and other church officers to be divinely commanded in the church. Throughout the Assembly debates resolutions on the Presbyterian government had been voted only to be "according to the word of God" or "evidenced by Scripture", and the "jus divinum" of the Presbyterian way of government by church officers left suitably vague. When Nye had accused the Assembly of asserting a divine right for the Presbyterian model, Marshall had assured him that they had "been carefull to go this way not to seek for a divine institution. It's contrary ... to the intent and purpose of the Parliament".¹ This was both to conciliate Independents and to appease the Assembly members who were not prepared to condemn modified Episcopacy. For many Assembly divines, including Reynolds, who later accepted a bishopric,² would not claim that Presbyterianism was the one unique jure divino church government, although virtually all would defend the fact that it was agreeable and desirable according to the word of God.³ Even those Presbyterians who felt it to be the most perfect Scriptural pattern. could not insist that its every tiny particular was directly ordained by God; Drake

1. Mitchell and Struthers, p.72. 25 March 1645. A later pamphlet made the same point: Anon, A Brief View of Mr. Coleman, 27 October 1645, p.33, E.307(8).

2. See above, p.80.

3. See also above, pp.385-6.

defined a jure divino church government as one that had some clear principles of divine prescription, and no just Scripture evidence against the rest.¹

But when the London ministers, in their great defence of the "jus divinum" of Presbytery defined the notion of divine right as

"the highest and best Tenure, whereby the Church can hold of Christ any Doctrine, Worship or Government; onely God can stamp such a jus divinum upon any of these things, whereby Conscience is compelled".

their intention was to defend the power of the church officers in governing the church.² Before 1645, when the Parliament's restrictions on ecclesiastical government became plain, the Assembly Presbyterians and the Scots had not emphasised such jure divino power, anxious to avoid antagonising Parliament. Parliament indeed criticised them for going on in "a prudential way" instead of making their claims for church power plain.³ But most Assembly divines, including Reynolds and others who would not claim Presbyterianism to be the sole jure divino government, would certainly press the jus divinum of church discipline. Reynolds was in fact a member of the Assembly committee to assert the jus divinum of church censures.⁴ There was unanimity amongst the majority of

1. R.D. (Drake), Sixteen Antiquaeries Propounded to the Catechiser of Diotrephes, 10 June 1646, p.6, E.510(6). George Walker defined the divine right to mean anything verbally commanded by Christ, or, through his inspiration, practised by the Apostles. G. Walker, A Modell of the Government of the Church, 29 June 1646, pp.1-2, E.342(3).

2. London ministers, Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici, 2 December 1646, p.7, E.364(8). This also stressed that various particulars of the Presbyterian way were divinely ordained.

3. S.W. Carruthers, The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly, p.15. The Assembly realised that there was little point in checking earlier votes to prove "jure divino" clerical power, since these had been deliberately muted. Mitchell and (cont'd overleaf).

the Assembly on the anti-Erastian cause, although even this issue could not arouse lethargic backbenchers into attending or voting in debates.¹

The confusions of what exactly the Presbyterians were claiming by divine right hardly aided their fight against the Erastians. For contemporaries thought that a divine right was asserted for the whole Presbyterian government alone, despite the fact that some facets, particularly lay elders, were clearly debatable by Scriptural evidence. It even became awkward for rigid Presbyterians to avoid the logic of magisterial government in the church when they openly acknowledged the role of laymen as elders in assisting church government.² Moreover, if some particulars of Presbyterianism were not "jure divino", but merely prudential, why could other prudential facets not be added?

The split amongst Presbyterians did not make them any more sympathetic to Independency - indeed, that split can be interpreted as a direct result of the ambivalence of the Presbyterian ideal under the impact of the Independent challenge. For the dual emphasis fundamental to Presbyterianism

3. cont'd. Struthers, p.207, 19 March 1645-6.

4. Mitchell and Struthers, p.207.

1. Only 26 votes were recorded in a crucial debate in February 1645-6, see below, pp.456-7 note 5.

2. Edward Bowles and William Hussey both made this point. E. Bowles, Manifest Truths, 4 July 1646, pp.63-4, E.343(1); W. Hussey, A Plea for Christian Magistracie, 20 December 1645, p.11, E.313(7).

- a national church and a godly discipline - became variously interpreted in the light of the Independent criticisms of parochial impurity. As a result, rigid Presbyterians became doubly convinced of the necessity of church censure, and argued more like Independents in their demand for a restricted Sacrament, whilst Erastian Presbyterians realised that the all-embracing concept of a national church must be maintained, with the civil magistrate dealing with offenders, and the clergy left to concentrate on teaching and ministering to their parochial flocks. This basic theoretical divergence between Presbyterians was the reason why Shaw wrote that "English Puritanism received its death-blow, not in 1662, but in 1645".¹ It was also the reason why contemporaries believed the issue of the admittance to the Sacrament to be so vital.²

It has already been seen that both in the Assembly and in pamphlets, Independents would exploit the Presbyterian divisions, condemning "rigid" and "Erastian" Presbyterians

1. ed. W.A. Shaw, Minutes of the Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 1646-1660, vol.i, (Manchester, Chetham Society, new series, XX, 1890), p.xvii.

2. This issue has been underestimated by historians. As early as 1641 Baxter had been worried about the scandal of "mixed" communions, where the godly and sinners alike received the ordinance; G.F. Nuttall, Richard Baxter, p.20. In 1649 Henry Newcome was anxious as to whether he was giving communion to the ignorant and scandalous; The Autobiography of Henry Newcome, ed. R. Parkinson, (Manchester, Chetham Society, XXVI and XXVII, 1852), vol.i, p.16. For divisions between Erastian and rigid Presbyterians and this issue see below, pp. 479-81.

when it suited them, and using Erastianism to their own advantage.¹ Logically the Independents should have supported the rigid Presbyterians and attacked the Erastians over the issue of a pure Sacrament. But practical politics and the desire for toleration meant that the Independents had to support magisterial and oppose Presbyterian authority, no matter how ill this accorded with previous theories of pure congregations. The fact that most Erastian Presbyterians were unsympathetic to Independents was irrelevant. Thus in 1646 Independents became overtly Erastian, urging on the conflict between rigid Presbyterians and Parliament, secure in the knowledge that the Erastians were in reality fighting their battles for them. For once branded as clerical tyrants, the Presbyterians might find it awkward to convince men that others were schismatical to dissent from them. Above all, with Parliament fully in control of the Presbyterian discipline, it would be easier to obtain a toleration, and the longer the delay in the establishment of the practical Presbyterian system, the more likely a toleration would become. Little wonder that the Independents ignored theoretical inconsistencies to encourage the Erastian dispute, and during this year most of the traditional areas of conflict between Presbyterians and

1. See above, e.g. pp.154-6, 395-401.

Independents became submerged in the new issues.

1645-6 brought other vital developments in the Presbyterian - Independent struggles. The renewal of the Parliamentary committee of accommodation proved only the lesson of the previous year - that with the establishment of Presbytery, the Independents would insist upon open toleration for their way and refuse any compromise with the Presbyterian government. They were encouraged to do so by the continued successes of the New Model Army, which, despite all Presbyterian efforts, was bound to remain their most potent ally.¹ Independents were anxious to reassure people that the army would do no more than defend their "liberties",² but suspicion was already growing in Presbyterian quarters that the army might be used as a purgative power;

"I like not that the Sectaries should thus mention the Army as a distinct state of the Kingdom; for our Kingdoms government knows but three Estates, namely King, Lords and Commons ... which being altered or confounded, will cause great and continuall disturbances, and at last utter ruine to these three Kingdomes".³

1. Oxford was surrendered on 24 June 1646. Presbyterians still tried to show that the Independents were not dominant in the army; Thomas Edwards wavered between the hope that his books were read by army Presbyterians by stealth for fear of the Independent minority of soldiers, and the conviction that the Independents were plotting a new role for their army. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, pp.106, 182-3. John Ley insisted that the army was not responsible to the Independents, but to Parliament; "there is no congruities betwixt the termes Independent and Army in our State"; J. Ley, The New Quere and Determination ... examined, 12 December 1645, p.95, E.311(24).

2. E.g. H. Peter, Gods Doings and Man's Duty, 2 April 1646, sig. a3 verso, E.330(11).

3. Captain Jones, Plain English: or the Sectaries Anatomized, 17 August 1646, p.22, E.350(11). Radical Independents were frequently boasting of the importance of the army to the nation.

The political situation in general was exploited by both religious groups to their own ends, but as Baillie realised, even the King's flight to the Scots brought political capital to Independents rather than Presbyterians, because of the wave of anti-Scottish feeling it engendered.¹ Not only did the political Independents oppose the Scots in the Committee of Both Kingdoms,² but radical pamphleteers scoffed at the excesses of the Scots' armies in the north, and questioned their motives in holding fast to the King instead of handing him over to the Parliament. One even suggested that the Westminster Assembly should be adjourned until the Scots released Charles into English custody!³ Before the

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1. Baillie, ii, 212. The King took refuge with the Scottish army on 5 May 1646.
 2. V. Rowe, Sir Henry Vane the Younger, p.74.
 3. Anon (preface by T. Hawes) The Afflicted Christian Justified, 18 May 1646, p.18, E.337(26). Such radical (some were Leveller) pamphleteers spared no effort in their anti-Scottish propaganda. One pamphlet, Truths Discovery of a Black Cloud in the North, 31 July 1646, E.346(9), claimed that the persecuting Scots came from the Beast and the Devil, and according to one newsbook, was "condemned to the gallows" in Newcastle, with the words "Independents untruths, Knavery hatcht in hell". The Moderate Intelligencer; No.76, 13-20 August 1646, E.350(21). Anti-Scottish propaganda continued until their army departed from England months later. David Buchanan blamed the Independents for setting England against the Scots, and was eventually forced to flee the country for his biased accounts of Scottish actions. D. Buchanan, An Explanation of some Truths, 3 January 1645-6, p.48, E.314(15); C.J. iv, 628.

Newcastle peace negotiations (to which the Presbyterians attached great hope) were under way, radical religious Independents could hint that they might sue for peace with the King themselves, despite the fact that Charles' overtures to the political Independents with regard to liberty of conscience were never seriously considered.¹ Either an Independent or a Royalist wrote the intriguing letter to Mr. Glyn at the time of the King's proposals, condemning the tyranny of the Westminster Assembly and suggesting that

"if the King will give us Liberty of Conscience, and not subjugate us to Ecclesiastical Power, we will submit our selves to His Civill Power; and rather live with Episcopacy to establish Monarchy, then under Presbytery to pull it downe. Episcopacy may stand, and we enjoy our Consciences, Presbytery will not allow it".²

1. For the King's offer to Vane see V. Rowe, *op.cit.*, pp. 80-88. The political Independents, realising that the King was using the religious issue to detract from others, took a harsh line in peace negotiations; 4 of the political Independents group met secretly in January 1645-6 and agreed on the ultimate necessity of deposing Charles.

2. Anon, A Letter of an Independent to his Honoured Friend Mr. Glyn, (Recorder of London), Oxford, 8 January 1645-6, p.6, E.315(1). This complained that Presbytery would effect a reformation in the State as well as in the church, and purported to defend the British constitution by joining with the King. As the pamphlet was published in Oxford, it could well be a Royalist attempt to increase divisions between Presbyterians and Independents (such efforts were condemned by newsbooks, e.g. Mercurius Civicus, No.132, 27 November - 4 December 1645, pp.1151-2, E.311(6).) Edwards feared (without proof) that all the malignant priests in London supported Independency, as "some of the prime Ministers in the way of the Sects have said, That Episcopall Government and a Toleration of their way would give them content"; T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, 26 February 1645-6, pp.54-5, E.323(2).

But with the King's removal to the Scots the religious Independents were anxious that Parliament should not conclude an overhasty, pro-Presbyterian peace.¹ Earlier Joseph Caryl, begging Parliament to remove oppression of conscience, had warned that peacemakers must not part with right and justice; peace was not viable at any price.² Thomas Edwards was convinced that the Independents feared nothing more than the King's signing of the propositions, and with his usual lack of evidence, and probably truth, declared that they were secretly advising the King to reject them.³

Another major feature of the year was the rising Leveller party and its partial identification with the Independent cause. In a real sense the Presbyterian-Independent religious conflict stimulated the Leveller movement, since the Leveller protagonists, Lilburne, Overton and Walwyn, found it a natural progression to extend their fight for freedom of conscience to liberties of a different kind, and recognised their audience in the purchasers of radical religious material such as the Marpriest tracts. Leveller works during the year attacked monopolies and tyrannies of all kinds, clerical and lay, and

1. The Scots and the Parliamentary Presbyterian party had been active agents for the negotiations with the King long before he came to the Scots' army. According to Buchanan, this was disliked by "the hotter kinde of people, who breath nothing but violence and extremity"; D. Buchanan, A Short and True Relation, 14 September 1645, p.90, E.1174(4). After the defection of the King to the Scots, the issue of peace negotiations became more pressing and after six months discussion, Parliament agreed to the propositions in July 1646. They included a demand that the King agree to the Parliamentary establishment of Presbyterianism, and were printed in The Propositions of the Lords and Commons ... sent to his Majesty at Newcastle, published 17 July 1646, E.344(25). The King's first reply to, and refusal of, these propositions in August meant despair for Baillie, who declared it had broken the Scots' hearts. Baillie, ii,221.

treated all opponents with the same mixture of righteous indignation and contemptuous criticism, whether they were old religious antagonists like Prynne or Bastwick, or new political enemies like the House of Lords.¹ Moderate Independents like Burroughes deplored the confusion of Independents not merely with the sectaries, but now with this new political group. Christ's real saints, he insisted, were not Levellers;

"Doe not hearken to those who tell you these men (i.e. the saints) would lay all levell, they would make no difference between the Noble-man and Trades-man".²

Certainly the radical Independents/sectaries could also be Levellers but generalisations can be misleading. John Goodwin, who was certainly moving towards the fringe of separatism and was regarded with certain embarrassment by moderate Independents,³

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2. J. Caryl, Heaven and Earth Embracing; or God and Man approaching, sermon to the Commons, 28 January 1645-6, pp.10,44, E.319(11).

3. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, p.237.

1. Lilburne and Walwyn attacked the Speaker, William Lenthall and his brother John, for collusion with Oxford, and Lilburne was denounced in Parliament by the efforts of Prynne and Bastwick. A pamphlet controversy ensued; Lilburne issued The Copy of a Letter, 9 August 1645, E.296(5), to be answered by Bastwick in A Just Defence, 30 August 1645, E.265(2), and by Prynne in The Lyar Confounded, 15 October 1645, E.267(1). Lilburne duly responded with England's Miserie and Remedie, 19 September 1645, E.302(5), and Innocency and Truth Justified, 6 January 1645-6, E.314(21). In this pamphlet war and other Leveller works, the Presbyterian-Independent issue became integrally linked with politics and the Leveller challenge against injustice and the "Norman yoke" of bondage of the English freeborn people. The Leveller demands were to result in the intermittent imprisonment of their leaders from 1645. See W. Haller, Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution, pp.254-87.

2. J. Burroughes, Sermon to the House of Lords, 26 November 1645, p.48(sic for 46), E.310(2).

3. See below, pp.575-6 note 3.

was clearly anti-Leveller. John Lilburne wrote to him protesting that members of his congregation were attempting to crush all Leveller petitions for the release of Lilburne from gaol, not merely in London, but in Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire as well.¹ Yet some identification between Levellers and Independents was inevitable, when both a leading Independent (Burton) and a leading Leveller could directly link spiritual freedom with earthly liberties, and pamphlets advocating the Independent cause used Leveller language.² Thomas Edwards certainly thought it was a short step from challenging ecclesiastical government to questioning the civil order, and others agreed with him.³

The increase in sectarian activity, Leveller politics, and heretical opinions was of course why rigid Presbyterians felt church censure to be so necessary, and many Erastians felt it to be an inappropriate remedy. Presbyterian

1. Lilburne's letter to Goodwin of 13 February 1646-7 was published in Anon, Jonah's Cry out of the Whales Belly, 26 July 1647, pp.5-6, E.400(5). Lilburne could not understand this, when he had previously accounted himself more obliged to John Goodwin than to all the congregations in London.

2. H. Burton, Conformities Deformity, 26 October 1646, dedicatory epistle, and p.13, E.358(20); A Defiance against all Arbitrary Usurpations, (published by friends of Overton) 9 September 1646, p.26, E.353(17). Some who opposed the Presbyterian Remonstrances in the summer of 1646 were probably Levellers, see below, p.475. Later, Independent

ministers, especially Peter, tried to heal the army Leveller divisions. John Saltmarsh may have supported the Levellers.

A.S.P. Woodhouse, Puritanism and Liberty, pp.73,438-9.

3. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, pp.108-9; see above, pp.421-2, 4

denunciations of sects and heresies continued unabated and reached a pitch with Edwards' "Gangraena", consistently claiming that all Independents were to blame for such excesses, for

"if you and other Independents were not, those other Sects, either could not be at all, or not so hurtfull; for you plead for them, protect, receive and harbor them: but remember the Proverb, A receiver is worse than a thief".¹

There seems to have been a meeting in London in December 1645, between some Presbyterians, Independents and sectaries, in which coexistence was discussed, but which ended with Presbyterian disapproval and no agreement.² Yet the Presbyterian tragedy was that in seeking a power greater than the civil magistrate would grant, they delayed by one year the erection of any discipline at all in London and beyond, and in this, given the growth of radical Independency in an increasingly strong army, they served the Independents and sects well. Delays caused by Assembly Independents had

1. Captain Jones, Plain English: or the Sectaries Anatomized, p.20. For Presbyterian denunciations of the Independents and sects see J. Vicars, The Schismatick Sifted, 22 June 1646, E.341(8); J. Ricraft, A Looking glasse for the Anabaptists and the rest of the Separatists, 4 September 1645, E.299(9); J. Brinsley (warning women in particular away from the sects) A Looking-Glasse for Good Women, 23 October 1645, E.305(23); R. Baillie, A Dissuasive from the Errours of the Time (second edition) 22 January 1645-6, E.317(5).

2. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, pp.15,83; Part III, pp.162-3. A public disputation with the Anabaptists, favoured by Calamy, was cancelled by the Mayor of London; Coxe, Knollys and Kiffen, A Declaration concerning the Publike Dispute, 26 December 1645, p.5, E.313(22).

prejudiced the Presbyterian cause no more than the rigid Presbyterians would imperil it themselves. For as Baillie wrote,

"Mr. Prin and the Erastian lawyers are now our remora. The Independents and sects are quiet, enjoying peaceably all their desires, and increasing daily their party".¹

Petition and Protest: Assembly, City and London divines against Parliament.

Rigid Presbyterians devoted their best energies to securing full power for church officers from Parliament, hoping that once it was gained, the sectarian menace could be easily crushed. In the Erastian conflicts of 1645-6, as later, the rigid London Presbyterian ministers were often denounced by Independents and others for hatching their plots in Sion College. Indeed, the name "Sion College" became synonymous in Independent writings for rigid Presbyterian treachery, avarice and ill-will to the Kingdom. As John Price wrote,

"we ... perceive that this great Wheel (i.e. Sion College) sets the Citie and Countrey in motion ... (its members do) engage and tamper privatly with chiefe Citizens in publick places, as Common-councill men, etc. and publickly in Pulpit and Presse, stirring up the people, by all possible means, under the pretence of the glory of God, a blessed reformation, the keeping of the covenant, the suppression of error, blasphemy, heresie, etc. to set us all together by the eares, fighting to set up the interest of the Clergy under the colour of a new form of government".²

1. Baillie, ii, 158.

2. J. Price, The Pulpit Incendiary, 4 May 1648, pp.18-9, E.438(10).

Sion College, a meeting place for London ministers with library and student chambers attached, was by no means intended to foster Presbyterianism.¹ Indeed, in 1645 Baillie gave an important clue that comparatively few London ministers were engaged in his secret schemes for the advancement of Presbytery; these almost certainly included Francis Roberts, William Jenkyn, and James Cranford.² But Sion College inevitably became the place where such divines influenced others, where petitions were circularised, and contracts made, and as its few Independent members ceased to attend, it soon became widely associated with Presbyterianism.³

In their efforts to fight Erastianism, the rigid Presbyterian ministers sought the aid of the City of London magistracy, and whilst they did obtain much support from that quarter, Baillie's letters reveal that the influence of the Independent group in the city council⁴ meant that solid Presbyterian backing could not be relied upon. He feared lest the controversy over the militia would drive the city to Independent counsels, and in March 1646 he so despaired of city support as to write "Our great hope on earth, the city of London, has played nipshot: they are speaking of dissolving

1. Cornelius Burges defended the function of Sion College according to the intentions of its founder in his Sion College, What it is and Doeth, 24 May 1648, E.444(3). Dr. Thomas White had left a bequest in 1624 to found a college to provide a meeting-place for London ministers and to foster unity and orthodoxy amongst them. Its original site was in Aldermanbury. It is probable that visiting country clergy lodged at Sion College when in London. See Anon., A Brief Account of Sion College, 1632-1949, (May 1949).

2. Baillie, ii, 184. Francis Roberts became Baillie's chief agent after the Cranford affair in the summer of 1645. At one stage it was feared that Parliament would search some city ministers' studies, including those of Cranford and Jenkyn. Ibid., ii, 180.

3. It became even more clearly stamped as a Presbyterian

the assembly".¹ The city magistrates heard Independent preachers and generally took a more independent line than city Presbyterian petitions might indicate.² But despite Independent attempts to influence common-council elections, and possibly to discredit Mayor Adams,³ the city did usually bow to its Presbyterian lobby and risked the wrath of Parliament in its support.

Throughout the "jure divino" challenge from rigid Presbyterians, Parliament stood steadfastly in its Erastian position, accommodating only a little when political prudence and the King's flight to the Scots necessitated a gesture to Presbytery. Parliamentary Erastianism was no new creation of 1645,⁴ but only with rigid Presbyterian pressure did it reveal its full strength. The House of Lords was more obliging than the Commons, and praised Presbyterian petitions when the

3. cont'd. institution when the London Provincial Assembly moved to the college from the convocation house at St. Paul's, on 28 June 1647.

4. The Independent faction included Foulke, Weaver, and Kenrick. A. Wilbee, Plain Truth without Feare or Flattery, 2 July 1647, sig. B verso, E.516(7).

1. Baillie, ii, 177, 198(quoted).

2. One such city preacher was Hugh Peter, God's Doings and Man's Duty, 2 April 1646, E.330(11). Thomas Adams the mayor, although a Presbyterian, actually encouraged Caryl to publish a sermon in which conscience was stressed; J. Caryl, The Present Duty and Endeavour of the Saints, 14 December 1645, E.323(1). One newsbook was perhaps referring to the city magistracy when it joked that "one in London" was an Independent in winter, because their congregations were warmest, but a Presbyterian in summer, when there was a need for cool air. Perfect Occurrences, Week 21, 22 May 1646, E.337(35).

3. Baillie, ii, 172, 203; T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, p.105. Apparently radical Independents circulated papers around the wards with names of those council men they wanted in and out.

4. See above, p.148.

lower house stood aloof; Baillie recognised that "The good party has now the plurality in the House of Lords; many in the House of Commons are falling off our unfriends".¹ Presbyterians were quick to assume that the Independents must have a hand in the Commons' intransigence, but whilst both religious groups endeavoured to secure the election of M.P.s favourable to their cause,² and petitioned Parliament tirelessly, the religious issue continued to affect Parliamentary politics but little. Edwards muttered that some in Parliamentary committees favoured sects and toleration, although Ley muffled his own agreement by insinuating that Parliament must be unaware of them.³ But whilst Parliament's Erastian attacks on ecclesiastical power were hailed as advantageous to the cause of toleration, they were motivated by political considerations. The fact that the political Independents carried the Commons with them on most issues until December 1646⁴ was also due to political reality - the necessity of

1. Baillie, ii, 207. 15 May 1646.

2. In the summer of 1645 Hugh Peter was endeavouring to secure the election of Lilburne and Walwyn as burgesses for Cornwall; the electors of Southwark also considered the pair. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part II, 28 May 1646, p.29, E.338(12); Captain Jones, Plain English: or the Sectaries Anatomized, p.3. A Norwich pamphlet condemned Independent trickery in elections; Anon, An Hue and Cry after Vox Populi, 25 September 1646, p.15, E.355(13). John Bastwick sought election for the Presbyterians at Rye, and was of the opinion that Independent M.P.s were "hinnyes"; J. Lilburne, Innocency and Truth Justified, p.8, and J. Bastwick, A Just Defence, p.42. One Independent M.P., Francis Allen, was discredited in the summer of 1646, much to Baillie's joy; Baillie, ii, 212.

3. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part II pp.155, 192; J. Ley, Light for Smoke, 11 April 1646, p.13, E.333(2).

4. V. Rowe, Sir Henry Vane the Younger, pp.88-9.

victory over the King and predominant anti-Scottish feeling.

The rigid Presbyterians took up their battle with Parliament on the crucial issue of church officers' power, the suspension of scandalous sinners from the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, over which Parliament had asserted ultimate control.¹ Despite Scottish advice that it should accept whatever power presbyteries had so far been permitted, and hope that Parliament would later grant more, the Westminster Assembly, led by its prominent members, refused to set up the London elderships as authorised by Parliament.² Indeed, members petitioned Parliament to the effect that

"if they cannot obtain the free exercise of that power which Christ hath given them, they will lay down their charges, and rather chuse all afflictions than to sin by profaning the holy table".³

Parliament was highly incensed by the petition, and the Assembly realised that it would have to proceed with rather more caution in future. Baillie scowled

1. See above, p. 331.

2. See above, p. 333.

3. Baillie, ii, 150. The petition was presented to the Commons on 8 August 1645, C.J. iv. 234. It also informed Parliament that the regulation of scandalous sinners was not against civil liberty. See also Hist. MSS. Commission, Report XIII, Appendix i, p. 241. The city ministers presented their own petition on 25 August to the same effect. C.J. iv. 253.

"Erastus is the book vexes us most. None of the assembly, for their life, can do any thing of moment. Were we free, there is above a dozen would beat him to dust".¹

Meanwhile some city ministers were secretly fomenting another petition demanding full power to the presbyteries and insinuating that Parliament's attitude was encouraging the sects.² Notification that this was circulating London came as Parliament was continuing with its discussions on the suspension of scandalous sinners (during which some M.P.s obviously favoured the rigid Presbyterian line),³ and Parliament wasted no time in declaring the unrepresented petition a scandal, to the joy of Independents and Erastians alike.⁴ M.P.s even devised a declaration in answer to the petition, strongly denouncing ministerial efforts

"to move us to put a boundless power into the hands of those that are so eager to claim it by such a right (jure divino) as being once fixed in them also ... the Parliament shall never be able to resume again ... no, not so much as to regulate it by appeals or otherwise."⁵

1. Baillie, ii, 154. Parliament ordered a committee of the Assembly to debate with a Commons' sub-committee on the points raised by the petition, Mitchell and Struthers, p.121. They also ordered the printing of Coleman's Erastian sermon (see above, p.332) a move calculated to annoy the Assembly. C.J. iv. 236. This sermon was indeed to be "bitten to the dust" by pamphlets from rigid Presbyterians, see below, pp.490-4.
2. Hist. MSS. Commission, Report XIII, Appendix 1, p.276. See also an untitled tract in Thomason's collection; B.M. 669 f.10(31), which was the form of this petition, to which Thomason had been asked "to gett hands". For evidence that some city ministers were behind this petition, see W. Prynne, A Vindication of Four Serious Questions, 3 October 1645, p.58, E.265(5). The petition was possibly intended for country-wide subscription; The Moderate Intelligencer, No. 30, 18-25 September 1645, E.303(3).
3. On 26 August, for example, the Grand Committee on Religion temporarily voted that all scandalous sins should be decided by the Presbytery, but the Commons deferred the matter. W.A. Shaw, The History of the English Church, vol.i, p.273, citing evidence from the diary of the M.P. Lawrence Whitaker.
4. C.J. iv. 280, 20 September 1645. The committee to discover more about this petition included Vane and Fiennes, as well as Holles. See below p.474 note 1 for Independent reactions.
5. Hist. MSS. Commission, Report XIII, Appendix 1, p.297.

The declaration continued that since Parliament could not discern that Christ had given the presbyteries arbitrary power of suspension, this ought to be only allowed under civil sanction, and a hint was even offered that Parliament might suffer tender consciences.¹ For the moment this declaration was not proceeded with, but as a newsbook published the main points the effect of it was not lost, and Buchanan was to censure other newsbooks for branding the petition "a thing evil and wicked against the publicke good of Church and State".² Moreover, the ordinance passed on 20 October for the suspension of sinners from the Sacrament was a sufficient blow for rigid Presbyterians, as it denied the presbyteries' power to decide on scandalous sins not enumerated by Parliament, but instead established a Parliamentary standing committee for this purpose.³ As Sir Robert Honeywood wrote to Sir Henry Vane senior,

"for the Presbyterian government it was ordered to be set up, but not with that latitude of power which the Assembly of Divines desired, which the sense of the House could not admit".⁴

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1. Hist. MSS. Commission, Report XIII, Appendix i, p.300.
 2. The declaration was laid aside on 8 November 1645, C.J. iv. 336, but it was resurrected in April, see below, p.458. The newsbook which publicised it was The Moderate Intelligencer, No. 35, 28-30 October 1645, E.307(22). Edwards called this newsbook "the great ... chronicler of the sectaries," but in fact it was a supporter of Erastian Presbyterianism, and the political Independents. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, p.11. For Buchanan's comment see his Truth its Manifest, 12 November 1645, p.129, E.1179(5).
 3. C.J. iv. 309. The ordinance listed sins worthy of suspension, but the Commons continued to discuss the addition of other sins, with the help of the Assembly. (C.J. iv. 324). The ordinance also provided for M.P.s to act as triers of elders in London. An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons, ordered to be published 21 October 1645, E.305(13). The ordinance prompted the appearance of various catechisms for the Sacrament.
 4. Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Car. I DXI, no. 9, 7 October 1645.

The reaction of the Assembly, London ministers and the Scots was to plot bigger and better petitions. Baillie commented that since Parliament gave

"to the ecclesiastick courts so little power, ... the assembly finding their petitions not granted, are in great doubt whether to set up any thing, till, by some powerful petition of many thousand hands, they obtain some more of their just desires".¹

The Assembly drafted an impulsive petition to Parliament after Marshall declared on 23 October that the recent ordinance meant that ministers could not proceed in their ministries with good conscience, but appears to have reconsidered its actions, as this petition was abandoned.² Instead the London ministers decided to draft a petition and persuade the city common-council to take it up on their behalf. These city ministers, led by George Walker, were so successful that on 19 November two petitions were presented to Parliament - one from the common-council, incorporating the ministers' desires, and the ministers' petition itself.³ Baillie was delighted that such "manifold petitions" proved that city

1. Baillie, ii, 161. Baillie himself believed the Scottish army would be the Presbyterians' strongest advocate.
2. Mitchell and Struthers, p.157.
3. C.J. iv. 348. The petitions were presented to the Lords on 20 November. A "true copy" of the ministers' petition was published in Mercurius Civicus, No.134. 11-18 December, 1645, p.1167, E.313(4). Burges claimed that the city magistrates took up the ministers' cause voluntarily, and without pressure, although his explanation is not very convincing. (He made the same case for the city Remonstrance in May 1646). C. Burges, Sion College. What it is and Doeth, pp.9,29.

magistrates and ministers were making common cause for the full Presbyterian power.¹ But unfortunately the Commons returned a sharp answer to both city officials and divines, telling the former that their petition was a breach of Parliamentary privilege, and the latter that they should devote themselves to the pastoral care of their congregations rather than incite them to prejudge Parliamentary procedure.² As the newsbooks rose almost in unison to condemn the petitions, and even "The Scottish Dove" was obliged to bow to Erastianism, it was observed that

"Petitioning is not always in season ... Take heed ... lest while we cry out against schisme (so called) in the Church, we introduce it not in the State".³

Ministers and magistrates were sufficiently abashed to abandon their pleas and projects for a couple of months. John White, preaching before the Lords on 26 November, hoped that Parliament was merely testing Presbyterian government, and would allow it more power in time.⁴ But after a brief delay the city ministers were again galvanised into action, reputedly by the Independents' demands in the revived

1. Baillie, ii, 166-9.

2. C.J. iv. 348. The Commons told the city that as its intentions were presumed to be good, it would not be officially branded as acting scandalously.

3. Mercurius Britanicus, No.106, 17-24 November 1645, p.937, E.309(35). The Erastian stance of newsbooks led the Presbyterian John Ley to denounce weekly pamphleteers as apparently pro-Independent! J. Ley, The New Quere ... Examined, 12 December 1645, p.71 ff, E.311(24).

4. J. White, The Troubles of Jerusalem's Restauration, 1645, p.54, E.310(1).

Parliamentary committee of accommodation.¹ On 1 January they presented a letter to the Assembly denouncing toleration, which produced squeals of protest from the Independents.² At the same time, the common-council presented a not dissimilar document to Parliament, demanding a settling of church government and a suppression of "private meetings".³ This latter petition produced a most unexpected effect, for the Commons, obligingly returning to the question of where the ultimate power should lie in the question of deciding unenumerated scandalous sins, decided to replace its proposed Parliamentary standing committee with a scheme whereby commissioners in every province should undertake the task.⁴ The change horrified Baillie, who advised his agent Roberts to explode the idea if he possibly could, since provincial committees would emasculate presbyteries far more than a national body, and "keep down the power of the presbyteries for ever, and hold up the head of sectaries".⁵ Before Parliament had a chance to publish this new scheme in an ordinance, the city ministers thus encouraged the city to

1. See below, pp. 467-9. ; C. Burges, Sion College. What it is and Doeth, p. 30.

2. A Letter of the Ministers of the City of London ... against Toleration, published 2 January 1645-6, E. 314(8). This letter was supported in February by a similar letter from Essex ministers; A True Copy of a Letter, 7 March 1645-6, B.M. 669 f. 10(42). The congregational minister John Owen felt obliged to explain why he did not sign this; J. Owen, A Vision of Unchangeable Free Mercy, 29 April 1646, p. 50, E. 334(15).

3. The Humble Petition of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons, 17 January 1645-6, E. 316(20). This petition was cordially received by Parliament, as it omitted the "jure divino" claims. C.J. iv. 407.

4. C.J. iv. 413. Final control would still remain with Parliament.

5. Baillie, ii, 191. Baillie hoped for amendments in the Lords.

petition against it, with disastrous effect. The new petition was voted a breach of privilege by the Commons, and although eventually some members of the Lords persuaded the Commons to drop proceedings against the city for such insolence, the city had a few tense days.¹

Parliament wasted no time in issuing the new ordinance embodying the hated provincial commissioners on 14 March.² Baillie was immediately forced to act out his despair by sending feverish letters to correspondents, blaming the ordinance on an Independent and Erastian alliance, and even suggesting a scheme for obstructing the passing of the ordinance in the Lords.³ The city, still smarting from its recent wounds, displayed understandable reluctance to complete another petition immediately,⁴ and so the Westminster Assembly prepared itself for its most spirited defence of the "jus divinum". The rigid Presbyterians in the Assembly had voted Coleman's Erastian arguments on the crucial "jure divino" proposition to be sufficiently answered on 17 March,⁵ and were

1. The city petition was presented on 12 March; see Mercurius Academicus, 14th week, p.134, E.328(6). Warwick, Essex and others in the Lords supported the petition, and certainly the House of Lords appears to have recommended to the Commons that all proceedings against the petition should be obliterated from Parliamentary records, C.J. iv. 479. The city itself had to satisfy Parliament that its intentions had been loyal, A Perfect Diurnall, No.138, p.1108, E.506(20). W.A. Shaw erroneously attributed the proceedings on this petition to the November city petition; History of the English Church, vol.i, p.287

2. C.J. iv, 463, 475. See An Ordinance for Keeping of Scandalous Persons from the Sacrament, March 1645-6, E.328(5).

3. Baillie, ii, 195. W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church vol.i, p.292.

4. Alderman Foulkes deterred the city; Ibid., p.291.

5. The proposition was "That Jesus Christ as King and Head of His Church hath appointed an ecclesiastical government in His Church in the hand of Church Officers distinct from the civil government", Mitchell and Struthers, pp.193, 206. In February

thus in just the right fighting spirit to meet the challenge of the new ordinance. Under Marshall's lead, they decided to pen a petition to Parliament, appointing a committee "to prepare something for the Assembly to assert the jus divinum of Church censures, and in whose hands jure divino these censures are".¹ The petition, presented on 23 March, duly denounced the Parliamentary commissioners as contrary to Christ's government, against the Covenant, and an encouragement to separatists, begging Parliament to award full censorial powers to the presbyteries.² Not surprisingly, it provoked a furious response from Parliament, who voted it a breach of privilege and on 22 April despatched nine "Queries" to the Assembly on the nature of the jus divinum.³ As Fiennes told the divines,

"The Parliament doth not pretend to an infallibility of judgment, and the Parliament suppose this Assembly will not do so neither. If, therefore, the question be but of a human judgement ... (Parliament) claim privilege that they have the supreme judgment in making laws".⁴

5. cont'd. the Assembly had voted scandalous Coleman's assertion that the Covenant was being used to brainwash men to support rigid Presbytery, Ibid., p.187. Only 26 votes were recorded, probably due to absenteeism, or indifference among backbenchers. Coleman, supported by Lightfoot, was opposed by Gillespie in the debates, and the arguments there had been pretested in the pamphlet war. See below, pp.490-6.

1. Mitchell and Struthers, p.207 (see also p.433).

2. The full text of the petition is in L.J. viii, 232.

3. C.J. iv, 506, 511. Fiennes, Vane, Rous and Tate were all on the committee to deal with the breach of privilege. The nine queries are reprinted in Mitchell and Struthers, p.225. Each member of the Assembly was ordered to answer yea or nay to each question, and if dissenting from the majority view, to affix reasons for his opinion.

4. Mitchell and Struthers, p.451.

While they were about the petition, the Commons issued on 17 April their "Declaration" to the effect that they could not allow arbitrary power to ten thousand presbyteries, and added that they had not yet "resolved how a due regard may be had, that tender Consciences, which differ not in any Fundamentals of Religion, may be so provided for".¹ The Assembly's embarrassment and wrath was to be heightened by this gesture to the Independents.

Although Parliament's interest in the "Queries" was to undergo a rapid change with the flight of the King to the Scots, the Assembly was forced to spend many hours from April to July debating the "captious questions".² Both Marshall

1. C.J. iv, 512; A Declaration of the Commons of England, 18 April 1646, E.333(19). This, probably a revised version of the abandoned declaration of the previous autumn, was actually published as an answer to some papers of Buchanans' that favoured Scottish Presbytery, but was deliberately aimed as a rebuff to the Assembly's petition. It was ordered to be published in every parish church, but a later Independent pamphlet claimed this was neglected. Anon, Vox Populi, 25 August 1646, p.11, E.351(7). As a result of Parliament's action, even "The Scottish Dove" was supporting Erastianism by April 1646, e.g. The Scottish Dove, No.129, 8-15 April 1646, p.621, E.333(10).

2. Baillie, ii, 216. Lightfoot now assumed the Erastian mantle of the newly deceased Coleman. On 12 June the Assembly resolved "that Church Government is in the hands of Church officers only as contradistinct to the civil Magistrate", and on 7 July agreed again on a distinct church government. Mitchell and Struthers, pp.243, 251-2. In August Baillie claimed credit for persuading Rous and Tate to influence Parliament in favour of postponing the answer to the "Queries", and by December Baillie was overjoyed that the Parliament had gained nothing by the "Queries". Baillie, ii, 223, 251. In fact the Assembly's answer to the "Queries" was demanded by Parliament on 7 December 1646 (C.J. v, 2), but was then ignored. The Assembly's work was far from wasted however, as its answers were embodied in the great testimony of London ministers to the "jus divinum" published in December 1646 - Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici, 2 December 1646, E.364(8).

and Calamy took the unusual step of excusing themselves from preaching before Parliament in May, possibly as a sign of annoyance with the Commons.¹ Meanwhile, the Presbyterian ministers conceived an elaborate scheme whereby Presbyterian petitions were to be mooted in several counties where the ministers were sufficiently influential, either to be signed just by ministers, or laymen as well.² Not surprisingly, London was encouraged to lead the way, and on 26 May supplied Parliament with the city's "Humble Remonstrance", which detailed grievances in church affairs, particularly concerning sectaries, and included some political clauses as well.³ London's petition was speedily followed by one from the ministers of Suffolk and Essex, and rather more slowly by one from "many thousand" gentlemen, ministers, freeholders

1. C.J. iv, 558. Calamy pleaded ill-health; Marshall said he had too much to do! J.F. Wilson has wondered (Pulpit in Parliament, p.115) why Burges, Calamy, Hill and Newcomen stopped preaching fast sermons after 1645. Clearly the Erastian conflict was the initial reason. Cornelius Burges was invited to preach in 1646 and 1647, but declined.

2. Norwich Independents believed that some "great persons" in London, "the Rabbies of our time" had organised the Norfolk petition. Anon, Vox Populi, p.9.

3. The Humble Remonstrance and Petition of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Commons of the City of London, May 1646, E.339(1). The city was at pains to explain that this should not be construed as a breach of privilege! The Lords approved the Remonstrance, but the Commons merely referred it to a committee, and conveniently forgot about it. In June some Presbyterian citizens petitioned the city to press for an answer; Thomason aided this petition, which had 8634 signatures. See B.M.669f10 (58) and J. Bellamy, A Justification of the City Remonstrance, 21 August 1646, p.4, E.350(23). In his fast sermon of 30 September, Herbert Palmer begged Parliament to report on petitions with a little more speed! H. Palmer, The Duty and Honour of Church Restorers, p.33, E.355(22).

and others in Lancashire. Petitions were also set on foot in Norfolk, Yorkshire and possibly other counties as well, but met with more opposition.¹ One York minister refused to declare against Erastianism in this way, desiring "to stay till he had further light: I know not whether he meant from the word, or from the State".²

But political events rather than such persistent petitions were to encourage Parliament to adopt a more conciliatory attitude to the rigid Presbyterians. With the King's removal to the Scots, the Commons, at Browne's instigation, reconsidered the idea of provincial commissioners and decided to abandon them in favour of the original concept of a standing Parliamentary committee to determine unenumerated scandalous sins.³ This would result in the presbyteries having more authority in the provinces, and considerably appeased the Presbyterians. With this new ordinance duly published on 3 June,⁴ to remain

1. The Essex and Suffolk petition was dated 29 May 1646 and was included in Thomason's collection, E.339(11). The Lancashire petition was presented on 15 September 1646 (C.J. iv, 668) and was printed by J. Tilsley in A True Copy of the Petition, 31 August 1646, E.352(3). See Anon, Vox Populi for the Norwich petition, and the pamphlets it provoked. John Price mentioned Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire as following such examples in his The City Remonstrance Remonstrated, 24 July 1646, p.7, E.345(18). He said that in all twenty thousand copies of the Remonstrance had been dispersed in England!

2. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, p.79. The Yorkshire ministers seem to have planned not a petition so much as a letter to the Assembly expressing support.

3. According to Baillie, the Lords had some influence in this decision, as did Rous and Tate. Baillie, ii, 211.

4. C.J. iv, 562-3. In all, 186 M.P.s were nominated to serve on the Parliamentary committee for unenumerated sins, although only 9 of them needed to act at once. Vane, Lord Saye and Sele, and Cromwell were all nominated.

in existence for three years, the London ministers reluctantly agreed to effect the government of the church. However, they made it perfectly plain that the ordinances neither held out Christ's perfect government, nor were completely satisfactory to their consciences, and that they hoped for future improvement.¹ The Lancashire ministers followed London's lead as usual, and published a similar resolution later in the year.² At last the Presbyterian government, lame and Erastian though it might be, could be effected; Parliament ordered the execution of all ordinances concerning church government on 9 June, and in London the election of elders was well underway by August.³ After all, the Presbyterians' year of protest had achieved only delay.

Dissociation, Exploitation, Counter-petition and Incitement:
The Independent Reaction to the Jure Divino Dispute

Since Assembly votes on Presbyterian authority in church censure had been muted to try to appease them, the Independents

1. The London ministers had a long meeting on the subject on 19 June. They eventually published Certain Considerations and Cautions ... to put the Presbyteriall Government in execution, agreed 19 June 1646, E.341(11). See also The Scottish Dove No. 136, June 1646, p.702, E.341(19). An Independent claimed that Sion College ordered this work to be despatched to all churches, Anon, Vox Populi, p.11. Prynne's strictures on Sion College for its reluctant attitude were condemned in turn in Anon, A Vindication of two Serious Questions, 20 October 1646, p.5, E.358(6).

2. The Deliberate Resolution, published in London January 1646-7, E.371(2), but actually agreed at Preston 17 November 1646.

3. C.J. iv, 569; Baillie ii, 197 (for the "lame Erastian" suggestion) and 223. For the realities of the Presbyterian government, see chapter 10. One London parish was confused as to whether elders were being elected "jure divino" or "jure" Parliament, but wisely decided on the latter. The Moderate Intelligencer, No.74, 30 July - 6 August 1646, E.349(12).

had already been indirectly responsible for assisting the Erastian cause. Independents inside and outside the Assembly now decided to exploit this fortuitous Erastian challenge to the full. Despite the rigid Presbyterians' belief that the Independents' principles ought to lead them to approve efforts for a purer Sacrament,¹ the Independents had already shown in Assembly debate that they would not do so.² Now the Assembly Independents definitely dissociated themselves from the Assembly's efforts against Parliament. On several occasions the Assembly deliberately added Independents to sub-committees appointed to discuss points concerning the Erastian struggle, evidently hoping to achieve a united front.³ To the same end the Assembly made definite concessions to Independents. When Goodwin declared that he could not support the proposed Assembly petition against the October ordinance, because it implied agreement with classical government, the Assembly obligingly deleted all mention of classes.⁴ Yet the Independents remained unsatisfied, and a pamphleteer later insisted that they had reasoned

1. See below, pp.481-2.

2. See above, p.135, when the Independents had objected to suspension from the Lord's Supper.

3. On 11 August 1645, Nye, Goodwin, Philip and Sterry were added to a committee to debate suspension. On 13 April 1646 Goodwin was added to a committee to investigate the vital role of church officers in church government. Mitchell and Struthers, pp.121, 218.

4. Ibid., p.158.

"That the thing the Assembly desired was good, yet they could not joine with them in petitioning for it, because it might be a hinderance to a greater good which themselves desired".¹

In April, a proposition implying the unlawfulness of separation from mixed parish communions was quietly dropped to try and enlist Independent support.² When the divines were obliged to commence debates on the crucial Parliamentary "Queries", the Independents were allowed to form their own committee for this purpose, although they were cautioned not to abuse this privilege as a delaying tactic.³ But all concessions were of little value, since the Independents did all in their power to frustrate debate on the "Queries". In June Goodwin dissented from the proposition that church government should only be in the hands of church officers,⁴ and although Independents agreed to the vital vote that church government should be distinct from the civil government, they later declined to agree to the principle of suspension from the Sacrament until they had reviewed its implications.⁵ Their behaviour confused and irritated Baillie;

1. Anon, Toichoructa, or, Independents Razing their own Foundation, 19 March 1645, p.4, E.328(23).

2. Mitchell and Struthers, p.220.

3. Ibid., p.231. Nye dissented to this caution! The special Independent committee consisted of Goodwin, Nye, Burroughes, Bridge, Simpson, Greenhill, Carter and John Philip, who now appeared to be acting systematically with the Dissenting Brethren.

4. Ibid., p.244. He wanted a popular share in government although the proposition was intended against Erastians.

5. Ibid., pp.251-2,257.

"(in the questions) there is like to be an unanimity absolute in all things material, even with the Independents. But because of the assembly's way, and the Independents miserable unamendable design to keep all things from any conclusion, it is like we shall not be able to perfect our answers for some time".¹

Rather more positively, the Assembly Independents decided to use the Assembly's preoccupation with the Erastian dispute to advance the cause of toleration. They may or may not have been involved in an attempt to persuade Parliament to dissolve the fractious Assembly,² but in any event decided to publicise all their grievances about the way they had been treated by the Assembly. So when the Assembly demanded the model of government the Independents had been forced to prepare, Simpson declared that this would not be forthcoming, and provided reasons for this.³ Shortly afterwards a sympathiser (professedly without the knowledge of the Dissenting Brethren) published these reasons at great length as a Remonstrance against the Assembly.⁴ Although this was done to forestall Presbyterian propaganda on the non-appearance of the "model", the Presbyterians, as expected, made much capital out of the issue. Edwards exulted that

1. Baillie, ii, 216. When the answers were ready, in December 1646, Baillie noted that the Independents had reluctantly asserted some jure divino principles. Ibid., ii, 251.

2. In November, Lord Saye and Wharton moved in the Lords that the Assembly be adjourned (i.e. dissolved), but the proposal was rejected. Baillie, ii, 172; D. Buchanan, An Explanation of some Truths, 3 January 1645-6, p.47, E.314(15). Radical pamphlets were often making similar proposals, e.g. The Afflicted Christian Justified (preface by Thomas Hawes), p.18.

3. See above, p.326. The Assembly requested the model on 22 September 1645, and Simpson reported on 13 October. Mitchell and Struthers, pp.132, 148.

4. A Copy of a Remonstrance lately delivered in to the Assembly, 12 November 1645, E.309(4).

"the Mountains have brought forth a Mouse ... the mighty Model is proved a Magnificent nothing", whereas Vicars, delighted that all the "Independent Proselytes" boasts about their "rare New modell" had come to nothing, pronounced that Remonstrance to be a scandal comparable only to the Apologetical Narration.¹ David Buchanan condemned such insolence as the fruits of the Assembly's suffering Independents for far too long already.² The Assembly wasted no time in drafting an answer to the Remonstrance, but was delayed from publishing it by Parliament, possibly so as not to prejudice the committee of accommodation.³

Both the Remonstrance and the Assembly's reply clearly revealed the mutual frustration between the Assembly and its Independent members. The Remonstrance claimed that the Assembly had deliberately laid aside the most vital issues between Presbyterians and Independents, and sought to win Erastian sympathy by declaring that one of these controversial matters was the "jus divinum" of Presbytery;

1. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, p.67; J. Vicars, The Schismatick Sifted, 22 June 1646, p.19, E.341(8).
 2. D. Buchanan, An Explanation of some Truths, p.43.
 3. Mitchell and Struthers, pp.162,166,171. The Assembly was obliged to ask Parliament for leave to answer the Remonstrance, (C.J. iv, 373), whereupon a Parliamentary committee examined the Remonstrance. Baillie believed the Independents used influence in the Commons to delay the reply; Baillie, ii, 172. The Assembly's answer was ordered to be published on 24 February: The Answer of the Westminster Assembly ... unto the Copy of a Remonstrance, February 1646, E.506(11).

"the greatest difference that were likely to grow betwixt us being this, That the Forms of Government, you pretend to, and we deny, are asserted to be Jure divino".¹

Since the Assembly had given no indication of its intention to consider the model in preparation, but rather had already decided on Presbytery, the Dissenting Brethren had concluded that their model would serve no useful purpose. In contrast, the Assembly blamed the Independents for delays, concealment, and deliberate refusal to engage in free discussion of their tenets.² Desperately trying to stop the Independents' exploitation of Erastianism, the Assembly replied that there was no fundamental difference between Presbyterians and Independents on the "jus divinum" of church government since

"The Controversie between our Brethren and the Presbyterians (was) not ... so much, Whether there be a Government jure divino, as Whether it be this or that?"³

Unfortunately neither the Remonstrance nor its reply adequately acknowledged that it had been the result of the former efforts at conciliation that some vital questions had never been fully stated.

Possibly as a result of the Remonstrance, the projected

1. A Copy of a Remonstrance, p.5. The Independents also claimed that their propositions on ordination were laid aside by the Assembly, (see above, p.138), that the Assembly declined to debate "the intire power in Congregations, that have a sufficient Presbytery for all censures", (see above, p.303.) and that Nye's propositions of March 1645 were ignored (see above, pp.325-6). They complained that the Assembly had failed to answer the second part of their "Reasons against the Subordination of Synods" (See above, p.317 note 1).

Ibid., pp.4-7.

2. The Answer of the Westminster Assembly ... unto the Copy of a Remonstrance. The Assembly mentioned the abandoned Calamy House Agreement, the long failure to bring in a model of Independency, and Independent secrecy and inconstancy. In answer to the Remonstrance's complaints, it maintained that it only refused to debate matters already concluded or implied.

3. Ibid., p.11.

new negotiations with the King, and the Assembly's intransigence, the Commons ordered the resumption of the Parliamentary committee of accommodation at the end of October.¹ But the Independents immediately seized the opportunity both to bow to Erastianism and to make it clear that toleration alone, not accommodation, would suit them now. In a November sermon to the Lords, Jeremiah Burroughes, referring to the newly-revived committee, bewailed that many of his Presbyterian brethren opposed forbearance, and demanded the fullest debate on toleration, since Presbytery had never been accepted as *jure divino*.² In the committee debates Independents rejected the Presbyterians' desire of an accommodation on Presbyterian terms by insisting

"we cannot go on in the way of Accommodation according to the former Method: Because Accommodation is an agreement in one common Rule, and we doe not presume to seeke a new Rule to be made ... there may be a variation, in a greater latitude from a government, that is established on a Divine right, much more from one which is not established upon Jus Divinum: when the government it self hath its authority but from the State".³

1. C.J. iv, 327; 31 October 1645. See above, pp.303-9. The committee had its first meeting on 17 November 1645; The Papers and Answers of the Dissenting Brethren and the Committee of the Assembly of Divines, p.13. The Assembly added several members, including Burroughes, Simpson and John Dury, to its representation on this joint committee. Mitchell and Struthers, p.164.

2. J. Burroughes, Sermon before the House of Lords, 26 November 1645, preface, p.49, E.310(2).

3. The Papers and Answers, pp.24-5. On 4 December 1645 the Independents brought their "desires" to the committee; these demanded full congregational power of ordination and censures and freedom from the parochial structure. Ibid., pp.15-7. The Presbyterians denied such freedom, but conceded that Independents could be excused from attending the Sacrament in their parish churches (15 December), Ibid., p.22. On 23 December the Independents repeated their demands for toleration, as quoted.

Thomas Goodwin now made it plain that he could not censure any church member for Anabaptism, Lutheranism or any non-fundamental error, although this revelation may not have been premeditated, and certainly "allayed the favour of some to their toleration".¹ In any event the committee of accommodation was no more successful than it had been a year previously. Although at one stage Baillie feared that the committee was allowing too much to the Independents, since

"Mr. Marshal our chairman has been their most diligent agent, to draw too many of us to grant them much more than my heart can yield to",²

Presbyterian concessions remained fixed at the point of excusing Independents from the Lord's Supper, and a vague admission in January that parishioners had never been denied a right to hear and communicate elsewhere.³ Vital though these moves were, they were far from the toleration the Independents desired, despite the fact that a later pamphleteer believed that the Independents had been offered exemption from all presbyters, classes and synods!⁴ So

1. Baillie, ii, 172. For the Independents' view of toleration of non-fundamental matters, see below, pp.573-4.

2. Ibid. Presbyterians were more anxious than ever (because of Erastianism) to try and reach an accommodation with Independents.

3. The Papers and Answers, p.85, 23 January 1645. Baillie thought these concessions invidious enough. Pearson falsely believed these concessions to be a toleration for Independency; S.C. Pearson, "Reluctant Radicals: The Independents at the Westminster Assembly", Journal of Church and State, (1969), p.483.

4. Anon, Anti-Machiavell. Or Honesty against Policy, 3 July 1647, p.9, E.396(16).

the Independents continued their demands for separate congregations until the committee adjourned indefinitely on 9 March.¹ Independent intransigence, encouraged by Erastianism, had provided the final nail in the coffin of accommodation.

Whilst the Assembly Independents were thus frustrating Presbyterian moves,² Independent supporters outside the debating chamber were similarly capitalising on the Erastian conflict, inciting Parliament against the rigid Presbyterians whilst appearing "to acquiesce wholly in the exercise of a parliamentary supremacy extended to ecclesiastical affairs".³ For its part, Parliament was pleased to counter Presbyterian arrogance by favouring Independents, as was proved both by its hints of protection for tender consciences, and by the extraordinary numbers of Independents allowed to preach before the Houses.⁴ Meanwhile, the more Presbyterians petitioned for

1. By March Parliament had lost interest in the committee, as accommodation seemed unlikely, and other matters, including Erastianism, became more pressing.

2. Even in debates on the Confession of Faith and Catechism, which began in earnest in December, (C.J. iv, 365), the Independents caused trouble. In February they dissented to a proposition about the visible church. Although they were consoled by a March vote that "They who require absolute and blind obedience unto superiors for conscience sake, do destroy liberty of conscience and reason", in June Baillie was still complaining that the Independents were making trouble over the Confession of Faith. Mitchell and Struthers, pp.191,214; Baillie, ii, 215.

3. R.P. Stearns, The Strenuous Puritan, p.239.

4. Presbyterians still preached as well, but the proportion of Independent preachers increased. Caryl preached on 28 January and 19 February (see Thomason tracts E.31(11) and E.323(31); Thomas Goodwin on 25 February, E.325(4), Hugh Peter on 2 April, E.330(11), John Owen on 29 April, E.334(15), Walter Cradock on 21 July, E.345(8) and Jeremiah Burroughes both on 26 November, E.310(2) and 26 August, E.351(11). Many of these sermons encouraged liberty of conscience.

their way, the more Independents opposed the petitions. Thomas Edwards reported that the common council had to proceed with caution in petitioning, since the sectaries watched "but for such an advantage, as to take them tripping, thereby to render all they present in this kind as false".¹ Independents were certainly lobbying the Guildhall when Parliament sent officials to enquire about a provocative city petition.² Buchanan blamed the Independents for thwarting the September petition and for prejudicing Parliament against the November petition, whilst Edwards accused Burroughes, Greenhill, and Hugh Peter of preaching against city efforts.³ In September the Independents decided to counter the Presbyterian petition of that month by circulating copies of a letter from Cromwell to Parliament after the capture of Bristol. The conclusion of this letter (deliberately omitted in the Parliamentary version) praised the unity between army Presbyterians and Independents, desired liberty of conscience

1. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part II, p.109.

2. Ibid., Part III, p.99. Edwards related the tale of one New England man who refused to engage in such lobbying.

3. D. Buchanan, Truth its Manifest, pp.129-37; D. Buchanan, An Explanation of some Truths, p.54; T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, p.109, and Part III, pp.108, 121-4. Burroughes defended himself against Edwards' charge of encouraging citizens to oppose the September petition in A Vindication of Mr. Burroughes, 23 July 1646, p.25, E.345(14). Baillie noted that the Independent M.P. Francis Allen was prejudicing Parliament against the November petition. Baillie, ii, 178.

for those possessing "reall Unity ... inward and spirituall", and added significantly that "In other things God hath put the sword into the Parliaments hands ... if any plead exemption from it, he knowes not the Gospel".¹ One sectary apparently told citizens in the autumn that they should cease petitioning until the spring, for he hoped that the toleration issue would be settled by then.² When the March city petition was denounced by Parliament, Independents gave public thanks, and by April, after the Assembly petition had fared no better, Independents were going about in a "great ruffe", proclaiming that Presbyterian ministers would soon be as contemptible as the prelates.³ Even accounting for Edwards' lamentable bias, it is clear that Independents were exploiting the clash between rigid Presbyterians and Parliament.

The radical Independents decided to do a little petitioning of their own, much to Edwards' contempt. They denounced others for petitioning, said he,

"but now the Sectaries four or five hundred of them, they may meet together, interpose, represent, may speak their pleasures of and arraign the Parliament".⁴

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1. The official Parliamentary version of this letter, omitting the conclusion, was ordered to be published on 17 September 1645; E.301(18). The Independent fuller version was kept by Thomason, who noted "September 22. This was printed by the Independent party and scattred up and downe the streets last night, but expresly omitted by order of the House". B.M. 669f10(38). See also Hist. MSS. Commission, Report XIII, Appendix, 1, p.271. Buchanan opposed this conclusion by listing the differences between Presbyterians and Independents: D. Buchanan, Truth its Manifest, pp.121-7.
 2. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, p.65.
 3. Ibid., Part II, p.23; Part III, p.25.
 4. Ibid., Part I, p.68. There is no reason to suppose that this figure was accurate.

Baillie heard in January that Lilburne was fomenting a sectarian petition, but was disinclined to believe it.¹ However the reality of the counter-petitions provoked as a result of the city Remonstrance could not be ignored. Before the Remonstrance was presented, London Independents petitioned the common council advising against disturbing Parliament, and after the Remonstrance had been delivered nonetheless, they petitioned Parliament not to neglect their April declaration and abandon tender consciences. Presbyterians accused Independents of tricking people into signing their petition to Parliament and of canvassing it in the army. But the fact remained that Parliament saw fit to thank the Independents publicly for their efforts.² Just as the Presbyterians had done, so the Independents extended their efforts to the provinces. In Lancashire and Cheshire an

1. Baillie, ii, 180.

2. The petition to the common council is found in B.M. 669f10 (57) and was delivered on 22 May, reputedly signed by many citizens. Thomason inscribed his copy with the words "this many not Just". The petition to Parliament was presented on 2 June, and was approved despite the fact that the common council was sure it would be deemed incendiary. C.J. iv, 561; T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, p.72. Thomason preserved a copy, although he contemptuously added the words "Nicholas Nemo and Sallomon Simple were amongst other subscribers of this Independant petition", E.339(12). "The Scottish Dove" reported that this petition gained "many thousand hands ... all about the Suburbs of this great City, especially at Conventicles and private meetings", The Scottish Dove, No. 136, p.676, E.339(13). For the charges of trickery and army canvassing respectively, see Captain Jones, Plain English, p.10, and Anon, A Vindication of the London Remonstrance, 7 July 1646, p.20, E.343(12).

Independent "anti-petition" was canvassed as a counter against the Presbyterian petition and was originated by the Dukinfield congregation; in Norfolk a similar petition was set in motion, but was abandoned when the Presbyterians dropped theirs.¹ According to Edwards, the sectaries were promoting "sundry Petitions of dangerous consequence" in Kent, with the deliberate encouragement of Hugh Peter, "the new Archbishop of Canterbury".²

The wave of petition and counter-petition found its due reflection in the pamphlet literature. Independents and separatists found Presbyterian petitions to be clear examples of blind obedience to tyrannical ministers, and warned Presbyterians that since Parliament had dashed their "jure divino" claims, clerical dominance should soon die as well. For

"In case the Parliament should approve of that Government in the main, yet the Prelaticall and persecuting power of it, we may well presume (since they themselves may smart under it as well as the rest of the people) they will never *"

1. For the Cheshire petition see The Life of Adam Martindale, p.61, and T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, pp.166-7. Edwards accused the Independents of obtaining signatures through treachery; Martindale accused the Presbyterians of ministerial interference and forceful persuasion in their petition! For the Norfolk petition see Anon, Vox Populi, pp.15-6, and Anon, An Hue-and-Cry after Vox Populi, 25 September 1646, p.33ff, E.355 (13). This latter pamphlet also accused the Independents of trickery, maintaining that they held drunken orgies, and used the name of the County Committee falsely to encourage men to sign. As elsewhere, some of the Norfolk Independent petitioners were clearly Leveller in sympathy.

2. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, p.76. Peter was much maligned by Presbyterians; Jones accused him of withholding medals Parliament had entrusted to him for soldiers, unless the recipients made donations to Independent churches! Captain Jones, Plain English, p.10. Peter defended himself from aspersions in Mr. Peter's Last Report of the English Ward, 27 August 1646, E.351(12).

establish".¹

The March Assembly petition and the Parliamentary "Queries" were excellent ammunition for Independents. Saltmarsh observed that since the Assembly divines were obliged to petition Parliament in order to inform them that ministers and elders had a greater ecclesiastical power than their Commissioners, they had contradicted themselves,

"for can the State give them any Ecclesiasticall power, and have none in it selfe? so as according to these Principles the State is Ecclesiasticall as well as they, and so not to be denied the power of Commissioning with them".²

Rigid Presbyterians rushed to defend the Assembly from such "vilest and most injurious misrepresentations ... to make them bee thought proud and intending to exalt themselves above the Parliament"³ and informed Saltmarsh that the petition was

"fully consonant to the Principles both of the Presbyterian, and the Congregationall way; and what you alludge against it, is equally destructive to both".⁴

1. Anon, Tolleration Justified, and Persecution condemn'd, 29 January 1645-6, p.12, E.314(15). For remarks against the petitions, see Anon, Strong Motives, or Loving and Modest Advice, unto the Petitioners for Presbyterian Government, 10 October 1645, pp.1-7, E.304(15); K. Chidley, Good Counsell to the Petitioners for Presbyterian Government, 7 November 1645, n.p., B.M. 669f 10(39); H. Burton, Truth Shut out of Doores, 3 December 1645, sig. A2, E.311(1).
2. J. Saltmarsh, The Divine Right of Presbyterie, 7 April 1646, p.13, E.330(29).
3. M.W., J.D., S.B., An Admonition given to Mr. Saltmarsh, 17 August 1646, p.8, E.350(10).
4. Anon, A Plea for Congregationall Government ... against Mr. John Saltmarsh, 6 May 1646, p.30, E.336(9).

But Saltmarsh was unabashed, and joined eagerly in the new Independent sport of taunting the Assembly with its inability to answer the Parliaments' excellent "Queries".¹ At least one Presbyterian felt obliged to answer the "Queries" on the Assembly's behalf.²

The Remonstrance and the petitions and counter-petitions of the summer of 1646 produced a pamphlet warfare of their own. In London a whole bevy of defendants of both the city Remonstrance and the Independent petitions against it duly appeared, many Independent supporters displaying distinctly Leveller tendencies.³ Political propaganda was used to

1. E.g., J. Saltmarsh, Reasons for Unitie, Peace and Love, 17 June 1646, p.10, E.340(30); E. Drapes, A Plain and Faithfull Discovery of a Beame in Mr. Edwards his Eye, 21 August 1646, p.8, E.350(22). Drapes wondered "When will the Assembly answer the Questions propounded by the Parliament? I feare some tricks, and shifts now".
2. T. Bakewell, An Answer to those Questions, 17 June 1646, E.340(29).
3. The pro-Independent pamphlets against the Remonstrance were, (in order of purchase by Thomason); J. Sadler, A Word in Season, 18 May 1646, E.337(25); (this was given about in the city hall the day before the Remonstrance was presented); a Leveller work, The Interest of England Maintained, 8 June, E.340(5); Anon, A Moderate Reply to the Citie-Remonstrance, 12 June, E.340(20); A Wel-willer, A New Petition, 16 June, E.340(24); another Leveller work, Conscience Caution'd and so set at Libertie, 20 June, E.341(7); J. Price, The City Remonstrance Remonstrated, 24 July, E.345(18). This last was against the Presbyterian Bellamy.

The Presbyterian defences of the Remonstrance were; Anon, A Glasse for Weak-ey'd Citizens, 19 June, E.341(5) against "A New Petition"; J. Bellamy, A Vindication of the Humble Remonstrance, 6 July, E.343(2) against "A Moderate Reply" and "The Interest of England Maintained"; Anon, A Vindication of the London Remonstrance, 12 July E.343(12) against the same pamphlets as Bellamy's work; Captain Jones, Plain English, 17 August, E.350(11); J. Bellamy, A Justification of the City Remonstrance and its Vindication, 21 August, E.350(23). This last work was against Price, and was in part a personal vindication against aspersions by Price, his former friend.

blame opponents wfor creating dangerous breaches between the city and Parliament, and to discuss whether or not the city representative, by its Remonstrance, had betrayed its trust with the city collective and exceeded the terms of its charter. Presbyterians even found it necessary to defend the principle of the three estates in the government of England when anti-Remonstrants showed an inclination to favour the decisions of the House of Commons.¹ The Independents deeply regretted the religious content of the Remonstrance, with its emphasis on curbing separatist congregations and banning their members from public positions. This they believed not only to be against the Covenant, but a clear offence to tender consciences, protected by declaration of Parliament.² Even worse, Price was able to claim (with much ingenious use of scriptural proofs) that the entire Remonstrance was contrary to the Word of God, thus forcing Bellamy to submit an equally clever argument that in this case, the Parliament's Propositions of Peace to the King were against it as well.³

1. E.g. see J. Price, The City Remonstrance Remonstrated, pp.22,26; Anon, A Moderate Reply, sig. A2; J. Bellamy, A Vindication of the Humble Remonstrance p.21; J. Bellamy, A Justification of the City Remonstrance and its Vindication, p.34.

2. A Wel-willer, A New Petition, p.8; J. Price, The City Remonstrance Remonstrated, p.14. Presbyterians denied the charges - Bellamy was convinced Parliament's "Declaration" of 17 April did not hold out an indulgence to heretics - a term he left ambivalent. J. Bellamy, A Justification of the City Remonstrance and its Vindication, p.15.

3. Ibid., p.8; J. Price, The City Remonstrance Remonstrated, pp.11-3.

Independents in London and country alike censured the role of the ministers in the Presbyterian petitions, especially their disgraceful methods of forcing signatures. A Norfolk Independent stressed that the Presbyterian clergy were clearly setting a new war on foot - a "bellum Presbyteriale", in which their "dissenting brethren" were labelled as incendiaries, whilst they themselves could hurl at pleasure "balls of wild fire from their Pulpits and pens, setting on fire the whole Kingdome". He decried the Norwich ministers' attempts to put their petition before the city council, observing that the magistrates were being forced to do the clergy's bidding.¹ The Lancashire Independent pamphleteer felt his local Presbyterian petition to be plainly anti-Parliamentary.² The local Presbyterians defended their clergy with righteous indignation, claiming that they merely wished to ensure that magistrates fulfilled God's work, and were demanding no ecclesiastical power disallowed by God.³ But

1. Anon, Vox Populi, or The Peoples Cry against the Clergy, 25 August 1646, especially pp.3,5, E.351(7). In fact the Norwich council rejected both Presbyterian and Independent petitions placed before it, although the defence of the Presbyterian petition (Anon, An Hue-and-Cry after Vox Populi; see above p.473 note 1) claimed that the Presbyterian petition was abandoned merely because the Commons were busy suing for peace with the King (An Hue-and-Cry, p.35).

2. Anon, A New Birth of the City Remonstrance; or a Lanchashire (sic) Petition, 18 August 1646, p.4, E.350(12). He claimed that he had heard some M.P.s give a similar opinion.

3. Anon, An Hue-and Cry after Vox Populi, pp.18-9; "the well affected Citizens" of Norwich, Vox Norwici, 19 October 1646, E.358(4), (which also defended the Norwich Presbyterian clergy); J. Tilsley, A True Copie of the Petition of Lancashire, 31 August 1646, p.6, E.352(3). Tilsley claimed that the Lancashire petition was the work of the gentry, not the ministers.

Independents still exploited the reality of clerical influence and jure divino claims.

Pamphlet Controversies I: "The great Diana of Presbyterians";¹
Rigid Presbyterian power defended and opposed.

Just as the clash between rigid Presbyterians and Parliament had centred on the suspension issue, so in the academic debates of pamphleteers it is unreal to distinguish between the two closely connected matters of suspension and ecclesiastical or civil power. Marchamont Nedham believed that suspension in itself gave Presbyterians secular power;

"they pretend to hold the Consciences of Magistrate and People ... in judging of scandalous sins, which reaches almost to every action of humane life; so that all the people ... must at every Turn stoop like Asses, to be ridden by them and their Arbitrary Assemblies".²

Suspension was not the same as excommunication but merely a step towards it - a "minor excommunicatio" as the schoolmen had called it, as opposed to the "major excommunicatio" - but it was believed by the Erastians to be far more arbitrary.³

1. So called by W. Dell, Uniformity Examined, 11 February 1645-6, n.p., E.322(12). Cf. above, p.401.

2. M. Nedham, The True Character of a Rigid Presbyter, 1661, p.29.

3. Many Erastians accepted the need for excommunication upon the legal conviction of a serious crime. But suspension could be at the arbitrary will of ministers and elders (although obviously Presbyterians would try to ensure the justice of a sentence) and did not require a formal legal conviction. For the working of suspension see below, pp.608-11.

Nor were men loosely called Erastians in agreement over their attitude to suspension.¹ Some, like Prynne, supported excommunication but not suspension, whilst others disliked both; some disagreed with suspension by church officers, but were content for the magistrate to wield the power.² Others supported the status quo authorised by Parliament - that is, they believed the civil power should be the ultimate arbiter on appeals from suspension, and on sins unenumerated by specific ordinance as worthy of suspension. The latter two groups were particularly scorned by the rigid Presbyterians;

"I referre it to the impartiall Readers judgment, whether the Presbyterians by pleading for Suspension as of divine right, or the Erastians by crying out upon it under that notion, but conniving at it as an humane Ordinance, have more disturbed the peace of the Church".³

The great Erastian apologist for as mixed a communion as possible in a national church, and as such the bane of the rigid Presbyterians, was William Prynne.⁴ To the horror

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1. W. Prynne, A Vindication of Foure Serious Questions, 3 October 1645, preface, n.p., E.265(5).
 2. Coleman had the latter view; T. Coleman, Male Dicis Maledicis, 8 January 1645, p.16, E.315(2).
 3. Anon, A Vindication of Two Serious Questions, 20 October 1646, p.55, E.358(6).
 4. Prynne began the pamphlet debate with his Foure Serious Questions of Grand Importance Concerning Excommunication and Suspention from the Sacrament, 23 August 1645, E.261(8). He was opposed by Anon, An Antidote against Foure Dangerous Queries, 2 September 1645, E.265(2); by G. Walker, A Brotherly and Friendly Censure of the Errour of a dear Friend, 10 September 1645, E.265(4); and by H. Palmer, A Full Answer, 18 September 1645, E.302(1). Prynne was defended against the "Antidote" by Anon, The Antidote Animadverted by P., 17 September 1645, E.301(16); and wrote his own defence in W. Prynne, A Vindication of Foure Serious Questions, 3 October 1645, E.265(5). In May Prynne resumed the debate with his Diotrephes Catechised, 8 May 1646, E.510(2). This was duly opposed by R.D. (Drake), Sixteen Antiquaeries Propounded to the Catechiser of Diotrephes, 10 June 1646, E.510(6). Prynne replied in Suspention Suspended, 5 August 1646, E.510(12), and was answered by an anonymous author in A Vindication of Two Serious Questions, 20 October 1646, E.358(6).

of his opponents, he maintained that no-one could be suspended from the Lord's table who desired to be present, and that it was illogical and unscriptural to suspend from the Lord's Supper but not from other public ordinances of the Church.¹ Rigid Presbyterians recoiled at the thought of sharing Christ's holy food with sinners; Case even suggested that it was pointless to restrain seventy thousand sinners from the Lord's table if one was still admitted, since that one would crucify Christ anew!² But Prynne was certain that a strict admission to the Sacrament was the great Independent fallacy, and that the presence of sinners could never hinder the efficacy of the Sacrament to a true believer. Since God alone was the judge of error, no minister would fail in his duty by admitting sinners to the Sacrament, providing that he had warned them of the dangers of impenitent communion.³ Rigid Presbyterians argued in vain that the Scriptures that proved excommunication must also prove suspension, the "minor excommunicatio".⁴ Prynne was convinced that the Lord's Supper

1. W. Prynne, Four Serious Questions, sig A verso; W. Prynne, Suspention Suspended, p.14. Prynne's views applied to men who were not excommunicated; he felt suspension cheapened excommunication and made this ultimate censure less effective. In his opinion, excommunication should bar men from all church ordinances. This was not shared by many Presbyterians, who felt that an excommunicate could still hear the Word; G. Walker, A Brotherly and Friendly Censure, p.2. See also p.481 note 1.

2. T. Case, Sermon to the House of Commons, 22 August 1645, p.30, E.297(15).

3. W. Prynne, A Vindication of Four Serious Questions, pp.12,29. Prynne was supported by the Erastian minister, William Hussey, A Plea for Christian Magistracie, 20 December 1645, p.2, E.313(7). Rigid Presbyterians and Erastians engaged in much controversy as to whether Christ had allowed Judas at his Last Supper!

4. E.g. G. Walker, A Brotherly and Friendly Censure, pp.5,8; H. Palmer, A Full Answer, pp.7-8.

was a converting ordinance and that suspension from it was the one sure means of avoiding a sinner's repentance.¹ When Gillespie charged Coleman and other Erastians with attempting to avoid a sin-censuring church government, he was told that so far Presbytery's censorial powers had not noticeably improved Scotland's sin!²

The Independents should have approved the rigid Presbyterians' desire for a strict admission to the Sacrament, since as Dr. Lamont has said, this wish shattered the philosophical foundations of an all-embracing national church.³ Certainly the advocates of suspension believed that a purer Lord's Supper would demolish much of the opposition between Presbyterians and Independents, and be a means to further unity. At the opening of the Assembly Oliver Bowles had said that reconciliation might be achieved if the "promiscuous thrusting in of scandalous and ignorant persons upon the Sacrament could be avoided",⁴ and Walker stressed that mixed

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1. W. Prynne, A Vindication of Foure Serious Questions, p.40. He believed that the Lord's Supper was just as much a converting ordinance as the hearing of the Word. This raised much controversy with rigid Presbyterians; one argued that the Gospel should not be preached to those "past hope"; Anon, An Antidote against Foure Dangerous Queries, p.6. H. Palmer emphasised the difference between the two ordinances in A Full Answer, p.12.
 2. T. Coleman, A Brotherly Examination Re-examined, 1 November 1645, p.3, E.307(28).
 3. W.M. Lamont, Godly Rule, p.108. See above, p.438. One correspondent told Baxter that Stephen Marshall (in the 1650s) was worried about the anomaly of baptising all, yet refusing above half at the Sacrament. G.F. Nuttall, Richard Baxter, p.56.
 4. O. Bowles, Zeale for God's House Quickned, 7 July 1643, p.12, E.63(6).

communions were "the maine cause of the Schismes and separations of divers godly and zealous Christians from our Communion".¹ Gillespie complained that Erastian arguments would

"strengthen instead of silencing the Objections both of Separatists and Socinians, who have with more then a colour of advantage opened their mouthes wide against some Reformed Churches, for their not exercising of Discipline against scandalous and prophane persons, and particularly for not suspending them from the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper".²

A moderate Presbyterian observed that the Independents should not be censured for desiring purity in churches, since

"We shall all be in this point Independent in our desires and endeavours, and must be constrained to set up a Congregation within a Parish, when wee debarre one halfe from the Sacrament, and admit the other, which is like to be the case in many places".³

But many Erastians opposed suspension largely because of this very similarity with Independent principles. Prynne felt that "Over-rigid Presbyterians and Independents" were both "Dissenting Parties", and was convinced that the rigid Presbyterian censures would introduce, not suppress, the "Anarchicall Hydra or Bable of Independency".⁴ Even a Royalist mocked the Presbyterians for swallowing some of the Independents' left over doctrines, and warned that they may

1. G. Walker, A Brotherly and Friendly Censure, preface. Such views were shared by many rigid Presbyterians, including John Bastwick; Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part I, p.714 (sic. for p.165).

2. G. Gillespie, Sermon before the House of Lords, 27 August 1645, p.18, E.298(12).

3. E. Bowles, Manifest Truths, pp.71-2; see above, p.426 note3.

4. W. Prynne, Diotrephes Catechised, titlepage, pp. 3,12; W. Prynne, A Vindication of Foure Serious Questions, p.58.

be choked as a result.¹

In fact, the Independents opposed suspension on two principal and mutually opposing grounds. The first was to maintain that suspension was not a sufficient means of achieving purity and avoiding profanity amongst church members, an argument that resurrected their opposition to a national church. John Saltmarsh, the leading Independent pamphleteer against the "jus divinum" of Presbyterian authority,² mocked the Presbyterian divisions over the Lord's Supper and enquired

1. Mercurius Academicus, Week 2, Oxford 1645, p.15, E.313(12)
2. John Saltmarsh's pamphlets were a major feature of the year. In September he produced A New Quere, 30 September 1645, E.303(20), and in October he opposed Prynne in The Opening of ... A Vindication, 22 October 1645, E.305(22). Both were answered by the rigid Presbyterian John Ley, "The New Quere and Determination ... Examined, 12 December 1645, E.311(24). In January Saltmarsh published The Smoke in the Temple, 16 January 1645, E.316(14), which whilst ostensibly advocating accommodation between Presbyterians and Independents, showed his dislike of rigid Presbytery, and was denounced by Vicars as "a most foggie and suffocating ... Smoake" (J. Vicars, The Schismatick Sifted, p.29). Ley retorted in Light for Smoke, 11 April 1646, E.333(2). Saltmarsh had by then produced a clever reprint of Smectymnuan complaints against prelacy as a parallel to Independent pleas against Presbytery in Groanes for Liberty, 10 March 1645, E.327(20), and denounced the jus divinum heavily in The Divine Right of Presbyterie, 7 April 1646, E.330(29). This last pamphlet was motivated by the March Assembly petition. He answered Ley's "Light for Smoke" in The End of one Controversie, 17 April 1646, E.333(17), and produced Reasons for Unittie, Peace and Love, 17 June 1646, E.340(30) in reply to one L.M. who defended Ley in An After-Reckoning with Mr. Saltmarsh, 5 June 1646, E.339(20). Saltmarsh was also opposed by M.W., J.D., S.B. and others in An Admonition given to Mr. Saltmarsh, 17 August 1646, E.350(10).

"Whether all the differences about Excommunication be not from the want of true Church-constitution? And whether a National Church be not too wide for the Ordinances, and the Scabberd too big for the Sword".¹

Independents believed that churches should consist of pure Christians, not corrupt parishes - "as the Presbyterians themselves many of them practice in some Ordinances".² A separatist stressed that Christ gave no authority to suspend a sinner from just one ordinance when he enjoined complete and utter separation from the profane.³ Similarly an opponent of Edwards thought that the Presbyterians could well abandon their suspension controversy, since so many parishioners were never truly church-members;

"What is the matter of their National Church, living stones or dead rubbish? ... I desire he would not plead for a Nationall Church, nor power to suspend and excommunicate, for the Church hath nothing to doe to judge those that are without, seing there is so many in the Kingdome that were never of it".⁴

The second, contrary stance posed by Independent opponents of suspension was that a complete establishment of purity and uniformity was impossible without tyrannising over tender consciences. Henry Burton neatly summarised Independent

1. J. Saltmarsh, The Opening of ... A Vindication, p.27. This book contained a discourse between two friends, P. and C. These letters represented Presbyterian and Congregationalist, although Ley believed C. might stand for Coleman (a hint that Independents preferred Erastians to rigid Presbyterians); J. Ley, The New Quere and Determination ... Examined, p.45.
2. J. Saltmarsh, Groanes for Liberty, p.22.
3. R.C., Eight very Serious and Considerable Queries, 2 March 1645, p.5, E.506(14).
4. E. Drapes, A Plain and Faithfull Discovery of a Beame in Master Edwards his Eye, pp.11-2.

confusions between a desire for purity and liberty of conscience when he argued that there must either be "an honest godly Presbytery, who will pluck out every~~thing~~ that offends, or else ... a tender care of tender consciences".¹ One Independent supporter denounced the Parliamentary ordinance of suspension thus;

"Where had the Lords and Commons this large commission, to meddle in ye affaires of King~~Jesus~~ so far, as to determine to have a compleat establishment of puritie and unitie?"²

A Presbyterian pamphleteer soon discerned the reason why the Independents could argue both that separation was necessary to avoid profanity and that the arbitrary power of suspension was over-rigid;

"Because the lesse power the Presbyterians have to keep their Sacraments pure, the more will their way prevaile: which whether it be a conscientious principle for such to proceed by; let the world judge".³

He also suggested that the Independents were hopeful that the rigid Presbyterians might change their attitude to liberty of conscience if they were unhappy about unsatisfactory suspension rights; in any case, the Independents clearly chose their arguments to suit policy and not conscience.⁴

1. H. Burton, Vindiciae Veritatis, 22 September 1645, p.7, E. 302(13).

2. Anon (probably a separatist/Leveller), The Tender Conscience Religiously Affected, 17 September 1646, p.15, E.353(11).

A similar pamphlet said that purity of ordinances could not be achieved in this world; Anon, Dictated Thoughts upon the Presbyterians late Petitions for Compleat and Universall Power, 14 April 1646, E.M. 669f10(48).

3. Anon, Toichorueta; or Independents Razing their own Foundation, p.3. He claimed that Independents did not wish the Presbyterians to have power over any more sins than in the Parliamentary ordinances.

4. Ibid., p.6. One Independent actually did hope that the Presbyterians would also be forced to sue for a toleration; E. Drapes, A Plain and Faithfull Discovery of a Beame in Master Edwards his Eye, p.30.

Certainly rigid Presbyterians found that they had to justify their "tyrannical" power of suspension to Erastian and Independent alike. When Prynne denounced suspension as "arbitrary, tyrannical, papall, domineering over the Consciences, the spirituall Prbviledges of Christians", Palmer reproached him in bewilderment, wondering "Why, I pray, do you borrow this curteous language from the Independents, with which they most familiarly grace the Presbyteriall government?"¹ Rigid Presbyterians pointed out that the Independents were far more tyrannical than themselves, since Independents "suspended" whole parishes, not to mention sending many would-be communicants "supperless to bed".² They tried to convince Erastians that suspension in the hands of church officers was not the result of arbitrary power, but of the Word of God, which had clearly placed the power of the keys in the hands of godly presbyters "jure divino", to be removed neither by Independent nor civil magistrate.³ Since lay elders and clergy would share power, suspension would be scrupulously fair; church officers were "just as able to decide on what is scandal, without being arbitrary or tyrannical, as any Civil Court, Committees, or Commissioners".⁴

1. W. Prynne, Foure Serious Questions, sig.A; H. Palmer, A Full Answer, p.3.

2. J. Ley, Light for Smoke, p.35; T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part II, pp.12-13, (see also p. 151).

3. J. Ley, The New Quere and Determination ... Examined, pp.49-50; Anon, An Antidote against Foure Dangerous Querries, p.8; S. Rutherford, The Divine Right of Church Government and Excommunication, 5 March 1645-6, p.223, E.326(1); T. Bakewell, An Answer to those Questions, p.19.

4. The London ministers, Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici, sig. a2.

On the contrary, it was tyrannical not to allow suspension by presbyters;

"Whatsoever power takes from Christs Ministers the lawfull and necessary liberty to exclude from the Lord's table scandalous sinners openly impenitent, that is such a transcendent, arbitrary, unlimited power ... and no lesse then tyrannie and oppression of the consciences both of Ministers and their godly people".¹

Independent pamphleteers were politic enough to support the Parliamentary control of suspension, although logically they should have maintained their past theoretical and continuing practical position that censure should be the task of the congregation alone. But to avoid a greater Presbyterian power they were more than prepared to concede a magisterial control over scandalous sins. To the horror of rigid Presbyterians, who felt that the Independents were sinning against conscience in "promoting the businesse of Commissioners, & obstructing those wayes which might have prevented it",² John Saltmarsh and a Norwich Independent both managed to imply support for the Commissioners whilst avoiding actual reference to the concurrence of such an office with their own Independent principles.³ One Independent in the Summer Islands openly declared that in his view the civil magistrates' censure was God's own punishment, but that if

1. G. Walker, A Brotherly and Friendly Censure, p.10. Simon Ford consoled himself with the thought that people denying the right of suspension must be themselves unsuitable communicants. S. Ford, The Great Interest of States and Kingdomes, 6 October 1646, pp.20-1, E.356(1).

2. Anon, Toichoructa: or Independents Razing their own Foundation, p.5. John Vicars approved such sentiments in The Schismatick Sifted, p.31.

3. J. Saltmarsh, The Divine Right of Presbyterie, p.11; Anon, Vox Populi, p.15.

excommunication was still necessary, it belonged not to clergymen, but to the whole congregation.¹ Rigid Presbyterians, however, were firm in their condemnation of the unscriptural commissioners. Walker called them

"a meere invention of humane policie, which hath no example or warrant in Gods word ... Godly ministers generally are of this judgement, that their approving and yeelding to the practice thereof, is a breach of the Nationall league and Covenant".²

Francis Cheynell begged Parliament to "free us from the much feared Commissioners". Another Presbyterian, more realistically, tried to adopt his own theoretical compromise, stating that none denied the lay commissioners power to enquire after sinners but the Word allowed only presbyteries to suspend people from the sacraments.³

Some Erastians, who would have preferred no suspension at all, were also obliged to compromise with the reality of Parliamentary ordinances that established some censure in Presbyterian hands, and to count it fortunate that the civil authority had ultimate control. Prynne felt that most of the evils of suspension would be remedied "provided, that this power be claimed by no divine Right, but only by Parliamentary

1. R. Norwood, Considerations tending to Remove the present Differences, 16 December 1646, pp.5-7, E.366(5).

2. G. Walker, A Modell of the Government of the Church, 29 June 1646, p.25, E.342(3).

3. F. Cheynell, A Plot for the good of Posterity, sermon before the House of Commons, 25 March 1646, preface, E.329(11); R.D. (Drake), Sixteen Antiquaeries, p.3. Henry Parker later stressed that Parliament was right to have "artificially declined" rigid Presbyterian power; The Trojan Horse of the Presbyteriall Government Unbowelled, 1 September 1646, pp. 1-2, E.353(1).

authority and humane institution".¹ However both Prynne and Coleman believed that it would be better if there was a complete dissociation between the government of the church, including censure, and the ministerial duty of the church, preaching and teaching, which was the proper function of the clergy. Church censure was anyway ineffective without the support of the civil authority.² Prynne, Coleman and Hussey, the three great pamphleteer supporters of this separation between the corrective and doctrinal functions of the church,³ all believed that this was the only means to achieve a godly reformation and a unified national church. Prynne felt that if the ministers would preach against sins, and Parliament would prescribe severe temporal punishments for sinners, there would be a greater reformation of church and state in six months than all the church censures so bitterly contested would achieve in an age.⁴ Hussey lamented that if the Westminster Assembly had been concerned less with the corrupting concept of governmental power and more with doctrine, the Reformation would have been speedier. The

1. W. Prynne, A Vindication of Foure Serious Questions, p.51.

2. It was not clear what the role of the lay elder would be if church officers were not to be concerned with government, but many Presbyterians disliked this office.

3. Coleman was the first to make this distinction; T. Coleman, Hopes Deferred and Dashed, p.26. For this sermon see above, p.332.

4. W. Prynne, A Vindication of Foure Serious Questions, pp.57-8. He later advocated an active committee to punish heretics and sectaries, which would "more suppress them in one month, then all Ecclesiasticall Judicatories in an age"; Diotrephes Catechised, p.8.

issue of church government had only precipitated Independent dissent, but with all hope of governing power ended, "let them (Independents and Anabaptists) be admitted, nay condemned to spend their times in Schooles, and not permitted to seduce the people".¹ The Presbyterian-Independent conflict had clearly promoted the appeal of Erastianism to Hussey, and another writer agreed that an Erastian solution was the only means of forever expirpating quarrels between Presbyterians and Independents.²

The Erastians therefore questioned the whole relationship of the civil magistrate and ministers or church officers in the structure of the church. This resulted in a furious debate between Erastians and rigid Presbyterians centring on the concept of the divine right of a separate church government in the hands of church officers. The Erastian pamphleteer protagonists, Coleman, Hussey and Prynne, were opposed by rigid Presbyterians Gillespie, Ley, and Rutherford.³ Although

1. W. Hussey, A Plea for Christian Magistracie, preface. Hussey thought church assemblies should only discuss doctrinal matters, and never take votes.

2. J.M., The Difference about Church Government ended, 30 May 1646, pp.8-11, E.339(8).

3. Coleman's controversial July sermon was opposed by Gillespie's own sermon to the Lords on 27 August (virtually the last sermon preached by a Scot to the Long Parliament); A Brotherly Examination, E.298(12), and also by an anonymous pamphleteer in A Brief View of Mr. Coleman, his New Modell of Church Government, 27 October 1645, E.307(8). Coleman duly replied in A Brotherly Examination Re-examined, 1 November 1645, E.307(28), and was answered by Gillespie in Nihil Respondes, 13 November 1645, E.309(9). John Ley also devoted space to Coleman in his The New Quere and Determination... Examined, whilst Hussey's defence of Coleman appeared in December (A Plea for Christian Magistracie). Coleman answered Gillespie's last work in Male Dicis Maledicis, 8 January 1645, E.315(2), but met a quick reply from Gillespie in Male Audis, 24 January 1645, E.317(16). Samuel Rutherford published The Divine Right of Church-Government and Excommunication, 5 March 1645, E.326(1).

Thomas Coleman always maintained his own essential Presbyterianism, and claimed to have the support of ministers as well as laymen; he became nevertheless to many rigid Presbyterians a figure more hated than the Independents or sects.¹ He was charged with fomenting the Erastian controversy, opposing church unity and reformation, abusing Parliament, undervaluing the Westminster Assembly, and destroying "the whole Fabrick of all Ecclesiasticall Government, by subverting the Pillars of it".² His opponents ridiculed Coleman's valid observation that the cause of church disunity in the Assembly was the bias of two systems of church government;

"Two parties came byased, the one with a Nationall determination, the other with a Congregationall ingagement. The reverend Commissioners from Scotland were for the Jus Divinum of the Presbyteriall. The Independents for the Congregationall government. How should either move, where should they both meet?"³

3. cont'd. In June, George Walker attacked the Erastian viewpoint in A Modell of the Government of the Church, 29 June 1646, E.342(3). Gillespie published in August his great defence of church government, Aaron's Rod Blossoming, 4 August 1646, E.347. The controversy was to continue long after August 1646 - Gillespie was answered in October by an anonymous Erastian, Nil Probas, 7 October 1646, E.356(6), and the London ministers published their climactic Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici in December, E.364(8).

1. Baillie was very rude to Coleman, calling him "a man reasonably learned, but stupid and inconsiderate, half a pheasant (sic) and of small estimation", and could not disguise his pleasure when Coleman died in March 1645-6, Baillie, ii,195. Coleman himself maintained that he was denounced as a knave and fool in London Presbyterian meetings, and protested against Presbyterian "prelatical tricks". The charge was denied by Ley in The New Quere and Determination ... examined, p.22. Coleman claimed that some divines visiting London supported him, and that he had followers in "the Assembly, City, Cauntry and Scotland too". Certainly Hussey, minister at Chislehurst, was an Erastian. It is difficult to say how extensive Coleman's support was among the clergy, but he undoubtedly had more lay support than clerical. See T. Coleman, A Brotherly Examination Re-examined, pp.2,4,11,12.

2. Anon, A Brief View of Mr. Coleman, pp.34,35(quoted). See also G. Gillespie, Nihil Respondes, pp.17-9. Coleman denied these charges in Male Dicis Maledicis, pp.17-8.

3. T. Coleman, Hopes Deferred and Dashed, p.24. Gillespie denied that the Presbyterians were biased; Nihil Respondes, p.21.

They thought even less of his four rules for church-unity, which Coleman intended to lessen the impact of "jure divino" claims by ensuring that these should only be made on clear scriptural precept. This scheme would reject the grounds presented by Presbyterians for lay elders and church suspension as insufficient for a "jus divinum".¹ For rigid Presbyterians believed that Coleman, in demanding that there should be laid "no more burden of government upon the shoulders of Ministers, then Christ hath plainly laid upon them",² and in stating that the civil magistrate should govern the church instead, was himself denying "not the Independency of the Church-Government upon the civill Government ... (but) the very thing it selfe, a Church Government".³ Coleman maintained in vain that he was not against church government, since he used the word "government" in a variety of senses to suit his own arguments. The crucial distinction between corrective government and doctrinal government was clearly apparent in his writings, and

1. Coleman's first rule was "Establish as few things Jure Divino as possible"; the second was that all precepts held out as divine institutions should have clear scriptural proofs. Rigid Presbyterians hastily defended the lay elder and church censure, and Gillespie argued that since Parliament had approved these aspects of the Presbyterian government, Coleman was in fact denigrating Parliament. T. Coleman, Hopes Deferred and Dashed, pp.24-5; G. Gillespie, Male Audis, p.3.

2. T. Coleman, Hopes Deferred and Dashed, p.25. This was Coleman's third rule for church unity; his fourth was the civil control of government.

3. G. Gillespie, A Brotherly Examination, p.35.

he awarded the ministers government only in the latter sense.¹ He even stated that if in 1641 Parliament had established county commissioners as an "interim Magistracy" for church government, religious divisions would have been avoided.²

Rigid Presbyterians poured opprobrium upon this divine who was denouncing Christ's own divine right of governing his church. They claimed, with much truth, that Coleman was excluding lay elders from church government as well as ministers, but that instead of acknowledging this fact, he implied "an innate enmity between the Clergie and the Laity".³ Although Gillespie hinted that rigid Presbyterians would not mind if Parliament made no formal declaration of the "jus divinum" of the power of church officers, this principle was vigorously upheld.⁴ Pamphleteers provided Coleman with scriptural proofs which seemed to them abundantly clear evidence for a church government distinct from the civil, but professed that they could find none in favour of Coleman's idea

1. T. Coleman, A Brotherly Examination Re-examined, pp.8-10.

2. Ibid., p.10. See above, p.38.

3. G. Gillespie, A Brotherly Examination, p.36.

4. Ibid., p.32.

5. Coleman based his claims on the example of Israel, and from various New Testament texts (e.g. 1 Cor.v. and Matthew xviii) which could be variously interpreted. Prynne provided many Old Testament proofs for Erastianism in Diotrephes Catechized, pp.4-7. For an example of the Presbyterian defences of the church government distinct from the civil, see G. Walker, A Modell of the Government of the Church, pp.3-26. Rigid Presbyterians were particularly appalled at Coleman's suggestion that as few things be established jure divino as possible (e.g. Anon, A Brief View of Mr. Coleman, pp.5-7), although Coleman later argued that this in fact meant no more than "as many as possible"; T. Coleman, A Brotherly Examination Re-examined, p.5. Like the Independents, Coleman discovered that the standard reproach of rigid Presbyterians for divergence from their view was the charge of Covenant-breaking. Gillespie made this aspersion in A Brotherly Examination, p.40, and Coleman defended himself in A Brotherly Examination Re-examined, pp.13-4.

They reiterated their position that the civil magistrate had a part to play in church affairs, as Cranford felt that only "nullifudians" would deny this.¹ But ecclesiastical and political governments were co-ordinate, not identical, and just as the Presbytery would not interfere in secular affairs, "the Politicall Magistrate is not the Proper Subject of this (ecclesiastical) Power".² If he were, then Christ and the Apostles would have preached rebellion by setting up their church government, a blasphemous assertion.³ For rigid Presbyterians were convinced that

"we give unto the civill Magistrate as much as the word of God giveth them, and if any give more, the more shame for them; there is more flattery than honesty in it".⁴

Rutherford was even more explicit;

"Christian Rulers would not do well to venture upon Eternity, Wrath, the Judgement to come, confiding on the poor Plea of an Erastian Distinction, to incroach upon the Prerogative Royal of Jesus Christ".⁵

Erastians retorted vigorously that God had indeed intended the magistrate to have control over church government. John Lightfoot felt the Erastian distinction between doctrinal and corrective power to be logical and self-evident, since

1. J. Cranford, Haereseo-Machia, preached 1 February 1645-6, p.48, E.329(1).

2. London ministers, Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici, p.35. See also above, pp.51, 266-9, 396-7.

3. T. Bakewell, An Answer to those Questions, p.10.

4. S. Gibson (Assembly-member), The Ruine of the Authors and Fomentors of Civill Warres, sermon before the Commons, 24 September 1645, p.12, E.302(27). A similar argument had been used against the Independents, see above, p.267.

5. S. Rutherford, The Divine Right of Church-Government and Excommunication, dedicatory epistle.

"The Ministry by the preaching of the word, and by prayer, striveth to cast the devill out: and if it doe it, well, but if it cannot doe it, it can goe no further; and then the Magistracy commeth in and bindeth him that hee trouble not others".¹

Hussey declared that thirty years of study had fully convinced him of the merit of the Erastian position. Electors did not employ double standards when choosing M.P.s and church officials, so that M.P.s should be wise, prudent men, well able to govern the church according to Christ's intentions. Learning, teaching and baptising should be work enough for the clergy if they only began to do these tasks properly.² Coleman himself reminded divines that there was a time when rigid Presbyterians had been happy to praise the role of the magistrate in governing the church; their words had evidently belied their anti-Erastian opinions!³ Mocking Gillespie's denial that Parliament's vicegerentship in church government was derived from Christ, Coleman deduced that Gillespie must mean that it was inspired by the devil;

"If this be Presbyterian government, the Lord save our Kingdome from it; and grant to me to spend the remainder of my dayes under such a Magistracy as manage the same under Christ and for Christ".⁴

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1. J. Lightfoot, Sermon before the House of Commons, 26 August 1645, pp.21-2, E.298(14).
 2. W. Hussey, A Plea for Christian Magistracie, pp.9,13,39-44.
 3. T. Coleman, Male Dicis Maledicis, pp.37-9. See above, p.51.
 4. T. Coleman, A Brotherly Examination Re-examined, p.21.

Not that Coleman doubted the historical inevitability of the triumph of his principle;

"My New Modell is older than his (i.e Gillespie's) father, and will be the Modell of Englands Church government when we are both brethren to the wormes".¹

Logically, as many rigid Presbyterians realised, the Independents should have supported the concept of a church government jure divino, even though they disputed the claims of the Presbyterian way to be such. Francis Taylor observed

"This opinion of denying of all Church-Government distinct from Civill ... so it crosseth all the Protestant Churches at this time, both Presbyterian, and Independent ... The rigid Presbyterians say their particular form of Government is Jure divino, of God's institution. The strict Independents say as much of theirs. Neither of which appears to our Governours out of Scripture".²

When the "secular sect" had appeared in Warwickshire, it was reported that "God hath raised the spirits of all Conscientious presbyterians and Independents to oppose this Secular this Jesuiticall faction".³ One Presbyterian later claimed that the Independents were even more rigidly "jure divino" than the Presbyterians, since he believed the Independents were gathering churches on the basis of a circumstantial, and not a fundamental issue of Christianity.⁴

1. T. Coleman, A Brotherly Examination Re-examined, p.22.
2. F. Taylor, God's Covenant the Churches Plea, sermon to the Commons, 29 October 1645, pp.25,27, E.307(20).
3. The Warwick Scout, 14 May 1645, f4 verso, E.284(14) See above, p.281.
4. Anon, The Pulpit Incendiary Anatomised, 13 May 1648, p.13, E.442(5).

But whilst Gillespie was right to warn Coleman that Independent principles were not against a divine right, he was nevertheless wrong to state that "the Presbyterians and Independents are both equally interested against the Erastian Principles".¹ For Coleman felt that Independents were preferable to rigid Presbyterians, since their emphasis on congregational purity, rejection of synodical authority, and avowed support for the magistrate's power in religion seemed to him to prove "The Independents Church-power ... to be but doctrinally, working only in a spirituall way in the name of Christ".² It certainly suited congregationalists to acknowledge civil authority if they could gain a toleration thereby. Gillespie was too naive in assuming that Presbyterian and Independents could ever have united on the jus divinum issue, for if this were true, his other assertion, that Coleman had ruined Presbyterian-Independent unity, would have been a non sequitur.³ As it was, Independents were happy to leap on the Erastian bandwagon.

Independent pamphleteers thus reiterated former professions of their preservation of magisterial power and supported the Erastian claim that the jure divino principles of rigid Presbyterians would place the power of presbyteries above the

1. G. Gillespie, Nihil Respondes, p.20. See also G. Gillespie, Male Audis, p.3.

2. T. Coleman, Male Dicis Maledicis, p.19. See also T. Coleman A Brotherly Examination Re-examined, p.15. Gillespie felt that the Independents had deliberately misled Coleman! Male Audis, p.3.

3. G. Gillespie, A Brotherly Examination, p.33.

secular state.¹ Although John Goodwin denied that Independents were exploiting the fact that Presbyterians were in conflict with each other,² he declared his own and the Independents' opposition only to the rigid men "who violently contend for the High and Anti-Parliamentary way of Presbytery", not those who favoured a Parliamentary Erastian Presbytery, since between the two "there is a difference not much unlike that, which is between the Lyon and the Lamb".³ Goodwin mocked the rigid Presbyterians for pretending to praise magisterial authority when their principles denied it, and he was echoed by his follower John Price, who told Bellamy that he was

"halfe-facing ... for Presbytery: viz jure humano, and so left to the wisdom of Parliament ... this is the profession of your lips, and yet (you act and that to the utmost) with those that hold it Jure divino ... let the Crowne be set upon the head of Civill authority ... and yet your hands endeavour to lift it up and fix it upon the Temples of the Episcopall Corporation the London Ministers sitting at Sion College".⁴

Independents decided that rigid Presbyterians would not be satisfied until Parliament was their slave, and claimed that Independency alone protected the principle of "Salus populi suprema lex".⁵ Henry Burton even warned rigid Presbyterians to

1. For such arguments see above, pp.266-9, 401.

2. J. Goodwin, Hagiomastix, 5 February 1646-7, p.111, E.374(1).

3. Ibid., preface. His version of "Erastian" Presbytery was one that tolerated tender consciences.

4. J. Goodwin, Anapologesiates Antapologias, 27 August 1646, p.66, E.352(5); J. Price, The City Remonstrance Remonstrated, p.19.

5. E. Drapes, A Plain and Faithfull Discovery of a Beame in Master Edwards his Eye, pp.18-9. For further Independent use of this principle, see below, pp.561-2.

"consider well of it, and beware of falling into a Premunire, if you be not deep in it already ... when once a superior power ... consisting of more Clergy-men, then of Lay, is predominant over the Parliament of England".¹

Independents and Erastians alike were pleased to raise the spectre of clerical opposition to laymen, although Parliament would ensure that unlike the Scottish practice, lay elders would outnumber the clergy in presbyteries.²

The Independents were particularly anxious to present the rigid Presbyterians as tyrannically forcing the Parliament to accept their version of uniformity and prejudging the magistrate against a toleration - hardly a new complaint, but one which assumed a new significance in the context of the jure divino dispute. Presbyterians were well aware of the dangers inherent in the persecuting image Independents were so fond of fastening on them, and of the parallels made between them and Papal or Episcopal clergy.³ For this reason they tried to stress that their jure divino claims for church discipline were made merely out of a concern for the spiritual welfare of their flocks, and not through any insatiable thirst for authority.⁴ Ministers and elders would be examined for

1. H. Burton, Conformitie's Deformity, 20 October 1646, p.20, E.358(20). John Saltmarsh had made the same point in The Divine Right of Presbyterie, p.7, and received a reply from M.W., J.D., S.B., and others in An Admonition given unto Mr. Saltmarsh, pp.12-3.
2. Cf above, p.493. For Parliament's order see below, p.588.
3. Innumerable examples could be given of these Independent attacks on Presbyterians, e.g. J. Goodwin, Anapologesiates Antapologias, p.107; E. Drapes, A Plain and Faithfull Discovery of a Beame in Master Edwards his Eye, p.5, and the Remonstrance literature.
4. E. Reynolds, Self-Deniall, 1645, p.33, E.308(22).

their worth, so that only the truly spiritual and non-avaricious men would wield church-power. But the taunts of tyranny struck home, and eventually by 1647 they had so worn down one supporter of church censure that he acquiesced in magisterial surveillance to enable Presbyterian discipline to be settled without "those scarcrows of inconveniences from the tyranny of it ... fomented and blown up by the envious enemies of it".¹

A good tactic for Presbyterians anxious to defend the jure divino church power from civil encroachment was to point out the inconsistencies in Independent arguments. For whilst the Independents were denouncing the divine right of Presbytery, they continued to promote the divine right of congregationalism! The Independent Bartlet agreed with the London ministers that a congregation had a divine right of government, but he could not accept that presbyteries had a similar power since there could not be two divine rights "especially when the Classicall divine right (as they call it) over the Congregationall, is merely humane"². Vicars quoted John Goodwin's early works to prove that Independents had not always been so fond of

1. Anon, Touching the Subject of Supremacy in Causes Ecclesiastical, 15 July 1647, p.8, E.398(14).

2. E.g. J. Saltmarsh, The Divine Right of Presbyterie, p.3.

For earlier manifestations of such inconsistency see above, pp.395-

3. W. Bartlet, A Model of the Primitive Congregational Way, 25 March 1647, p.48, E.381(17).

Parliament. When Parliament had been most favourable to
Presbytery,

"Alas for the Parliament to take upon it the ordering of
Church Government, or Church discipline, O this was a most
high and intollerable presumption in them, this was a most
bold intrenching upon Christs royall prerogative ... and
authority over the consciences (for sooth) of Christs free
born Holy ones".

But now the Independents desired a toleration and a
Parliamentary curb on Presbyterian discipline, their tone
had seemingly changed; "are not all these men brave and
bold consciencious time-servers and time-observers for their
own ayms and interests?"¹ The rigid Presbyterians were
aided by the fact that Independent supporters could not hide
their own real limitations on magisterial power, despite
the Erastian marriage of convenience. When Martin Marpriest
praised Independency for preserving magisterial power "within
its own compass", he was promising no more than the rigid
Presbyterians.² Henry Burton had certainly not revised his
thoughts on the necessity of separating from a profane church
that was awaiting the civil magistrate's reformation.³ John
Price, whilst convinced that Parliament could interfere in a

1. J. Vicars, The Schismatick Sifted, pp.22,25.

2. M. Marpriest, Divine Observations upon the London-Ministers
Letter against Toleration, 24 January 1645-6, p.12, E.317(15).

3. H. Burton, Truth, still Truth, though Shut out of Doores,
9 January 1645-6, p.13, E.315(6).

church government like Presbytery which meddled in affairs of state, was equally sure that no magistrate could oppose the desires of the saints. Similarly Thomas Goodwin warned of "the danger that is unto States, to deale otherwise then well with the Saints, God's anointed".¹

Independents continued to stress the divine right of conscience and the necessity of toleration, whilst rigid Presbyterians decided that the necessity of uniformity was another argument in favour of their jure divino power. Edwards moaned that the longer Reformation was delayed, the greater the sectaries' hope

"that the Church Government and a Toleration might be born and brought forth together as twins in one day, and so go hand in hand, and this they were labouring for now, the monster of Toleration".²

Presbyterian arguments reached their height in the London ministers' letter against toleration, which was duly denounced by a fresh crop of Independent pamphlets.³ In defence of toleration the radical Independents even took to pictorial effect and sparked an "illustration controversy", whereby some radical Independent pamphlets were prefixed by a picture of a presbyter, suitably positioned beside a Pope and a prelate, stabbing the bleeding heart of tender conscience

1. J. Price, Independency Accused and Acquitted, 12 August 1645, pp.9-11; T. Goodwin, The Great Interest of States and Kingdomes, sermon to the Commons, 25 February 1645-6, p.7, E.325(4).

2. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, p.64. For an example of one of many sermons urging uniformity according to the Covenant and opposing liberty of conscience and Erastianism, see C. Burges, The Necessity of Agreement with God, sermon to the Lords, 29 October 1645, E.307(19).

3. The London ministers' letter to the Assembly dated 18 December 1645 from Sion College E.314(8) was opposed by Anon, Certaine Additionall Reasons, 15 January 1645-6, E.316(10); by Henry
(cont'd overleaf).

with his dagger.¹ Enraged, the Presbyterians retaliated by devising a picture depicting a Pope, a Bishop and a "profane libertin" smiting an honest heart, in a pamphlet which indicated that the Presbyterians were seeking to redress the harm the Marpriest-type pamphlets had done to their cause among common folk.² Even a moderate pamphlet adopted the illustrative technique, showing "a godly dissenting Brother" and "a godly Brother of the Presbyterian way" offering each other the right hand of fellowship.³ In their pleas for toleration the Independents were nevertheless careful to

3. cont'd. Burton in part of his Truth, still Truth, though Shut out of Doores; by Martin Marpriest, Divine Observations upon the London Ministers Letter, and by Anon, Toleration Justified and Persecution Condemn'd, 29 January 1645, E.319(15). The last two were very radical. The London ministers were supported by a well-wisher in Anti-Toleration, 16 April, 1646, E.333(12).

1. Pamphlets with this illustration were Anon, Dictated Thoughts, 14 April 1646, B.M. 669f10(48); Anon, The Tender Conscience Religiously Affected, 9 May 1646, E.337(4), and Anon, Several Votes of Tender Conscience, 23 July 1646, B.M. 669f.10(68). A different illustration was affixed to a pamphlet called The Watchman's Warning Piece, which appeared before August 1646, E.354(10). This showed a man assailed by a Dragon (Pope), a Leopard (Prelate), and a Serpent (an "Anti christian Presbyter"), together with a verse predicting the Presbyter's doom.

2. This picture was affixed to Anon, Proper Persecution, (a reply to Dictated Thoughts), 22 December 1646, B.M. 669f.10(104). Another pamphlet, Reall Persecution, abused the Independents and added a picture of "an English Persecutor or a Foole Ridden Anti-Presbyterian Sectary", 13 February 1646-7, B.M. 669f.10(114). Thomas Edwards snarled that the truest picture he knew of the Independents had been drawn in Holland, with God in the mouth of an Independent, and the Devil in possession of his heart! T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part II, p.158.

3. Anon, A Pious and Seasonable Perswasive to the Sonnes of Zion, 11 March 1646-7, B.M. 669f.10(118). The picture also bore the caption "Let not the world devide those whom Christ hath Joyned".

balance claims that Christ alone was lord of the conscience¹ with reminders of the advantages that would accrue to the state by a toleration. Saltmarsh dealt yet another blow for the concept of a pure church by vowing

"sure I am, that State is most free, where the conscience is least straitned, where the Tares and the Wheat grow together till the harvest".²

Past arguments, future hopes, present necessities and inconsistencies were all revealed in the Presbyterian- Independent conflict as revised by the politics of the Erastian controversy

Pamphlet Controversies II: The Year of Gangrene.

The jus divinum debate only enhanced personal recriminations, scandals and slanders, to provide a year's pamphlet warfare between Presbyterians and Independents that reached a zenith of venom and vitality. There were the usual appeals to moderation and accommodation, but it is noteworthy that even these became fainter and fewer after the abandoning of the accommodation committee in March. This does not mean that their significance should be doubted, as among them was perhaps the greatest work to emerge from the accommodation

1. E.g. H. Burton, The Peace-Maker, 23 March 1645-6, p.10, E.329(5).

2. J. Saltmarsh, A New Quere, p.6.

literature of the entire Presbyterian-Independent debate - Jeremiah Burroughes' "Irenicum". In this Burroughes sought to denigrate dividing principles (of which uniformity was the first), dividing distempers and dividing practices, and to recommend "joining" principles, considerations, graces and practices in their place. Just because Congregationalists differed from Presbyterians over the power of synods, must one difference invalidate their agreement on other issues? Surely

"the way to peace is not the necessity of coming up one to another, because the thing is little, but the loving, and peaceable, and brotherly carriage of one towards another, because the difference is but small".¹

But such appeals certainly fell on deaf ears, and presupposed a spirit of compromise that was entirely lacking among most divines at this stage. As one pamphleteer said, "Every week, nay almost every day, the Presse is delivered of something, that is like a denunciation of Warre between one Brother and another".²

The true spirit of the year was personified by Thomas Edwards, whose own anti-Independent crusade reached a zenith of vituperation and provoked responses in similar style. Other contentious pamphlet disputes were also raging on a personal

1. J. Burroughes, Irenicum, 24 October 1645, p.47, E.306(9). Burroughes deliberately used the word "congregational" in this work to avoid the emotive content of the word "Independent".
 2. Anon, The Reconciler, 6 November 1646, p.1, E.360(15).

and public level; William Prynne and John Bastwick were still under Independent fire for their pamphlets of the preceeding twelve months.¹ Bastwick in particular was the subject of a vigorous controversy over his personal integrity, his design in writing against Independents and his divisive style; Lilburne, Sadler, Burton and two anonymous writers, S.E. and E.A. all wrote denunciations of Bastwick with varying degrees of malice and contempt.² S.E. purported to be a Presbyterian, and implied that Bastwick aroused disapproval within the Presbyterian ranks, although a defender of Bastwick doubted if this was true.³ Burton denounced his former friend as the greatest "Incendiary" in the kingdom, and decided Bastwick's head needed examining!⁴ Whilst Bastwick's supporters retorted that

"the Independents grand designe is to use all meanes publikely to reproach, disgrace, revile, defame, vilify and falsly accuse this worthy sufferer and faithfull servant of the Lord",

1. For the pamphlet warfare between Prynne, Bastwick, and Lilburne, see above, p.443 note 1. Prynne was attacked by Nathaniel White in Truth Gloriously Appearing, 14 October 1645, E.304(26), a defence of the churches in the Summer Islands from aspersions in Prynnes "A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring-Blasing Stars".

2. J. Lilburne, The Copy of a Letter; J. Sadler, Flagellum Flagelli, 1 September 1645, E.298(25); S.E., A Friendly Check to Dr. Bastwick, 11 September 1645, E.300(18); H. Burton, Vindiciae Veritatis, 22 September 1645, E.302(13); and E.A., The Presbyterian Brother and Sister, 1 November 1645, E.308(2). The latter was probably separatist, and was supported as late as March 1646-7 in A Sudden Al-arme to all the quarters of the chiefe Presbyterian Captain, E.379(8) against Bastwick's new work, The Storming of the Anabaptists Garrisons, which Thomason acquired on 3 June 1647, E.390(23).

3. B.S., Innocency Cleered, 13 October 1645, E.265(7). He claimed that the Independents had been boasting that a pamphlet would discredit Bastwick in this way; maybe S.E. was a "Presbyterian Independent". S.E. could stand for the Independent Samuel Eaton.

4. H. Burton, Vindiciae Veritatis, pp25, 19(sic for 27).

the Independents were doing no more than providing Bastwick with a taste of his own medicine.¹

Meanwhile local conflicts were reaching a wider press. Henry Burton engaged in a pamphlet war with the parish church of Aldermanbury and its incumbent Edmund Calamy, who had become so irritated with Burton's lecture in their church, in which Independent ideas were propounded, that they had locked him out, an event which provoked censure and aspersions on all sides.² Animosity between Presbyterians and Independents in the North-west produced a public controversy between Richard Hollingworth, Samuel Eaton and Timothy Taylor.³ On a more general level John Vicars continued to take a vindictive delight in modelling himself upon Thomas Edwards, and detailing as many of the Independents' "tricks", "double-dealings" and "new lights" as he could.⁴ But he could hardly expect to

1. B.S., Innocency Cleered, p.4. B.S. believed Burton had taken offence at Bastwick's gibe about a certain "white basket-hilted beard". Bastwick was also defended by J. Bernard, The Independents Catechisme, 5 August 1645, E.1186(5).

2. See below, pp.637-8.

3. Richard Hollingworth's "An Examination of Sundry Scriptures" (see above, p.385 note 3) was answered now by Eaton and Taylor in A Defence of Sundry Positions, 8 November 1645, E.308 (27). The Presbyterian Hollingworth retorted in Certain Querres, 17 January 1645-6, E.316(16), and was again opposed by Eaton and Taylor in The Defence of Sundry Positions ... Justified, 29 July 1646, E.346(4). Hollingworth later replied again in A Rejoynder, 4 June 1647, E.391(1).

4. J. Vicars' The Schismatick Sifted, 22 June 1646, E.341(8) was intended to augment his earlier "Picture of Independency". It was opposed by defenders of the Independents; M. Nedham, Independencie No Schisme, 16 July 1646, E.344(24), and T.C., The Schismaticke Sifted Through a Sive, 30 June 1646, E.342(4).

surpass the great master of this art, Edwards himself.

Between February 1645-6 and December 1646 Edwards published three huge pamphlets entitled "Gangraena", each one seemingly filled with more vituperation, hatred, slander and bias than the last. His purpose was to relate as many errors, heresies and blasphemies as he could discover himself, or learn from correspondents, with no scruples spared in the gathering and handling of evidence.¹ The tenets of Independents and separatists were indiscriminately catalogued along with gross blasphemies, immoralities and clear heresies as a matter of policy, since Edwards reckoned that there were not above fifty "pure" Independents.² Asking his readers to provide him with additional ammunition, Edwards unilaterally declared war on "heresy", defying the Independents to battle;

"I well understand that I put my hand into a Hornet's nest, and shall raise up against me all the spirit of separation, schisme and error thorewout (sic) the Kingdome, from the highest Seeker to the lowest Independent: but I value it not".³

Edwards believed that his works were welcomed by godly men,

1. Edwards' use of anonymous letters was much criticised by Independents; Saltmarsh wondered if he wrote them himself! J. Saltmarsh, Groanes for Liberty, p.26. John Goodwin believed one to be false; J. Goodwin, Cretensis, 19 March 1645-6, p.6, E.328(22). Edwards claimed that his letters were all genuine, and even named the authors of some, (Gangraena Part II, pp.53-6), but he later acknowledged that one was false, Gangraena, Part III, preface. He certainly published two of Baxter's letters without their author's approval. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 56.

2. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, pp.15-16.

3. Ibid., Part I, sig. B2. Edwards wanted a committee in London and every county to deal with the prevention of sects and heresies; Ibid., Part I, p.165.

although he did not follow the practice of other authors and sell them widely in places of popular resort. Baillie certainly hoped that "Gangraena" would awaken the Parliament and nation to the dangers surrounding them.¹ The reaction of the Independents was understandably rather different.

John Goodwin was of the opinion that Edwards had

"made more joy in hell with the noyse of his Gangrene going forth into the world, then that climate hath known for these many generations",

but comforted himself with the reflection that none would swallow Edwards' home-baked "truths" but those whose were of his own diet and constitution.² Another writer condemned "Gangraena" as "a putrified, rotten, dead, and insensible soare, whose nature is to fret, to the mortifying of that member that hath growing upon him".³ Edwards' scale was set not by truth and error, but by Presbyterianism (= truth) and Independency (= error);

"If an Independent, Edwards will sound his trumpet against him, though his error be never so small. If a Presbyterian, then silence, all is born withall. Mark what a fit man this is to be a Judge!"⁴

Independents hastened to assure readers that they could provide just as many calumnies of the Presbyterians, if they had the

1. Edwards quoted letters from country ministers expressing support, but declined to name them lest army sectaries came their way! Ibid., Part II, pp.48-9; Baillie, ii,177.

2. J. Goodwin, Cretensis, pp.2,5(quoted).

3. Lanseter's Lance for Edwards'es Gangrene, 21 September 1646, preface, E.354(17). See below, p.512.

4. Ibid., n.p.

inclination.¹ Edwards' book was "Persecution and Prelacy sublimate", which all moderate Presbyterians would surely mourn, so obviously had they fostered a frozen snake in their midst.² Independents even claimed that "Gangraena" was a breach of Parliamentary privilege and sedition against the Kingdom.³ No wonder Edwards had heard "many hard speeches in City and Country daily . . . against Master Edwards and his late Booke".⁴

The numerous counterattacks on "Gangraena" plainly illustrated its effectiveness, although only two Presbyterians wrote in direct support of Edwards, which may indicate that many Presbyterians did find Edwards' crusade something of an embarrassment.⁵ Moderate Independents like Burroughes, radical Independents like John Goodwin and Saltmarsh, separatists and Levellers all found a common cause in defence of themselves and Independency against Edwards. At one point Edwards had insinuated that Burroughes and Greenhill were drunk (although

1. J. Goodwin, Cretensis, p.3; E. Drapes, A Plain and Faithfull Discovery of a Beame in Master Edwards his Eye, p.3.

2. J. Saltmarsh, Groanes for Liberty, p.32; W. Walwyn, A Wisper in the Eare of Mr. Thomas Edwards, 13 March 1645, p.7, E.328(2).

3. One pamphleteer cleverly "proved" this by juxtaposing some comments in "Gangraena" with some in Royalist papers recently declared scandalous by Parliament! Anon, Gangraena Plays Rex, 22 June 1646, E.341(10).

4. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part II, p.44.

5. The two supporters were Thomas Alle, A Brief Narration, 27 June 1646, E.341(24), and Josiah Ricraft, A Nosegay of Rank-smelling Flowers, 6 May 1646, E.336(5). This last was also a self-defence against Goodwin's personal attack on Ricraft in "Cretensis". However, John Vicars also praised Edwards in The Schismatick Sifted, p.5, as did Captain Jones in Plain English; or the Sectaries Anatomized, p.21.

elsewhere he had conceded that they possessed tinges of saintliness!) He also accused them of contrariness in their censuring of the separatist Nichols, whilst they themselves publicly objected to the abortive London petition of September 1645.¹ Although Burroughes confessed that certain aspects of Edwards' tale were true, he was justified in resenting Edwards' harsh treatment when he had consistently advocated conciliation. It was scarcely surprising that Burroughes concluded that "The accusations or condemnations of a shamelesse man shall never make me ashamed".²

Less moderate men slandered by Edwards had similar feelings. Saltmarsh, whose anagram had been unkindly revealed as "M'al's Trash", hoped that the Lord would rebuke Edwards in a suitable manner, whilst William Walwyn felt obliged to undertake the task himself, and despatched a series of "loving" corrections.³ He was convinced that Parliament would protect Englishmen from "Gangraena's" tyranny, so that Edwards would be left raging

"like an Irish, ravenous and hungry wolfe, deprived of his prey by generous and true English Mastives, that watch both night and day to save the harmlesse and benefitiall sheepe (the Independants and Separatists)".⁴

1. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, pp.79,109; Part II, pp.86-97, 135. Thomas Alle verified Edwards' story in A Brief Narration.

2. J. Burroughes, A Vindication of Mr. Burroughes, 23 July 1646, p.11, E.345(14).

3. J. Saltmarsh, Reasons for Unitie, Peace and Love, p.10. Walwyn wrote A Whisper in the Eare of Mr. Thomas Edwards, 13 March 1645-6, E.328(2); A Word More to Mr. Thomas Edwards, 19 March 1645-6, E.328(20); An Antidote against Master Edwards his Old and New Poyson, 10 June 1646, E.1184(4). In August he added an optimistic Prediction of Mr. Edwards his Conversion and Recantation, 11 August 1646, E.1184(5), and in October A Parable, or a Consultation of Physitians upon Master Edwards, 29 October 1646, E.359(8).

4. W. Walwyn, An Antidote against Master Edwards, p.3.

Lilburne thought that Edwards might be more prudent if he defended England's fundamental laws instead of attacking others for doing so.¹ Separatists John Maddocks, Henry Pinnell, "R.S" and John Lanseter were all vindicated by themselves or others against slander by Edwards.² As Thomas Webbe wrote in his own self-defence, "Oh who cannot but die, in the beholding one Brother die by the hands of another, for whom CHRIST died".³

But it was John Goodwin who was the real match for Edwards. Goodwin's "Cretensis" scorned Edward's "Lion" (Antapologia) and now his "Beare" (Gangraena) sent to devour all those that refused the "Clergie-Classique" faith, observing that "Mr. Edwards is so far from burning when weake Christians are offended, that he is offended, when they burne not". Clearly "Gangraena" would be revealed as a product of that "Great scarlet whore, which corrupteth the Earth with her fornication".⁴ Edwards wasted little time in snarling insults back at "Cretensis", the Liar, Goliath Goodwin, "the great Red Dragon

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1. J. Lilburne, The Oppressed Mans Oppressions Declared, 1 February 1646-7, p.21, E.373(1).
 2. J. Maddocks and H.Pinnell, Gangraena chrestum, 5 September 1646, E.353(12); R.S. (R. Smith?) A Letter to Mr. Thomas Edwards, 25 February 1646-7, E.378(3); Anon, Lanseter's Lance for Edwards'es Gangrene, 21 September 1646, E.354(17). This last tract was believed by Edwards to be the work of Katharine Chidley and her son, who were members of the Bury St. Edmunds separatist congregation to which Lanseter preached; T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, pp.170-1.
 3. T. Webbe, Mr. Edwards Pen No Slander, 21 May 1646, p.14, E.337(34). Edwards had accused Webbe of Antinomianism.
 4. J. Goodwin, Cretensis, pp.17-8, 50. Goodwin's final insults against "Gangraena" were published in Hagiomastix, 5 February 1646-7, E.374(1) in which Goodwin announced that he would give up railing against Edwards, and leave him to God's judgement.

of Coleman-street", who was "foul-mouth'd in all kind of filthy language", and a compound of many wicked heresies as well. Edwards scorned Goodwin's folly in taking things on trust from his "partial Saints", since by his own admission, Goodwin had only troubled to read a quarter of the first "Gangraena".¹ Both men charged each other with anti-Parliamentary activities, and Edwards gibed that Goodwin had only turned to Independency due to pique at not being nominated for the Westminster Assembly.² Edwards' censure of Goodwin for playing bowls and sports with his church on days of public thanksgiving was duly matched by Goodwin's assurance that Edwards had sought his own gain in trying to acquire the sequestered living of Dunmow.³ Goodwin believed Edwards' language and grammar to be quite disgraceful, whereas Edwards faulted Goodwin's Greek despite his "finicky grammar".⁴ One favourite Presbyterian calumny was soon to be laid to rest however, as Goodwin produced the long-awaited answer to the "Antapologia" in August.⁵ Telling Edwards that

1. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part II, pp.31,39; J. Goodwin, Cretensis, p.50.

2. J. Goodwin, Cretensis, p.28; T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, p.54; Gangraena, Part II, pp. 58,72-5. Edwards also accused Goodwin of denouncing city petitions; Gangraena, Part II, pp. 108-10.

3. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, p.73. Goodwin retorted that he had played bowls on the thanksgiving day for Naseby, but he had played with Presbyterians, and that three Presbyterian ministers had even gone fishing, to be suitably rewarded by Heaven with a catch of just two roaches. J. Goodwin, Cretensis, pp.32-4.

4. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, p.285; J. Goodwin, Cretensis, p.10.

5. J. Goodwin, Anapologesiates Antapologias, 27 August 1646, E.352(5). Edwards claimed that this reply had been held up in the press for a year. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part II, p.110.

he had better work to do than attend the every motion of Edwards' pen, Goodwin added vindictively that

"if Independent Ministers had either the privilege of ease, to preach to the bare walls and pews in their meeting-places, or shamelesnesse of forehead to make the subject matter of their Sermons little else but loose, and lying, and frivolous reports ... against the Saints ... they might (I confesse) be men of more expedition in writing then they are".¹

Although Edwards hoped that his "Gangræna" would cause the fall of "Cretensis Babels", he also feared that Independency, "no religious conscientious businesse but a politick State Faction", might prove more tenacious, and even seize towns and cities by force of arms, endangering the Presbyterians.² Certainly no amount of gangrenous literature could undo the harm caused by the extra year's delay in the establishment of Presbytery as a result of the Erastian conflict. During this year the Independents and sects, closely identified, consolidated their position, curried favour with Parliament, and abandoning accommodation entirely, continued to demand a toleration that their increasing strength in the army would soon achieve.

1. J. Goodwin, Cretensis, pp.15-6.

2. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part II, pp.66,134, 181. Edwards matched Prynne in his obsession with such plots.

Chapter Nine.MILITARY MACHINATIONS AND MINISTERIAL MANOEUVRES: THE TRIUMPH OF TOLERATION.Politics, Religion and the Presbyterian- Independent Conflict 1646-8.

(the Independents were) "resolved to erect their Anarchie with a sword in the one hand and a trowell in the other hand ... and rejoyce they have so much time allotted them to project apt waies to attaine their wish".

Anon, A True Diurnall, 31 May 1647, p.4, E.390(11).

(The army was obliged to defend liberty of conscience because). "the Synod, with the Ministry of England should have spoken for us, and they speke against us, and God hath blasted them, many of them are as dung upon the earth abhorred, and if the Army had neglected us herein, God would have blasted them".

S. Richardson, An Answer to the London Ministers' Letter, 27 January 1648-9, p.29, E.540(8).

"it's not long since we had a War for Episcopacie; the Lord grant our War end not in a War for Presbyterie or Independencie".

J. Brayne, The Smoak of the Temple Cleared, September 1648, sig. A2, E.455(9).

From 1643-6 Independents had been increasingly forced to defend themselves against rigid or Erastian Presbyterian ascendancy in Assembly, Parliament and city. This, together with the failure of Assembly accommodation attempts, had forced the moderate Independents to become reliant on the army and its left-wing religious radicals, and the army victories had been instrumental in affording the Independents the consideration they had already received from Parliament, although the Independents' pretended Erastianism had assisted their cause. Now the Independents' policy of delaying the religious settlement (which the rigid Presbyterians' own quarrel with Parliament had aided), would pay abundant dividends as the army's emergence as the dominant political force transformed the Independents' mood;

"While they only used the buckler and weapons of defence, we pittied and connived at their weakenes ... But now that they furbish the sword and whet their teeth like sharp arrówes ... it is high time to rub our eies and watch their progresse".¹

For now it became the Presbyterians' turn to face attack, as Parliament was purged, the King executed, and a wide toleration for dissenters from the Presbyterian church established. Political reality and military might would provide an approximation to a solution of the Presbyterian-Independent conflict, while the Assembly drifted, in characteristic style, to a laborious close. Well might the rigid Presbyterians, transferring

1. Anon, A Sectary Dissected, or the Anatomie of an Independent Flie, 22 April 1647, p.19, E.384(17).

their opprobrium from Erastians to the army and toleration, bewail the slow start to their discipline before 1647, because the cataclysmic events of 1647-8 meant that an effective national Presbyterian network was doomed. Some areas achieved initially promising results, but apathy and lack of governmental support spelt ultimate failure.¹

Politics and religion cannot be easily separated in these years of confusion and change. The well-worn question of the significance of the religious issue for Parliamentary and political divisions has received wide treatment for 1646-48. Were the names "Presbyterian" and "Independent" merely political epithets used to vilify conservatives and radicals, as Hexter suggested? ² Certainly the division of M.P.s into "Presbyterians" and "Independents" reached its climax in this period although it continued to be far too simple an analysis of fluid political alliances and individual idiosyncracies abounding in a Parliament which did not work according to the modern two-party system. Thomas May wisely excused himself from analysing the Presbyterian-Independent political divisions "because the motives and intentions of men are not enough known".³

1. Presbyterians bemoaned delays in sermons, and also in the "Testimonies". See below, pp. 541, 578.
2. J.H. Hexter, "The Problem of the Presbyterian Independents" in Reappraisals in History, p.183.
3. T. May, A Breviary of the History of the Parliament, in F. Maseres Select Tracts I (1815) p.97. Clement Walker was among those who stressed the political divisions; e.g. The Mystery of the Two Juntoes, Presbyterian and Independent, (issued under the penname of Theodorus Verax) 24 June 1647, E.393(29).

By 1647 contemporaries were fully aware of the limitations of a two party view and split both political groups into "royal" and "real" subdivisions. Thus both Sir John Harris and the Leveller John Wildman believed the "royal" Presbyterians and Independents to favour the return of the King and their own self-interest, whereas the "real" sections would insist on full security for the nation's liberties before a restoration of royal authority! Dr. Pearl has delineated the "royal" Independents as the moderate, constitutional monarchist wing of that party, as opposed to the radical republican wing and these royal Independents could vote with Presbyterians.¹ Contemporaries also knew that political "careerists" or time-servers further complicated political terminology, and described such men by terms like the "hynocriticall party",

1. Sir John Harris, alias Sirrahnic, used religion to distinguish between "real" Presbyters and Independents since both favoured the good of the nation. He called a "real" Presbyter one who was for the Scots Presbytery, but left the religious sympathies of his "real" Independent vague. He believed the "Royall" factions of both parties to be overawing the real (in February 1647-8) and asserted the dubious claim that the "royall" Independents had deliberately incited the army against Parliament. Sir J. Harris, The Royall Quarrell, 9 February 1647-8, pp.5-6, E.426(1). A similar division was made by John Wildman, Westminster Projects, 6 June 1648, p.3, E.446(5). Dr. Pearl convincingly maintains that the "royal" Independents were the inheritors of the "middle group" of 1643-4, and included men like St. John, Browne, Crewe, Pierrepont, Evelyn, Fiennes and Lord Saye; V. Pearl, "The Royal Independents in the English Civil War" Transactions of the Royal Historical Society (1968). David Underdown supports this view and has demonstrated how in 1648 moderate or "royal" Independents split from the political Independent party (see below, p.53)).

Professor Yule has assumed that the divisions "royal" and "real" meant Erastian and non-Erastian, but this conclusion is not supported by available evidence. G. Yule, "Some Problems in the History of the English Presbyterians in the Seventeenth Century", Journal of Presb. Hist. Soc., (1965), p.4.

or by distinguishing between "pure" and "mixed" Independents.¹ Then there were those "that are neither Presbyterians nor Independents, but cry up the one, because it cries downe the other";² in particular political Independency (as religious) could partly be seen still in terms of a negative attitude to Scottish influence. Furthermore, the existence of uncommitted moderates was recognised; Walker wanted the "middle and disingaged men" in the Commons to form themselves into a party to spoil the monopoly of the other two "Juntoes".³

In part the problem was that the political labels "Presbyterian" and "Independent" never wholly apt, became outdated after 1647 just as they were being most widely adopted. For the relevance of "Presbyterian" applying to political conservatives favouring a Scottish alliance faded with the return of the Scottish army across the border. The identification of the political Presbyterians as favourers of peace as opposed to the "win the war" radical Independents meant equally little at a time when the political Independents had taken over the Presbyterian policy of coming to terms

1. "An hypocriticall Party" was used by Sir John Harris, *op.cit.*, pp.5-6 and "pure" and "mixed" by Clement Walker in The History of Independency, 26 May 1648, p.75, E.445(1). Walker also used "vulgar" and "non-vulgar" Independents to describe the Leveller divisions.

2. Bori Alis, Guard (an anti-Scottish pamphleteer), An Answer to a Declaration of the Commissioners of the General Assembly of Scotland, 27 March 1648, sig.A, E.433(21).

3. C. Walker, The Mystery of the Two Juntoes, p.16. David Underdown has identified some moderates in "The Independents Reconsidered", Journal of British Studies (1964). Even in the Rump a number of members were uncommitted moderates. See below, p. 533 note 1.

with the King, although ultimately Charles' stubbornness and intrigue thwarted all.¹ No wonder that contemporaries were confused and adopted "royal" and "real" subdivisions to explain certain difficulties, while retaining the new commonplace political epithets.

But with their limitations recognised, the religious labels were not irrelevant for the political scene in general or Parliament in particular. It would be futile to pretend that religion was the one force polarising political conservatives and the radicals in the army, but it was not unimportant when the former feared the social consequences of religious anarchy and the latter held liberty of conscience to be a fundamental freedom for which they had fought. Thus the army saw the moves of Holles and his associates against them and religious dissenters as part of a great Presbyterian plot - both political and religious. Religion could not be irrelevant when Major-General Robert Sterling could despair of his recent declaration of support for the Presbyterian church on hearing of the army coup. Certainly, when pro- and anti-army factions had a brawl in Market Harborough, religion was a key factor; some sword

"they would live and die for the true worship and discipline of Presbytery, others that they would spend their dear blood for divine worship of Independency".²

1. One pamphleteer observed that the Independent negotiations with the King after his seizure by Cornet Joyce proved the political Presbyterians' past folly in succumbing to the Independent interest in crying up the war. Anon, Anti Machiavell. Or Honesty against Policy, 3 July 1647, p.12, E.396(16).

2. G. Yule "Independents and Revolutionaries", Journal of British Studies, (1968) pp.21-2; A Great Fight at Market Harbrough in Leicestershire betwixt the Presbyterians and Independents, 14 August 1647, E.402(2) (quoted).

One Presbyterian blamed all Independent M.P.s for encouraging heresy and schism, considering them "the most unhappy obstructors and hinderers of the most long and zealously desired building and settlement of the Presbyterian Church Governments".¹ William Waller deserted the political Independents because of the confusion in religion occasioned by their "independential interest".² When contemporary writings consistently "confused" religion and politics, seeing them as interconnected aspects of one world view, historians separate them at their peril.

The main religious issue between Presbyterians and Independents in 1646-8 was that of toleration, since the army made it plain that it was not its intention to overthrow the national Presbyterian church.³ It might well be wondered why an Independent national church was not established after the army victories, but besides the fact that at least initially the Independents' alliance with the sects made this impossible, it would have made nonsense of their pleas for liberty of conscience. Saltmarsh explained that the army

"intend not to set up Independency upon the Kingdome; for

1. Anon, Hinc Illae Lachrymae, written August 1647 and published 23 December 1647-8, p.27, E.421(6). He wished all Independent M.P.s to be removed from Parliament!

2. G. Yule "Independents and Revolutionaries", Journal of British Studies, (1968) p.26.

3. Fairfax' letter to Parliament of 6 June 1647 stated that the army would not oppose the settling of Presbytery, or stablish Independency or any "licentiousness" in religion, but would leave all such matters to the Parliament. A Letter from Fairfax, 8 June 1647, E.391(7). A significantly different emphasis was in the army's Declaration of 14 June 1647 and subsequent pronouncements, when the army again disavowed any design to overthrow Presbytery, but asserted its desire to provide for tender consciences. A Declaration-Representation, 14 June 1647, p.15, E.392(27). One pamphleteer however had recommended the resistance "vi et armis" of a church government

truly that were wholly to oppose their owne Principles, if they should have thoughts to force up any such thing, who desire that they should not be compelled themselves".¹

Most Independents would stress the right of the state to determine a form of church-government, provided dissent was freely permitted; even the Agreement of the People maintained that the "public way of instructing the nation" could be decided by the magistrate. An army spokesman insisted that

"we did never engage against this Platforme, nor for that Platforme, nor ever will, except better informed; and therefore if the State establisheth Presbytery, we shall never opposeit".²

Contemporaries were suitably sceptical of such professions, and in reality any toleration would deal the national Presbyterian church a severe, if not mortal, blow.

The advance of toleration in 1646-8 can only be related in terms of the political situation. Baillie wrote that

"some few of the most active men of the House of Commons and army are for too general a liberty for all consciences, but the most of both Houses are right and sound",³

believing that the greatest prop of the "sectaries'" power in Parliament was fear of a Scottish alliance with Charles. Certainly the political Presbyterians came to the fore in December 1646, when, led by Holles and Stapleton, they persuaded the Scots to withdraw their army and surrender the

3. cont'd. contrary to God's word; A. Wilbee, Plain Truth Without Feare or Flattery, 2 July 1647, p.8, E.516(7).

1. J. Saltmarsh, A Letter from the Army, 10 June 1647, p.3, E.392(6). John Wilson believed that the Independents' lack of interest in a national church was due to millenarianism, but this is not an adequate explanation. J.F. Wilson, Pulpit in Parliament, p.229.

2. E. R. Gardiner, History of the Great Civil War, (1901) vol.iii, pp.392-4; Anon, Vox Militaris, 11 August 1647, p.4 (quoted), E.401(24).

3. Baillie, ii, 246.

King's person on promise of the settling of peace and disbanding of the English army, which Baillie was sure must result in the decay of heresy.¹ Thereafter Holles' party wasted no time in planning various anti-Independent ploys.

One such move was already underway, as a Heresy and Blasphemy Ordinance had been considerably opposed as prejudicial to Independents, although it was really anti-sectarian.² A newsbook insisted that the ordinance was not intended against Independents, but in any event it sparked a heated pamphlet debate between radical Independents, sectaries and Presbyterians on the power of the State to persecute for religion, the crucial issue of 1646-8.³

1. Baillie, ii, 246, 250, 257. After the army coup in 1647 Baillie wrote that the Presbyterians' "bent execution of this real intention has undone them". Charles was delivered to Parliament at Newcastle at the end of January 1646-7 and was sent to Holmby House.

2. The ordinance, introduced by Tate and Bacon and encouraged by Baillie, was under debate in Parliament in September 1646. Baillie, ii, 231, 244. In April 1646 the Assembly had been asked to prepare such a bill; C.J. iv, 526. It proposed imprisonment for public profession that Presbytery or parish churches were antichristian, and for a denial of infant baptism, but was mainly against blatant heresies.

3. For the text of the ordinance as finally published in 1648 see C.H. Firth and R.S. Rait, Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, (1911), vol. i, pp. 1133-6.

3. For the newsbook see Perfect Occurrences, Week 38, n.p., E.354(14).

The content of this literature is further discussed below pp 57 The ordinance was opposed (and a broadly accurate copy of it published) in Anon, An Ordinance ... by Mr. Bacon and Mr. Taet, 21 September 1646, E.354(16). This was a separatist/Leveller work, as was Anon, A Demurre to the Bill, 7 October 1646, E.356(5) The bill had other opponents, but John Goodwin's enthusiasm was greatest. He wrote Some Modest and Humble Queries in September which Edwards believed to be the most "Atheistical piece" since the Reformation; Gangraena, Part III, p.117. Goodwin defended his queries in several later works, including Hagiomastix; or the Scourge of the Saints, 5 February 1646-7, E.374(1).

The ordinance was defended by, among others, A Vindication of a Printed Paper, 20 November 1646, E.362(25), which John Goodwin believed to be by Cranford and/or "certain striplings of the Assembly."

Richard Overton did not scruple to call the ordinance

"a most Romish inquisition Ordinance ... (to) fill the land with more Martyrdomes tyrannies, cruelties and oppressions, than ever was in the bloody dayes of Queen Mary".¹

Moves against heresy continued, encouraged by Presbyterian sermons and cautioned by Independents; Parliament even held a public humiliation on March 10th 1646-7 for divine assistance in combatting heretics.² However due to pressure of business in the House and political opposition, the ordinance was still not passed when the army actions of the summer of 1647 deferred it for a year.

Radical Independents and sectaries were further vexed by a Parliamentary declaration on December 31st in support of the ordinance of 25th April 1645 against lay-preaching. Various pamphlets, (some from the army) immediately defended preaching by the unordained.³ Then on 20th April 1647 the Commons assented to certain "Remedies for the Obstructions in Matter of Church Government" to speed the elections of elders and the formation of classes.⁴ Although previous

1. R. Overton, An Arrow against all Tyrants and Tyranny, 10 October 1646, p.13, E.356(14).

2. Most printed Presbyterian sermons in the autumn of 1646 praised efforts against heresy, and by the spring of 1647 were bemoaning their delay. The fast day was entreated by Obadiah Sedgwick's sermon to the Commons of 27 January 1646-7, The Nature and Danger of Heresies, E.372(13). The Independent William Strong advised Parliament against persecution in his sermons of 24 February 1646-7 and 28 April 1647, and Stephen Marshall warned Parliament to limit its definition of heresy in a sermon of 30 December 1646.

3. A Declaration of the Commons, E.370(4). Kentish Presbyterians immediately resolved to execute this declaration; see A Declaration Set Forth by the Presbyterians within the County of Kent, January 1646-7, E.370(25). It is significant that ordination was now increasingly attacked by radical Independents like John Saltmarsh eg. J. Saltmarsh, Sparkles of Glory, 27 May 1647, E.1114(1). For one army work see W.G. A Just Apologie for an Abused Armie, 29 January 1646-7, E.372(22).

4. C.J. v, 145-146. This also called the London Provincial Assembly into being.

peace propositions had not specifically mentioned Presbytery, Holles' party now advised Charles to accept the Presbyterian church system for at least three years, which the King seemed temporarily willing to do.¹ The political Presbyterians sought to increase their strength by imposing the Covenant on recently elected M.P.s, but the key to all their plans was the destruction of the New Model Army, either through disbanding or despatch to Ireland, which was naively attempted without any effort (until too late) to settle army demands for arrears and indemnity. Hand in hand with this planned disbanding went a remodelling of the city militia, whereby Presbyterians replaced Independents in command, and orders were given to defend the city from "all malignants, sects ... and all godly persons".² A force of Reformadoes (reformed soldiers) was encouraged under Massey and was suitably mocked by Independent pamphleteers.³ All these strategies of the political

1. His Majesties Most Gracious Message from Holdenby, 12 May 1647, p.3, E.388(19). This constituted Charles' third reply to the Newcastle peace propositions.

2. The attempt to impose the Covenant was condemned by a Leveller as a plot for a New Model Parliament to pull down a New Model Army! Anon, A Warning for all the Counties of England, 24 March 1646-7, pp.2-4, E.381(3). This was suppressed by Parliament. C.J. v, 123.

Disbanding, supported by petitions from the city and from Suffolk and Essex, was voted in the Commons on 25 May 1647. See C.J.v, 168,183, and tracts in B.M. 669f10(119), E.377(4) and E.383(12). An attempt to replace Fairfax by the Presbyterian Colonel Graves was only narrowly thwarted; C.J. v, 166.

For the city militia orders see A.S.P. Woodhouse, Puritanism and Liberty, introduction, p.26, quoting the Clarke Papers. Pennington, Atkin, Venn, Allen and others were replaced by political Presbyterians, Bunce, Langham, West, Bellamy, Bromfield and others; A. Wilbee, Plain Truth without Feare or Flattery, sig. B verso.

3. To cite just one example of the anti-Reformado works, Anon, The Disconsolate Reformado, 21 August 1647, E.404(4) was embellished with woodcuts of "Jack Reformado" and "Jamy Independent".

Presbyterian group were supported by city petitions, as the Presbyterians were still supreme in the common council although a sizeable Independent faction continued to operate in the city and at least one pamphleteer observed that "the city (was) being almost divided into parties concerning points of Conscience and the matters of Religion".¹

This many sided "great Presbyterian plot" was portrayed by Independent and army propagandists in terms which fused politics and religion, and the propaganda value of the religious factor did not prevent its being a genuine concern. Rage was poured on "our own Presbyterian Reformers, the Scotists of our Kingdome, M. Hollis, Stapleton, and the rest of the zealous hipocrites (with their Antichristian priests)" who would deprive men of their fundamental liberties and erect "their new formed Monster of presbyterie".² For

"doth it not appeare, that these present Parliament-men intended to intrall the whole Kingdome both in Civill and Church matters unto themselves ... unto the worlds end?"³

Certainly pamphleteers were convinced that the political

1. City petitions were on the lines of A Humble Representation, December 1646, E.366(16). The city had to defend its actions when the army was powerful. Many areas of London did support the army in 1647, suggesting a sizeable Independent/Leveller faction; G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, p.70. The pamphleteer quoted was Mercurius Civicus, No.175, 1646, E.355(24).

2. A. Wilbee, Plain Truth without Feare or Flattery, p.5, sig. B2.

3. Anon, Certain Queries Lovingly Propounded to Mr. William Prynne, 16 July 1647, p.4, E.398(22).

Presbyterians were not truly conscientious but were merely using religion as a veil for self interest, a hypocritical pretence they effected

"so cunningly, that the godly Presbyterians not discerning their ambitious aymes, which is to make themselves Grantees in Church and State, joyne and concur with them".¹

But motives were comparatively irrelevant compared with the effect of actions which, the army proclaimed, threatened all liberties, including freedom of conscience. Once the army disbanded, the "Presbyterian yoake" would be used as an instrument of political and clerical tyranny; why did not Parliament inform the army before the wars that they intended to suffer none but Presbyterians? "We are at the pit brinke, and see not", cried one radical pamphleteer.² Eventually the army, dominated by its radicals, proceeded against the "plot" by refusing to disband, moving towards London, seizing the King to save him from Presbyterians,³ and as the city capitulated, marching to the Commons to restore M.P.s who had fled to its protection. When the army took revenge upon eleven M.P.s at the head of the Presbyterian schemes, including Holles and Stapleton, pamphleteers significantly

1. J. Cook, Redintegratio Amoris, 27 August 1647, p.64, E.404(29). John Cook was an Independent M.P. and leading Republican. He may have been a member of Henry Burton's church. G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, p.105.

2. Anon, A New Found Stratagem, 18 April 1647, pp.9,15, E.384(11). This was "scattered abroad in ye Armies when ye Commissioners were sent from ye Parliament to disband ym", (according to Thomason).

3. Joyce seized the King on 4 June 1647; almost certainly the political Presbyterians were planning that Colonel Graves should remove the King to the palace at Oatlands. Joyce's actions created a violent pamphlet controversy suggesting and censuring a Royalist-Independent alliance. Nedham's support for the alliance in The Case of the Kingdom, 12 June 1647 E.392(13), was opposed by the anonymous Anti-Machiavell. Or Honesty against Policy, 3 July 1647, E.396(16).

perceived the proceedings to be politico-religious. They immediately declared that the M.P.s were censured as "faithfull Presbyterians", that the Assembly should be impeached as well, and that Holles for one was a "protomartyr to Presbytery".¹

Contemporaries believed that toleration was one of the most crucial army demands in its quarrel with Parliament, although the Whitehall Debates would show that the army was far from united on the limits of that toleration. Vital though material grievances were, army petitions soon included liberty of conscience.² The Presbyterian minister Nathaniel Ward believed that toleration was "the prime purchase they seem to aim at".³ John Cook observed that the army was "bound by the Law of God to deliver God's people and this whole Kingdome from all oppressions both in soules and bodies". So it was scarcely surprising that Thomas Edwards published his last work against toleration in a great hurry in June 1647, "not knowing what a Day might bring forth, the storm coming on so fast".⁴ But Independents rejoiced loudly

1. The comment on Holles was made by Mercurius Anti-Pragmaticus, 27 January - 3 February 1647-8, E.425(13). For the other comments on the M.P.s, who were finally impeached in January 1647-8 but had fled the country, see Anon, Hinc Illae Lachrymae, p.11; Anon, A Coppie of a Letter, 10 June 1647, E.397(11). (Both these were Presbyterian).

2. The extension of the soldiers' demands to include liberty of conscience was evident in the grievances to be presented to the Parliamentary Commissioners at Saffron Walden on 13-14 May 1647. A.S.P. Woodhouse, op.cit., introduction, p.22. Subsequent army declarations included it as a matter of course.

3. The Humble Petition ... of the Eastern Association, subscribed 12 April 1648, p.24, E.438(15) and ascribed by Thomason to Ward. Ward had written a treatise from New England in 1645 to urge "commoderation between Presbyterians and Independents, which was published as The Simple Cobler of Aggawam 29 January 1646-7, E.372(21). By 1646 Ward was in England, adopting an increasingly conservative line against toleration and supporting the Presbyterians.

at the army moves. The Marpriest character Sir John Presbyter was declared dead and buried in a series of scurrilous pamphlets labelled "the year of jubilee" and "the year of the Presbyterian fear", whilst satires on the Westminster Assembly reached a record level. In July there was a significant reprint of the Independent grievances against the Assembly, and some "Propositions to both Houses for gathering of Churches" appeared in August.¹ The Yarmouth Independent church suddenly reversed its policy of not advising East Anglian saints to enter into church fellowship in their own localities. John Goodwin's former parish appealed for his return as their lecturer, and other London citizens petitioned in favour of lay-preaching.² Thomas Goodwin, who had been invited to New England and had proceeded so far as to install his library on board the ship, suddenly changed

cent'd.

4. J. Cook, Redintegratio Amoris, p.66; T. Edwards The Casting Down of the Last and Strongest Hold of Satan, or a Treatise against Toleration, 28 June 1647, preface, E.394(6).

1. The Independents' mock death of Sir John Presbyter eg. in The Last Will and Testament of Sir John Presbyter, 22 July 1647, E.399(22) was answered by the Presbyterians eg. in The Last Will and Testament of Sir James Independent, 31 July 1647, E.400(30). Works like this showed that at last the Presbyterians were beginning to respond to Marpriest-type tracts in like style. Satires on the Assembly included Mercurius Clericus, 24 September 1647, E.408(5) and A Justification of the Synod of Sion College, 6 September 1647, B.M. 669f11(76). For the reprint of the Dissenting Brethren's reasons for not producing their model, see The Independents Declaration, 17 July 1647, E.399(1). The Propositions for gathering churches were printed in E.404(10) but do not appear to have been presented to Parliament.

2. J. Browne, History of Congregationalism, p.161; L.J. ix, 488; C.J. v, 327.

his mind.¹ Whilst Independent preachers to Parliament and pamphlets urging toleration increased, the Commons conceded the principle of liberty of conscience. The demand that absentees from parish churches should not be penalised was made in the army propositions of 22 July and reiterated in the "Hheads of the Proposals".² On 13 October the Commons resolved to add a clause to the peace propositions to the King demanding toleration for all except Papists and those who preached against the fundamental principles of Christianity.³

But toleration was not yet assured. The army continued in uneasy alliance with Parliament, which the Independent M.P.s were able to control, thanks partly to the self-imposed absences of certain M.P.s and Charles' engagement with the Scots.⁴ With toleration agreed in principle, the Independents had no objection to another ordinance for the speedy settling of the Presbyterian church, which passed on

1. J. Goodwin, Works, vol.v, (1704) p.xviii.
2. New Propositions from his Excellency Sir Thomas Fairfax, 26 July 1647, E.400(6); W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, vol.ii, p.56. Proven popish recusants were still to be punished.
3. C.J. v,332. The new proposals were sent to Charles at Carisbrooke on 24 December 1647 and were disliked by the Scots; the proposals also suggested that Presbytery should be settled until the end of the next Parliamentary session. Charles now repudiated the toleration he had favoured in September, and signed a secret treaty with the Scots, refusing Parliaments' terms. Even the "royal" Independents now turned against the King.
4. A Presbyterian petition claimed that the army deliberately set up garrisons at Whitehall and the Mews to intimidate Presbyterian M.P.s. A Petition, 3 February 1647-8, p.5, E.425(10).

29th January and thoroughly confused Royalists;

"the House of Commons ... resolve out of pure zeal to their owne Cause, to settle the Presbytery upon the Kingdome, though themselves intend the practise of Independency".¹

In the spring of 1648 the Parliamentary Independent party began to disintegrate as the middle group moderates split from the radicals and aligned themselves with the political Presbyterians in view of the imminent Scottish invasion and second war which became reality in May 1648.² The Heresy and Blasphemy Ordinance finally became law in May, and what was to be the last ordinance establishing Presbytery was introduced (to be passed on 29th August).³ Thomason noted that one petition advocating the restoration of government by King, Lords and Commons, the eventual disbanding of the army and the fulfilling of the Covenant was composed and agreed by "The Presbiterian and Independant ... together".⁴ With the political Independents in disarray, the Presbyterian M.P.s, supported by their faction in the

1. Mercurius Aulicus, No.1, January-February 1647-8, E.425(8). Thomason's copy of the ordinance is E.423(31).

2. For this decisive shift in alliances see D. Underdown, Pride's Purge, pp.96-100. The middle group was led by Lord Saye and his friends. The Scottish justification for the war was that the King, monarchy, and Presbytery were endangered by the prevailing party of sectaries in England; A Declaration of the Commissioners of the General Assembly, 20 March 1647-8, p.15, E.432(24).

3. C.J. v.549 (2 May 1648) and C.J. v.548. The moderate Independents probably accepted the Heresy ordinance in the hope that it would counter act Scottish criticisms that they countenanced every error. This was suggested by an army writer in An Answer to the Scots Declaration, 12 May 1648, p.8, E.442(1).

4. The Petition of divers Citizens of London to Parliament, 29 May 1648, B.M. 669f.12(38).

City, could reassert control over the Commons by June,¹ when they recalled the impeached M.P.s, nullified the January vote of no addresses to the King, and proceeded to treat with Charles. Although at Newport the King refused Parliament's propositions, which now excluded toleration, the Presbyterians despairingly voted his terms acceptable, provoking the charge of collusion with the Scots, rebels and Royalists.² The army, enraged at the new "plot", having decisively defeated the Scots at Preston in October and its Leveller divisions forgotten, marched on London to teach Presbyterian M.P.s and the King a lesson. The result was Pride's Purge in December and the King's execution in January;³ needless to say such acts

1. The political Independents could still defeat the Presbyterians in May over changing the terms to Charles so that Presbytery would be established "until King, Lords, and Commons should alter it". C.J. v, 574.

2. The impeachment of the 11 M.P.s was revoked on 8 June. C.J. v.589. For John Price's version of the new "plot" see Clerico-Classicum, 19 February 1648-9, p.38, E.544(1), where he observed that even the Scots did not approve of the Presbyterian concessions.

Walker revealed that the Presbyterians feared that Skippon had a secret list of city "schismatics" in John Goodwin's and other congregations who might terrorise Presbyterians. C. Walker, The History of Independency, p121.

3. These events cannot here be treated more extensively. For Pride's Purge see D. Underdown, Pride's Purge, which stresses the relationship between the radical Independent M.P.s in Parliament (who had been a minority in the political Independent party) and the equally determined revolutionary minority in the army, towns and countryside. Underdown therefore sees the revolution of 1648 as a move by radical Independents against moderates of all political colours, Presbyterians, former middle group Independents, and non-party men (p.233).

signalled an effective toleration at last, although Presbytery was never legally annulled, and Independency never established in its place.¹

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The continuing Assembly debates seemed almost irrelevant to the political background. Depicted in Royalist and radical Independent/Leveller/sectarian literature alike as a tyrannical "unreverend Dissembly of Divines", "Scots apes", who searched Scriptures "as the Devill did, to make use of them for his owne ends, against Christ", the Assembly was castigated by many who believed its members had achieved nothing, but had just sat "upon their foure shilling Cushions,

1. The Rump's inability to achieve a clear-cut religious settlement was largely the result of its internal divisions. For after the execution of the King, the extremists enabled many moderates to return to the Rump, and in so doing, emasculated their own radical programme. Many religious Presbyterians were soon back in the House of Commons. After repealing the Elizabethan and Jacobean laws about absence from church (27 September 1650), the Rump ignored religion for eighteen months and toleration was still unsettled when the Rump was ejected on 20 April 1653. For the Rump, see D. Underdown, Pride's Purge, especially pp. 5, 236, 269, and B. Worden, The Rump Parliament (Cambridge 1974), pp 61-73.

The first authoritative utterance on toleration appeared in the 1653 Instrument of Government, but toleration was not absolute, since the Instrument precluded liberty for those who "under the profession of Christ hold forth and practise licentiousness", and offered freedom for those who agreed with the "fundamentals of the Christian religion". The Protectorate did not afford a legal toleration for Catholics and Jews, although Cromwell's personal sufferance meant leniency was shown. The Quakers were to present Cromwell with a dilemma between his wish for toleration and his desire to avoid political disturbance, for freedom was to be only for those who did not interfere with the State. W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, vol.ii, pp.70-96; G.F. Nuttall, "Cromwell's Toleration", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., XI (1930-32).

till the stuffings flie out". One opponent crowed;

"The people look't for mountaines but
They have brought forth a mouse".¹

Predictable though these criticisms were, much admiration should be accorded the few divines who, beset by the absence of many colleagues, fear of dismissal by Parliament, cries for a more representative clerical assembly, not to mention Erastianism, Independency and the political climate, struggle on to effect the Assembly's remaining objectives.² These were the completion of a Confession of Faith and Catechism, theological statements which it has been claimed were "in reality the most valuable of their labours".³

Although debates on the Confession and Catechism were typical of the Assembly's near-unanimity on doctrinal matters, clashes with the Independents were inevitable where discussions raised the topical problems of liberty of

1. J. Lilburne and R. Overton, The Out-Cryes of Oppressed Commons, 1 March 1647-8, p.17, E.378(13); Anon, A Warning for all the Counties of England, p.13; A. Wilbee, Plain Truth without Feare or Flattery, p.7; Anon, A Justification of the Synod of Sion Colledge, n.p.; Mercurius Pragmaticus, No.18, 11-18 January 1647-8, n.p., E.423(1).

2. Poor Assembly attendances were recorded, e.g. Mitchell and Struthers, p.292; TSS, vol.iii, f.296; and Baillie, ii, 234. Radical pamphlets urged dissolution, e.g. Anon, A Demurre to the Bill, p.8, and Anon, The Scottish Mist Dispel'd, 19 January 1647-8, p.25, E.423(8), which commented that the Assembly was never intended to exist "in sempiternum". Calls for a more representative Assembly were made, e.g. by J. Cook, Redintegratio Amoris, p.42.

3. W.M. Hetherington, History of the Westminster Assembly, preface, p.x. The Assembly had begun to prepare the Confession at the end of 1644; 19 chapters were delivered to Parliament on 25 September 1646.

conscience and civil censure of religious dissenters. Baillie sighed that "the Independents offer to keep us (in) long and tough debates".¹ Indeed they did; when the Assembly voted the twentieth chapter of the Confession concerning "Christian Liberty and liberty of conscience", Nye, Carter and Simpson dissented to the withholding of this liberty from those with principles "contrary to the light of nature", and Carter to the exemption of those whose beliefs were "contrary to the known principles of Christianity". Later Simpson, Burroughes, Greenhill and Carter openly disagreed with a clause empowering the magistrate to punish such offenders. When the Confession was concluded in the Assembly, Nye, Carter and Greenhill objected to the preface, and when Parliament returned it for the addition of Scriptural proofs, Carter dissented to the evidence for civil censure.² The Independents even dissented to some clauses in the Catechism,

1. Baillie, ii, 234.

2. Mitchell and Struthers, pp. 293, 297, 303, 306, 337. For the crucial paragraph 4 of the twentieth chapter of the Confession, see The Humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines ... concerning a Confession of Faith, 7 December 1646, E.368(3). Paragraph 4 was later omitted by Parliament, due to Independent influence. The Confession was finished in the Assembly on 26 November 1646, although on 3 December an alteration was proposed to Chapter 31 (on synodical government) and was duly opposed by Independents. Chapter 31 was also omitted by Parliament. Because of the army troubles, the Commons did not consider the Confession in earnest until October 1647, and it was not adopted until March 1648, under the title "Articles of the Christian Religion". C.J. v, 323, and 502. For a discussion of the doctrinal implications of the Confession, see A.F. Mitchell, The Westminster Confession of Faith, (Edinburgh, 1867). See also S.W. Carruthers, "The Original Manuscript of the Westminster Confession of Faith", Journal of Presb. Hist. Soc., VII, (May 1943).

obstinate to the last.¹

In the summer of 1647 at least one pamphleteer believed the Assembly to be at its "last gaspe",² but its demise was to be protracted after the conclusion of the Catechisms, its last major task. At first it busied itself with preparing the Answers to the Reasons of the Dissenting Brethren for publication, but after 20 September 1648 the Minutes recorded no action except the examination of ministers, and when on 26 October 1649 this task was transferred to the Committee of Plundered Ministers, the Assembly, still formally undissolved, "died of sheer inanition".³ Despite its own shortcomings and the limitations imposed upon it by Parliament, the Assembly (or its leading members) had proved remarkably resilient - as late as May 11, 1648, it was still countering Erastian criticism by insisting that there was a church government jure divino.⁴ Shortly before his return to Scotland at the end of 1646, Baillie reflected on the Assembly's work and optimistically concluded that now the body of English ministers was thoroughly infused with the principles of Scottish Presbytery, and that only the

1. Mitchell and Struthers, p.365, TSS. vol.iii, f335. The Assembly prepared 2 Catechisms, a larger and a shorter, presented to Parliament on 22 October and 25 November 1647 respectively. The Larger Catechism never received the Lords' assent, although both passed the Commons in June 1648.

2. Anon, Certaine Seasonable Quaeries, 3 July 1647, p.5, E.396(17).

3. S.W. Carruthers, The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly, p.4. On 19 October 1649 the Minutes recorded an order for the subscription of the Engagement (which some members refused) TSS. vol.iii, f.368.

4. TSS. vol.iii, f.350. Some Independents supported this.

the Independents and Erastians in the Commons were to blame for all the obstacles Presbyterianism still encountered. Others were more critical of the Assembly's history, since they felt it had exacerbated the breach between Presbyterians and Independents, and in its consequent failure to speedily substitute a new form of church government broadly acceptable to Parliament and country, had been responsible for the great increase in errors and heresies in the confused war period. The Assembly members' absence from their own flocks had only aided the process.¹

Ministerial Activity: Rumour and Reality 1646-8.

The political confusions of 1647-8 presented a dilemma to many ministers, especially the Presbyterians. Moderate Independents may not have chosen constitutional irregularity and military force as the ideal way of achieving toleration, but they were hardly likely to publicly oppose events which their more radical brethren exalted as the will of God against politico - religious tyranny. But the Presbyterian ministers could approve neither the army's means nor its ends. The reality of their opposition is difficult to evaluate as there were so few public anti-army clerical pronouncements

1. Baillie, ii, 250-2; Anon, The Scottish Mist Dispel'd, p.25.

before Prides Purge, ministers contenting themselves with testimonies against sects and heresies in general.¹ Since their anti-army sermons were not printed, the main evidence of these and of their opposition in general comes from the prejudiced radical Independent pamphleteers. But from the little unbiased evidence available it seems that these pamphleteers complained justifiably that Presbyterian ministers were inciting city, M.P.s and people to make a stand against the army. However, before Pride's Purge even the more outspoken Presbyterians predictably saved their political meddling for opportune moments, viz, before the summer of 1647, and after January 1647-8 when fears of a Scottish invasion were growing. So Price observed,

"as the constitution of publick affairs do vary amongst us, so the constitution of these mens Sermons do alter and change; one while we find them all for moderation and Christian accommodation ... another while all for ... Presbytery in the rigid sense thereof".²

Besides the fact that at certain times some rigid Presbyterians campaigned in favour of accommodation, it was now more than ever true that the extreme Presbyterians were being repudiated by their moderate colleagues who chose to dissociate themselves from criticism of the army. Contemporaries were aware of this; John Price informed the "violent spirits" that

1. One exception was Nathaniel Ward, who rebuked the army before Parliament and in his anonymous pamphlet, A Religious Retreat Sounded to a Religious Army, 27 August 1647, E.404(34).
 2. J. Price, The Pulpit Incendiary, 4 May 1648, p.17, E.438(10).

"almost all men have already given in their judgment against you, many of your own party being more moderate, meek, and considerate than your selves, have declin'd you, and are asham'd of you".

While John Goodwin¹ observed that "clean birds" were deserting the "dirty cage" of Sion College, even the Presbyterian John Vicars felt obliged to defend his latest vitriolic pamphlet from his own moderate associates. Only Burges complained that the defection of some erstwhile Sion College members was due to "sectaries", now grown so "high and well backt".¹

Political necessity forced Presbyterian ministers onto the defensive; before Prides Purge their public attacks on Independents were confined to the usual charges of heresy and schism and personal acrimony. Accusations of Independent ministers' political involvement were surprisingly rare, although Hugh Peter received a few complaints. For the present, Presbyterians contented themselves with countering calumnies of their own political schemes, such as they received from John Goodwin and his lay disciple John Price. These took delight in representing the more extreme London Presbyterian ministers (whom they rightly or wrongly identified with Sion College), as the "great distemper" of the Kingdom,

1. J. Price, Clerico-Classicum, p.42; J. Goodwin Neophutopresbuteros: or the Yongling Elder, 15 June 1648, preface, E.447(27). Goodwin cited Caryl and Woodward ("Mr. C" and "Mr. W.") as defectors, but these had always been sympathetic to Independency. The evidence would suggest that these were not the only deserters. J. Vicars, Coleman Street Conclave Visited, 21 March 1647-8, p.39, E.433(5); C. Burges, Sion College, What it is and Doeth, 24 May 1648, p.6, E.444(3).

"for most confident we are, there is at this day no faction in the Kingdome more dangerous and obnoxious unto the peace, prosperity, and welfare of the Parliament, Army, and consequently whole Kingdome, than Sion Colledge is".¹

Burges claimed in vain that Sion College ministers were not "sticklers for any party whatsoever", because his subsequent emphasis on their hatred of heresies and breaches of Covenant caused by too many following "the faith of the times, and not of the Gospel", made it only too clear where "Sinon" College's sympathies lay.² John Price made a lengthy analysis of Sion College lectures, and concluded that the spiritual food obtainable there was "wormwood and gall", fed by "Bulls of Basan ... tossing and goring the Parliament and Army, and their dissenting brethren from day to day, maliciously fomenting contentions, strifes and divisions". A later writer observed that it was wise to hang fire buckets near London churches, since violent combustions were liable to be kindled there! Taking advantage of lenient government, ministers must be planning and coordinating sermons to advance sedition and treason, concluded Price.³

1. J. Price, The Pulpit Incendiary, p.27.

2. C. Burges, Sion College: What it is and Doeth, p.6.

3. J. Price, The Pulpit Incendiary, pp.3(quoted); 37-8; W.Ca. A Sad and Serious Discourse, 25 January 1648-9, n.p., E.540(3).

Price, a member of John Goodwin's congregation, was called by Burges Goodwin's "precious Second, who comes not much behind his Leader, in the black Art of reproaching his neighbours". Sion College had a regular morning lecture, given at different London churches. Price seems to have attended these lectures at least between February - April 1647-8, to see what use he could make of them for the Independent cause. For a reply to Price, see Anon, The Pulpit Incendiary Anatomized, 13 May 1648 (especially pp.3-5) E.442(5).

Goodwin called the college "Sinon" (sinning) but Burges retorted that it had only sinned in allowing John Goodwin to be a member!

Such ministerial designs were seen by Independents in politico-religious terms, just as Holles' manoeuvres had been; Price accused Sion College of treason no less for inciting men against the dissenting brethren as for their anti-army sermons. In the pamphlet warfare provoked by the London Provincial Assembly's "Testimony" against errors, heresies and toleration, which was echoed (doubtless by design) by Presbyterian ministers in no less than thirteen counties,¹ the Presbyterians denied that such denunciations of "heresy and schism" could be defined as [reasonable activity]. Once it had been considered public-spirited to censure sectaries, who now assumed to themselves the honour of being "the only Faithfull Adherents to the Publick Cause!"² But

1. The Testimony to the Truth of Jesus Christ was subscribed by 52 London ministers on 14 December 1647, E.423(3) after Parliament's inclusion of a toleration clause in the peace negotiations. It censured gross heresies (although these included some of John Goodwin's tenets and Milton's views on divorce) and their toleration, Goodwin believed that some signatories were tricked into opposing his "errors" along with others! The Testimony was followed by "Testimonies" and "Attestations" from London citizens, from Warwickshire, Gloucestershire, Lancashire, Cheshire, Essex, Northants, Shropshire, Yorkshire, Norfolk, Devon, Staffordshire, Somerset and Wiltshire. The signatories' names have been recorded by A.G. Matthews, Calamy Revised, Appendix 1.

The London Testimony was immediately denounced by John Goodwin in Sion Colledg Visited, 1 February 1647-8, E.425(2). William Jenkyn defended it in Allotricepiskopos: the Busie Bishop, 30 March 1648, E.434(4), a violent attack on Goodwin and his errors, and received a rebuke in similar style from Goodwin's Neophutopresbuteros. Jenkyn replied again in The Blinde Guide, or Doting Doctor, November 1648. Works already cited by John Price, Cornelius Burges and John Vicars were also involved in this pamphlet debate, which typically included much personal vituperation.

2. G. Burges, Sion College: What it is and Doeth, p.7.

clearly censures of toleration and the Independent church way were the subtlest means at the Presbyterians' disposal to publicly carp at the army's dominance over Parliament. Why else did William Jenkyn moan that "if there be a toleration, it doth not follow the Parliament is to be blamed; perhaps 'tis a toleration not given but taken". Not that John Price felt that the Presbyterians could grumble at the army's guidance of Parliament, when they themselves had so consistently endeavoured a similar influence.¹

What was the reality of the Presbyterian ministers' opposition to the army, so reproached by Independents? According to Price, all the events of the summer of 1647 could be blamed on Sion College, since its members had incited the city against the army, encouraged the mob to storm Parliament, driven faithful M.P.s to the army, and forced the soldiers' intervention. Although Burges repudiated such "unproven slanders", certain Presbyterian clergy must have been involved in Holles' designs.² Some were certainly encouraging the disbanding of the army at an early

1. W. Jenkyn, Allotricepiskopos, p.15 (which stated that many wise M.P.s approved of the Testimony); J. Price, The Pulpit Incendiary, p.9.

2. J. Price, The Pulpit Incendiary, p.12, and J. Price, Clerico-Classicum, 19 February 1648-9, p.8, E.544(1); C. Burges, Sion College: What it is and Doeth, p.22,25.

date.¹ One anti-army Essex petition was read in churches and offered for subscription by ministers! Nathaniel Ward launched a biting attack on the army in a sermon to Parliament described by one army newsbook as "worse than Edwards his *Gangraena*".² When the army approached the city, some ministers must have encouraged resistance, urging the Covenant, Presbytery, and the probability of army plundering as incentives, and using words not too far removed from Price's version; "Go on and prosper, go out to meet with that proud and blasphemous Army; the Lord hath delivered them into your hands".³ The anti-Presbyterian apprentice petition in July specifically asked Parliament to stop the clergy aggravating differences between peaceful spirits. Moreover, great significance must be attached to the fact that when the Lord Mayor and some citizens were accused of high treason after the army's intervention, Parliament also

1. Hugh Peter claimed, in a flimsily-based and exaggerated account, that in the autumn of 1646, some London ministers came to the Commons threatening violence unless the "heretical" army was disbanded. The charge was denied by Nathaniel Ward. R.P. Stearns, *The Strenuous Puritan*, pp.306-11. Yet Stephen Marshall publicly dissociated himself from involvement in the cause of disbanding in a sermon to the Lords in October 1646; *A Two-Edged Sword out of the Mouth of Babes*, 28 October 1646, p.30, E.359(3). Burges suggested a financial scheme to aid the departure of the Scots army, a prerequisite for disbanding. Baillie, ii, 244.

2. For the Essex petition see *A New Found Stratagem*, titlepage. The petition was read in churches on April 4, 1647. London ministers were also doubtless encouraging the city's anti-army petitions. N. Ward, *A Sermon* (not published by the Commons) 30 June 1647, E.394(30).

3. J. Price, *The Pulpit Incendiary*, p.10.

summond Jenkyn, Edwards and Burges to answer certain questions.¹

Although the Independents received fewer complaints than Presbyterians, they were probably as active in opposition, encouraging support for the army. Price admitted that some ministers entreated citizens

"in the name of the Lord not to goe out to fight against the Army, assuring that if the Army did come, not a haire of their heads should perish".

Henry Burton advised the city council in July of the necessity of a day of public repentance for the city's persecution of the army just because of its views on church-government. Some of the Independent army chaplains may even have encouraged the army's refusal to disband, although Saltmarsh for one repudiated the charge. Burges later hinted that Independents had suggested that Sion College should be used as an army quarter!²

In addition, three significant movements can be discerned among Presbyterian ministers in 1647. Firstly, it is clear that at an early stage, when the extreme Presbyterians were encouraging Holles' policy, some moderate ministers were

1. For the apprentices' petition (which was countered by a Presbyterian apprentices' petition) see The Humble Petition of ... apprentices of the City of London, presented 13 July 1647, E.398(9). For Parliament's summons, see C.J. v, 324 (2 October 1647). No further action is recorded against the ministers, but Edwards fled abroad.

2. J. Price, Clerico-Classicum, p.45; H. Burton, Meditations ... presented to the Commons Council, 22 July 1647, E.399(24); J. Saltmarsh, A Letter from the Army, p.4, 10 June 1647, E.392(6); C. Burges, Sion College: What it is and Doeth, p.24.

urging accommodation between city, Parliament and army. Such "mealy-mouthednesse" would be later censured by the radical Cawton.¹ Thomas Valentine urged accommodation in May, and Hussey obliquely hinted that the army might prove a "rod of God" if Parliament failed to act democratically. Thomas Manton, in a vital sermon on June 30th, denounced the following of one party to the prejudice of religion, and claiming to represent moderate men, stressed that ministers should seek to heal breaches. His suggestion of a reconstitution of the Parliamentary committee of accommodation was hastily taken up by the Commons.² Secondly, when the army approached the city and violence seemed imminent, a group of ministers led by Marshall, and probably including the Independent Nye, tried hard to avoid conflict. Marshall's mediating influence between Parliament, city and army was well documented, and was a logical extension of the moderate policy he had pursued in the Assembly. He and his "seventeen servants of the Synod" led the Assembly to implore Parliament to come to terms with the army, in a petition described by Baillie as "an example rarely paralleled (sic), if not of

1. J. Price, The Pulpit Incendiary, p.12.

2. T. Valentine, A Charge against the Jews, 26 May 1647, preface, E.389(6); W. Hussey, The Magistrates Charge for the People's Safetie, 26 May 1647, E.389(7) which reputedly caused much debate among lawyers; T. Manton Meate out of the Eater, or Hopes of Unity, 30 June 1647, E.395(1).

Manton's suggestion was adopted by the Commons who included Manton and Valentine in the 12 divines to constitute the new committee, of which little else was heard. C.J.v,228.

treachery, yet at least of childish improvidence and base cowardice".¹ According to Walker and Holles, Marshall also advised the city to capitulate. It is significant that it was Marshall and Nye who were the Parliamentary preachers at the thanksgiving on 12 August 1647 for the "restoration" of Parliamentary freedom and the avoidance of war between city and army.² Thirdly, it appeared that certain London ministers, including some extremists, were so frenzied with fear lest the army should revenge their preaching, that they decided to publish a declaration that they never intended the city and army to come to blows,

1. Baillie, ii, 257.

2. Marshall and Nye were sent with the Parliamentary commissioners to treat with the army; both were later awarded gratuities "for the service of the Parliament". C.J. v, 272.

For Marshall's role see C. Walker, The History of Independency, p.79; Memoirs of Denzil Lord Holles, (1699) pp.88, 106, 168., and Baillie, ii, 257. Holles made it clear that many "well-meaning" Assembly men like Palmer were guided by Marshall. Baillie believed that Marshall was advised by the Independent aldermen Foulkes and Gibbs, and Holles thought that in comparison to Marshall, Nye's Independency looked like modest Presbyterianism! The Assembly's petition urging peace was delivered to Parliament on 2nd August 1647; C.J. v, 265 and Perfect Occurrences, 6-13 August 1647. For Marshall's sermon of 12 August, see Thomason's copy in E.401(29). The sermon deplored the abuse of religion for self-interest and criticised men who divided Parliament, city and army, yet stressed cleverly that peace must be settled by "unity of hearts and not power of arms".

although they approved of the defence of the city. This document was presented to the city militia committee by Ashe, Calamy and Case, and was possibly read in churches.¹ It is therefore important to distinguish between consistent moderation, like Manton's and Marshall's, and that born of fear of reprisals.

The same mixture of extremism and moderation is apparent in the months leading up to, and during the Scottish invasion in 1648. While the moderates in the political Independent party were dissociating themselves from the radicals, and uniting with the political Presbyterians, Royalist newsbooks consistently reported the "Independent journey-worke" of Marshall in persuading moderate preachers to publicise the alliance. In May, Marshall begged M.P.s to deal honestly with dissenters and eschew all partisan commitments, significant words at the time the Presbyterians were reestablishing ascendancy in the Commons.² In the meantime, Independent pamphleteers censured continuing Presbyterian pulpit attacks on the army and Independent - dominated Parliament. The army was called a "generation of vipers", and the ten-horned beast prophesied by Daniel;

1. C. Burges, Sion College: What it is and Doeth, pp.22-3. This is easily confused with the Assembly petition (eg. by Dr. Pearl "London Puritans and Scotch Fifth Columnists", in Studies in London History, p.329), but was in fact different. It was signed by 20 city ministers on 2 August, and Burges emphasised that many signatures were those of Presbyterian extremists aspersed by Price. Price claimed that a declaration (which he thought provocative) was read in city churches at this time. J. Price, The Pulpit Incendiary, p. 2. For the Royalist comments see Mercurius Pragmaticus, No.28 and 29 (quoted), March-April 1648, E.433(28) and E.434(17). On 17 May 1648 Marshall told Parliament "Vote not one thing this day to please one party, and then another thing, another time, to please another party". S. Marshall, Emmanuel, E.443(3).

the 11 M.P.s and imprisoned citizens were praised and remarks were made that Parliament ought to repent of its sinful compliance with the army. Moderation was deplored, since "we have moderated it so long, that we have moderated away ... City ... Parliament ... Covenant ... Christ, and almost Religion out of the Kingdome".¹ But if the Presbyterian Ward led the Eastern counties in an anti-army, anti-sectarian petition, the Independents were no less active. Nye, opposing the proposed personal treaty with the King, led an Independent petition against it in July.² According to Royalists, Independents were as busy as the Presbyterians in preaching politics.³

The Independents eagerly blamed the extreme Presbyterians with fomenting the Second Civil War, "separating their consecrated lungs for bellows to blow up these coals".⁴

2.cont'd. With accommodation in mind, it is significant that the reports of the committee of accommodation were published in May, and a Royalist reported a meeting between Presbyterians and Independents at army headquarters in January. Mercurius Pragmaticus, No.18, E.423(2).

1. Price censured these remarks of radicals like Cawton, Witham, Jenkyn and Cranford and also indirect comments (which could be variously interpreted) by men like Calamy and Ashe. He mocked that the Presbyterians denigrated the army to their "woman audiences". J. Price, The Pulpit-Incendiary, pp.3-29 (p.16 quoted) and Clerico-Classicum, p.25. See also S. Annersley, The Sinne of Hardnesse of Heart, 26 July 1648, p.26, E.455(3).

2. The Humble Petition ... of the Eastern Association; The Petition of divers well-affected in habitants in London, 5 July. 1648, B.M. 669f.12. (This, led by Nye, was in response to a Presbyterian city petition, doubtless encouraged by Presbyterian ministers, in favour of a personal treaty). The personal treaty, favoured by Presbyterians, was deemed too advantageous to Charles.

3. Mercurius Elencticus, No.8, p.59, E.423(10) mentioned that Independent preachers were preaching against the political Presbyterians and Scots.

4. J. Goodwin, The Obstructours of Justice, 30 May 1649, p.1, E.557(2) Goodwin claimed without proof that ministers incited rebellions in Kent, Sussex, Essex and Wales.

But this was pure progaganda, although it is not impossible that some ministers did preach for the King and Scots,

"some of them not sticking to say, we shall never have Presbytery settled untill our brethren of Scotland come into the kingdome to settle it".¹

But the Presbyterians repudiated the slur, and although most would favour the Presbyterian M.P.s' activities, few seem to have supported the Scottish invasion, which English Presbyterians and even the Scottish clergy disliked. While the Assembly wrote to Scotland imploring peace, Marshall was encouraging ministers to hinder the Scots.² Despite Hamilton's assurance to Lancashire ministers that the Scots had come to settle the Presbyterian church, the ministers adhered to Parliament.³ Even the Independents could cite no concrete evidence to substantiate their calumnies.

After Pride's Purge and the King's execution however, the Independents had plenty of evidence that Presbyterian ministers were bellowing a "Clergi-allarum to a third war".⁴

1. J. Price, The Pulpit Incendiary, p.19. See also J. Price, Clerico-Classicum, pp.25,43.

2. For a Presbyterian defence of the slurs of fomenting war, see the London Provincial Assembly's A Vindication of the Presbyteriall Government and Ministry, 2 November 1649, p.13. Baillie made the feelings of the Scottish clergy about the "late unhappy engagement" clear; they even proposed to suspend its leaders from the Sacrament! Baillie, ii, 293,300,305½. For the Assembly's letter to Scotland see C.J. v. 587-8, and for Marshall's activities, C. Walker, An Appendix to the History of Independency, 1648, p.11.

3.- The Copy of a Letter from Duke Hamilton to the Ministers at Lancaster, 10 August 1648, E.460(38), and R. Halley, Lancashire: its Puritanism and Nonconformity, pp.265-6.

4. The full title of J. Price's "Clerico-Classicum" was Clerico-Classicum or the Clergi-Allarum to a Third War.

Hugh Peter warned the London ministers that soldiers might take revenge on clergy who persistently opposed army policy, which was assumed by Presbyterians to be a dire threat.¹

Yet Presbyterian preachers continued in chorus;

"one shall raille against the Army, another inveigh against the present forme and Constitution of the Parliament; another must pray and preach devoutly for restoring the King; another cry up the secluded Members".²

Martindale observed "the wrath of Rulers against Presbyterian ministers in the citie, which they daily exasperated by their cutting sermons", while in Lancashire pulpits so rang out against the army that soldiers had to keep the peace actively.³ Thomas Watson even warned the purged Parliament not to allow religious libertines, which so embarrassed the Rump that

"they could not rest on their Seats, but one while whispering, anon frowning, then throwing their cloaks about their shoulders, with great indignation: at other times offering to be gone".⁴

On 28 March 1649 the Commons ordered that no minister should meddle with State affairs in his pulpit, a situation which even Baillie now supported, and was highly recommended by John Milton.⁵

1. Peter took a body of soldiers to break up a meeting at Calamy's house; C. Walker, The History of Independency, Part II, 1649, pp.67-8. For the Presbyterian interpretation of this act see the London ministers, A Serious and Faithfull Representation, 17 January 1648, pp.15-16, E.538(25).

2. S.T., A Thunder-Clap to Sion Colledge, 12 February 1648-9, p.10, E.542(9).

3. The Life of Adam Martindale, p.87; The Moderate Intelligence; No. 197, and No. 203, E.536(18) and E.541(27). Thomas Cawton was imprisoned for six months for praying for Charles II in Hanuary, C.J. vi, 107. Cornelius Burges preached against the trial on 14 January. D.N.B.

4. Mercurius Elencticus, No.58, p.553, E.536(31). Watson's sermon (preached on December 27) was not printed by Parliament,

But the Presbyterians now moved one stage further and publicly denounced both Purge and execution, since they believed ministers had an interest in the Kingdom as subjects, and thus "ought (without incurring the just censure due to busie-bodies and incendiaries) to appear, for preserving the Laws and Liberties of that Commonwealth".¹ Many of the London Presbyterians had been invited by the army to consult about religion in December 1648, and some, including Calamy, Ashe, Seaman and Burges had done so.² But these expressed dislike of the army actions, and other London Presbyterians refused to attend at all, giving their reasons in a "Representation" of January 17th to Fairfax, duly mocked by radical Independents as a "Papal Bull". The "Representation" was despatched to provincial centres for subscription, and met with limited success in Essex.³ Before the King's death,

4. cont'd. so Cranford licensed it! T. Watson, God's Anatomy upon Man's Heart, E.536(6).

5. C. Walker, The History of Independency, Part II, p.152; Baillie, ii, 286; J. Milton, The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates, 13 February 1648-9, pp.41-2, E.542(12).

1. The London ministers, A Vindication of the Ministers of the Gospel, 27 January 1648-9, p.2, E.540(11).

2. A.S.P. Woodhouse, op.cit., p.125. Marshall, Nye and the moderate Norfolk Presbyterian John Brinsley also consulted with the army.

3. The London ministers, A Serious and Faithfull Representation; 17 January 1648, E.538(25). For its despatch to the provinces, see The Kingdomes Faithfull Scout, 26 January-2 February 1648-9, p. E.541(5), and H. Smith, The Ecclesiastical History of Essex, p.100, which quoted a "Covenanter's" declaration of 14 January against the army in Prittlewell parish registers.

ministers in Oxford and Northamptonshire had written to Fairfax asking that the trial be suspended. The execution itself provoked another public denunciation from the London Presbyterians, including Burges, Ashe, Calamy, Seaman and others who had not subscribed the earlier document.¹ Army and radical Independent pamphleteers immediately deluged the ministers with sneers that the "Mouth Granadoes" were upset only to see "their crown of Classicall Jurisdiction" fall to the ground with Pride's Purge, and were too uncharitable even to consult with the army. Eventually the Provincial Assembly issued a "Vindication" against such aspersions, which as well as reiterating all the "jure divino" claims, duly delivered a rebuke to the dissenting brethren on the bitter fruits of their "moderate separation".² In the meantime the ministers' warnings against the Agreement of the People were repeated by Essex and Lancashire ministers, and by

1. The Humble Advice of ministers in Oxford and Northamptonshire, 27 January 1648-9, E.540(12) naively thought the Assembly could yet influence the army! The London ministers' denunciation of the execution was A Vindication of the Ministers of the Gospel. At least two Devon ministers were arrested by the army for reading this in the pulpit! D. Underdown, Pride's Purge, p.177. Thomas Thorowgood, who signed the vindication, was told by "one of that bloody crew" that all its subscribers would be tried! B. Cozens Hardy, "A Puritan Moderate", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., IX (1926) p.212.

2. The vigorous denunciations of the "Representation", "Vindication", or both were (in chronological order):- W.Ca., A Sad and Serious Discourse upon a Terrible Letter, 25 January (1648-9), E.540(3); S. Richardson, An Answer to the London Minister's Letter, 27 January, E.540(8); Anon, An Answer to the Citie's Representation, 7 February, E.541(23); S.T. A Thunder-Clap to Sion College, 12 February, E.542(9); J. Milton, The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates, 13 February E.542(12);

the committee, gentry, and ministry of Leicester.¹ But the moderate, politic or timeserving Presbyterians still held aloof from such protests: Price observed that only one third of the London Provincial ministers actually signed the Representation. Marshall and Caryl, previously sympathetic to Independents, were chosen to preach to Parliament after Pride's Purge.²

It should not be supposed that Independent ministers supported the execution. Some few did, including John Goodwin, whose theological vindications of army policy caused the Presbyterian Geree to complain that some divines would always be "abettours to a prevailing faction".³ Hugh Peter's

2. cont'd. A Minister, Eye Salve to anoint the Eyes, 13 February E.542(16); Anon, Little Benjamin, 19 February, E.544(14); J. Price, Clerico-Classicum, 19 February; Anon, A Parallel, 26 February, E.545(8); Anon, The City Ministers Unmasked, 5 March, E.546(2), and J. Goodwin, The Obstructours of Justice, 30 May 1649 (which was burnt at the Restoration).

The one pamphlet to defend the London ministers was, A Modest and Clear Vindication, (against Price) 3 April 1649, E.549(20). The Provincial Assembly's own defence came in A Vindication of the Presbyteriall Government and Ministry, 2 November 1649.

1. The Essex Ministers Watchword, 8 March 1648-9, E.546(11); The Paper called the Agreement of the People ... Resolved ... by the Ministers ... of Lancaster, 26 March 1649, E.546(27); and The Humble Representation of the Committee, Gentry, Ministry, and well-affected in Leicester, 1 March 1648-9, E.545(22).

2. J. Price, Clerico-Classicum, p.15; R.P. Stearns, The Strenuous Puritan, p.328. The sermons were on 8 December 1648.

3. For Goodwin's defence of Pride's Purge, see Right and Might Well Met, 2 January 1648-9, E.536(28) which was opposed by John Geree's Might Overcoming Right, 18 January 1648-9, E.538(24). The quotation is from the latter, page.1. Goodwin defended the execution in The Obstructours of Justice.

sermons so encouraged the regicides that they "dripped blood".¹ But one source emphasised that Goodwin, Peter and Dell were the only important ministers who favoured the design, whilst another said "some of the Independents also ... declare against the thing".² Halley believed that the Oxford and Northamptonshire ministers' letter was signed by some Independents. But Independent ministers generally kept any reservations well hidden, and on the fast of January 31st, immediately after the execution, the Parliamentary preachers John Cardell and John Owen, whilst referring to the regicides as "the Lord's workmen", devoted themselves to general eulogies on liberty and justice. The one minister, William Sedgwick, who dared criticise the army in public, had a rapid change of heart.³ One pamphleteer later censured Independent congregations for silently acquiescing in the army's political excesses, for "which of our gathered churches declared the trouble of our hearts ... (they) are partakers of all their evill deeds".⁴ But the Independents

1. G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, p.66.

2. R.P. Stearns, The Strenuous Puritan, p.331, quoting a letter to Secretary Nicholas; G. Bates, "A Short Historical Account", 1685, quoted in B. Hanbury, Historical Memorials of the Independents, vol.iii, p.358.

3. R. Halley, op.cit., p.276; see J. Cardell, God's Wisdom Justified and Man's Folly Condemned, 1648-9, E.540(24); J. Owen, Sermon before the Commons, 1648-9, E.540(25). Sedgwick had criticised the army in Justice upon the Armie Remonstrance, 11 December 1648, E.475(35) but changed his mind in A Second View of the Army Remonstrance, 23 December 1648, E.477(20). A minister called N.T. defended the execution in The Resolver Continued, 12 March 1648-9, E.546(17), as did a supposed Presbyterian minister in The Kingdomes Grand Quere, 1 March 1648-9, E.545(21).

4. Salem Philalathes, The Moderate Independent Proposing a Word in Season to the Gathered Churches, (1660).

looked to the future, which due to the army, looked very bright at the end of 1648.

Pamphlet Literature 1646-8. I: Presbyterian-Independent Reactions to Army Policy.

The fusion of political and religious arguments was again evident when pro and anti-army pamphleteers flocked to judge the motives behind, and effects of, Pride's Purge and the preliminary removal of the eleven M.P.s which predated it by sixteen months. Predictably the writers, whilst anxious to ascribe genuine religious motivation to their own cause, denounced similar claims of their rivals as spurious. Thus, just as the Presbyterian purged M.P.s were criticised for masquerading personal advantage under a religious guise, it was also questioned whether

"all (in the army) who have religious and specious pretences in their mouths, have the like reall intentions in their hearts and veins ... (since they) pursue their own ends and interests more than any others they asperse".¹

However the army insisted that it was no "mere mercenary army",² but acting in accordance with the laws of God and man, and both at Putney and Whitehall was anxious to vindicate this claim. Hugh Peter declared that religion was the reason soldiers

1. Anon, VIII Queries upon the Late Declarations of and Letters from the army, 15 June 1647, pp.3-7, E.392(22).

2. A Declaration or Representation from His Excellency, Sir Thomas Fairfax, 14 June 1647, p.9, E.392(27).

marched with their swords in their hands, and Harrison insisted that

"some conviction that God is in us (must be revealed) ... Some that fear God, and are against us upon other grounds, they think that our business is to establish ourselves, it is only to get power into our own hands ... (But we must) vindicate the profession that we have all along made to God ... that (what) we seek (is) not for ourselves, but for all men".¹

The army thus really resented Presbyterian efforts to malign it as at worst completely hypocritical, anxious only for material grievances (important though these were),² and at best a band of heretics and libertines, dangerous to church and state alike. To the soldiers it was all part of the Presbyterian plot that they were presented "as Secretaries (sic), even as heretofore the well-affected party were rendered hateful ... as Puritans ... with old tales of private mens preaching, Conventicles, rebaptising".³ Prime targets for army complaints were the works of Bastwick, Prynne and particularly Thomas Edwards, for although Peter professed that the army was so forgiving that "even Gangraena himselve

1. A.S.P. Woodhouse, op.cit., pp.138, 177-178(quoted).

2. Lack of arrears and indemnity, and other material grievances were vital, and Presbyterians viewed these as superior to the army's professed religious intentions. One observed that it was strange a non-mercenary army should be so fond of demanding its arrears; Anon, IX Proposals ... to the Generall, Officers, and Soldiers in the Army, 2 July 1647, p.8, E.396(8).

3. Anon, The Poore Wise mans Admonition, 10 June 1647, pp.3-4, E.392(4). Presbyterians claimed that so many sectaries had been recruited into the army in the past year, that army numbers had doubled (a claim denied by the army); e.g. IX Proposals, p.8.

might have marcht through the Army unmolested", few believed him.¹ A Royalist thought "Gangraena" was a prime cause of the army's refusal to disband, the book was mentioned in army grievances, and army pamphleteers felt themselves obliged to

"take off from the Army much of that filth which M. Edwards throwes upon it ... endeavouring to make it stink in the nostrils of the Kingdom".²

They accordingly presented the army to be more pious than Presbyterians, and the means of spreading "the sweete savour of Religion abroad throughout this Kingdome".³

Both before and after Pride's Purge, familiar Presbyterian-Independent arguments occurred over the army's supposed "subversion of the ministry" by lay-preaching and perversion of Reformation through toleration,⁴ both of which Presbyterians

1. H. Peter, A Word for the Armie, 11 October 1647, p.6, E.410(6).

2. Anon. (pro Royalist) A True Account and character of the Times, 9 August 1647, pp.4-5, E.401(13); W.G., A Just Apologie for an Abused Armie, 29 January 1646-7, p.14(quoted), E.372(22). See also A Perfect and True Copy of the Severall Grievances of the Army, 27 May 1647, sig A2 verso, E.390(3).

3. J. Price, Clerico-Classicum, p.41. See also Anon, The Riddles Unridled, 14 July 1647, p.10, E.398(8). After Joyce's seizure of the King, when it suited Royalists to adopt a pro-army stance, even they praised army piety, e.g. Anon, An Answer to a Letter, 17 June 1647, p.3, E.393(3).

4. An important radical Independent pamphlet portrayed the differences between Presbyterian ministers and the army at the time of the army's refusal to disband; J.P. (could this be John Price?) Certaine Scruples from the Army, Presented in a Dialogue between a Minister of the New-moulded Presbytery, and a Soldier, 3 June 1647, E.390(21). In November 1646 there was a conference between six Presbyterian ministers and some Independent army commanders over ordination and lay-preaching A Publike Conference, 26 November 1646, E.363(4).

felt to be epitomised in the Agreement of the People. The Lancashire ministers were appalled that the Agreement omitted all mention of a public ministry, but set all heresies at liberty in the Kingdom, and complained that here was a Christian religion "without Church, Ministry, Sacraments, or Discipline"¹ Nathaniel Ward concluded earlier that the army's religious policy would

"utterly blast the esteeme of your Army, in the hearts of good men, who conclude that your way cannot be of God; surely when Hee gives the Kingdom to the Saints, hee will not suffer them to give such large tolerations to erroneous opinions, nor to build with one hand, and pluck downe with the other"²

But army defenders retorted that the army was neither opposed to a lawful ministry, nor a censure of fundamental errors. Yet as the Westminster Assembly had proved unequal to the task, the army had to prevent the persecution of men for trifling differences, which hindered the pursuit of true piety. If the Presbyterians continued to reject the army's religious ideas, "it is the Lord himselfe that is rejected by them, because they will not have him to rule over them"³

If the army's religious principles were not bad enough, the reproach of its political actions to religion appalled all

1. The Paper called the Agreement of the People ... resolved ... by ministers of Lancaster, p.15.

2. N. Ward, A Religious Retreat Sounded to a Religious Army, 27 August 1647, p.16, E.404(34).

3. W.G. A Just Apologie for an Abused Armie, p.20. For other army defences see Anon, Vox Militaris, pp.5-9; S. Richardson, An Answer to the London Ministers' Letter, (quoted on frontispiece to this chapter).

critics;

"How is Religion made to stink by reason of your miscarriages, and like to become a scorn and a reproach in all the Christian world ... How is the Golden Cord of Government broke in sunder? the Honor and Authority of Magistracy laid in the Dust?"¹

Prynne wondered "with what colour or shadow of Religion, Justice or Conscience" the so called saintly army could grow so unchristianly impatient as by such antiparliamentary and mutinous proceedings to enslave the judgement and conscience of the whole Parliament. Had not Hugh Peter once told soldiers not to violate Parliamentary liberties?² Others believed that the army had exceeded its calling, which was to defend and be regulated by Parliament, and instead was judging M.P.s if "they answered not their new illuminated fancies". In demanding the persons of M.P.s, the army was worse than the King!³ Clearly the army would now usurp magistracy, just as its lay-preachers assumed the role of the ministry. Such actions were not only contraventions of English law, but also of God's law;

"to disobey the Parliament, or resist them in their lawfull Commands is to resist the Ordinance of God: For as the Administration of the Word and Sacraments are in the hand of Gods Ministers Jure Divino; so the Administration of Judgement and Justice, Government and Rule, are in the hand of the Magistrate Jure Divino, unquestionably".

1. The London ministers, A Serious and Faithfull Representation, pp.9-10.

2. W. Prynne, IX Queries upon the Printed Charge of the army against the XI Members, 25 June 1647, pp.5-11, E.394(1).

3. J. Gere, Might Overcoming Right, pp.7(quoted), 8,29. The King had merely desired 5 M.P.s, whereas the army imprisoned 40 and excluded about 100 from Parliament. For Goodwin's reply to this charge see J. Goodwin, Might and Right Well Met, p.32.

John Geree agreed;

"many humane Lawes, are but the backing of Divine Lawes with civill sanction ... such lawes are as indispensible as the Laws of God themselves, being but the Laws of God, put out in a Politicall dresse".

Quite apart from this, argued some Essex "Covenanters", the army had clearly violated "a divine precept given to soldiers by that burning and shining light, Luke III 14: Do violence to no man, or put no man in fear".¹

Independents were anxious to defend the army from such charges. Magistracy, they explained, was ordained by God not for its own sake, but for its benefit to the people; if this was neglected, God would not insist on obedience. Thus Goodwin believed that the army's proceedings against "that most barbarous, inhumane, and bloody faction amongst us, who for many yeares last past have ... attempted the absolute enslaving ... of the Nation",² was far from violating Parliamentary privilege. For by "the glorious worke of casting out Devils by the finger of God" and sifting out "much of the drosse and soile", the army merely

1. Anon, The Lawfulness of the Late Passages of the Army ... Examined, 8 June 1647, pp.16-17, E.394(12); J. Geree, Might Overcoming Right, p.22; H. Smith, The Ecclesiastical History of Essex, p.100.

2. J. Goodwin, Right and Might Well Met, p.1.

"reduced the Parliament to the true nature, dignity, and honour of a Parliament, by secluding such Members from it, who altered the property, and turn'd the glory of it into a lie".

The army had every intention of preserving true Parliamentary authority and preventing such abuses for the future.¹ As Richardson said, in this case "one may break the Letter of the Law, and keep the Law, if he observe the intent of it". Hugh Peter went so far as to say that in moulding Parliament the army saints were fulfilling God's purpose, since in the past they had erred in "not designing a government from first to last".²

Independents thus claimed that far from usurping authority, the army was led by God for the good of the whole nation, protecting the people's liberties. For the army could not

"without offering violence to their principles, as Englishmen; to their Consciences, as Religious men; and to common piety, as lovers of their Countrey, but stay and see the Flocke secured from being made a prey to those Wolves ... the Clergy-lay Conventiclers of the Faction".³

Salus populi est suprema lex became a favourite ploy.

Magistrates were only

"minores universis, and therefore we cannot ... basely betray the publike interest which is greater than they ... the God of our Army which hitherto hath blest us, can witness

1. J. Goodwin, Right and Might Well Met, preface, pp.1,29. Geree objected that the Independent Jeremiah Burroughes had said abused authority should be obeyed, and only men's wills resisted, but the army supporters felt this distinction was applicable to their cause. J. Geree, Might Overcoming Right pp.35-8.

2. S. Richardson, An Answer to the London Ministers' Letter, p.10; H. Peter, A Word for the Armie, p.9.

3. M. Medham (arguing for the Independents), The Lawyer of Lincolnes-Inne Reformed, or an Apology for the Army, 1 July 1647, p.4, E.395(4).

for us ... (we desire only) the King, the Lords and Commons, and every Subject may peaceably enjoy his own personall and undoubted right".¹

But when the people's liberties were "lay'd upon the altar" for sacrifice, then "the People by the Law of nature have power to preserve and secure themselves".² Since in times of danger, "the necessities of men called more effectually then men themselves", the army had a clear mandate from the people, justifiable in the sight of God, to preserve the "salus populi". How could the Presbyterians malign the army for breaking their Covenant contrary to conscience, when the army had covenanted not merely to protect Parliaments', but the whole Kingdom's liberties? To John Goodwin, Pride's Purge was comparable with Christ's descent into Hell to redeem lost souls, and

"when the inhabitants of this nation shall have dranke ^hswile of the sweet waters of that Well of Liberty which the Army have dig'd and opened with their swords ... (they will) call their Benefactors Blessed".³

Presbyterians were most unimpressed by such arguments. They found an obvious flaw in the Independent logic that the law of necessity (equated by Goodwin with the law of nature) was higher than the laws of the land, and that "many of the

1. Anon, Vox Militaris, p.4.

2. J. Goodwin, Right and Might Well Met, p.8; A Wilbee, Plain Truth without Feare or Flattery, sig.C. The sacrifice of "salus populi" on the altar of self-interest was a popular image.

3. J. Goodwin, Right and Might Well Met, pp.8,30,44. The charge of Covenant-breaking was made e.g. by the London ministers in A Serious and Faithfull Representation, p.15.

lawes of God themselves think it no disparagement ... to give place to their elder Sister, the Law of necessity".¹

The London ministers pronounced that "no necessity can oblige a man to sinne; God stands not in need of our sinne to carry on his owne worke".² If any necessity could ever dispense with God's precepts, it should be clear, not merely pretended by "a sort of people in the land, that out of pretended new light, would live exempt from the ordinary and received rules of Government". The only way to avoid false claims of necessity was to ensure that the judgements of public persons, to whom authority was entrusted, should overrule private opinions.³

A fierce debate then ensued as to whether the excluded M.P.s had created such a danger to the Kingdom that the law of necessity had required their removal. Goodwin was satisfied that they had "become Renegadoes from their trust". Certainly the M.P.s might be personally less sinful if they believed themselves to act conscientiously, but such blindness to their own failings could only increase the justification for army action. For "the corruption of the best, is worst ... When conscience and concupiscence meet (asft they do in religious men), the conjunction is very fiery".⁴ But Presbyterians

1. Such views had been held by J. Goodwin, Right and Might Well Met, p.15(quoted) and S. Richardson, An Answer to the London Ministers Letter, p.2.

2. The London ministers, A serious and faithfull Representation, p.14.

3. J. Gere, Might Overcoming Right, p.41.

4. J. Goodwin, Right and Might Well Met, pp.18,26.

insisted that the M.P.s were acting according to religion,
Covenant and salus populi, affording no cause

"to pretend such apparant necessity of danger, as to
break Lawes humane and Divine, seen only by men, that can
pretend to no more of science, or conscience, than those
whom they reject".¹

It appeared that high treason in an Independent had become
a commendable virtue, whereas Covenant-keeping by a
Presbyterian was attributable as treason.²

Claims that the army preserved the "salus populi" were
also repudiated by Presbyterians, who firstly informed the
army that throughout history usurpers had

"pretended (though seldom or never promoted) publike
weal or liberty ... to still their own consciences ...
and to blear the eyes of those who bear an awfull respect to
that ordinance of God, Authority".³

But the people themselves had not called the army to perform
this dubious service on their behalf, which indeed was more
likely to ruin their safety than preserve it. Secondly,
Presbyterians assured the army that even if the people had
called them to act, the people could never be above magistracy.
Parliament was "the Supreame Judicature, against which lies no

1. J. Gere, Might Overcoming Right, p.24.

2. Anon, New Presbyterian Light Springing out of Independent
Darkness, 30 July 1647, p.9, E.400(24).

3. J. Gere, Might Overcoming Right, p.1.

writ of errour, or appeale, but to God".¹ To place supreme power in the people to alter the government at will (such as the army proposed in the Leveller-inspired Agreement of the People), was no more than anarchy and confusion, and contrary to God's will. Indeed, scoffed Geree, if pretended "salus populi" could defend power-snatching, doubtless the Leveller faction could teach the army's "Moderater part" a lesson.²

When the Presbyterians howled in protest at yet another gross violation of the English constitution and heavenly law, the King's execution, a few Independents were ready with two lines of defence. The first was to insist that the deed was no "Jesuiticall King-killing by assassines"³ but the lawful execution of a tyrant, guilty of the blood of his subjects, whose actions had so violated his own authority that it could only be preserved by the death of his person. To Independents, the London ministers condemnation of "the highest act of Justice that ever was performed in this Land"⁴ came not from God, but from Sion College, whose opinion seemed to be that "King's may not be murdered, therefore Subjects may".⁵ John Price reminded Presbyterians that if the

1. J. Geree, Might Overcoming Right, pp.10,26(quoted). Goodwin had stressed in Right and Might Well Met, p.15, that the army did not need the consent of the people to save their liberties. Certain petitions could be used by the army to indicate that they enjoyed popular support, e.g. Four Petitions, 18 June 1647, E.393(7).

2. J. Geree, Might Overcoming Right, p.33. The Levellers did indeed claim that "salus populi" was rarely rightfully used. Westminster Projects, 23 March 1647-8, p.2, E.433(15). For other arguments accusing the army of anarchy and confusion see London ministers, A Vindication of the Ministers of the Gospel, p.6; The Essex Ministers' Watchword, p.5; The Paper called the Agreement of the People ... Resolved by ... Ministers

Laudian clergy had not overemphasised the divine right of magistracy in the first place, the King might have been saved.¹ Secondly, the defenders of the execution adopted a favourite Independent argument, namely that the Presbyterians themselves had once set the people against the King, defying his magistracy for the *salus populi*.

"He who but erewhile in the pulpits was a cursed tyrant, an enemy to God and saints ... is now ... a lawfull magistratē! a sovereign lord! the Lord's anointed! not to be touch'd! though by themselves imprison'd".²

The truth was that the events of 1647-8 had proceeded far beyond the intentions of both Presbyterian and Independent divines and laymen in 1642-3; Presbyterian divines correctly insisted that in advocating the wars they had never aimed at the execution of the sovereign and the alteration of

"the Civil Government of the Kingdom by King, Lords and Commons ... to bring the freeborn subjects of England under martial law, which is not suitable to our English spirits".³

Both Presbyterian and Independent divines had then agreed with the defence of Parliamentary liberty and the protection of the King from his evil advisers. But they had also stressed popular safety and the necessity of resisting tyrannical

2. cont'd. ... of Lancaster, p.3.

3. So phrased by J. Gere, Might Overcoming Right, p.32.

4. J. Price, Clerico-Classicum, p.48.

5. W. Ca., A Sad and Serious Discourse, n.p.

1. J. Price, Clerico-Classicum, pp.29-30. For other defences of the King's execution see J. Milton, The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates, p.7; J. Goodwin, The Obstructours of Justice, p.3ff

2. See J. Milton, The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates, p.6 (quoted); J. Price, Clerico-Classicum, p.9; J. Goodwin, The Unrighteous Judge, pp.15-16. Walker claimed that Marshall, Nye and Caryl also used such arguments, The History of Independency, Part II p.157. The Independents cited Presbyterian writings justifying the civil war to illustrate their point, especially Scripture and Reason pleaded for Defensive Arms, 1643; S. Rutherford's Lex Rex, and Christopher Love's sermon at Uxbridge England's Distemper.

3. See the London ministers, A Vindication of the Ministers of the Gospel, pp.3-4,7; The Essex "Covenanters" declaration in H. Smith, The Ecclesiastical History of Essex, p.100(quoted).

authority, even if the Presbyterians had stressed that Parliament must act for the people, whereas Independent ministers had hinted at a greater role for the people themselves. So the few Independent~~s~~ divines who publicly supported Pride's Purge and the King's death~~s~~ found that they could consistently do so by using arguments previously advanced for the first taking up of arms. For what universal definitions existed for "salus populi", "liberty", and "tyranny"? As Hugh Peter said, if "a wise Statist~~s~~" could define such notions, the whole Kingdom could soon have been at peace.¹ As for changes in the civil constitution, neither Presbyterians nor Independents had ever claimed that one form of civil government was universally ordained jure divino. If the Duke of Hamilton claimed that the Independent religion was inconsistent with monarchy, Nedham thought the same of the Presbyterian.² Presbyterians would not argue that the constitution could never be changed, since alterations in the State might be necessary, as in a Church, to restore God's original intentions.³ But they did believe that only the full Parliament could effect changes, not the people themselves nor their pretended representatives. It was left to

1. H. Peter, A Word for the Armie, p.13.

2. G. Yule, "Independents and Revolutionaries", Journal of British Studies, (1968) p.15; M. Nedham, The True Character of a Rigid Presbyter (1661) p.39.

3. This was the Independents claim in e.g. Eleutherius Philodemus, The Armie's Vindication, titlepage; ^{January 1648-9, £538 (3)} Anon, An Answer to the Cities Representation, p.3; Anon, A Parallel, p.17.

a visionary to philosophise on the situation, and deduce that as only Christ's rule could be perfect, earthly governments must change to keep a balance between arbitrary power and popular freedom. As Cromwell said, constitutions were "but dross and dung in comparison of Christ".¹

Pamphlet Literature 1646-8: II: The Great Toleration
Debate Continued.

Waller believed that "this will be the question to the end of the world, whether the civil magistrate has any power in matters of religion".² Long-established debates between Presbyterians and Independents over the power of the state to tolerate religious dissidents reached a new peak with the army actions, the literature provoked by the Heresy and Blasphemy ordinance, and the various testimonies to "the truth of Jesus Christ" against liberty of conscience. But the most vital feature of the toleration debate in 1646-8 was the conflict that their emerging victory brought to the Independents and their sectarian allies. With the failure of the Assembly accommodation attempts the Apologists openly demanded toleration, and seemed to contemporaries to

1. Anon, A Brief Discourse, examining from the authority of Scriptures and Reason, the Nature, Rise, and End of Civill Government, 4 February 1647-8, E.425(15); Cromwell speaking at the Putney debates, 1st November 1647, A.S.P. Woodhouse, op.cit., p.97.

2. A.S.P. Woodhouse, op.cit., p.136.

be advocating a wider religious freedom than in 1644-5. Baillie had revised his earlier opinions and now thought the Assembly Independents were pleading for a liberty "well near universal".¹ By 1646 the New England synod believed that they did favour a universal toleration.² But there was still a certain confusion about the position of the Apologists and Independents in general towards the sects. One writer, though admitting that some Independents "cordially shake hands with the Separatists", condemned others for desiring their own liberties and neglecting the sects.³ The Whitehall Debates were to show that there was indeed a gulf between the moderate Independents and the sects, and that radical Independents like *John Goodwin* felt that the logic of their arguments impelled them towards a sectarian position, although they still professed dislike of errors and heresies.

The crucial issue - that of the separation of church and state - was believed by Hugh Peter to be of such vital importance that it should be "hung forth in every market town" to provoke discussion there.⁴ Controversy at Whitehall arose

1. Baillie, ii, 234.

2. J. Winthrop, The History of New England, vol.ii, p.329. Winthrop also believed incorrectly that most of the House of Commons favoured liberty of conscience.

3. Anon, The Reconciler Earnestly Endeavouring to Unite in Sincere Affection, the Presbyters and their dissenting Brethren of all Sorts, 6 November 1646, p.14, E.360(15).

4. A.S.P. Woodhouse, op.cit., p.139.

over the separatists' denial of any power for the civil magistrate in religion, for army sectaries had long been vehement in their conviction that

"the Civil Magistrate had nothing to do to determine of anything in Matters of Religion ... (but) ... to keep the Peace, and protect the Churches Liberties etc".¹

But moderate Independents could not agree, and their dilemma of reconciling their genuine desire for liberty of conscience with the necessity of restraint for gross heretics and disturbers of the peace was clearly revealed in the complex debates of Ireton and Nye.

The issue was confused by various interrelated arguments. At first it seemed that Ireton supported the common right of any man submitting to the civil government to enjoy liberty of conscience. The magistrate could exercise authority over mens' bodies, but not their souls, and could not restrain "your inward, but ... your outward man".² The criterion for such a toleration would be the individual's conduct towards the state, and went a long way towards a separation of church and state, although Overton was not entirely happy about its consequences;

1. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 53. A newsbook reported in January 1646-7 a debate in York between army representatives and York ministers over the power of the civil magistrate in religion. Mercurius Diutinus, No.8, 1646-7, E.371(13).
2. A.S.P. Woodhouse, op.cit., p.131.

"if he (i.e. the magistrate) has power over my body, he had power to keep me at home when I should go abroad to serve God".¹

Yet Ireton soon made it plain that it was not just a matter of walking "civilly and inoffensively",² but that a magistrate should have control over a man's conscience as well. He argued that a magistrate could restrain ~~sins~~ against the "first table" of the ten Commandments, i.e. the first four laws concerning man's relationship to God. This was in addition to his restraint of offences against the "second table" (laws concerning man's relationship with man), which as Nye observed, could involve pleas of conscience;

"a man may make conscience of some things (that are contrary to common morality). There was a gentleman cast into Newgate, to be executed for having two wives, and he had this case of conscience".³

Both Ireton and Nye deplored the punishment of the true servants of Jesus Christ. But they could not agree to liberty for men "to practise idolatry, to practise atheism, and anything that is against the light of God".⁴ As Nye said, a magistrate could punish a false religion, because it was not a religion at all, otherwise "I do not think that the civil magistrate hath anything to do determinatively to enforce anything that is matter of religion". Ireton even

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1. A.S.P. Woodhouse, op.cit., p.139.

2. Ibid., p.149.

3. See Ibid., pp.142-167 for these crucial debates. Nye's statement is quoted from p.146.

4. Ibid., p.143.

adopted a favourite Presbyterian argument against any toleration when he stressed that conscience could be faked, and

"you cannot so provide for such a reserve as this is for men really conscientious, that they shall not be persecuted, but you will by that debar the magistrate of a power that he ought to have to restrain".¹

However, the separatists' arguments were based on the reversal of that principle; i.e. if

"ye desire liberty for the people of God, but not for others, You could not provide for the one and exclude the rest. If the Children have any bread, the dogs will have some".²

The theological justification for the separation of church and state was argued at Whitehall by John Goodwin, long a radical Independent and defender of the principle of toleration. He acknowledged that since the debate over the power of the state in religion had long engaged the best wits, the matter was best avoided.³ But if conflict was inevitable, Goodwin felt obliged to argue the logic of the separatists' case. Against Ireton's arguments that under Old Testament law, the magistrate had authority to punish idolaters and other religious offenders, and "that what was sin before is sin still",⁴ he observed that the exercise

1. A.S.P. Woodhouse, op.cit., pp.154,144. Woodhouse commented (p.34) that Ireton and Nye said no word in favour of toleration, but the debates reveal their pleas for some liberty, if not unlimited.

2. S. Richardson, An Answer to the London Ministers Letter, p.29.

3. Goodwin felt that if any man conscientiously believed the State to have power in religious affairs, this could be "presumed" from the clauses on civil power in the Agreement of the People. The final form of the Agreement adopted a similar suggestion by Deane, conceding to the people's representative "the highest and final judgment concerning all natural or civil things, but not concerning things spiritual or evangelical". A.S.P. Woodhouse, op.cit., pp.127,140.

4. Ibid., p.156.

and nature of power were totally different under the Law and Gospel. Under the Gospel, magisterial authority was derived from, and bestowed by, the people, so

"if a body of people, as the commonalty of this land, have not a power in themselves to restrain such and such things, (as) matters concerning false worship, among themselves, certain it is that they cannot derive any such power to the magistrate".¹

Why call a magistrate a civil magistrate, if God had intended him to be a church officer? The granting of power to the civil authorities to punish men for religion was an invitation for abuse;

"If this power should have been destined in all magistrates, then every magistrate in the world had been bound to have put all his subjects to death".²

How far apart were the arguments of Nye and John Goodwin?

Nye was clearly advocating that toleration should be for all true Christians who did not differ in the fundamentals of their religion, a concept that was akin to the views of Jacob Acontius and indicative of his influence on Independent thought.³ The Assembly Independents had already adopted this position; in October 1645 Thomas Goodwin had asserted in debate a "toleration for those who differed not in fundamentals", and although the Confession of Faith debates in 1646 revealed

1. A.S.P. Woodhouse, op.cit., p.159. Nye's answer to this was that of course the people could grant a power to preserve their religion.

2. Ibid., p.169. The recorded Whitehall debates were inconclusive, although Ireton hinted that he had made concession when he said "By our denying (the State) compulsive power ... we do allow they (heretics) should be opposed with spirituall weapons". (p.170).

3. Acontius, a sixteenth century humanist, had distinguished between doctrines necessary and unnecessary for salvation. His "Satanne Strategemata" was translated by John Goodwin in February 1648-9. See B. Gustaffson, "The Five Dissenting Brethren. Acta Universitatis Lundensis, LI (1955), chapter 3, "The inheritance from Acontius".

Carter to support a wider toleration, the other Apologists, despite their objections to an Assembly demand for civil censure, would have supported Thomas Goodwin's view.¹ Independent pamphleteers were now largely insisting that toleration was not for sinners demolishing the foundations of religion or disturbing the State. John Owen, who once stressed civil obedience as the criterion for toleration, did not deny the difference between fundamental and non-fundamental errors.² Indeed, the Savoy Declaration of Faith adopted this distinction as official Independent policy. This was a limited toleration, yet it is easy to see why extreme Presbyterians found it but a small step to a universal liberty, when everything depended on the definition of these fundamentals, which were not even clarified in the Savoy Declaration.³

1. See above, p.468 and p.535 . Only Carter dissented to the truth of civil censure and to the punishment of beliefs contrary to the known principles of Christianity. Mitchell and Struthers, pp.293,297.

2 . J. Burroughes, Gospel Conversation, published posthumously, 24 May 1648, p.327, E.444(1); J. Cook, What the Independents Would Have, 1 September 1647, p.9, E.405(7); M. Cary, A Word in Season to the Kingdom of England, 23 June 1647, p.11, E.393(26); J. Owen, Of Toleration: And the Dutye of the Magistrate about Religion, p.41, E.540(24) (appendix to his sermon of 31 January 1648-9).

3. A Declaration of the Faith and Order Owned and practised in the Congregational Churches ... at the Savoy, 12 October 1658, pp.17-8, E.968(4). In March 1654 a committee was appointed by the government to draw up a list of "fundamentals" in religion. For further details see below p. 657. Nye, Goodwin and Owen formulated articles which were later printed as The Principles of Faith presented ... to the Committee of Parliament, 2 November 1654, E.234(8). These were purely theological, and too restrictive for Baxter who commented that the only requirement for toleration should be to believe the Scriptures, Creed, Lord's Prayer and ten Commandments, and not to preach against anything else; Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, p.197.

John Goodwin's position is somewhat confusing.

Despite his radical views on liberty of conscience, he had maintained in the past that he was against a universal toleration. Was he then contradicting himself by opposing Ireton and Nye at Whitehall? Certainly in his pamphlets, in 1646-7 he still insisted publicly that neither he, nor (he presumed) Parliament, intended an unlimited liberty. But this could have been to counter Presbyterian criticism, and since Goodwin stressed that spiritual weapons (i.e. church censure) should "punish" heresy, it must be presumed that he now saw a separation of church from state as the only safeguard against tyranny.¹ For Goodwin had constantly questioned the nature of error and certainly of truth, and found it difficult to decide what a fundamental error could be - at one stage he thought dissenters to the traditional fundamental Christian doctrines should be patiently received, since these were so much more difficult to apprehend than minor dogmas.² His own theological peculiarities still drew much Presbyterian protest and criticism from other Independents.³ His position was best explained by himself;

"there are very few opinions or heresies which are

1. Since Goodwin delighted in expressing his views in pamphlets as "queries", and even at Whitehall said he was but offering a case to consideration, it is difficult to be certain his own views were always as radical as the case he argued. It must be remembered that the Whitehall debates were private and not public statements.

2. J. Goodwin, Sion College Visited, p.4; Hagiomastix, preface pp.4-5, 27-35, 74.

3. In "Hagiomastix" Goodwin was deemed to have aspersed the divinity of all Scriptures, and was obliged to defend himself in A Candle to See the Sunne, 18 February 1646-7, E.377(6); A Postscript to Hagiomastix, 2 April 1647, E.383(10), and The Divine Authority of Scripture Asserted, 18 December 1647, E.440(1). John Vicars later explained how William

damnable ... because the Scripture so expressly saith, That whosoever beleeveth in Jesus Christ, shall not perish, but have everlasting life".¹

Thus it was Goodwin's radical interpretation of the Independent concept of fundamental truths that divided him from Nye and led him to deny the State a power to punish for conscience (although he probably would still favour punishment for Papists, whose principles opposed the secular authority).² Other radical Independents now had similar separatist conclusions. In a controversial sermon William Dell stressed that the magistrate had no role in religion, reasoning that according to Prynne was "much relied on by his Independent party" and was duly censured by Presbyterians.³ John Saltmarsh shared Dell's views, and Henry Burton ~~refer~~ clearly revealed the radical Independent dilemma when he asserted that Christians were "free from the civil power in

3. cont'd. Greenhill and Henry Burton disliked John Goodwin's individuality in doctrine. Burton wanted to preach against him in 1647, but an army officer begged him not to publicly reveal Independent disunity. J. Vicars, Coleman Street Conclave Visited, pp.22-3.

1. John Goodwin, Hagiomastix, p.75 (sic for 84).

2. See above, p. 406.

3. W. Dell, Right Reformation, sermon to the Commons, 25 November 1646, pp.2-9, E.363(2). Dell condemned the Presbyterians for confusing the heavenly and earthly Kingdoms, and stressed that the Gospel reformation was spiritual. The sermon was criticised for "jostling out the magistrate" by Christopher Love, Short and plaine Animadversions on some passages in Mr. Dell's Sermon, December 1646, E.366(7); by an "Umfrevile", in An Information for Mr. William Dell, 24 December 1646, E.367(10) and by Prynne's The Sword of Christian Magistracy Supported, 9 March 1646-7 (p.77 quoted), E.514(1). Prynne believed that Dell had confused a personal reformation with a public reformation. Dell's sermon was not authorised for publication and Parliament called him to account for its appearance (ironically on the same day as the Presbyterian "Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici" was examined!) C.J. v. 10-11.

point of religion" and yet must submit to the civil magistrate even in religion, leaving God to condemn the magistrate.¹ Radical Independency had long been akin to separatism, and continued "a step or two above Independency"² as delineated by men like Nye.

The moderate Independents' refusal to separate church and state led Joyce to remark that some were studying to please the Presbyterians.³ Certainly the Presbyterians were now so anxious to stress the punitive powers of the State in religion that they almost abandoned the Erastian conflict, recognising that ecclesiastical censure alone would hardly deter heretics regarding excommunication as "the crack of a pot gun".⁴ John Greene even proclaimed that magistrates' judgements were as the judgments of God! Presbyterians were appalled at the separatists' principles, which seemed to prefer the prevention of civil injury to divine precepts when freedom of conscience was granted to all those living peacefully in the State. Was not mischief to men's souls worse than physical harm to their bodies? They emphasised; "It is Reformation according to the Word of God, That the Magistrate suppress the preaching of false doctrines, and exercise of false Religion".⁵

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1. J. Saltmarsh, Sparkles of Glory, n.p; H. Burton, Conformities Deformity, pp.22-3.
 2. W. Jenkyn, Allotricepiskopos, p.3.
 3. A.S.P. Woodhouse, op.cit., p.176.
 4. Anon, The Pulpit Incendiary Anatomized, p.12.
 5. J. Greene, The Churches Duty for Received Mercies, fast sermon to Commons, 24 February 1646-7, p.3, E.377(26); The Paper Called the Agreement of the People ... Resolved ... by the Ministers ... of Lancaster, p.14. The Agreement of the People was censured by Presbyterians for its emphasis on civil peace as a criterion for toleration.

Yet interestingly enough, some Presbyterians still displayed noticeable reticence in including Independents in the category of men to be censured by the magistrate, and even echoed the Independents own distinction between fundamental and non-fundamental errors. The Heresy and Blasphemy ordinance did not include Independency as an error, but merely the asserting of Presbytery to be antichristian. Even the Testimonies censured theological errors and a "publike and generall Toleration" rather than Independency.¹ Of the two preachers on the March 10th fast, Richard Vines specified that "pure" Independents should not be classed as heretics, unlike the "pernicious" offenders that sheltered under their wings, and Thomas Hodges advised that only fundamental errors should be punished. Colonel Leigh, who investigated Lilburne's petition of March 1647 as well as other "scandalous" documents and pamphlets, stated that he favoured leniency to those who "err not in fundamentals".² Moderate Presbyterians and Independents, as always, could seem so similar.

But the extremist Presbyterians and Independents used both the Heresy and Blasphemy ordinance and the Testimony

1. The London Provincial Assembly, A Testimony to the Truth of Jesus Christ, p.32. A handful of ministers signed the Testimonies who either were Independents or became such later, e.g. John Barcroft, James Fisher, Thomas Lawson, William Tray, and Gilbert Walden; A.G. Matthews, Calamy Revised, pp. 28,198,319,490,506. The Essex Testimony specified that "tender Consciences of dissenting Brethren" should be tenderly treated.

2. R. Vines, The Authors, Nature and Danger of Haeresie, 10 March 1647, p.70, E.378(29); T. Hodges, The Growth and Spreading of Haeresie, dedicatory epistle, E.379(1); Colonel Leigh's preface to Christopher Cartwright's sermon, The Magistrates Authority in Matters of Religion, 12 August 1647, E.401(32).

literature to respectively condemn liberty and persecution in general, and to continue the personal attacks that their readers had come to expect. The vindicators of the Heresy ordinance had no hesitation in recommending John Goodwin's flock to despatch their pastor to the devil!¹ In opposing the Heresy ordinance, radical Independents argued that Christs' doctrines were not intended to ensnare men to punishment, that outward penalties could never reform the inward soul, and that the bill was inciting "an insurrection of one sort of men against another". Why did the ordinance censure denials of Presbytery and infant baptism. and not acts of profanity? Since heretics were supposed to recant in the parish church, did the ordinance apply only to parish congregations? Surely the ordinance would discourage candidates for the ministry! God had given no authority to the magistrate to decide the nature of heresy, a matter much disputed by learned men, and certainly no judge or jury at country assizes, who would have to effect the ordinance, could resolve such matters.² But the Presbyterians had answers to all these gibes and more.

Well-tried arguments were now rephrased as Presbyterians

1. A Vindication of a Printed Paper, p.6. Needless to say, Goodwin's congregation replied in An Apologeticall Account, 25 February 1646-7, E.378(2). Vicars regarded this as a shocking show of solidarity in error!

2. J. Goodwin, Some Modest and Humble Queries, and Anon, A Demurre to the Bill. It is noteworthy that Independents frequently used the shortage of ministers to their advantage. Hugh Peter was particularly fond of this. e.g. his Gods Doings and Man's Duty, 2 April 1646, p.43. E.330(11) and Mr. Peter's Last Report of the English Ward, pp.12-3.

raised new spectres of social anarchy consequent on toleration, claiming that he who believed

"that none but properly spirituall weapons are to be used against the strong holds of sinne he wholly denies all Civill punishment and all the exercise of the Magistrates Sword against evill doers".

This was a "theological scarecrow", as John Goodwin had stipulated that the magistrate could punish men for civil crimes such as murder and robbery.¹ But the Independents also resurrected past ghosts by reemphasising the secular perils of persecution. John Goodwin now insisted that liberty of conscience was a complete national necessity;

"Independency is the only lint that can staunch our wounds, the only damme that can stay the inundation of blood, which is else likely to overwhelm us".²

Another feature of the 1646-8 toleration arguments was the new twist given to the continuing use of the Covenant by Presbyterians and Independents in favour of their respective views. By 1647 it became fashionable for Independents to capitalise on anti-Scottish propaganda by claiming that their interpretation of the Covenant as not excluding toleration, was "English" as opposed to "Scottish",

1. A Vindication of a Printed Paper, p.10; J. Goodwin, Hagiomastix, p.91. John Cook entitled this argument as a theological scarecrow in What the Independents Would Have, p.11.

2. J. Goodwin, Independencie God's Veritie, 14 October 1647, p.7, E.410(24).

although in fact there had never been any uniform English interpretation of the Covenant. Henry Burton was guilty of this in condemning "the importunate pressing of the Covenant, for Uniformity, in the Scottish sense", whilst the Lancashire ministers bewailed "the new-coined titles of distinction of a Scottish and English Presbytery".¹ One Presbyterian declared in desperation that the English were very well aware that the Scots intended Independency to be extirpated by the Covenant, but John Goodwin reminded readers that even Thomas Edwards had promised that the Scottish system was not premised in the oath.² But by 1648 the "strict grammatical sense" of the Covenant was irrelevant, and liberty of conscience for Independents at least assured. John Gere made one last desperate plea to have toleration debated by a free Parliament, not a purged Rump. But as Overton told the army leaders,

"God has made you instruments of liberty ... If you cannot agree upon it (toleration) then I shall conclude, for my part, never to expect freedom whiles I live".³

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1. H. Burton, Conformities Deformity, p.20; The Harmonious Consent of the Ministers ... of Lancaster, 30 March 1648, p.17, E.434(7).
 2. Anon, The Main Points of Church-Government and Discipline, 17 January 1648-9; p.54, E.1182(11); J. Goodwin, Sion College Visited, p.9. For Edwards' statement see above, p.209.
 3. J. Gere, Might Overcoming Right, p.41; A.S.P. Woodhouse, op.cit., p.140.

Chapter Ten.THEORY IN PRACTICE: PRESBYTERIANISM AND INDEPENDENCY
ON A LOCAL BASIS.

"The Presbyter went lame of a leg for want of power to compell".

ed. W.H.D. Longstaffe, Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes, (Durham, Surtees Society, L, 1867) pp.112-3.

"after Pride's Purge it was more fashionable to be an Independent, and many more Independent churches were set up".

G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, p.22.

(1659) "Now both sides seemed desirous of union, but it was too late".

The Life of Adam Martindale, written by himself, p.131.

In the translation of theory into practice,¹ Independency had a clear advantage over Presbytery since the commitment of members to a gathered church inevitably made the realities of discipline more successful. Even an Independent church of the "reformed type", where an Independent minister operated from the basis of his parochial cure, had considerable advantages over Presbytery in the extent of popular participation in congregational affairs and lack of external bureaucracy. In the areas where Independent churches existed, they were often healthy, and generally corresponded well to the theories of leading Independent apologists. But Presbyterianism had all the problems of operating a complex structure of discipline within a parish system where not all ministers, let alone people, were even half-sympathetic to its aims. Not surprisingly, only two provincial presbyteries are known to have met regularly and whilst plans for a Presbyterian system were drawn up, according to Parliamentary instructions, in nearly every county, only in some areas are classes known to have been operational. The full national Presbyterian structure was, in any case, a non-starter, since Parliament never called a national

1. Wherever possible, examples in this chapter have been drawn from the 1640s but because much evidence is of the 1650s when Independent congregations were stronger, this must be included.

synod.¹

The Independents and Anglicans alike deliberately fostered the myth that Presbyterianism conflicted with the English character. Price commented in 1648 that "English spirits cannot endure the Bramble-government, even in the Common-wealth, much lesse in the Church".² The myth has persisted among historians; Dr. Shaw believed that "no system could be found more repugnant to the essence of English civil, constitutional, and national sentiment", whilst C.E. Surman stated that many opposed the Presbyterians' rigid and doctrinaire subordination of personal freedom".³ But if the English national character can be said to exist, it traditionally disliked any clerical authoritarianism, and if in historical terms Presbytery was less successful than Episcopacy, the reason must be that the latter usually had the full backing of the government. Presbyterianism

1. The ordinance of 19 August 1645 specified that a national assembly was to be summoned by Parliament. C.E. Surman conjectured that the national synod was "a paper conciliation to Scotland", never intended to materialise as it would pose a threat to Parliament. But it is possible that, had the Independents not gained power, a national assembly would have been permitted under the aegis of the State, as the Westminster Assembly. C.E. Surman, The Register-booke of the Fourth Classis ... in London, 1646-59, (Publications of the Harleian Society, Registers, Vol. LXXXII, pxi Henceforth referred to as London Fourth Classis Minutes).
2. J. Price, The Pulpit Incendiary, p.52.
3. W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, vol.1, p.4; C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England 1643-1660, University of Manchester M.A. Thesis, 1949, p.171.

between 1649-1660 did not, despite being the official church of the land. It was no accident that Presbyterianism flourished most in 1647-9 when Parliamentary support was at its greatest, and it is easy to forget in detailing the difficulties encountered by Presbyterians under a tolerant government, that with civil enforcement, Presbytery would probably have been effective. Presbyterianism did receive real support from sections of the clergy and laity; the "Testimonies" of 1647-8, signed by over 900 ministers, proved that Presbyterianism had leavened the country's clergy as Baillie believed, although not as much as he wished.¹ But after 1649 civil sanction was not forthcoming, and as a result the efficacy of Presbyterian discipline was seriously impaired. Throughout the 1650s there were clear instances of decay in classes that were working well in the late 1640s. The Lancashire Provincial Assembly tried vainly in 1655 to obviate the problem of civil support by declaring

"that in Church labour ... The distance, disfavour, yea, or oppositeness to it of state superiors is no supersedeas ... Civil authority is but accidental (though it may be in its kind assistant) to divine ordinances".²

What were the other factors contributing to the failure

1. Baillie, ii, 250. There were about 9,000 parishes in England! Some signatories of the "Testimonies" may have been protesting more against errors and heresies than avidly supporting Presbytery, but it is safe to say that most were Presbyterians.

2. An Exhortation directed to the Elders ... of Lancaster, May 1st 1655, in W.A. Shaw, Materials for an Account of the Provincial Synod of the County of Lancaster, 1646-1660, (Manchester 1890), p.63. The Assembly reminded its congregations that the Parliamentary ordinances for Presbytery were still in force!

of the Presbyterian system? It may be wondered to what extent Independency was responsible for the lack of classical activity in some areas. Certainly the strong Independent influence in Norfolk may have contributed to the apparent absence of classical activity there, despite the circulation of Presbyterian petitions.¹ C.E. Surman followed Urwick in assuming that Presbytery was inoperative in Cheshire because "the Independent element (was) too strong in the county to permit it", although there was initially a Presbyterian body(ies) in existence.² He postulated similarly that Independents in Kent stifled classical activity in that county, although Anglicanism was undoubtedly a stronger influence.³ But Independency alone could not account for the weakness of Presbytery even in these areas. With lack of civil sanction, indifference was to prove far more destructive than Independency, Anglicanism or popery.⁴

1. See above, pp. 460, 477.

2. C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England, 1643-1660, University of Manchester M.A. Thesis, (1949) p.39.

3. Ibid., pp. 227-9; A.M. Everitt, The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion, 1640-1660, (Leicester 1966) p.127.

4. The Lancashire Provincial Synod acknowledged in 1655 that lack of zeal, not schism, was the cause of the failure of classes. W.A. Shaw, Materials for an Account of the Provincial Synod of the County of Lancaster, p.62.

Whilst some laymen were interested in the controversies over church government in the 1640s, it must be remembered that many parishioners, especially in the north, were ignorant of the new ways, if not of religion at all. The "good churchman" at Cartmel who professed never to have heard of Christ may not have been typical,¹ but Richard Laurence claimed that

"A man may ride twenty miles together in some parts of the Kingdome, and not finde two men in a Parish, that know what a Presbyter, or Elder, or Deacon is ... the tenth part of the Kingdom is not capable of receiving (Presbytery) nor the tenth part of the ministry capable of officiating it".²

In such circumstances it was little wonder the classes so consistently emphasised the necessity of catechising. Still more folk were naturally impervious to religious discipline, as some inhabitants of Wisbech, where "the Presbyterian Government hath not been very fruitfull ... they leave not easily ... a way of liberty".³ Others, Baxter's "meer Catholicks",⁴ who desired unity between Presbyterians, Independents and Episcopalians, found no cause to be over-

1. "The Life of Master John Shaw", in Yorkshire Diaries and Autobiographies in the seventeenth century and eighteenth century, (Durham, Surtees Society, LXV, 1877) pp.138-9. For ignorance and indifference in religion see K.V. Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic, (1971), especially chapter 6, Religion and the People, pp.159-166.

2. R. Laurence, The Antichristian Presbyter, 9 January 1646-7, pp.10-11, E.370(22). In 1644 a newsbook had explained to its readers that a classis was like a bishopric, with the power distributed! A Diary, No.37, 23-30 January 1644-5, ultimate page, E.26(11).

3. The Moderate Intelligencer, No. 97, January 1646-7, p.844, E.371(4).

4. E.g. Reliquiae Baxterianae, 1, p.90.

rigid Supporters of Presbytery.

The reason for much indifference was that Presbytery seemed to mark a return to the old clerical dominance. Ironically, Parliament had intended that laymen should form a majority in the presbyteries, in contrast to Scottish assemblies where ministers outnumbered laymen. An order of 1647 stipulated that no act of the London Provincial synod was to be valid unless a quorum of 36 was present, of whom 24 were to be lay elders, and that no classical meeting was to be valid without 15 present, of whom 10 were to be elders.¹ The surviving county plans for classical divisions clearly reveal the intention that elders should outnumber ministers, yet extant minutes show the classes' consistent inability to secure or retain lay participation. C.E. Surman felt this "as much as anything militated against the working of the Presbyterian system in England",² as the main object of Presbyterian organisation had been lay involvement in church affairs through elected responsible officers. But in fact discipline by lay elders caused even more distaste than clerical authoritarianism, which was inevitable on the failure of democracy.

1. The Remedies for the Obstructions in the matter of Church-government, 22 April 1647, C.J.v, 146. For Scotland see A Treatise of Ruling Elders and Deacons by a minister of the Church of Scotland, 1652.

2. C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England, p.138.

The complexities of Presbyterian bureaucracy served to alienate ministers and people even more. The innumerable meetings of parochial presbyteries, classes, committees, and for some, provincial assemblies, expended much clerical energy that might more profitably have been devoted to the cure of souls. Since the same ministers acted on both the classical and provincial level, it is not surprising to find William Wickins, the scribe of the London Provincial Assembly, writing to himself in his capacity as scribe of the fourth London classis.¹ But all its bureaucracy failed to provide the Presbyterian system with any effective authority. Presbyteries² possessed no power over the church's patrimony, which made their control of even the clergy impossible. The Parliamentary committees in charge of church finance did not always agree with presbyteries, whilst lay patrons continued to support ministers unsympathetic to Presbytery despite the fury of their local classis.² People soon realised that for all

1. London Fourth Classis Minutes, p.64.

2. Church finance was controlled by the committee for Plundered Ministers until 1650, the Committee for the Universities from 1650-1653, and the Trustees for the Maintenance of Ministers from 1653-1660. For an example of a patron supporting a malignant in Salford, see R. Halley, Lancashire: its Puritanism and Nonconformity, (Manchester 1872), p.306.

their officiousness, threats and exhortations, the classes were really impotent and could often be safely ignored.

The reliance on local cooperation inevitably meant that

"Parliamentary Presbyterianism was a very patch-worky affair; while it was established by lex terrae, its practical operation was largely a matter of lex loci".¹

London and Lancashire established the first and most perfect systems, with functional provincial synods, although these counties had enough problems.² Elsewhere plans for Presbytery were tardier, not completed until the army broke Presbyterian power and their operation less satisfactory. It is unnecessary to repeat the labours of Dr. Shaw and C.E. Surman in detailing the evidence for the existence of Presbyterian plans and organisation county by county. But lists of classical divisions survive for thirteen counties, most bearing the approval of Parliament that was necessary before such classes could become operational. As there is additional evidence that other lists were formulated and

1. C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England, p.35.
2. London was divided into classes by the Parliamentary ordinance of 19 August 1645, and triers were appointed in September 1645 to approve ruling elders; most of these later became classis members themselves. Lancashire was divided into classes by an ordinance of 2 October 1646 (C.J. iv.669-670). Records exist for one London classis and two Lancastrian; see London Fourth Classis Minutes; W.A. Shaw (ed), Minutes of the Manchester Presbyterian Classis 1646-1660, 3 vols, (Manchester, Chetham Society, new series, XX,XXII, XXIV, 1890-1, henceforth referred to as Manchester Minutes) and W.A. Shaw (ed) Minutes of the Bury Presbyterian Classis 1647-1657, 2 vols, (Manchester Chetham Society, new series XXXVI and XLI, 1896, henceforth referred to as Bury Minutes). W.A. Shaw has also collected the piecemeal references to the Lancashire synod in Materials for an Account of the Provincial Synod of the County of Lancaster. The records of the London Provincial Assembly, the MSS. of which are preserved at Sion College, have been transcribed by C.E. Surman, Records of the Provincial Assembly of London 2 vols. 1957 (typescript deposited in Doctor Williams Library).

approved, it seems likely that many counties devised schemes for Presbyterian organisation.¹ However, some counties met more initial difficulties than others. Kent had tried to avoid classes by procrastination, or as their committee phrased it, "(the ministers and gentry were desirous) yet a while to wayte the further directions of the Parliament".² Baillie felt that such "Scottish negligence of the ministers and gentry in the shires" was responsible for delays in other county plans, and Parliament was obliged to issue reminders.³ Yet Northumberland and Durham both reported that their schemes were limited because

1. See W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, vol.ii, appendix III; C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England, pp.35-65. County committees had to submit their Presbyterian plans to be approved by the Parliamentary committee of scandals. Dr. Shaw printed the lists for Durham, (submitted 1645 but with no record of approval), Essex (approved 1648), Lancashire (approved 1646), London (approved 1645), Northumberland (advising in 1645 that only one classis was feasible), Shropshire (approved 1647), Somerset (published 1648 without record of approval), Suffolk (approved 1647), Surrey (approved 1648) and Westmorland (proposing two classes in 1645). C.E. Surman added the list for Middlesex (approved 1647) and the lists for Wiltshire and Hampshire are now available, G. Yule, "English Presbyterianism and the Westminster Assembly"; The Reformed Theological Review, XXXIII, (1974) p.43.

Additional evidence exists that a Parliamentary ordinance for Cheshire was approved in 1647, and that Devon devised a scheme in 1647/8 with 7 classes. A meeting was held to divide the West Riding of Yorkshire into classes and Derbyshire had active classes and possibly a provincial synod as well. An incomplete book of the Wirksworth classis, Derbyshire, survives and is edited by J.C. Cox, "Minute Book of the Wirksworth Classis 1651-8", Journal of the Derbyshire Archaeological and Natural History Society II (1880), (henceforth referred to as Wirksworth Minutes). For this additional evidence see C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England, pp.34,39-40,54., and C.E. Surman, "Presbyterianism under the Commonwealth", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc. XV No.4 (April 1948).p167.

2. C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England, p.45. A classis was nevertheless probably established (on paper).

3. Baillie, ii, 250 (December 1646). Such a Parliamentary reminder was Remedies for the Obstructions, 22 April 1647, (C.J. v. 146).

many congregations lacked ministers, whilst others had weak, scandalous or malignant clergy.¹ In Essex there is evidence that Independents tried to influence the classical establishment; Josselin recorded

"We had much discourse about falling into practice, and in the first place, seeing the elders are to be chosen, by whom shall it be done? The Parliament proposeth by the people that have taken the Covenant: others, as Mr. Owen conceive this too broad, and would have first a separation to be made in our parishes, and that by the minister and those godly that join with him, and then proceed to choosing".²

There are two main problems involved in interpreting the evidence of classical organization. The first is that the existence of classical lists for any county does not prove that the classes were ever operational. Despite the strong Presbyterian sentiment in Essex, there is reason to doubt whether Presbyterian organization there ever proceeded beyond the paper stage.³ Certainly the fourth London classis ordained men to serve in Essex parishes, which may prove that Essex classes were not functioning. Similar evidence exists for Cheshire, Devonshire, Kent, Surrey, Suffolk and Wiltshire, as well as for counties where no lists or preparations are known, such as Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Huntingdonshire, Leicestershire, Norfolk

1. Hist. MSS. Commission Report XIII, Appendix I. pp.324-5.
 2. ed. E. Hockcliffe, The Diary of Ralph Josselin, p.48. (March 31, 1648).
 3. H. Smith, The Ecclesiastical History of Essex, p.191. For information on ministers nominated to the Essex classes see H. Smith, The Sequence of the Parochial Clergy in the County of Essex, 1640-1664, (Typescript in Essex Record Office).

and Northamptonshire.¹ Even in London and Lancashire, the most efficient counties, some classes failed to operate; in London the second, ninth, eleventh and twelfth classes do not seem to have met, and by 1656-7 the fifth and seventh had ceased.² The Lancashire Provincial Assembly's exhortation of 1655 bewailed the lack of discipline "in many congregations and some whole classical presbyteries in this Province", and in 1649 the third Lancashire classis had to be reminded of its duties.³ On the other hand a classis in Northumberland, where so many problems had been reported, was still functioning in the 1650s and Presbyterian activity continued in several other counties.

The second problem of interpretation presents itself when a new species of classis, the "voluntary association" arose in the 1650s largely in response to the accommodation characteristic of Cromwell's protectorate. Baxter's association of Worcestershire ministers became a model for many other counties, being followed in Cheshire, Cambridge, Cumberland and Westmorland, Devon, Dorset, Essex, Hampshire,

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1. Manchester and Bury classes ordained men for Cheshire; C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England, p.39. The fourth London classis ordained for the other counties; London Fourth Classis Minutes, pp.98,111,130. Northamptonshire was described in a letter as being "too much Presbyterian", and there had been Presbyterian activity there in Elizabethan days; The Copy of a Letter written from Northampton, 6 February 1646-7, p.7, E.373(20).
 2. C.E. Surman, Records of the Provincial Assembly of London, vol.ii, p.23, and London Fourth Classis Minutes, p.xvii.
 3. W.A. Shaw, Materials for an Account of the Provincial Synod of ... Lancaster, pp.51, 62.

Kent, Norfolk, Nottingham, Shropshire, Somerset, Wiltshire, Warwickshire and North Wales.¹ But since contemporaries used the word "classis" ambivalently to refer to any ministerial association, it is often difficult to distinguish between a Parliamentary classis and a voluntary association in seventeenth century references.² Shaw himself separated the two on an ante or post 1653 basis, but Surman has shown that division by dating might not be satisfactory. Surman's own criteria for a Parliamentary classis were Parliamentary approval, the existence of "triers" (often appointed to start the procedure of electing elders) and lay participation; he rejected Shaw's belief that a voluntary association was marked by its willingness to incorporate Independents and Episcopalians in its ranks on the ground that such men could be found (due to accommodation or expediency) in a Parliamentary classis.³

1. W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, vol.ii, appendix iii(c); Reliquiae Baxterianae, p.167. I have omitted counties listed by Shaw where the evidence for voluntary associations appears slight. Cromwell referred to a religious association in Kent in 1653 (A.G. Matthews, Calamy Revised, p.171). For the Warwickshire assembly, see C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England, p.56.

The Cornwall and Cambridge voluntary association minutes are published by W.A. Shaw in Bury Minutes, vol.ii, Appendices ii and iii. The minutes of the Exeter Assembly (a provincial meeting of ministers in Devon voluntary associations) were transcribed by R.N. Worth in Transactions of the Devonshire Association, (1877), pp.250-291. The MSS of these minutes are no longer traceable.

2. Martindale, for example, called the Cheshire voluntary association an "associated classis", The Life of Adam Martindale, p.112.

3. C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England, pp.23-33. The voluntary associations were predominantly ministerial bodies, but that of Cheshire possibly included elders. The Life of Adam Martindale, p.114.

The Parliamentary or "true" classes did have much in common with the voluntary associations, but there were certain crucial inherent differences between them which Surman did not sufficiently emphasise. Firstly, despite the fact that some few Independents and moderate Episcopalians did join in the Parliamentary classes, the main intention of these bodies was not a wide accommodation. On the other hand, the explicit purpose of the Worcester voluntary association was that it should not represent one faction, but "so much of the Church Order and Discipline, as the Episcopal, Presbyterian and Independant are agreed in". Its members included four who in 1672 were licensed as Congregationalists, of whom two, John Spilsbury and Thomas Juice, were commended by Baxter as honest and moderate Independents.¹ The Cumberland association similarly stressed "reconciliation at least of different judgments in matters of Church Government", as did the Devonshire ministers.²

Secondly, and more important, the Parliamentary classes should have had authoritative power over all congregations

1. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 90, and ii, 148; G.F. Nuttall, "The Worcestershire Association: its Membership", Journal of Ecclesiastical History, I (October 1950) pp.197-206.

2. The Agreement of the Associated Ministers and Churches of the Counties of Cumberland and Westmorland, 1656, p.27, quoted in W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, vol.ii, Appendix III (c). The Cumberland association may have been motivated by fear of Quaker activity. For John Quick's comments on the accommodating tendencies of Devon divines see T. MacCrie, Annals of English Presbytery, p.270.

and ministers within their area, in accordance with Presbyterian theories. But the voluntary associations depended on the consent of members to their discipline, which was achieved by subscription to an agreement, usually involving rules on the administration of baptism and the Lord's Supper, mutual reproof and endeavours of purity.¹ The existence of such an agreement indicates a voluntary association, and hence I would support Shaw against Surman's contention that the Nottingham classis was Parliamentary.² In Wiltshire the Independents severely restricted the nature of agreement, so that promise was made to submit to reproof only so far as "shall be warranted by the Scripture" and on no account to meddle in civil matters.³ When Cumberland ministers asked Baxter why they should only impose discipline on those who consented to it, Baxter begged them not to insist on authoritative power, for

1. The Worcestershire agreement involved a profession of faith, upon which Ussher was consulted; Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, 165.

2. C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England, pp. 26-8. The Nottingham classis minutes, printed by Shaw in Bury Minutes, vol.ii, Appendix, i, clearly reveal the existence of an agreement, which was canvassed in the area (Ibid., pp.153-5,163). The Nottingham reference to "triers" mentioned by Surman may be a reference to an earlier classis. The minutes also reveal that ministers belonged to the classis whose congregations did not. The minutes of the Wirksworth classis, also of doubtful identity, bear no reference to an agreement, and this classis was probably Parliamentary.

3. Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, 167-8. The Cornwall minutes contained a similar resolution that no interference in state affairs was permissible; Bury Minutes, vol.ii, Appendix, ii, p.181.

"if the Congregationall Brethren should take it as a making your many Churches to be but one particular Church, or a giving the Pastor of one Church a true Pastoral power ... over other Churches ... then for Unity and Peace sake, we could wish you did forbear it".¹

Adam Martindale clearly explained the reasons why he could join a voluntary association although he objected to a Parliamentary classis;

"the case was not the same. Here was onely a voluntary association of such as were desirous to advise and assist one another, nor did we look upon ourselves as having any pastorall inspection over one anothers congregations; but onely to be helpfull to them in a charitable way: we pretended not to any power to covent any before us, or supresse any minister ... differing from us in practice".²

The nature of associating and the restriction of authoritative power thus distinguished a voluntary association from a Parliamentary classis. Yet ironically, whilst they tried to exert their theoretical powers and sometimes succeeded, their lack of civil sanction after 1649 meant that in effect the Parliamentary classes did become voluntary associations. Surman concluded that voluntary associations could be "pragmatic modifications of the Presbyterian polity under the increasing pressure of the Independent party".³ But this is a misleading statement,

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1. Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, 166. Baxter hinted that not all the Worcestershire ministers agreed with such limited power, but for unity's sake the agreement could promise no more.
 2. The Life of Adam Martindale, p.112.
 3. C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England, p.24.

Whilst it cannot be proved that the voluntary associations were not based to a limited extent on earlier classical divisions,¹ the Parliamentary classes did not suddenly change their status to that of voluntary associations, although for all the power they enjoyed, they could well have done so. The voluntary associations were new bodies, owing far more to the Independent ideal of a consultative synod (and to the informal cooperation always existing between ministers)² than to the coercive presbytery of the Presbyterian polity, although they certainly marked the failure of the latter. This is why areas where Parliamentary Presbyterianism had never begun, or had collapsed, enthusiastically adopted the new associations.

It is to be regretted that so few records of Parliamentary presbyteries survive, but those that do provide an insight into the workings of these bodies. At first classes met regularly once a month (and sometimes even more frequently) but the pattern altered in the 1650s. The London Provincial Synod followed a similar pattern; its resolution of 3 June 1647 to meet twice a week was not even attained in the first six months, and long before 1660 meetings were as infrequent as a month or less.³ The London ministers could be forgiven

1. The minutes of the Exeter voluntary assembly include a list of classical divisions probably made in 1647. The scribe may have copied the Parliamentary divisions as a guide to the ministers and parishes of the county.

2. E.g. Thomas Wilson consulted his colleagues about his acceptance of a new cure in the 1630s; G. Swinnock, The Life and Death of Mr. Thomas Wilson, (1672), p.9.

3. The fourth London classis met more than once a month when it commenced in November 1646, but meetings became more intermittent, especially after 1653. The Manchester and Bury classes met once a month respectively from 16 September 1646-7 (Manchester) and 25 March 1647 (Bury) until 1652 (Manchester)

for their laxity in 1647 when the army threatened London and the provincial records apologised that the "distractions of the times, and the multiplicity of other weighty occasions" had kept them from their duties".¹ Later excuses were not so valid. Both classes and synods drew up procedural rules, and the London synod had definitely learnt some lessons from the Westminster Assembly, as it included the proviso that "No man is to speake above three times to the same thing at one sitting".²

What evidence do the Parliamentary lists of classical divisions and extant records give of the members of the classes and hence of the synods?³ Parliament was well aware that outside London many ministers were insufficiently learned to become classis members, and in many areas these ministers had to be omitted from classes. The Independents used this fact to advantage in the committee for accommodation, when they observed that parishioners were hardly to be blamed

3. cont'd. and 1651 (Bury) when meetings became irregular.

The London Provincial Assembly, like that of Lancashire, officially met only twice a year, but in London the six month period covered several sessions and work would be carried on by committees. In Lancashire the problems of the Provincial Assembly after 1651 are evidenced by its charge in location.

1. C.E. Surman, Records of the Provincial Assembly of London, vol.i, p.12.

2. Ibid., vol.i, p.7.

3. The ordinance of 19 August 1645 required that each classis should send at least 2 ministers and 4 elders to the provincial synod; on 12 September 1648 Parliament approved an increase in the number of delegates to 3 ministers and 6 elders per classis, as the London Provincial Assembly complained that it was difficult to obtain a quorum. Ibid., vol.ii, p.4. In 1645 Baillie had realised that provincial synods could not follow the Scots' practice of having; every parochial minister attend, or else some provinces would have 1200 delegates; Baillie, ii, 102.

for separating from men "who are not worthy to joyn in Government with your selves".¹ The importance placed by classes on learning was proved when Robert Constantine, ten times moderator of the Manchester classis, tried to obtain an honorary degree from Glasgow University because his classical brethren were not aware that he lacked such a distinction.² Yet many classis ministers were humble, pious men, or even like Hohn Harrison of Ashton, Lancashire, who was an excellent preacher and scholar, kneeled in prayer in his pulpit and was "as acute a respondent as any countrey-minister of England".³ Some ministers who were at heart moderate Episcopalians (such as John Gauden of Essex who became Bishop of Exeter at the Restoration) cooperated with classes and were named as members, since they were conscious in 1646-8 that Presbytery was the legal church government, or believed that the saving of souls was more important than outward forms. Others, like Ralph Josselin, seem to have adapted to Presbyterianism and again to Episcopacy with little difficulty. There would be

1. The Papers and Answers of the Dissenting Brethren and the Committee of the Assembly of Divines, p.40. For Parliament's comment on the shortage of suitable ministers, see the draft Declaration drawn up in late 1645 for suspension from the Lord's Supper; Hist. MSS. Commission, Report XIII, Appendix, 1, p.297.

2. C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England, pp.82-7.

3. The Life of Adam Martindale, pp.52(note 4) 93.

members like John Angier of Lancashire, "very moderate towards all that he judged godly of the congregational way".¹ Some few were congregationalist in sympathy but were prepared to accept classical discipline for the sake of unity; William Sparrow, John Stalham and John Warren of Essex, John Spilbury of Shropshire, James Fisher of Surrey, John Philip of Suffolk and probably John Nye of Middlesex either were Independents or later became such, but were listed as classis members.² William Strong and the Independent sympathiser Joseph Caryl were named as triers for London classes. Whilst it is true that some of the classes for which Independents were nominated never functioned, their willingness to serve still remains.

The men nominated as ruling elders were probably not dissimilar in variety of attitude. Professor Hexters' discovery of political Independents who became Presbyterian church elders only emphasises the fact that the political sympathies of Erastian M.P.s cannot be equated with their

1. Oliver Heywood's Life of John Angier of Denton, Together with Angier's Diary, ed. E. Axon, (Manchester, Chetham Society, new series, 111C, 1937) p.9. Angier was the brother-in-law of Thomas Case. Adam Martindale felt that Angier had congregational leanings himself; The Life of Adam Martindale, p.74

2. I have obtained information on 383 of the ministers on classical lists (approximately half the total). Of these only a few can be presumed Independents by virtue of their gathering congregations, registering as Congregational in 1672, and being listed by Calamy as such. For Sparrow, Stalham, Warren, Spilsbury and Fisher respectively, see A.G. Matthews, Calamy Revised, pp.453,457,511,455,198. Philip was also a member of the Westminster Assembly. For John Nye (son of the Independent Philip Nye) see C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England, p. 48.

religious views, which could anyway be subordinated to unity in a state church.¹ M.P.s who can plausibly be regarded as having Independent religious tendencies were anxious to involve themselves in the new classes and to maintain the identity of church and state.² However, many elders were not M.P.s and remain obscure; it would be a worthwhile albeit lengthy task to perform local searches in quest of their views. In Lancashire at least one Independent elder was appointed, Major James Jolly, although the parish of Gorton for which he was elected was probably not an active participant in the Manchester classis.³

1. J.H. Hexter's "The Problem of the Presbyterian Independents" (now in Reappraisals in History) has occasioned some controversy. Hexter was criticised by S. Foster, "The Presbyterian Independents Exorcised", Past and Present, (1969), who maintained that every M.P. was *ex officio* a trier of the Presbyterian church. Foster has in turn been criticised by Drs. Pearl and Worden, and Professors Hexter and Yule in "Debate: Presbyterians, Independents, and Puritans", Past and Present (1970). Dr. Pearl argued convincingly that only M.P.s living in London were triers, (Ibid., pp.122-7).

2. For evidence of such M.P.s, particularly Francis Allen, Sir John Barrington, Robert Brewster, William Heveningham, Sir William Masham and Sir Henry Mildmay, see G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, pp.39-41, 81.

Independent-inclined M.P.s including Cromwell, were also included by the ordinance of 29 August 1648 to be commissioners for scandal; C.H. Firth and R.S. Rait (ed) Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, vol.i, pp.1208-9.

3. The Note-Book of the Rev. Thomas Jolly (James' son), ed. H. Fishwick, (Manchester, Chetham Society, new series, XXXIII 1894) p.iv. Martindale revealed that Gorton tended towards Independency; The Life of Adam Martindale, p.74.

Independents complained that Presbyterian elders were all rich and profane. John Price inquired

"Whence is it, that wee see the great man, though the ignorant man, the rich man, though the prophane man, the Deputie, the Common-Councill-man, the Justice of peace, the chiefe man in the Parish, he must be the Elder, though an ordinary swearer, an ignorant, a loose, a covetous person?"¹

Certainly several "of the meaner sort" were also chosen, for one Presbyterian apologist was obliged to defend the usefulness of pious men of lower rank to the work of Christ.²

One Anglican gibe against elders had been that "a Plowman from the Plow, or a Tradesman from his shop" would have an equal voice with reverend divines in presbyteries.³ Yet elders did not receive remuneration, and significantly a Presbyterian, Richard Hollingworth, commented that they should be paid so as to end the necessity of choosing men able to support themselves.⁴ It is fair to say that many elders were men of status and wealth in their locality; Yule had a point when he argued "socially and religiously it must have been regarded as an insult not to be

1. J. Price, The Pulpit Incendiary, p.50.

2. W.L., The Sacramental Stumbling-Block Removed, 4 February 1647-8, p.9, E.425(16).

3. J. Maxwell, An Answer by Letter, July 1644, p.7, E.53(13).

4. R. Hollingworth, Certain Queries ... to Eaton and Taylor, 17 January 1645-6, p.27, E.316(16).

included.¹ Many elders were busy on Parliamentary, county-committee, and their private business, and by 1655 the Lancashire synod was warning that earthly affairs were no just cause for neglect of God's work.² Yet even rich and busy men cannot be presumed profane. In theory elected elders were rigorously examined by triers before initial approval and complaints could be (and were) later made to the classes against the conduct of suspect elders.³ Certainly in London many elders were knowledgeable and pious men, some like John Bastwick and John Bellamy already pamphleteer defenders of Presbytery. Some dubious characters may have crept in; Henry Marten was hardly an

1. G. Yule in "Debate: Presbyterians, Independents, and Puritans", Past and Present (1970)p.132. The classical lists provide some interesting information on the social status of elders. Lancashire had 82 gentlemen; 2 baronets, 48 yeomen, 26 esquires, a clothier and a mercer. (For the wealthy Lancashire yeomen see R. Halley, Lancashire, its Puritanism and Nonconformity, p.164). Essex had 2 earls, 1 lord, 12 knights and baronets, 82 gentlemen (particularly strong in the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th classes), 35 esquires, 50 "Masters" (especially strong in the 1st and 3rd classes), 1 doctor and 206 unstyled men. Surman's analysis of the London elders reveals, not surprisingly, that most were freemen of livery companies engaged in trade; C.E. Surman, Records of the Provincial Assembly of London, vol.ii, p.113, and the Index to this work, pp.184-30. However, in Wirksworth, only one family of note (the Buxtons) served as elders; Wirksworth Minutes, p.146.

2. W.A. Shaw, Materials for an Account of the Provincial Synod of ... Lancaster, p.64. The Manchester classis' delegation to the synod in 1648 pleaded the affairs of the county-committee as an excuse for non attendance, although only 2 elders were committee-men. Manchester Minutes, vol.ii, p.90.

3. E.g. the Manchester classis heard complaints against James Parkinson, elder for Chorlton, and pronounced him unfit; Manchester Minutes, vol.i, pp. 24,31,40. Cases were not always proven; Wirksworth dismissed a charge of scandal against Robert Storer; Wirksworth Minutes, pp.212-3.

example of piety. But if the requirements for elders of the Nottingham voluntary association were typical, it is a wonder that any men were learned enough to qualify.¹

Many parishes were plainly reluctant to choose their elders. In theory, everyone in the parish who had taken the Covenant was meant to elect these officers, although the Nottingham association decided it was preferable for communicants only to do so.² Both in London and Lancashire classes had problems persuading certain parishes to vote, despite constant exhortations and the London Provincial synod's decision that even if only a minority in the parish voted, the election should be valid.³ The fourth London classis had asked earlier whether it could not appoint elders for the obstinate parish of St. Michael, Crooked Lane, where the people disapproved of their pastor, Mr. Browne, and refused to choose representatives.⁴ Independents or sectaries may have been behind this contumacy, as they were in other parishes. At Aldersgate and elsewhere sectaries

1. Bury Minutes, vol.ii, Appendix i, p.156.

2. Ibid., vol.ii, Appendix i, p.161. This shows the Presbyterian insistence on the pure communion and/or Independent influence. John Price intimated that householders only were eligible to vote; The Pulpit Incendiary, p.50.

3. London Fourth Classis Minutes, p.101. In 1655 the Lancashire provincial synod was still advising classes what to do in the event of lack of elders; W.A. Shaw, Materials for an Account of the Provincial Synod of ... Lancaster, p.70.

4. London Fourth Classis Minutes, p.51.

railed against the elder's office, whilst some churches had their election notices ripped down. One radical broadsheet entitled "Several Votes of Tender Conscience" was affixed to church doors during the elections! The tale was told of how at Dover Independents and sectaries conspired to procure the election of corrupt elders so as to bring odium on the Presbyterian government, "and being asked by some whether they thought them fit to be Elders in their Independent Church, they answered no, nor members neither".¹ A newsbook claimed that there was in Newcastle "some difference betwixt the Presbyterians and the other party concerning the choosing of Classicall Elders".²

But the little Independent harassment was of no significance besides the widespread dislike among both ministers and people to the lay-eldership, the most contentious part of the Presbyterian system. In 1649 the London Provincial Assembly acknowledged elders to be the great remorae to a popular acceptance of Presbytery. Even

1. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, pp.222-4. For "Several Votes of Tender Conscience," see above, p.503 note 1. Edwards' tales probably contained some truth despite his deliberate confusion of sectaries and Independents. He claimed that at St. Thomas Appstles' sectaries refused to elect elders unless they could choose new ministers without Episcopal ordination!

2. The Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer, No.202, 23-30 March 1647, p.476, E.383(2). Cuthbert Sydenham was an Independent lecturer at Newcastle, and the mayor, Henry Dawson, was probably Independent. R. Howell, Newcastle upon Tyne and the Puritan Revolution, (Oxford, 1967) pp.227-30.

the Westminster Assembly had not been able to vote them "jure divino", and Coleman may not have exaggerated too wildly when he claimed

"with 9/10 of the Assembly, and 19/20 of the City Ministers, and 900/1000 of the Kingdome, as I verily suppose; I deny a ruling Elder to be an instituted Officer Jure Divino".¹

Baxter and Martindale both disliked lay elders; Martindale felt they ought to be ordained before assuming such a vital office.² The Wirksworth minutes referred to the lay elders rather contemptuously as "others".³ Episcopally-inclined ministers such as Isaac Allen of Prestwich (one of the pricklier thorns in the side of the Manchester classis) and John Lake of Oldham were particularly hostile to the office, and conducted their parochial affairs without them.⁴ Popular resentment against elders abounded, and many would have agreed with the Royalist pamphleteer that Englishmen must "dig and root out all old shrubbed Elders, that lye as so many stumbling-blocks against the feet of weake consciences".⁵ When elders received only reproach and contempt for their labours, it is little wonder that some declined the office

1. The London Provincial Assembly, A Vindication of the Presbyteriall Government and Ministry, p.29; T. Coleman, Male Dicis Maledicis, (1645-6), p.15. For the Westminster Assembly debates on the lay elder, see above pp.109-11. It is interesting that when the London Provincial Assembly defended the "jus divinum" of the eldership in 1649, they received a complaint from Ireland that three or four of their more rigid members had inserted the defence "contrarie to the judgment of the rest". The complaint was disallowed. C.E. Surman, Records of the Provincial Assembly of London, vol. ii, p.36.

2. Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, 141; The Life of Adam Martindale, p.67. Many Presbyterians did regard elders as solemnly designated for their work, and thus virtually ordained, see above, p.263.

3. Wirksworth Minutes, p.146.

4. Manchester Minutes, vol.ii, p.158; R. Halley, Lancashire, its Puritanism and nonconformity, pp.303-5.

when elected, and that the attendance of others at classical meetings became very poor. Only a few laymen regularly participated in the fourth London classis, loyal to the end, and other classes revealed the lay elders' neglect of their duties. Perhaps a system of fines for non-attendance at meetings would have been a good idea!¹

Elders came most under attack in their exercise of the most crucial question of Presbyterian church discipline, the power of excluding sinners from the Lord's Supper. As the Erastian controversy had already revealed, many rigid Presbyterians almost regarded admission to the Lord's table as the test of church membership, although others felt the whole issue to be a dilemma. Baxter was convinced of the necessity for a purer Sacrament but felt the procedure of trial to be unnecessary, being proud that out of 600 communicants, he was unsure of only twelve.² Classes and Provincial Assemblies issued firm instructions about the conduct of the Sacrament, the most important being the

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5. O.B., A Dialogue, or Discourse ... Concerning our present Government by Elders, 14 May 1647, p.3, E.387(3).

1. For evidence that elders were reluctant to undertake the office, see W.L., The Sacramental Stumbling Block Removed, p.34. Even at one of its first meetings, only 21 out of 32 possible elders attended, and the fourth London classis failed to attain a quorum on several occasions. The Provincial Assembly was adjourned on no less than 30 occasions for this reason. The most diligent elder in the fourth London classis was Nehemiah Wallington, with a record of 69 meetings to his credit. Most elders attended 20 meetings, and several under 5. Fines were imposed on members of Stepney Independent church who failed to attend meetings! A.J. Jones, "Notes on the Early Days of Stepney Meeting", (1887) in Tracts on Church History 1846-88, pp.29-30.

2. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 84, and ii, 147. Even so, many believed Baxter's communion to be too rigid. For the ambivalence of Baxter's position see W.M. Lamont, Marginal Prynne, pp.197-9.

examination by ministers and elders of all persons of competent age to assess their worthiness for the Supper. Bolton resorted to a ticket- system of admission, leaden tickets being available after examination by the eldership, which were to be given up at the monthly communion.¹ But people violently objected to the examination in general and the elders' rôle in particular, and the Sacrament became less of a comfort to the godly than the source of many a parish dispute. One pamphleteer compared this "New Presbyterian error" with the papists' auricular confession, although the Presbyterian W.L. reminded parishioners that elders themselves had undergone a rigorous examination.² Royalist pamphleteers exploited such distaste for trial by elders; "Mercurius Academicus" declared that "You shall not weare a Ring on your finger ... if any of their Elderships hold it inconsistent with your Estates or qualities".³ Undeniably, some elders carried out their duties too officiously; at Prestwich one elder suspended a communicant "alleading that

1. For the first London classis' suggestions for a restricted communion see C.E. Surman, Records of the Provincial Assembly of London, vol.1, pp.22-3. For Bolton's ticket system see "Letters of Oliver Heywood and Life of Richard Heywood, Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., XV (1945) pp.25-7. Richard Heywood complained that Bolton was the only church in the country to employ a ticket system, but the Manchester minutes reveal that Prestwich and other parishes adopted the scheme; Manchester Minutes, vol.1, p.61 note and vol.ii, p.106.

2. A. Mingzeis, A Confutation of the New Presbyterian Error, 19 July 1648, E.1181(10); W.L., The Sacramental Stumbling-Block Removed, p.23.

3. Mercurius Academicus, week 2, Oxford 1645, p.20, E.313(12).

he was informed he had sworne, this deponent answering that there was (sic) few men but they had sworne".¹ Appeals following unjust ex+aminations could always be made, first to the classis, and then to the Provincial Assembly. Lancashire's Provincial Synod was obliged to settle two disputes about suspension by the zealous Bury eldership, the first concerning Richard Heywood's refusal to accept the ticket system, and the second relating to the suspension without trial of Mr. Bradshaw for entertaining a scandalous minister, Mr. Banks, in his chapel. But both these cases reveal a reluctance on the classical level to censure the decisions of elders.²

Not surprisingly, the ideal of the "pure" Sacrament either broke down altogether, or worked far too well. In the first instance, parishioners refused to be denied the Sacrament, and ministers like John Wiersdale of Bradley administered "promiscuously".³ In the second case, many pretended to be banned from communion rather than face examination, to be rebuked by W.L., "This turning our backs upon the Lord's Supper, rather then to passe thorow this doore of examination, argues great sleighting of that sacred Ordinance".⁴ Before 1645-6 many ministers, uncertain as to

1. Manchester Minutes, vol.1, p.61.

2. W.A. Shaw, Materials for an Account of the Provincial Synod of ... Kancaster, pp.52-3, 78-9. In both cases the sentences of suspension were revoked at provincial level.

3. Wirksworth Minutes, pp.155-6.

4. W.L., The Sacramental Stumbling-Block Removed, p.23.

whether to administer the Sacrament promiscuously or not, had abandoned it altogether, and people were well used to going without.¹ In some parishes people would agree to be examined by the minister but not elders, and the Nottingham and Cambridge associations accepted this compromise.² Certainly objectors to the Presbyterian trial by elders would have found the Independent system no more to their taste, as W.L. observed. John Price ridiculed the folly of Presbyterians who allowed the whole parish to elect the men who could then admit them in turn to the Sacrament.³ But in the tolerant atmosphere of the 1650s this most vital aspect of Presbyterian discipline was doomed to collapse, especially as the civil power bore ultimate authority in appeals and in cases of unenumerated scandals. This collapse was to present Presbyterians with a dilemma in 1660.⁴

In other matters too the presbyteries' bark proved worse than their bite. Bury classis issued authoritative summonses to several troublesome ministers who quietly ignored them;

1. In 1650 Ralph Josselin's parish received communion for the first time in nine years; The Diary of Ralph Josselin, ed. E. Hockcliffe, p.82.

2. Bury Minutes, vol.ii, Appendix I, p.159 and Appendix II, p.194.

3. W.L., The Sacramental Stumbling-Block Removed, p.32; J. Price, The Pulpit Incendiary, p.50.

4. See below, pp.663-8.

they pursued John Pollit for years for offences including "not manifesting any sorrow for his malignancy", "going to a horse-race on Barlow Moor", and "going to an ale-feast when the parliament forces were fighting against Warrington".¹ Isaac Allen challenged the Manchester classis' authority to rule his parish and kept as many Episcopal ways as he legally could, but he was not deposed.² Independents also challenged Presbyterian authority; John Wigan informed the Manchester classis that he would meet with them not as classis members, but only as fellow brethren. Manchester went to much trouble to satisfy the doubts of the Independent-inclined Adam Martindale concerning Presbyterianism, but Martindale believed his congregation capable of transacting its own affairs.³ Bury issued orders forbidding Independent or sectarian preachers within the classis bounds, but that did not prevent two appearing.⁴

It would be wrong to suggest that the presbyteries achieved nothing. The fourth London classis perhaps predictably encountered less opposition than the northern

1. R. Halley, Lancashire, its Puritanism and Nonconformity, p.255.

2. Allen published his correspondence with the classis under the title of Excommunicatio Excommunicata, or A Censure of the Presbyterian Censures, 1658.

3. Manchester Minutes, vol.1, pp.44-5; For Martindale, see below, pp.641-2.

4. Bury Minutes, vol.1, pp.24,111-2.

bodies and was more successful in its aims. Classes could attempt to deal with disputes between elders and ministers, pastors and people, and the Manchester classis negotiated an improved stipend for one minister with his flock at Chorlton.¹ The classes' most useful function concerned the work of the ministry; their ordination and examination of clergy both for their own and non-presbyterated parishes. They enforced strictly the Parliamentary requirements for ordinands, and although ordinations may occasionally have been overhasty, the subjects of theses for disputation indicate both high standards and tests for orthodoxy. One such subject disputed for Manchester was "An magistratus Christianus potest legitime tolerare omnes religiones".² Presbyteries tried to improve both the standards of the ministry and the education and morals of their congregations, and they may have met with some success. They were sincerely concerned with instructing the people, particularly the "poorer sort", for whom the London Provincial Assembly recommended that catechisms should be supplied "at the common charge". Lancashire Provincial Assembly considered drawing

1. R. Halley, Lancashire, its Puritanism and Nonconformity, p.247. For examples of the classis' dealing with disputes, see Manchester Minutes, vol.i, pp.43,70.

2. Ordinands were required to produce evidence of taking the Covenant (later the Engagement) and to give a personal testimony. (They were not required to subscribe to the Confession of Faith). They had to prove the consent of their future congregations to their ministry. Although the Assembly debates left vague the question of reordination on removal to a new parish, this was never done, and previous Episcopal ordinations were declared valid. Martindale, whose congregational tendencies were known in Manchester, obtained a hasty ordination in London through Joseph Caryl, applying for the ceremony one day and receiving ordination the next! The Life of Adam Martindale, p.86.

up a simpler version of the Westminster Assembly's catechisms for those "very yonge or very ignorant, or otherwise not soe capable of learneinge".¹ Unfortunately people often disliked catechising, believing it to be a Presbyterian move "not so much ... to fit them for the Sacrament, as to teach them obedience".² If only the classes had stressed Presbyterian polity and authority rather less, and the work of the ministry, instruction of the people and the message of Christ rather more, they might have achieved greater success.

There are isolated examples of classes interfering in civil affairs; Bury ordered the confiscation of a ministers' tithes, which was beyond its power, and Manchester agreed that its ministers should promote a petition encouraged by the Lancashire M.P., Alexander Moore.³ Otherwise the presbyteries' reluctance to accept State control (as opposed to State support) of their discipline resulted in their avoiding appeals to the civil authorities whenever possible. Manchester classis resolved

1. London Fourth Classis Minutes, p.67; W.A. Shaw, Materials for an Account of the Provincial Synod of ... Lancaster, p.72.

2. I. Allen, Excommunicatio Excommunicata, 1658, preface, sig. b2.

3. Bury Minutes, vol.i, p.104; Manchester Minutes, vol.i, p.48. Only the county committee, or the Committee for Plundered Ministers could confiscate tithes. The minutes are vague as to the nature of Moore's petition; it may have been concerned with Ireland.

"that every congregational eldership shall advise with the classis concerning the manner of representing scandalls, not enumerated, to the committee before they doe so represent them, that the comtee may not bee needlessly troubled." ¹

Nevertheless their only recourse against obstinate offenders was to put them "under the civill magistrate", and there are references in the classis minutes which show that this was done.² But classes could only request the assistance of some Justice of the Peace, and there is no evidence of the cooperation of the civil authorities. Many offenders against Presbyterian discipline seem to have had the cases against them abandoned. After 1649 the classes, devoid of State backing, their discipline ineffectual, became gradually reduced to machines for ordination, and in certain cases, electing delegates for provincial synods. The latter bodies mainly concerned themselves with issuing defences and exhortations on behalf of their discipline, but this had so far broken down that they were rarely required to function as appellate courts. Gradually classes became more accommodating out of sheer necessity,³ and their demise in 1660 seemed almost natural.

1. Manchester Minutes, vol.i, p.28.

2. E.g. Manchester Minutes, vol.ii, pp.83, 166; Bury Minutes, vol.i, p.29.

3. E.g. the Manchester classis softened its attitude to Gorton; The Life of Adam Martindale, p.75.

Independency in Practice.

Toleration after 1649 marked the decline of Presbytery but the encouragement of Independency. Prior to 1649 the spread of Independent ideas depended very much on Independent ministers who could be found in lectureships (and a few parochial benefices) besides the limited number of gathered congregations. But after 1649 Independency received governmental recognition and approval, and both the number of Independent parish ministers and gathered congregations rose. Certainly even then the number of Independent ministers was not enormous. It is difficult to calculate exactly how many Independent gathered churches existed at the Restoration, although 120 churches were represented at the Savoy Conference.¹ 171 known Independents were ejected at the Restoration; 41 from town lectureships, preacherships, chaplaincies or academic posts, and 130 from parochial livings in the established church.² Although a higher figure of ejected Independent ministers may give a truer picture,³ it is clear that out of 1,909 cases of ejection the Independents were in a considerable minority. But

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1. G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, p.23. Some parochial ministers received information on the Conference; G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, p.17.
 2. G.F. Nuttall, "Congregational Commonwealth Incumbents", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., XIV (1943) pp.155-7.
 3. G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, pp.20,23.

strength did not lie in numbers alone; it lay in the Independents' successful practising of the theoretical ideal they preached, their appeal to influential men, and above all on the quality and spiritual ministrations of their pastors.

Although the growth of Independency was not uniform, it is surprising how widely spread over the country Independent churches and ministers were. Dr. Nuttall has shown that ejected congregationalists appear in all counties except Westmorland, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Rutland, Warwickshire, Huntingdonshire, Herefordshire and Surrey.¹ Of these counties, gathered churches existed in Lincolnshire, Herefordshire, and probably Surrey, so Independency was not unrepresented.² Independency seems to have been weaker in the Western counties, although by no means nonexistent; one of the earliest congregations met at Bristol in 1640, there was a church at Taunton in 1654, and several Independent congregations were mentioned in Wiltshire.³ In Devon Thomas Larkham formed a congregational church at

1. G.F. Nuttall, "Congregational Commonwealth Incumbents", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., XIV, p.157.

2. Bankes Anderson, town preacher of Boston, promised to notify "the churches in Lincolnshire" of the Savoy Conference. F. Peck, Desiderata Curiosa, 1779, vol. ii, p.506. For Herefordshire see G.F. Nuttall, "Congregational Commonwealth Incumbents", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., XIV, p.167. Edwards mentioned "old Mr. Close, an Independent Minister" who had gathered a church in Guildford, Surrey, by 1646; T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part II, p.148.

3. For the Bristol church see above, p.35. For the Taunton church see C.E. Surman, "Taunton Church Covenant 1654", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., XX(1966). For Wiltshire see F. Peck, Desiderata Curiosa, vol. ii, p.506.

Tavistock, as did William Bartlet at Bideford.¹ Walter Cradock, Morgan Llwyd and Vavasor Powell were busy spreading the Independent gospel in Wales, although Powell himself claimed after 1660 that there were only a score of gathered congregations there.²

The situation in the west may have been worse than in the north, where Edwards for one was alarmed in 1646 at the numbers of gathered congregations, and quoted a correspondent as bewailing

"whereas formerly we wanted the Ministry, now we have such variety and strife amongst them, that truly I know not what will become of us".³

In Cumberland, 7 out of 20 ejected ministers were Independents, whilst Newcastle boasted Independent lecturers William Durant, Cuthbert Sydenham and Samuel Hammond. In Yorkshire Robert Luddington, John Oxenbridge and Henry Roote had their respective congregations at Hull, Beverley and Sowerby before 1645, and there were other Independent ministers operating in the county, including Christopher Nesse and Thomas Smallwood. Edwards knew of the existence of an Independent congregation

1. G. F. Nuttall, "Congregational Commonwealth Incumbents", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., XIV, p. 163.

2. C. Hill, "Propagating the Gospel" in Historical Essays, 1600-1750, ed. H. E. Bell and R. L. Ollard, (1963) p. 54.

3. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part II, p. 149.

at York.¹ In Lancashire and Cheshire Independents may have been few, but they were certainly formidable, and supported by patrons such as Col. Robert Dukinfield, who harboured Eaton and Taylor's congregation, and Col. Thomas Birch, who aided John Wigan. Michael Briscoe of Walmsley, Bolton and Thomas Jolly of Altham were two more Lancashire Independents, and a correspondent of Edwards claimed that Eaton and Taylor encouraged several Independent churches in Cheshire in 1646.²

Beyond a doubt, Norfolk and Suffolk were the strongest Independent areas. In these counties 30 Independents were ejected from parochial livings and although up to 1649 only six gathered churches existed, Browne noted that afterwards thirty churches, either gathered or reformed, were instituted.

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1. For Cumberland see G.F. Nuttall, "Congregational Commonwealth Incumbents", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc. XIV, pp.161-3. Cumberland Independents included Richard Gilpin and George Larkham, although both were Presbyterians by 1672, and Gilpin was recommended by Baxter for a bishopric; Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, 286. For Newcastle see R. Howell, Newcastle upon Tyne and the Puritan Revolution, pp.222-3, 236-7, and G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, pp.24-5. For Yorkshire see B. Dale, Yorkshire Puritanism and Early Nonconformity, (1909) pp.111, 146; T. Edwards Gangraena, Part II, p.149.
 2. R. Halley, Lancashire, its Puritanism and Nonconformity, p.254. For Wigan's later Baptist ideas and possession of Manchester collegé, see The Life of Adam Martindale, p.75. For Briscoe, see B. Dale, op.cit., p.179. For Thomas Jolly see The Note-Book of the Rev. Thomas Jolly, with Extracts from the Church Book of Altham and Wymond houses, ed. H. Fishwick, (Manchester, Chetham Society, new series XXIII, 1894). For the remark by Edwards' correspondent see. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, p.167.

In 1655 Bridge listed ten Independent congregations in Norfolk, and Calamy later observed that along the Norfolk and Suffolk coast were

"the celebrated Fifteen Churches (and there were so many at least of that Way) ... that receiv'd their Direction and Encouragement from Mr. Bridge of Yarmouth, and Mr. Armitage of Norwich".¹

Next to these counties Gloucestershire boasted the largest number of ejected Independents, although it is interesting to note that this congregationalism did not long survive the Commonwealth. London was well served with Independent congregations and ministers² although elsewhere in the Home Counties Independents were less numerous. Even so, Edwards commented on the Independents and sects near Lewes in Sussex, "some of the chiefe being Mr. Peters converts".³

In anti-Puritan Kent John Durant's gathered congregation at Canterbury aided new Independent churches at Canterbury itself (1646), Staplehurst (1647) and Adisham (1648), whilst there were also churches at Dover and Sandwich.⁴

In addition to the above-mentioned counties, Scobell's correspondence with regard to the Savoy Conference revealed

1. G.F. Nuttall, "Congregational Commonwealth Incumbents", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., XIV, pp.158-61, (p.159 quoted); J. Browne, History of Congregationalism ... in Norfolk and Suffolk, p.164.

2. G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, pp.141-3

3. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, p.105.

4. "The Canterbury Church Book", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., VII, (henceforth referred to as Canterbury Church Book) pp.189,191. John Durant was the brother of William Durant of Newcastle. Hohn Saltmarsh of Brasted was also a Kent Independent.

the existence of Independent churches in Hertfordshire, Coventry, Shropshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.¹ Clearly Independent congregations, though limited in number, were sufficiently scattered geographically to ensure widespread diffusion of their ideas.

Not surprisingly, Independent churches stressed in practice the essence of congregational theory- the separation of professed Christians from the world to join in fellowship together to worship Christ in purity of church ordinances and discipline. In joining together most congregations followed the example of New England and Dutch churches and adopted a written covenant expressing this ideal. So. Norwich and Yarmouth church members promised in 1643 to remain unpolluted by sinful ways, whether public or private, and

"in all love, (to) improve our communion as brethren, by watching over one another ... to counsel, admonish, reprove, comfort, relieve, assist and bear with one another, humbly submitting ourselves to the government of Christ in His churches".²

Congregations were conscious of the heavy responsibility of covenant-keeping, and when in 1655 Altham found itself deviating from its high ideals, the covenant was solemnly

1. F. Peck, Desiderata Curiosa, vol.ii, pp.505-12.
2. J. Browne, op.cit., p.211. The Rotterdam covenant has been quoted above, pp.255-6. For other early church covenants see "Early Examples of Church Covenants", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., XX, (1966) and G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, pp.78-81.

renewed.¹ Apart from members of other Independent congregations who would be admitted by virtue of the communion of churches, new members were bound to convince the congregation of their faith, and this could not always be achieved without open profession, despite the claims of Welde.² At Canterbury this ordeal was repeated quarterly when members were required to relate their experiences

"of the incomming of Jesus Christ.
of their growth in grace
of the temptations and corruptions which
they wrestle with and what strength &
victory they have over them. Together with
any spiritual experience of any kind".³

Just as church fellowship with its heavy duties could not be lightly entered, so it could not be easily abandoned. Applications for "dismissal" of members to other congregations were usually granted when a change in residence was involved, and a Stepney church member travelling around the country was given letters of recommendation to any congregation he might contact.⁴ But dismissals could be refused. Samuel Eaton, called to advise on Stepney's refusal to allow Mistress Brown to join John Goodwin's congregation, upheld the church's

1. The Church Book of Altham and Wymond houses (published with The Note-Book of the Rev. Thomas Jolly), p.127. Altham under Thomas Jolly was a "reformed" rather than a "gathered" Independent church.

2. See J. Browne, op.cit., p.224 for an example of members being received by communion of churches. For Welde's comment see above, pp.256-7.

3. Canterbury Church Book, p.189.

4. A.J. Jones, "Notes of the Early Days of Stepney Meeting" (188 in Tracts on Church History, 1846-88, p.19. For applications for "dismissal", see Ibid., p.33, and Canterbury Church Book, pp.191, 193.

decision on the grounds that

"if she could not communicate with us because of such errors amongst us as she conceived, how could we give a dismission to her to join in that church which we conceived to be erroneous".¹

Even the Norwich and Yarmouth church's agreed division into two congregations could not be effected without formal letters of separation.²

Enthusiasm for church membership was probably greatest during the early years of a church's history. The Canterbury church entolled 72 members in its first two years (1645-7), a figure not equalled during the whole of the 1650s despite the government's policy of toleration.³ Yet congregational growth depended on such varied factors as the abilities of the local parish ministers and the proximity of another Independent congregation, besides the number of local "saints". In contrast to parish churches Independent congregations were always small, a factor which could aid church discipline. But it must be stressed that many of the earliest Independent churches drew their members from a wide area. Edwards

1. A.J. Jones, op.cit., p.18.

2. J. Browne, op.cit., pp.214-6. The letters were dated May 1644.

3. Canterbury Church Book, p.181.

commented that Independents came from Surrey, Middlesex, Hertfordshire and Essex to worship in London congregations perhaps once a month; very few Stepney members actually lived in Stepney. Yarmouth saints were obliged to offer accommodation to long-distance members attending meetings.¹ Presbyterians were quick to observe that such a situation largely invalidated the concept of Christians watching over each other, although in fact Stepney members were rapidly called to account for unexplained absence from meetings. But the Independent ideal of fellowship could not always meet geographical reality.

What sort of people joined Independent congregations? Ironically, when Independents criticised Presbyterians for dependence on the wealthy, they received the same charge in return. They were accused of impoverishing parochial clergy by encouraging "the fattest and best wooll'd sheep they have in their flock, to increase the contributions of their private congregations".² John Bastwick claimed that poor people were refused entry to one church of predominantly titled and wealthy people.³ Certainly many Independent congregations did depend on men of substance to shelter them and provide for their ministers, and it was scarcely surprising

1. T. Edwards, Antapologia, p.118; A .J. Jones, op.cit., p.15; J. Browne, op.cit., p.230.

2. D.P.P., An Antidote Against the Contagious Air of Independency, February 1644-5, p.20, E.270(3).

3. H. Bastwick, Independency Not God's Ordinance, Part I, pp.142-3.

that William Strong's Westminster congregation should attract M.P.s and men of quality. But many congregations included poorer folk. According to Thomas Edwards' correspondent, the Independent church at Birch in Lancashire consisted of "all of mean quality" (and mostly women, as well!)¹ The richer Yarmouth church members showed concern towards "industrious poor" members, whilst at Bury St. Edmunds in 1654 only six members were able to aid church funds.²

Independent theories of popular participation in church affairs worked well in practice. Lay initiative was responsible for the founding of many congregations and some churches survived for long periods without pastors.³

Martindale was appalled that Independent ministers Eaton and Taylor were forced to retract promises made to their Presbyterian colleagues if their congregations disagreed.⁴ Yarmouth church members decided the admittance and dismissal of brethren and their church's attitude to sects and politics, whilst Stepney overruled their pastor on the choice of a deacon.⁵ This did not mean that a pastor could not influence his flock; Bridge persuaded the Yarmouth church to agree to

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1. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, p.68.
 2. J. Browne, op.cit., pp.230,395.
 3. G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, pp.50,80-5.
 4. The Life of Adam Martindale, p.67.
 5. J. Browne, op.cit., p.230; A.J. Jones, op.cit., p.26.

admit a former Anglican minister.¹ Approved brethren were also encouraged to "exercise their gifts" and help in preaching. John Goodwin was charged with abandoning his congregation to lay preachers whilst he wrote his pamphlets!² As Samuel Eaton was frequently absent from his church due to "many journeys to London, Scotland, etc" and a garrison chaplaincy, "his place was then supplied by gifted persons, whereof the best was many degrees below him".³ Some churches were more cautious than others; Norwich only consented to occasional lay preaching whilst Yarmouth agreed to six lay preachers every week. However, all insisted that church approval must be given to gifted brethren.⁴ Stepney made it plain that laymen could never dispense the "seals" (the Lord's Supper and baptism).⁵

The involvement of all the church members perhaps made inevitable the fact that ruling elders were less important in Independent congregations than in Presbyterian. It must be remembered that Independents were not opposed to ruling elders provided their office was regarded as ecclesiastical. Bridge told the Yarmouth church that ruling elders were necessary for a congregation's full beauty. Nevertheless,

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1. J. Browne, op.cit., pp.219-20.
 2. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part I, preface, sig B verso. Daniel Taylor often preached for Goodwin; J. Vicars, Coleman-Street Conclave Visited, 21 March 1647-8, p.36, E.433(6).
 3. The Life of Adam Martindale, p.74.
 4. J. Browne, op.cit., pp.217,255. Yarmouth's pastor Bridge was of course often absent at the Assembly.
 5. A.J. Jones, op.cit., p.18.
 6. See above, pp.262-3.

Yarmouth did not elect elders until 1651-2, some eight years after its separation from Norwich, and abandoned the office in 1655. Stepney waited thirteen years before electing its elders.¹ In contrast, Independent congregations placed more emphasis on the offices of deacons and widows, which the Presbyterians neglected. Adam Martindale's Independent-inclined church at Gorton had a long struggle with the Manchester classis before being allowed to choose deacons, whom Gorton held to be just as vital as elders. Yarmouth chose deacons in 1644-5 and widows in 1650, assuring Norwich that it was perfectly in order to choose a deacon before any other church officer. Practice varied however, as Stepney did not worry about deacons until 1657, and not all churches had the office of widow.²

True to theory Independents stressed the difference between the office of pastor and teacher. At Dukinfield Eaton pursued a more evangelical rôle as teacher while the pastor, Taylor, organised the church.³ Although the offices were supposedly equal, when Mr. Woodall received calls to be pastor in one church and teacher in another, he was advised to accept the pastoral rôle as better for the "full proof and discharge of his ministry".⁴ Many churches (like

1. J. Browne, *op.cit.*, pp.227-8; A.J. Jones, *op.cit.*, pp.24-7. The Independent church at Birch did not have "officers" in 1646; T. Edwards, *Gangraena*, Part III, p.68.

2. *The Life of Adam Martindale*, p.75; J. Browne, *op.cit.*, pp.227,253; A.J. Jones, *op.cit.*, p.25.

3. A. Gordon, *Historical Account of Dukinfield Chapel and its School*, p.12.

4. J. Browne, *op.cit.*, pp.285-6. Woodall later rejected the Savoy Conference's distinction between teachers and pastors; G.F. Nuttall, *Visible Saints*, p.18.

Stepney) did not choose a teacher as presumably they could not afford one. Ministers were always made church members before election to office as the theorists had explained. Ordination by representatives of the people was subsequent to election and generally held by Independents to be less important, although it is impossible to tell how extensively Independent churches practised imposition of hands. Bury St. Edmunds just elected its ministers and Yarmouth advised Norwich that imposition of hands was insignificant. An interesting case occurred in Cumberland, when the congregationalist George Larkham was ordained by imposition of ministers' hands "for feare of offending the godly brethren of ye Presbyteriall way".¹

The relationship between pastor and flock was felt to be one of mutual engagement, and a pastor could accept no other position without the consent of his congregation. Yarmouth church was so divided as to whether Bridge should accept a call as preacher to the Council of State in 1649 that Bridge rejected the offer. Even when ministers were in great demand larger congregations could not "steal" a minister from a weaker church without mutual consultation,

1. G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, p.92; J. Browne, op.cit., pp.253-4; G.F. Nuttall, "Congregational Commonwealth Incumbents", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., XIV, p.162.

as in the case of Samuel Habergham in 1650.¹ In theory the Independent church was responsible for the maintenance of its ministers, but practice varied. Norwich and Wymondham both supported their pastors. The church of Sandwich was divided as to whether its pastor should receive maintenance from the town in 1651, and Yarmouth rejected a town rate to support its ministers as "against the way of the gospel".² Yet Bridge and other East Anglian Independents did receive town or (in the 1650s) state support.³ Thomas Jolly would not be the only Independent incumbent to augment his salary with tithes and the Yarmouth and London churches agreed in 1659 that

"the taking away of Tithes for the maintenance of ministers, until as full a maintenance be ... legally settled, tends very much to the destruction of the ministry and the preaching of the gospel in these nations".⁴

Church discipline, censure and excommunication were the concerns of all church members and in the execution of their charge congregations were patient, humane, but realistic. Altham waited three years before excommunicating Patience Riley in 1654 and Canterbury dealt kindly with Susan Godfrey's

1. J. Browne, *op.cit.*, pp.218-9; 221-2.

2. *Ibid.*, pp.165,230-1; *Canterbury Church Book*, p.192.

3. F. Peck, *Desiderata Curiosa*, vol.ii, pp.496-7.

4. *The Note-Book of the Rev. Thomas Jolly*, p.xii; J. Browne, *op.cit.*, p.225.

"going unto witches to enquire about a husband" as she was an epileptic and probably mentally unbalanced as well. Yet Stepney excommunicated several members for their "scandalous courses" and when one mariner later repented, the church decided that the confession was too premeditated to be heartfelt. Independent censures seemed to be more successful than those of Presbyterians, although this was inevitable from the Independents' more committed membership. Many sinners repented, although some took a year or more in the process, as did Brother Starr of Canterbury, rebuked for his love of money and consequent embezzling. Even Prudence Riley had recanted by 1659.¹

The Independents' distinction from the sects was more pronounced in theory than it always was in practice. Certainly some Independent congregations repudiated the sects, especially Baptists and Quakers. Stepney rejected members who had imbibed Baptist and Quaker doctrines, whilst Hapton questioned the lawfulness of giving "the right hand of fellowship" to a local Baptist church. Yet Yarmouth was clearly more liberal to the sects. In 1646 it advised Wymondham that Baptists and paedobaptists could worship together in one congregation; it discussed the admittance of "those who are of contrary judgment in the point of hearing in churches not rightly constituted" and finally in 1659-60 it united with the "old Separatist" church in Yarmouth.²

1. The Church Book of Altham and Wymondhouses, p.126; Canterbury Church Book, pp.192-3; A.J. Jones, op.cit., pp.17,31
 2. Ibid., pp.22,23 (Even Stepney advised a Baptist congregation when its opinions were solicited); J. Browne, op.cit., pp.224, 230 (quoted), 285,289.

Although the Quakers were generally repudiated, even by Yarmouth, there is evidence that Baptists were accepted in many churches, including Broadmead.¹ In Suffolk

"there are members in many, if not most of the churches ... who are doubtfull about infant baptisme, yet walke comfortably with their pastors and other members".²

However, differences of opinion in congregations could sometimes prove Presbyterian gibes that the Independents'

"principle of mutability" would be self-destructive. At Broadmead Quaker doctrines caused a great rift, whilst Dukinfield members took to publishing pamphlets against each other.³

It was suggested that whether they recognised the authority of synods or not, Independents would in practice be just as reliant on neighbour churches as the Presbyterians.⁴ This proved to be almost the case. Many Independents would share Michael Briscoe's views that it was contrary

"to a right rule for any number of persons to join themselves together and enter into church relation without calling in the assistance and desiring the presence of neighbouring Churches".⁵

Churches did assist the foundation of others and then offered them fellowship, providing the government of the new church

1. J. Browne, *op.cit.*, p.166; The Records of a Church ... in Broadmead, Bristol 1640-87, ed. E.B. Underhill, pp.41-2.

2. F. Peck, Desiderata Curiosa, vol.ii, p.505. See also G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, p.118. Baptists considered themselves fundamentally at one with Independents.

3. The Records of a Church ... in Broadmead, pp.43-50; The Life of Adam Martindale, p.74. For the principle of mutability see above, pp.212,384.

4. See above, p.426.

5. Michael Briscoe's letter to the Altham church; The Church Book of Altham and Wymondhouses, pp.124-5.

was in the "particular congregation solely and independently".¹ Churches asked each others advice on doctrine and discipline, settled each others disputes, and celebrated together. This was certainly the practice of the East Kent Independent churches as revealed by the Canterbury records; on one occasion Canterbury even told a neighbouring minister given to promiscuous baptism that it accounted him "as a Brother & under its power".² The prime example of Independent inter-church fellowship was the Savoy Conference, which was held in 1658, attended by some 200 representatives to prepare a Confession of Faith.³ This lamented that Independent churches had previously neglected "correspondency together" on a national level,⁴ but even before 1658 Independent church fellowship was not confined to the immediate locality. Personal friendships among ministers drew distant churches together and for example "they of London, Bristol, Yarmouth,

1. Canterbury Church Book, p.189.

2. Ibid., p.191. For evidence of the East Kent churches' fellowship see pp.188-93. Canterbury aided the discussion of one church on the Arminian error. Norfolk churches showed a similar pattern of consultation, a county meeting was held in 1659. J. Browne, op.cit., p.225.

3. Most of the delegates were laymen and their expenses were borne by their churches. Some of the replies of ministers to news of the Conference are preserved in F. Peck, Desiderata Curiosa, vol.ii, pp.505-12. See also. A. Peel., The Savoy Declaration of Faith and Order, 1658, (1939). The doctrines enunciated at the Conference were substantially the same as those in the Westminster Confession of Faith, as the Savoy Declaration itself acknowledged; A Declaration of the Faith and Order Owned and Practised in the Congregational Churches in England, agreed upon ... at the Savoy, printed February 1658-9, preface, E.968(4).

4. Ibid., preface.

New England and Dublin would send to Newcastle for advice".¹
 Nevertheless churches could still exist in isolation;
 Thomas Spurdance's congregation at Hinstead was reported
 in 1658 as walking "obseurely; neither seeking communion
 with others nor they with it".²

How did Independents differ from Presbyterians in
 worship? Newcomen observed in 1644 that the new gathered
 churches celebrated the Lord's Supper more frequently than
 the parish churches, viz. every Lord's Day in the afternoon,
 and Thomas Goodwin certainly favoured a weekly communion.³
 The Presbyterian ideal was probably a monthly celebration,
 although the Directory specified only a "regular" Lord's
 Supper.⁴ Different churches of both persuasions could
 vary in practice, and Stepney Independents only held
 communion monthly.⁵ However it seems likely that on average
 Independents received the Supper more often than Presbyterians.
 This is scarcely surprising, since unlike the Presbyterians
 they did not have the problem of the examination of
 communicants before each celebration. Baillie had thought

1. Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes, ed. W.H.D. Longstaffe, p.134. See also G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, pp.164-5. In 1656 Thomas Jolly met with ministers in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire; The Church Book of Altham and Wymondhouses, p.129.

2. F. Peck, Desiderata Curiosa, vol.ii, p.505.

3. G.Gillespie, Notes, p.102, quoting Newcomen's speech in the Assembly sub-committee for the Directory; T.Goodwin, Works, vol.iv, p.345.

4. Bolton Presbyterian church held a monthly communion; "Letters of Oliver Heywood and Life of Richard Heywood", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., XV (1945) pp.25-7.

5. A.J. Jones, op.cit., p.32.

their whole service highly irreverent, lacking preparation, exhortation, reading and singing.¹

Independent churches were interested in politics; indeed under the Commonwealth some of their ministers, especially Nye and Owen, acted as government officials. Independent congregations virtually nominated the Barebones Parliament² and Gloucestershire churches sent a remonstrance to Cromwell in 1656 advising him not to accept the throne. When Cromwell died Stepney would not be the only church to fear for the future.³ Yet Independents were really concerned with the spiritual worship of Christ in their churches, and when the Restoration came they might take comfort in the millenarian conclusions of a Norwich church conference in 1655-6, namely to submit to the civil powers in the hope that "there should be in the latter days a glorious and visible kingdom of Christ, wherein the saints should rule". They would continue to pray, as the Canterbury congregation did in 1646, for "the diversion of persecution with out, & the prevention of errors and devisions wth in".⁴

1. Baillie, i, 440.

2. G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, p.67. The Nominated or Barebones Parliament was selected in 1653 by the Council of Officers from lists submitted by the congregations. 140 men were chosen, but the experiment was a failure.

3. G.F. Nuttall, "Congregational Commonwealth Incumbents", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc., XIV, p.164; A.J. Jones, op.cit., p.29. John Owen also opposed Cromwell's kingship and drafted Pride's petition against it; C. Hill, God's Englishman, p.175.

4. J. Browne, op.cit., p.165; Canterbury Church Book, p.188.

Local Presbyterian and Independent Conflict and Coexistence.

Dr. Shaw believed that "On the whole, the two systems Presbyterian and Independent, were kept clearly distinct, existing side by side, but not troubling each other".¹ However, the truth of this statement depends on two main factors, the first the years and the second the geographical localities to which it is applied. In many places conflict between Presbyterians and Independents was plain in the late 1640s. But by the 1650s a combination of Presbyterian weakness, Independent growth and the prevailing climate of accommodation achieved peaceful coexistence and harmony in several areas where there had been previous conflicts, such as Manchester, Norfolk and Newcastle. Yet clashes persisted even in the late 1650s in places, whereas areas such as Worcestershire do not at any time seem to have suffered Presbyterian/Independent hatred.²

It must be emphasised that although Presbyterians inevitably thought gathered churches were inviting trouble by withdrawing from the parochial system, some Independent congregations deliberately tried to avoid contention.

1. W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, vol.ii, p.136.

2. There were Independents in Worcestershire (including a church at Worcester under Simon Moor) but Baxter claimed "we were all of one mind and mouth and way". Baxter also stated that some Independents who opposed parish churches changed their minds when they saw his good work at Kidderminster Reliquiae Baxterianae, pp.85-7.

In 1645 Independents, at Hapton asked the Yarmouth church whether the time was right for their pastor "to administer the Supper in their public meetingplace" for fear of offending the Presbyterians.¹ Reformation in Altham was much hindered by "some unhappy differences betwixt the Presbyterian and Congregational parties", but when Thomas Jolly's Independent church covenanted^{an} together, their church "swaddling-bands" specified that members were not

"to approve ourselves to men by affecting terms of difference amongst God's people, as Presbyterian and Independent, but purely to approve our hearts and ways to God".²

Conflict was particularly evident in towns, where ministers and lecturers of both persuasions came into close contact. London was a prime example, although London Presbyterians, living in full view of the central government, became of necessity less aggressive after 1649. But the climate of the capital in the 1640s was mirrored in the Presbyterian-Independent pamphlet war, dependent as it was on London protagonists, with incidents in individual parishes providing extra illumination. In the early 1640s many accommodating Presbyterian incumbents had allowed Independents to hold lectures in their churches, but by 1645

1. J. Browne, op.cit., p.283.

2. The Church Book of Altham and Wymondhouses, p.121. The Altham "swaddling-bands" was its church covenant.

this situation produced considerable tension. The vicar of Stepney, Joshua Hoyle, felt little sympathy for his lecturers Greenhill and Burroughes, and the moderate Burroughes was censured by Vicars for publicly reviling Presbyterians in his second lectureship at Cornhill.¹ Another Independent lecturer, Nicholas Lockyer, reputedly renounced the conditions one incumbent, Fisher, imposed for the use of his church, namely the avoidance of "the point in difference between the Independents and Presbyterians".²

However the clearest indication that the "preaching war" was causing distress to a parish occurred at Calamy's church, St. Mary Aldermanbury. Henry Burton, who held a fortnightly "catechistical Exposition Lecture" there, had apparently caused much irritation in the parish by preaching Independent tenets in direct contradiction to Calamy.³ After one particularly inflammatory lecture in the autumn of 1645, the churchwardens locked the church doors to prevent Burton's lecturing there in the future, thus triggering a vigorous pamphlet controversy in which assertions and denials were so frequent that the truth is hard to discern.⁴ Calamy, who was by no means an extreme Presbyterian,

1. A.J. Jones, op.cit., p.12, (Greenhill was to succeed Hoyle as vicar in 1653); J. Vicars, The Schismatick Sifted, 22 June 1646, p.35, E.341(8).

2. H. Burton, Truth still Truth, though Shut Out of Doores, 9 January 1645-6, p.24, E.315(6). Mr. Fisher was presumably Samuel Fisher, incumbent of St, Albans, Wood Street, C.H. ii,939.

3. Burton seems to have refuted Calamy's Sunday sermons.

4. Burton began the pamphlet debate with all the air of an injured party in Truth Shut Out of Doores, 3 December 1645, E.311(1). He was answered by The Door of Truth Opened, 8 December 1645, E.311(13), published in the name of the church of Aldermanbury, although Burton believed Calamy had written it (he claimed to have heard a streetseller cry "Buy Mr. Calamie's Answer to Mr. Burton!") Burton replied in

claimed to have had no prior knowledge of the churchwardens' plans and professed the willingness of the parish to readmit Burton if he refrained from advocating the congregational way. It would anyway appear that the committee of underwriters had advised Burton not to meddle with controversial issues.¹ Aldermanbury proclaimed that at Calamy's request, other Independents had tried in vain to curb Burton's lectures and had intimated that he was being deliberately awkward.² During the controversy, Presbyterianism, Independency, the integrity of the parish clerk, churchwardens, the two ministers and the entire parish were questioned and aspersed by one side or the other. Burton did not scruple to declare Calamy and his church "doomed by the Holy Ghost to be a rebellious people", whilst Calamy doubted if Burton was capable of brotherly love towards Presbyterians.³ Emotions had been severely stirred.

The fourth London classis recorded two disputes concerning Independency. When St. Michael's Cornhill proposed in January 1646-7 to offer the late Jeremiah Burroughes'

4. cont'd. Truth, still Truth, though Shut Out of Doores, which so incensed Calamy that he penned A Just and Necessary Apology, 30 January 1645-6, E.320(9). Most parishioners seem to have opposed Burton, although he made one convert; Truth, still Truth, though Shut Out of Doores, p.23.

1. E. Calamy, A Just and Necessary Apology, p.3. Burton's lecture was underwritten by a committee including Mr. Francis Shute and Mr. Hartford. Burton later confessed that he had promised to deal mainly with catechistical subjects, but insinuated that the underwriters opposed his expulsion; H. Burton Truth Shut Out of Doores, n.p., Truth, Still Truth though Shut out of Doores, p.10.

2. Aldermanbury church, The Door of Truth Opened, pp.10-11.

3. H. Burton, Truth, Still Truth, though Shut Out of Doores, p.4; E. Calamy, A Just and Necessary Apology, p.3.

lectureship to Mr. Symonds, the classis conducted an inquiry into his opinions on toleration, as they suspected him of favouring the Independent way.¹ In 1648 the classis upheld the refusal of the incumbent of St. Michael's Crooked Lane, Joseph Browne, to permit Thomas Goodwin to administer the Lord's Supper to his gathered congregation in that church.² Even after 1649 London was not free from conflict. When Thomas Case was removed from Milk Street for refusing the Engagement, the parishioners could not decide whether to have a Presbyterian or an Independent in his place.³ Zachary Crofton, Presbyterian minister of St. Botolph's Aldgate received orders from the Protector in 1657 to cease his opposition to the Independent (and Antinomian) John Simpson.⁴ St. Bartholomew Exchange, whilst not

1. London Fourth Classis Minutes, pp.5-9. Joseph Symonds, who had assisted in Sidrach Simpson's Rotterdam congregation, managed to satisfy the classis that he would not tolerate all opinions, e.g. popery. The classis was obliged to vindicate itself from aspersions against its treatment of Symonds in A Full and Faithfull Accompt, February 1646-7. A copy of this survives in John Ryland's Library, Manchester.

2. The people of Crooked Lane were already in conflict with the classis over their dislike of Browne (see above, p.605). The people may have inclined to Independency, or Goodwin may well have sought permission from a parish he knew to be at loggerheads with Presbyterian authority. Certainly the people appealed against the classis' decision. London Fourth Classis Minutes, pp.54-62.

3. H. Smith, The Ecclesiastical History of Essex, p.149.

4. A.G. Matthews, Calamy Revised, p.144.

Presbyterian in sympathy, strongly objected to their new vicar John Loder, who arrived in 1655 accompanied by his gathered congregation. A long dispute ensued, with Loder refusing to administer the Sacrament to parishioners outside the gathered church, and parishioners withholding their tithes since "our church was taken up and our pews filled with strange congregacons". The parish would not even accept the Independent congregation's offer to pay for church repairs for fear it gave them an interest there.¹ Yet St. Stephen's Coleman Street welcomed the return of John Goodwin, and gladly agreed to share the church with his gathered congregation.²

Independents were a growing problem in the Manchester area in the 1640s, largely due to the influence of Eaton and Taylor, whose Dukinfield congregation was reputedly behind anti-Pre-byterian activities such as the 1646 Cheshire counter-

1. Nye also ministered to Loder's congregation. St. Bartholomew Exchange had previously insisted on a promiscuous Sacrament, which indicates they were not rigidly Presbyterian in sympathy. The living was in the gift of the parishioners, and they had chosen George Hall, a future Bishop of Chester, but first Sidrach Simpson and then John Loder were appointed over the parishioners' heads. W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, vol.ii, p.132; G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints (for this and similar disputes) p.134ff.

2. W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, vol.ii, pp.134-6. Shaw printed the agreement that St. Stephen's parish made with the gathered congregation.

petition. Eaton and Taylor's pamphlet controversies with Richard Hollingworth have already been mentioned¹ and Eaton and Taylor were also obliged to defend their church from a particularly incredible accusation of Thomas Edwards.² Eaton and Taylor later tried to be accommodating to the Manchester classis, but to little avail.³ This classis also found a source of trouble in John Wigan, whilst Bury classis was obliged to take proceedings against Robert Hill of Edenfield for professing Independency.⁴ At one stage a preaching war was underway with Independents trying to obtain a public lecture and Presbyterians denouncing them weekly at Manchester.⁵

Such conflicts were vividly described by Adam Martindale, who was thrust into the "wasp's nest" after accepting the call of the Independent-inclined chapelry of Gorton in 1646.⁶ Martindale had been impressed by Eaton

1. See above, pp. 507

2. Edwards claimed that on one occasion as Eaton preached, ghostly drumbeats could be heard as a heavenly warning against the Independents' war-mongering (Gangraena, Part III, pp. 164-5). Eaton and Taylor denied the tale in A Just Apology for the Church of Duckenfield (1646) and so did John Goodwin in the preface to Hagiomastix. It seems that the ghostly sounds were due to a dog scratching his ear and knocking the side of a pew with his foot.

3. In 1655 they asked the classis to publicise a sentence of excommunication from Dukinfield, but the classis would not cooperate; Manchester Minutes, vol. ii, p. 229.

4. Bury Minutes, vol. i, pp. 50-1. Hill was prone to drunkenness and seems to have been a rather dubious character.

5. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, pp. 64, 68.

6. The chapel of Gorton was in the parish of Manchester and had been served previously by John Wigan. In 1648 Martindale moved to the parish of Rostherne, Cheshire.

and Taylor but also revered the leading Manchester Presbyterians, Richard Hollingworth, John Harrison and Richard Heyricke. Wishing to remain friendly with both groups, he found that "to be familiar with them of one partie was to render me suspected to the other" and "would faine have removed out of this hote climate into a cooler, but the people would not heare of it". Finding himself torn between both persuasions, he was eventually advised by the moderate John Angier

"to read over endways all the considerable authors I could get for and against Presbyterianisme and Independencie, and to write out all the concessions I could meet with from either party ... to try whether men of peaceable spirits of both persuasions might now hold communions sweetly together".¹

He did so, and was relieved when in 1659 ministers of both persuasions "out of severall counties" met in Manchester to agree on an accommodation, but observed that such moves were thirteen years too late. Indeed they were; amid the political confusion of Sir George Booth's rising and subsequent events the project came to nothing.²

1. The Life of Adam Martindale, pp.61-75, (pp.65,70 quoted). Martindale disliked aspects of both systems. He opposed the Independents' gathering, covenanting, ordination by elders, maintaining ministers by Sunday collections and their denial of communion to known godly persons not of their church. Yet he shared the Independents' conviction that deacons were as warrantable as ruling elders, approved of a strict entry to the Lord's Supper and felt that no authority could create a new classical church in which he was obliged to discipline people he was never likely to see. Martindale remained a moderate, neither supporting nor deliberately antagonising the classis.

2. The Life of Adam Martindale, pp.71,128,131. The "Propositions" for this accommodation (inspired by Dury's papers for accommodation in Protestant churches) were printed by Dr. Shaw in Manchester Minutes, vol.iii, Appendix v, pp. 400-1. They stressed that Presbyterians and Independents should consult each other and hold the Lord's Supper in each other's congregations whenever possible. Ordination should only be performed by ministers, but lay-preaching

The broad pattern of clashes in the 1640s followed by greater harmony was repeated elsewhere. Newcastle suffered some tension between Presbyterians and Independents, particularly when the town was under Scottish occupation, "each man labouringe to please himselve and his party".¹ Edwards' "Gangraena" exaggerated the extent of the conflict, but antagonism was both religious and political.² Yet by the 1650s Presbyterians and Independents were

"preaching in the same place, fasting and praying together in heavenly harmony ... it may be said of Newcastle ... the air is so pure no venomous creature can live there".³

The act of 1656 for settling ministers sanctioned Presbyterians and Independents alike, rejoiced that ministers "differinge in Judgements^t in some smaller matters" could

2. cont'd. was not disallowed. These propositions were also subscribed by some Yorkshire ministers, including Henry Roote and Thomas Smallwood, Martindale and members of the Cheshire voluntary association did not immediately subscribe as they lacked the approval of their colleagues. After Booth's rising, which was supported by some Lancashire ministers (see below, p.660 note 1), the Independents were estranged as they were opposed to all Royalist aspirations.

1. R. Howell, Newcastle upon Tyne and the Puritan Revolution, p.242, which quotes the Newcastle act of 1656 "for settleinge the Ministers in their preachinge att the severall Churches".

2. T. Edwards, Gangraena, Part III, pp.88-9. This made the false claim that Independents were driving ministers away, but a newsbook supported Edwards' claim of Presbyterian-Independent political differences. Perfect Occurrences, 21-28 May 1647, p.135, E.390 (7) The election of elders had also caused trouble, see above, p.606.

3. C. Sydenham, The Greatness of the Mystery of Godliness, 1654, quoted in Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes, p.365

coexist peaceably and prayed that former breaches should be healed forever. Cooperation in Newcastle was made even more necessary by the sects, and Presbyterian and Independent ministers combined to confute the local Baptist and Quakers.¹ Nearby Gateshead was less fortunate; in 1657 there was an eruption of Presbyterian and Independent political and religious rivalry, although the Independent minister Welde emerged victorious.²

In Norfolk too the 1640s contrast unfavourably with the 1650s. At both Yarmouth and Norwich religious divisions affected local politics in the mid 1640s when Edwards gleefully reported tales from Carter and Thornbecke Presbyterians in Norwich, that Independents were trying to establish a lectureship "in despight of the Magistrate".³ The Norwich Presbyterian-Independent dispute was to reach its widest audience with the publication of vindictive treatises for and against the abortive 1646 petitions.⁴ However, by 1648 a

1. R. Howell, *op.cit.*, pp.240-2, 247-61. The act of 1656 epitomised the harmony already evident in consultation between Presbyterians and Independents. Ministers who left a church were to be preplaced by successors of the same judgement. Indifference to religion was also a problem in Newcastle. Samuel Hammond calculated that half of Newcastle's population was absent from church.

2. *Ibid.*, pp.263-6. Presbyterians petitioned the Northern Commissioners for the Propagation of the Gospel when Welde refused to allow a Presbyterian lecturer in Gateshead. When the Presbyterians' appeal failed, they were purged from the town administration.

3. T. Edwards, *Gangraena*, Part III p.33. See also J. Browne, *op.cit.*, p.510. Sampson Townsend decried the Norwich Independent congregation in *Truth Vindicated*, August 22, 1646, E.351(4).

4. See above, pp.460,473,477. Both Presbyterian and Independent petitions were rejected by the town council.

Royalist discerned a change in atmosphere in the county;

"let Presbyterians and Independents fight till I part them. But ... a reconciliation and compliance is a working between the two factions ... the next effect sure must be a marriage between a Presbyterian incubus and an Independent succubus".¹

Bridge used his influence to protect the Presbyterian John Brinsley at Yarmouth, where "they lived and conversed together comfortably many years".²

Fragments of information provide clues to the situation elsewhere, and extensive research into local sources might yield further material. Colonel Hutchinson, governor of Nottingham, reluctantly imprisoned some Independents or separatists at the instigation of the "ministers and godly people, who had animated them almost to mutiny for separating from the public worship", and when he released them in 1644 one Presbyterian minister, Goodhall, delivered harsh invectives against "governors and arbitrary power".³ In 1646 residents of Sowerby, Yorkshire locked the chapel doors against Rooté's congregation to show their resentment.⁴ Conflicts arose in Devon; in 1646 some Barnstaple Independents accused Presbyterians of causing the plague then raging in that town, whilst at Exeter (where the council was strongly

1. Letters of Sir Thomas Knyvett, quoted in R.W. Ketton-Cremer, Norfolk in the Civil War, (1969), p.331.

2. J. Browne, op.cit., pp.111-2.

3. Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson ... by his widow Lucy, (1904), p.224. This may refer to separatists as an Independent congregation is not specified in Nottingham until 1655. (G.F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, p.33). Hutchinson reputedly belonged to no faction, but as a kinsman of Ireton probably favoured Independents.

4. T. Edwards, Gangraena Part III p.69. Rooté answered criticisms against his church in Eaton and Taylor's A Just Apologie for the Church of Duckenfield, (appendix).

Independent) the mayor dropped the proclamation of the Covenant in the gutter.¹ One soldier from Essex commented in 1647 that "the presbyterians are so bitter, he did not desire but to quarter with some honest Independent".² Walter Cradock sighed that in Monmouth

"We are the most miserable men in the world in this poor city: if a man had as much grace as Paul had, if some Independent see him and say he is inclining to Presbyterianism, or if a Presbyterian see him and say he is inclining to Independency, then let him go and cut his throat ..."³

By the 1650s, many Independent congregations that had previously met in private houses were sharing church buildings with Presbyterians.⁴ This often happened when Independents were appointed to parochial cures, and was illustrated by the Stepney Independents' removal to the parish church when their pastor William Greenhill became the new vicar. A similar situation existed at Coleman Street under John Goodwin and St. Mary Abchurch under Sidrach Simpson. In 1650 the Canterbury Independents resolved to break bread in the Cathedral chapterhouse in future, probably because Duranb

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1. Anon, Five Wonders Seene in England, 4 August 1646 pp.1-2. E.349(1). According to the writer, the Independents were then smitten by the plague whilst the Presbyterians escaped.
 2. G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, p.24.
 3. ed. E. Hockcliffe, The Diary of Ralph Josselin, p.41.
 3. Quoted in G. Yule, The Independents in the English Civil War, p.24.
 4. In some army garrisons, Independent congregations met in castles, eg, Chester, Dover, Nottingham. G.F. Nuttall Visible Saints, p.33.

was then one of the Cathedral preachers.¹ Elsewhere Presbyterian incumbents freely or resentfully shared their buildings with local Independents. At Yarmouth in 1650 the chancel was "closed in with main walls where needful and fitted up for a church house" so that Bridge and his congregation could be suitably accommodated. Despite the protests of parishioners, Holy Trinity church at Hull was shared between Presbyterians and Independents; a wall separated the nave from the chancel so that the two groups should not disturb each other. Thomas Ford, preacher at Exeter Cathedral and former Assembly-member, strongly disapproved of a similar division of his cathedral at a cost of £1,000.²

As already seen, conflicts did not always abate in the 1650s. The M.P. William Stanley received complaints in January 1656-7 that Mr. Barton refused to administer the Sacrament outside his covenanted congregation in Leicester, to which Stanley remarked that he had supposed Presbyterians to desire a pure sacrament, and Burton intended to reconcile both parties.³ In Dartmouth, two ministers, the Independent

1. The Canterbury Church-Book, p.191.

2. For Yarmouth, see J. Browne, op.cit., p.229, and for Exeter, see A.G. Matthews, Calamy Revised, p.207. At Hull, John Canne (a Baptist) preached to the Independents and Henry Hibbert and John Shawe to the Presbyterians and parish. A.E. Trout,

"Nonconformity in Hull", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc. IX, April 1924, p.31; B.N. Reckitt, Charles the First and Hull, pp.114-5.
3. ed. H. Stocks and W.H. Stevenson, Records of the Borough of Leicester, 1603-1668, Vol.IV (Cambridge 1923) pp.436-8. It is unclear as to whether Presbyterian-Independent rivalry, or fury at a minister appointed over the head of the parish was the cause of a riot in Leicester in 1649 in which a minister was thrown out of a pulpit. Ibid., pp.384-5.

John Flavell and the Presbyterian Mr. Geare lectured on alternate weeks, answering each other. The Broadmead records specified in 1657 that "bitter spirited or rigid" Presbyterians would

"vilify our ministry, and their call; saying they were not true ministers, because not called and ordained in their way, by a classical or synodical assembly".

Thomas Taylor's Independent congregation at Bury St. Edmunds complained to the Protector in 1658 that the Presbyterians threatened to turn them out of their meeting place, the Shire House.¹ Professions of unity could sometimes belie deepseated antagonisms; an Exeter correspondent wished in 1653 that "there may be as much substance found, as there hath beene noise made" about Presbyterian-Independent unity.² Yet on the whole, evidence reveals the 1650s to have been a more peaceful period in the history of Presbyterianism and Independency, and where they existed, voluntary associations both encouraged and epitomised such accommodation. John Gorges said that the Somerset association was

1. For Dartmouth and Bury St. Sdmunds see A.G. Matthews, Calamy Revised, pp.200, 478; for Broadmead, The Records of a Church of Christ meeting in Broadmead, p.57.

2. G.F. Nuttall, "Presbyterians and Independents. Some Movements for Unity 300 years ago". Journal of Presb. Hist. Soc. X, (May 1952)p.11. Nevertheless, Independents asked to join the Devon voluntary association in 1656; C.E. Surman, Classical Presbyterianism in England, p.227.

"ye maine instrument ... to joyne the ministry of this county in such a firme bond of union yt the name of Presbyterean or Independent are (sic) not mentioned here".¹

Anthony Palmer remarked that the common acceptance of the need to preserve pure communions was unifying Presbyterians and Independents in Gloucestershire.² The two groups were finally realising they had much in common.

1. Letter from John Gorges to Henry Cromwell, 1657, quoted by W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, vol.ii, Appendix III b, p.423.

2. A. Palmer, A Scripture Rule to the Lord's Table, 1654.

EPILOGUE: PRESBYTERIANS AND INDEPENDENTS 1648-1660.

By 1648 some protagonists in the Presbyterian-Independent conflict were already in their graves. Alexander Henderson had died in 1646;¹ Jeremiah Burroughes followed him in November 1646, and John Saltmarsh, Thomas Edwards, and Henry Burton in the closing months of 1647.² Many members of the Westminster Assembly did not live to see the Restoration, and Stephen Marshall, Richard Vines, William Gouge, Thomas Gataker, Thomas Hill, William Strong, Sidrach Simpson and Thomas Wilson to name but some, were dead by 1655.³ An elegy in 1655 "upon the death of so many Reverend Ministers of late" could not but conclude that this portended the doom of Presbytery and the peril of the country.⁴ Another lament remarked that at least in God's holy Assembly in the skies

1. Henderson was reported to have declared on his death-bed that English people were too rich and freedom-loving to appreciate the Presbyterian discipline, but the pamphlet which stated this, The Declaration of Mr. Alexander Henderson ... Made upon his Death-bed, on sale 16 May 1648, E. 443(1) was condemned by the Scottish General Assembly.

2. Burroughes died at the age of 45 after a fall from his horse, Perfect Occurrences, 20 November 1646, n.p., E.362(23). John Saltmarsh expired in December 1647 after delivering a last prophecy to the army that God would destroy it by its own divisions; Anon, Wonderfull Predictions ... by John Saltmarsh, 29 December 1647-8, E.421(16). Thomas Edwards was reported dead at Amsterdam, Kingdome's Weekly Intelligencer, No. 246, February 1647-8, E.426(7). News of Henry Burton's death was in Mercurius Pragmaticus No. 18, January 1647-8, sig. 2 verso, E.423(2).

3. D.N.B. For Wilson, see G. Swinnock, The Life and Death of Mr. Thomas Wilson, (1672). Thomas Gataker's parishioners had taken advantage of his condemnation of events since Pride's Purge to withhold their tithes!

J. Reid, Memoirs of the Lives and Writings of those Eminent Divines, vol.i, p.304.

"There no dissenting brethren be,
But all as one, in one agree".¹

However, the many Presbyterians remaining in this world had problems after 1648. Their first real crisis of conscience came in 1649-50, when the Engagement was offered for subscription. In Lancashire and Cheshire ministers debated their dilemma at length, some, including John Angier, publishing a plea for non-subscribers. Martindale quickly repented of his subscription, realising "how hardly those tender people that pretended so much to libertie of conscience had dealt with their brethren in imposing burdens upon them". Newcome too (rather conveniently) engaged, repented, and thereafter privately regarded himself as a non-subscriber.² Some ministers may well have echoed the views of the M.P. Francis Rous that even usurped power was God-given, and support should be granted when no other (government) can be had, and so the Commonwealth must go to ruine".³ But others refused to subscribe, including

cont'd.

4. Anon, Upon the Death of so many Reverend Ministers of Late, included in T. Jacombe, Enoch's Walk and Change, (funeral sermon for Richard Vines) March 1655. pp.48-50. E.870(4).

1. G. Swinnock, Poem on the ... death of ... Mr. Thomas Wilson, in his The Life and Death of Mr. Thomas Wilson, (1672), p.95.

2. The Life of Adam Martindale, pp.89-100; The Autobiography of Henry Newcome, Vol.i, pp.24-5. The Engagement was a declaration of obedience to the Commonwealth, obligatory for the enjoyment of places of public trust. C.H. Firth and R.S. Rait, Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, vol.ii pp.325-8.

3. F. Rous (so ascribed by Thomason) The Lawfulness of Obeying the Present Government, 25 April 1649, p.11, E.551(22).

Assembly members Thomas Case, Francis Cheynell, Thomas Ford, William Spurstowe, Thomas Thorowgood, Richard Vines, Jeremiah Whittaker, Thomas Young, and men like Richard Baxter and Richard Hollingworth.¹ Despite the fact that many non-subscribers lost their positions, much leniency was exercised, although persistent "seditious preaching" was suppressed.²

While Independents enjoyed high favour between 1647-53 and monopolised preaching before the Rump Parliament,³ Presbyterian ministers were obliged to devote themselves to the increasingly frustrating task of maintaining the efficacy of their discipline. Some kept as quiet as possible in public, others cooperated with the Independents while the extremists continued to attack the Rump from their pulpits.⁴

1. D.N.B., J. Reid, Memoirs of the Lives and Writings of those Eminent Divines; and Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 64. For Thorowgood, see B. Cozens Hardy, "A Puritan Moderate", Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc. (1926) p.212. Thomas Hill described the reluctance of Cambridge University men to subscribe, see Hist. MSS. Commission, 8th Report, appendix ii, p.63. Yorkshir ministers signed a memorial of objections to the Engagement, 17 December 1649; B. Dale, Yorkshire Puritanism and Early Nonconformity, p.12.

Thomason records that broadsides were posted on several London church doors on 11 and 30 November 1649, condemning Assembly members who had subscribed, (Lightfoot, Valentine, Corbet, De la March, Bond, Reyner, Dury as well as Assembly Independents). See E.579(6) and E.584(7) in the Thomason tract collection.

2. Hollingworth was examined by the Council of State for his seditious sermons, whilst Martindale recorded "Diverse of the ministers of the classis hurried about and imprisoned", The Life of Adam Martindale, p.75. For an example of leniency, Richard Vines lost his mastership of Pembroke College and rectory of Walton, but was allowed to accept the cure of St. Laurence Jewry and a lecture at Cornhill. D.N.B.

3. B. Worden, The Rump Parliament, pp.121-3. Radical Independents like Goodwin did not receive the Rump's patronage.

4. Ibid., pp.81-4.

Some daring clergy intrigued against the government with London citizens (including John Bastwick) who were in league with Royalists in Holland and Scotland to promote a landing by Charles II. The plot centred around Christopher Love but involved other Sion College divines including Cranford, Case, Jenkyn, Watson, Calamy and Case's Lancashire associate Richard Heyricke, although the full extent of their involvement is uncertain.¹ Its failure led to Love's execution despite the fact that moderate Independents tried to use leniency in this case to aid reconciliation with the Presbyterians.² But an example was made of Love because

"he and his brethren do still retain their old leaven ... it is plain unto me that they do not judge us a lawful magistracy, nor esteem anything treason that is acted by them to destroy us".³

Not surprisingly Presbyterian ministers then chose to err on the side of caution. Baillie was amazed at Calamy's "feeble-mindedness" in refusing to license one of his books and observed "The ministers there, are herein, so heartless and discouraged, that they dare speak nothing which may be interpreted to give the least offence."⁴

1. Prynne was implicated and his study fruitlessly searched for a letter from Charles II. C.E. Surman, Records of the Provincial Assembly, vol.ii, pp.91-100. For Love, see D.N. Nix, "Christopher Love, 1618-1651", Journal of Presb. Hist. Soc., XIII (1967).

2. B. Worden, op.cit., p.246.

3. J. Willcock, Life of Sir Henry Vane the Younger (1913), p.213.

4. Baillie, ii, 393.

However Presbyterian laymen could still indulge in vigorous pamphleteering, as in 1652-4 when a group of Presbyterian publishers (including John Bellamy) became involved in an interesting dispute about blasphemous literature. They censured Popish and heretical books and recommended the Provincial Assembly's works where true religious principles could be discovered. Such pamphleteering provoked rejoinders from army officers and the indefatigable John Goodwin, who perceived he had discovered a fresh outburst of the "high Presbyterian spirit" his pamphlets of 1644 had tried to demolish. Presbyterian-Independent pamphleteering was not yet dead.¹

The Protectorate marked a period of less uneasiness for the Presbyterians. Josselin wrote that "all apprehend a storme on the ministry" by the new Lord Protector but was soon pleasantly surprised; "ye Independents in favor of the presb: not much meddling or medled with".² The Cromwellian State church was described by Halley as "the church of comprehension", and in practice encompassed Presbyterians, Independents and moderate Episcopalians

1. The publishers had produced many of the Provincial Assembly's works, and also published literature by London Presbyterian ministers. For an account of this controversy, see C.E. Surman, Records of the Provincial Assembly of London vol.ii, pp.60-9.

2. ed. E. Hockcliffe, The Diary of the Rev. Ralph Josselin 1616-1683, pp.103, 110. Cromwell took the oath as Lord Protector on 16th December 1653.

whilst tolerating sectarian groups.¹ many Presbyterians, their distaste over the events of 1648-9 receding, cooperated with Cromwell's church, and Baillie believed that

"the Presbyterian party in England ... is exceeding great and strong, and after the army, is the Protector's chief strength against the sectaries, who generally are out of conceit of him".²

When proposals were made to augment the income of preachers, both Independents and Presbyterians were intended to benefit.³ When a central committee of "Triers" was established to investigate the qualifications of candidates for benefices, Baxter reported that they "were mostly Independants, but some sober Presbyterians with them". Even Case, refuser of the Engagement and participant in Love's plot, reputedly wished to be a Trier, although this was unfulfilled.⁴ Many Presbyterians served with Independents as assistants to the county commissioners for ejecting scandalous ministers; in

1. R. Halley, Lancashire: its Puritanism and Nonconformity, p.275.

2. Baillie, ii, 422. For Cromwell's increasing irritation with radical sects, Fifth Monarchists, Baptists and Quakers, see C. Hill, God's Englishman, p.178.

3. F. Peck, Desiderata Curiosa, Part II, p.491.

4. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 72. The Triers, instituted by an ordinance of March 1654, were opposed by John Goodwin, who felt they had unwarrantable authority over spiritual freedom; J. Goodwin, The Triers (or Tormentors) Tried and Cast, 23 May 1657, E.910(12). For Case see D.N.B.

Cheshire, Angier and Heyricke worked alongside the Independent Eaton. Assembly members Sedgwick, Valentine, Wilkinson, Ley, and the Engagement non-subscriber Francis Cheynell all became assistants.¹ The new mood was apparent, but some Presbyterians still held aloof, burying themselves in parish duties, like Calamy who "In Oliver's Time ... kept himself as private as he could."² Meanwhile Independents like Thomas Goodwin, John Owen, William Greenhill, Philip Nye, Peter Sterry and Sidrach Simpson enjoyed government preferment.³

The years 1653-59 thus marked a more accommodating spirit between Presbyterians and Independents. The London Provincial Assembly's "Jus Divinum Ministerii Evangelici", published in 1654, was more conciliatory than earlier pronouncements and stressed the need for unity with those who differed in church government but were orthodox in doctrine.⁴ A letter supporting John Dury's efforts for evangelical unity in Europe was signed by both Presbyterians and Independents in March 1654.⁵ Nor were efforts lacking at home. Richard

1. D.N.B. entries and A. Gordon, Historical Account of Dukinfield Chapel, p.16. The assistants were appointed by an ordinance of August 1654.

2. D.N.B.

3. D.N.B. Yet shortly before his death in 1655, Simpson was imprisoned for a while for preaching against Cromwell.

4. C.E. Surman, Records of the Provincial Assembly of London, vol.ii, p.56.

5. The letter, a copy of which is in the Staatsarchiv, Zurich, is reprinted in ed. P. Toon, The Correspondence of John Owen 1616-1683, (Cambridge 1970), pp.68-9. John Dury (with letters of recommendation from the Protector) spent 1654-7 abroad for the purpose of fostering Christian unity in Switzerland, Germany, and the Netherlands.

Baxter, long desirous of some scheme of accommodation, had between 1652-4 been in regular correspondence with Dury over a plan to hold a conference on the subject. Dury's tireless labours, which were supported by the Protector, secured an unofficial conference between the leading Independent and Presbyterian ministers in the spring of 1653-4 at Blackfriars, but little was achieved since most of the delegates were soon to meet again on an interrelated issue.¹ For in March 1653-4, the government appointed a committee of 15 divines to draw up a list of "fundamentals" in religion, as a result of which Marshall, Vines, Manton and others met with Thomas Goodwin, Owen, Nye and Simpson. Baxter, who attended the committee, disagreed with the Independents, whom he criticised for having the "tincture of Faction stuck so upon their Minds, that it hindered their Judgment". He believed that their proposed fundamentals included some "neither Essential, nor true" for salvation, and claimed that his view was supported by Marshall and Vines. In any event it would appear that the Presbyterians did not concur with the Independents' fundamentals, and Parliament let the matter drop, "lest it should be a publick

1. Baxter had corresponded with Hill and Vines about an accommodation in 1649, and the idea of a conference was his. Dury recorded that at the conference 5 Independents and 5 Presbyterians were deputed to prepare an agreement, but they may never have met. G.F. Nuttall, Richard Baxter, pp.67,74-6; G.F. Nuttall, "Presbyterians and Independents, Some Movements for Unity 300 years ago". Journal of the Presb. Hist. Soc., X(May 1952) pp.6-13.

Reproach that we could not agree on the Fundamentals".¹
 Earlier Baxter had made a serious attempt to make an agreement with Nye, and drew up proposals whereby gathered churches were permitted, providing that the Independents joined in non-authoritative voluntary associations which should debate whether the proposed gathered congregations had sufficient reason to withdraw from parish communion. But Nye felt this to cast a slur on the gathered churches, and would not accept the proposal that Independent ministers should be ordained by other ministers.²

The 1658 Savoy Declaration insisted that

"the differences that are between Presbyterians and Independents (are but) differences between fellow servants, ... neither of them having authority given from God or Man, to impose their Opinions, one more then the other".³

Baxter felt such sentiments were in fact divisive rather than accommodating, although he was assured by some Independents

"that many good and peaceable men that were there present (at the Savoy) intended not the dividing distant sense which many words in the Declaration do openly import".⁴

The Declaration's ambivalence owed much to the recent death

1. Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, pp.197-205 and appendix p.75. Baxter, though not a doctrinaire Presbyterian, was by the 1650s identifying himself with moderate Presbyterians.

2. Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, 188-193.

3. A Declaration of the Faith and Order ... agreed upon at the Savoy, preface, E.968(4).

4. Quoted in C.G. Bolam, J. Goring, H.L. Short, R. Thomas, The English Presbyterians, p.68. Baxter thought the New England synod showed a better example of conciliation; Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 104.

of the Protector and to the resultant defensive mood of the Independents. But clearly national accommodation was still too difficult, although the meeting of ministers in Manchester in 1659 which achieved local unity and the voluntary associations told a different story on a county basis.¹

Both Presbyterian and Independent ministers participated in some of the political intrigues that followed the death of Oliver Cromwell. Richard Cromwell was thought to favour reconciliation with the Presbyterians, and John Owen was certainly involved in the moves of senior army officers that led to the recall of the Rump and the eventual resignation of Richard in May 1659.² But Baxter claimed that Philip Nye and other Independent ministers were not involved in Owen's schemes, which Baxter attributed to "factious Envy ... lest (non-Independents) ... should be too much countenanced."³ Presbyterian ministers were no less active in the North-west in August 1659, when Henry Newcome and other ministers were promoting the success of

1. See above, pp. 642, 648.

2. C.G. Bolam, J. Goring, H.L. Short, R. Thomas, The English Presbyterians, p.68; and ed. P. Toon, The Correspondence of John Owen, p.48. Owen gathered a church in the home of General Fleetwood at Wallingford House, where the Council of Officers met.

3. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 101.

Sir George Booth's Royalist rising.¹ Baillie discounted rumours that some London ministers were also implicated, but it is not unlikely that they knew of the plans.² Certainly Presbyterian pulpits were bitterly denouncing the Rump in June 1659, although the ostensible cause was a threatened attack upon the tithes system. In Yorkshire too, the Presbyterian clergy were reported as holding "many and great meetings . . . Preach division and distraction".³

As the country seemed to drift towards anarchy, General Monck, Cromwell's commander-in-chief in Scotland, marched to London in the winter of 1659 as the spokesman of those demanding a return to constitutional government and the avoidance of military dictatorship. The Yorkshire Presbyterian clergy seem to have played an important role in the drafting of a message to Monck expressing the support of Fairfax and his followers.⁴ Owen and other Independents

1. The aims of Booth were somewhat confused apart from the restoration of Charles; he stood for "liberty and property" against radicals in politics and religion, and some recruits were mustered under pretence of danger from the Quakers. Martindale was in general sympathy with Booth's aims, and disliked the Rump, but felt that Booth was bound to fail, and was suspicious of Booth's declaration with its promise of universal toleration "which was either a perfect cheat or a promise of what I utterly abhorred". After the rising failed, Martindale begged Samuel Eaton, a good friend of Newcome's, to use his influence with General Lambert to prevent ministers' bloodshed, but Eaton was afraid that a letter of Newcome's might have implicated him in the plot. In any event, the ministers did receive leniency. The Autobiography of Henry Newcome, vol. 1, pp. 109-13; The Life of Adam Martindale, pp. 133-41.

2. Baillie, ii, 433. Baxter certainly knew of the secret.

3. G. R. Abernathy, "The English Presbyterians and the Stuart Restoration 1648-1663", Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, new series, LV part 2 (1965), p. 30.

4. Ibid., pp. 37-8.

including Nye and Greenhill hastily contacted Monck to try to persuade him to preserve the interests of the congregational churches, and to advise him that he had no right to interfere in Parliamentary affairs. Monck replied that a free Parliament must be restored, although the "interest, liberty and encouragement" of the London churches would be dear to him. Messengers from East Anglian and London congregational churches met in December 1659 to resolve that "all due care be taken that the Parliament be such as may preserve the interest of Christ and his people in these nations". It was even rumoured that Owen and Nye were hoping to collect £100,000 if the officers of Wallingford House would call out their regiments against Monck to protect the liberties of congregational churches. But on 3 February 1659-60 Monck entered London, and soon the purged Parliament of 1648 was recalled.²

It has been said that the Presbyterians in 1660, "in the exuberance of an unsuspected loyalty", threw their chance away, and "recalled the heir of the Stuarts without conditions".² In assessing the attitude of Presbyterians to

1. P. Toon, God's Statesman. The Life and Work of John Owen, (Exeter, 1971) pp.116-20. The Yarmouth church had, in June 1659, refused to meddle in politics. J. Browne, History of Congregationalism, p.168.

2. Mitchell and Struthers, introduction, p.lxxiii.

the Restoration it is necessary to remember that "the Presbyterians, as a political unit, entered the crucial pre-Restoration period totally demoralized and shattered" after the Cromwellian period in which some had cooperated with the Independents, some had showed passive obedience, and some had espoused the Royalist cause.¹ The Presbyterian clergy were no less divided. Many were impelled towards hopes of a compromise with Episcopacy as a result of the dissolution of the Long Parliament and the election of the Convention Parliament in April 1660, in which the political Presbyterians were a minority party. Certainly some Presbyterian ministers had tried to prevent the dissolution of the Long Parliament and made overtures to the Scots; they did so because they feared the consequences of a new election. However, a Scottish alliance was forestalled by the Royalist agents James Sharp and the Earl of Lauderdale, and in March 1660 it was reported that some more extreme Presbyterian clergy were trying to "drive the people to another rebellion, but they are little listened unto, and lesse believed".²

1. G.R. Abernathy, op.cit., p.18. Abernathy gives a clear account of the complex political and religious moves leading to the Restoration, and stresses the political disorganisation of the Presbyterians in 1659-60. Some leading political Presbyterians, Waller, Holles and others were in close alliance with Charles II, and the political antagonism between Presbyterians and Independents prevented their cooperation in Parliament. Ibid., pp.59-60.

2. Ibid., pp.43-6. The restored Lond Parliament had tried to follow a mild Presbyterian course in religion, but had rejected chapters of the Confession of Faith (p.41) because political Presbyterians were fearful of losing the elections to Independents and Royalists. Calamy and other Presbyterians tried to stop the dissolution of the Long Parliament with a petition.

For the Presbyterian clergy faced a crisis of conscience in 1660 which inevitably divided them into groups. There were some extremist Presbyterians like Seaman and Jenkyn¹ who wanted no part in a Restoration that involved a compromise with Episcopacy. Most Presbyterians were seriously concerned about their religious obligations to the Covenant and other oaths since 1642,² but equally, many of these Presbyterians were also conscious of the illegality of the King's execution, and took the attitude

"We all look to be silenced, and some or many of us imprisoned or banished: but yet we will do our parts to restore the King, because no foreseen ill consequence, must hinder us from our Duty".³

Baxter was won to the cause of the Restoration because the Earl of Lauderdale told him it would determine the question of "whether a sword shall prevaile to the apparent ruine of Church & state or if England shall returne againe to be govern'd by Parliaments".⁴ Moreover the Presbyterian dilemma of a national church and pure communions, so clearly

1. Jenkyn was to die in Newgate gaol; "Jenkyn's Farewell" was to be a popular tune. W.W.D. Campbell, "John Quick 1636-1706"; Journal of Presb. Hist. Soc., III (1924) p.14.

2. Baxter in 1660 was preparing to publish his views on the continued validity of oaths and engagements.

3. Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, 216. Both Newcome and Martindale revealed a similar attitude; i.e. of preferring to suffer under a King and free Parliament, than to guiltily profit under usurpers. The Life of Adam Martindale, p.133; The Autobiography of Henry Newcome, vol.i, p.118.

4. G.R. Abernathy, op.cit., p.44.

evidenced by the Erastian controversy, had worsened during the 1650s when the State exercised "Erastianism with a twist" and refused to sanction their classical discipline.¹ Some Presbyterian ministers were now willing to promote a new unified national church, even though compromise with the Episcopalians would necessitate some sacrifice of their principles of pure communions.² They therefore accepted Charles II's vague promises at Breda in the expectation of an accommodated settlement with the Episcopalians.³ The failure of another attempt at national accommodation with the Independents in September 1659 only further convinced them of the need to accept the overtures of the Anglicans, however illusory these proved to be.⁴ Leading Presbyterians like Calamy, Ashe, Spurstowe, Case and Manton, who formed a delegation from Sion College to the King in Holland, became convinced that Charles would ensure the comprehension of Presbyterians within a national church,

1. R.E. Boshier, The Making of the Restoration Settlement (1951) pp.13-8.

2. Outside the classical system, discipline would be hard to enforce.

3. The Declaration of Breda, 4 April 1660, vaguely promised liberty of conscience, saying "that no man shall be disquieted or called in question for differences of opinion in matters of religion which do not disturb the peace of the Kingdom".

4. Abernathy sees the accommodation efforts of September 1659 as moves to forstall an Episcopalian compromise. G.R. Abernathy, op.cit., p.32.

and "leave the Common Prayer and Ceremonies indifferent". Their influence on other Presbyterians was stressed by Baxter, whilst Morley believed that Edward Bowles would win over the northern Presbyterian clergy and laity.¹ But other Presbyterians could not accept the efforts to compromise with Episcopacy and prejudice pure communions even if it meant the sacrifice of their principles of a national church. The Presbyterian struggles during the Interegnum had only convinced them of the importance of rigid discipline. So after another abortive effort to link with the Independents in May, they petitioned the King in June to hold fast to the Covenant.² Their actions embarrassed Calamy's group, who disavowed the factiousness of fanatics before Charles and reaffirmed their desire to collaborate with the Episcopal party.³

But the Presbyterians' political weakness, coupled with the divisions among Presbyterian clergy, led the Episcopalians to stand firm, and despite the willingness of the "Reconciling" Presbyterians to accept Ussher's plans for

1. Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, 215-7, 229-31; E.R. Abernathy, op.cit., pp.65-6.

2. In 1661 Crofton published a tract on the Covenant that was so outspoken that it resulted in his arrest.

3. C.G. Bolam, J. Goring, H.L. Short, R. Thomas, The English Presbyterians, pp.74-5.

modified Episcopacy and the King's Declaration concerning Ecclesiastical Affairs of October 1660, in which concessions were made to the Presbyterians, hopes of comprehension proved futile.¹ Parliament rejected the Bill to implement the Declaration (Independent M.P.s voting against the Presbyterians), and by 1662 an Act of Uniformity was in force. Baxter, Calamy, Reynolds, Manton and Bates had been offered bishoprics, but all except Reynolds declined. 17 August 1662 saw hundreds of Presbyterian ministers taking leave of their parishes, unable to consent to the main provisions of the Act of Uniformity viz. the compulsory reordination of all those not ordained by a bishop, submission to the Prayer-book, and renunciation of the Covenant.² Before long Baillie was lamenting "the persecution of Presbyterian ministers began to be very hot".³ Independent

1. Baxter insisted that the group of Presbyterians, led by Calamy, who sought an accommodated settlement with the Episcopalians (or "Reconcilers" as they were called) supported Ussher's "Reduction of Episcopacy" of 1641. They did not support lay elders or synods without bishops at the negotiations. According to Baxter, Holles and the Earl of Manchester supported moderate Episcopacy and liturgy, and "would have drawn us to yield further than we did". Calamy disagreed with some concessions because "it might offend the Presbyterian Brethren, who expected more from us". As a result of the King's Declaration, a Commission met fruitlessly at the Savoy in 1661 to review the Prayer Book. Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, 238-40, 278-84; G.F. Nuttall, Richard Baxter, pp.88-9. For an account of the re-establishment of Episcopacy, see R.S. Boshier, The Making of the Restoration Settlement.

2. Martindale said that he would have conformed but for the prayer-book, although other factors may also have been important. The Life of Adam Martindale, p.163. Many Presbyterians felt they could not denounce the Covenant. Some Presbyterians (e.g. the Assembly-member Richard Heyricke) conformed. Henry Swift of Yorkshire, who "enjoyed" a very poor living, even managed to retain it without conforming. B. Dale, Yorkshire Puritanism and Early Nonconformity, p.149. But some 1000 ministers, Presbyterian and Independent,

parish ministers were also ejected, although these had never expected a compromise; John Owen's efforts to persuade the government to grant freedom for congregations outside the parish system were doomed to failure.¹ Nor was such a widespread toleration supported by most Presbyterians; when Charles II supported an indulgence in December 1662, the Presbyterians refused to join Owen, Nye and the Independents in thanking the King, for they could not accept a measure that would benefit the Catholics and sects as well as themselves.²

After the Act of Uniformity, the Presbyterians found themselves in a similar position to the Independents-semi-separatists from the church of England. As the Broadmead records explained,

"our friends of the presbyterian party, were turned out of their public places as well as we. Then those who had preached against us for meeting in private houses ... were fain to meet in private houses ... and did do".³

2. cont'd. resigned. For the ejection and rejection of the Declaration see C.G. Bolam, J. Goring, H.L. Short, R. Thomas, The English Presbyterians, pp.78-84, and J.H. Colligan, "Farewell Sermons 1662", in "Presbyteriana", Journal of Presb. Hist. Soc., VII (1942) pp. 137-40.

3. Baillie, ii, 456.

1. ed. P. Toon, The Correspondence of John Owen, pp.125-6. For the difficulties of Independents before the Act of Uniformity, see William Hooke's letter to John Davenport in J. Browne, History of Congregationalism, p.259. Hugh Peter was the one Independent minister to be executed for his part in inciting the Regicides.

2. G.R. Abernathy, op.cit., pp.86-8.

3. The Records of a Church of Christ meeting in Broadmead, Bristol, p.70.

Ejected Presbyterians had, in the crisis, sacrificed their concept of a national church for the purity of discipline of the Presbyterian way, although some may have accepted a modified Episcopacy if this had been conceded. Yet many ejected Presbyterians still clung to their belief in a national church; some attending parish worship and holding "conventicles" only outside the hours of public services. Others continued to minister unofficially to all those parishioners who would still support them. Gradually a split developed in the Presbyterian ranks between those who looked for eventual return to the established church, and those who accepted a future in separatism.¹ John Owen tried to persuade the Presbyterians to join the Independents in demanding toleration for dissenters, but found that some were still desirous of a comprehensive national church; even in adversity, the Presbyterians and Independents could not yet accommodate.² But in practice the Independents and Presbyterians were easily confused. Many Presbyterians were jeered as "Independent apes";³ Ames Short "gathered" a Presbyterian church with a covenant before 1665, and Thomas Wellman received licenses in 1672 as both a Presbyterian and a Congregationalist.⁴ In Yarmouth

1. C.G. Bolam, J. Goring, H.L. Short, R. Thomas, The English Presbyterians, pp.21,85,87,95-

2. Ibid., pp.95-98.

3. Ibid., p.89.

4. A.G. Matthews, Calamy Revised, pp.440,518.

Presbyterians and Independents shared their problems;
 "the Presbyterians and Independents are now in charity with
 one another, and jointly contribute to the relief of
 their ministers".¹ Only when hopes of comprehension were
 finally doomed with the advent of William III and toleration,
 could Presbyterians and Independents accommodate - in the
 aptly named "Happy Union" of 1690.²

1. (1667). G. Eyre Evans, "Early Nonconformity in Yarmouth",
Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc. II, (October 1906) p.404.

2. In London this lasted but for a short time; elsewhere
 for nearly a century. C.G. Bolam, J. Goring, H.L. Short,
 R. Thomas, The English Presbyterians, pp.101-2.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

When Baillie referred to the Apologists in 1641 he commented,

"It were all the pities in the world that they and we should differ in any thing, especially in that one, which albeit very small in speculation, yet in practice of very huge consequence, for making every congregation an absolute and independent church ... the goodness of God will never permit so gracious men to be the occasions of, (confusion) let be the authors".¹

Yet when Baxter surveyed the turmoils in State and church after 1648, he sighed that

"all this began but in unwarrantable Separations ... Five dissenting Ministers in the Synod begun all this, and carried it far on ... O! what may not Pride do?"²

The Assembly Independents were not responsible for army actions, but it is easy to see why Baxter was so bitter about them. For their failure to achieve accommodation in the Assembly meant that the Independent cause passed out of the hands of moderates into the care of radicals in the army who possessed the means to make it more effective. Only with the approaching settlement of Presbyterianism in 1644-5 did the dissenting brethren stress toleration as opposed to accommodation, a change which necessitated increasing identification with the sects and the army's religious extremists.

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1. Baillie, i, 254, March 15, 1641.
 2. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 103.

There is no reason to suppose that the Assembly Independents were only more than reluctant allies of such radicals in the cause of the Christian liberty that they felt would otherwise be denied to their congregations. Baxter was unfair when he complained that Cromwell had raised the Independents "to make a Fraction in the Synod", for the army's championing of the cause of toleration came after the Assembly's divisions on church-government and not before.¹

John Cook knew that the Assembly, "that great Apple of contention in this kingdome", was responsible for the aggravation of the Presbyterian-Independent dispute. For

"though I beleeeve most of the Assembly are men regenerate, and good Christians, and therefore I love them; yet had they never met, I am as confident as confidence it selfe can make me, that this kingdome had long since been settled in a peaceable posture; for we may thank them for their learned distinction of Presbyter and Independent, between whom lovers of peace desire to make the difference very small, but contentious spirits study to make it a wound incurable".²

It has been seen that in 1643 two results of the Assembly were augured:- the achievement of a unified national church, or the exacerbation and development into a serious split in the church of differences between Presbyterians and Independents that were inherent in Puritan history, although largely suppressed until 1643. The fact that the latter was fulfilled and not the former was the fault of both Presbyterians and

1. Reliquiae Baxterianae, 1, 99.

2. J. Cook, Redintegratio Amoris, 27 August 1647, p.45. E.404(29).

Independent Assembly members, but it would be unfair to blame them, as Cook did, with the entire responsibility for the breach. For their deliberations were carried on amidst an increasingly vehement pamphlet dispute inspired largely by hotheads outside the Assembly, and the hostile climate this produced was bound to influence tempers in the debating chamber. Assembly members were not the most uncompromising of divines, and there was a group, led by Marshall, who tried to concede as much power as possible to congregations.

Why then was the conflict worsened in the Assembly? It has been seen that its debates were always dominated by a leading core of divines, who, under Scottish influence, became advocates for a Scottish-style Presbyterianism. These and the backbenchers who followed them through expediency became alienated by the policy of delay deliberately pursued by Independents to ensure their ideas received maximum attention, and had a chance to spread in the country at large. Such delaying tactics both hindered and advanced the Independent cause. For whilst on the one hand they enabled Presbytery to be delayed long enough to fall victim to the increasing power of the army, on the other hand they made reliance on the army essential. This was because the delay of accommodation in the Assembly meant that sects and heresies flourished in the vacuum of church-government, and terrified the Presbyterians into

denying a liberty to men more deserving than such radicals. Contemporaries were well aware that this was the situation. John Cook observed,

"Concerning the errors of the times ... the Assembly sitting so long before they agreed upon anything, was the great occasioner of them; they kept the kingdom too long fasting".¹

Baxter decided that some Presbyterians were so frightened by the prospects of "Libertinism" that they went to the other extreme, and "would not have those tollerated who were not only tollerable, but worthy Instruments and members in the Churches".² The Presbyterians' growing intransigence and the Independents' defensive and offensive tactics in the Assembly reacted upon one another and made a compromise impossible. The main problem was that "accommodation" was a deliberately vague concept and both sides demanded an interpretation favourable to their own cause.

Parliament repeatedly initiated accommodation attempts between the two groups. Should M.P.s have gone further and forced an accommodated settlement? Baxter and Dury certainly thought so. Baxter stated that

"above all, I could wish that the Parliament and (the Assembly) ... had done more than was done to heal our Breaches and had hit upon the right way either to unite with the Episcopal and Independents... or at least had pitched on the Terms that are fit for Universal Concord ..."³

1. J. Cook, What the Independents Would Have, 1 September 1647, p.7, E.405(7).
See also T. Hodges, The Growth and Spreading of Haeresie, 10 March 1646-7 p.26, E.379(1) and W.L., the Sacramental Stumbling-Block Removed, 4 February 1647-8, p.15, E.425(16).
2. Reliquiae Baxterianae, 1, 103.
3. Ibid., 1, 73.

Dury went further and stressed in 1647 that the only way to end church divisions was for the "Government by law established" to procure a union. He realised that this could only be achieved if classes became voluntary associations with purely consultative and advisory functions, whilst the Civil Magistrate should "regulate the outward behaviours of men".¹ Yet such an Erastian and congregational scheme would never have won the support of rigid Presbyterians, and it left vague crucial issues of gathered churches and pure or mixed communions which could well have alienated some Erastian Presbyterians. Despite the fact that most M.P.s desired an accommodation, it is difficult to see how they could have forced one. For the time most favourable for such an imposed concord would have been in 1643-4, before the Assembly votes on Presbyterian government had caused the moderate Independents to dissent and demand toleration. Yet at this stage Parliament hoped that the Assembly could come to an agreement under the persuasion of St. John and the "middle group". Since the Scottish alliance was then vital, as was the support of moderate and radical Independents, M.P.s would have anyway found it difficult to engineer an accommodation without alienating one group, given the basic opposition between Presbyterian and Independent concepts of accommodation.

L. J. Dury, A Model of Church Government, 10 April 1647
n.p., E.383(26).

By the time Assembly accommodation had failed at the end of 1644, the military success of the Scots and their political alliance with the Parliamentary peace party, coupled with the fear of sects and "libertinism" that gripped many M.P.s, affected Parliament's attitude to a lenient accommodation, whilst the increasing importance of the army rendered anti-Independent moves unwise. In any event, toleration rather than accommodation had now become the Independents' objective, and the opportunity for a united Presbyterian-Independent national church was already lost.

Both Independents and Presbyterians had their moderates and extremists, and the tragedy of the conflict was that whilst the moderates of both groups could emphasise their similarities, the extremists were irreparably polarising the two sides. Moderate Independents could be criticised for refusing to publicly denounce the radicals and sects, but so could the Presbyterians for allowing Thomas Edwards, James Cranford and their like to stir the Independents to the point of fury. Extreme Presbyterians in fact stressed the similarities between moderate Independents and the sects for their own purpose, to convince men that a latitude to the former would concede victory to the latter. Ultimately and ironically however, it was to be the Presbyterians' divisions that would prove the enemy to their own cause.

The Erastian conflict not only seriously delayed the establishment of Presbytery by a year that was to prove vital in the spread of radical Independency in the army, but revealed the Presbyterians to be divided on a basic theoretical issue—pure or mixed communions. The controversy over the civil magistrate's power in church censure was important in itself, but the associated problem of admission to the Sacrament has too often been subordinated to the problem of civil versus ecclesiastical authority. For in their advocacy of a "pure" Sacrament, rigid Presbyterians showed themselves to be responding to the Independent challenge of parochial impurity by destroying the theoretical basis of a national all-embracing church. Yet whilst the rigid Presbyterians hoped that this emphasis would create a foundation of unity with the Independents, the Presbyterian-Independent conflict had by 1645 reached such a pitch that the Independents exploited the arguments of rigid Presbyterians to strengthen their own position, and made common cause with Erastians on the question of civil versus Presbyterian authority. Many Erastians had anyway reached the conclusion that only with civil control over church government could Presbyterian/Independent divisions be healed.

Both Presbyterian and Independent ministers had their political contacts through personal acquaintance with M.P.s, and both groups were anxious to influence Parliament by petitions and sermons. But it is very hard to draw a line

between influence and interference, and to decide whether Independent ministers' cultivation of the army, or Presbyterian ministers' efforts to engage the city council on their behalf were permissible propaganda or unwarrantable meddling in politics, although Cranford's collusion with Baillie in 1645 certainly fell into the latter category. Beyond a doubt it was the extremists of both sides what by 1646-7 were stirring the conflict between Parliament and army, whereas the moderates like Marshall were striving for conciliation between them. The Assembly, ever conscious of its restricted position, deliberately held aloof from political interference, apart from its vehement opposition to Parliament's Erastian encroachment upon church discipline. It was therefore as members of Sion College that some Assembly divines joined in London ministers' Presbyterian appeals, and in any case the most persistent hotheads among city ministers - James Cranford, Thomas Edwards, William Jenkyn and Thomas Cawton were not Assembly members. Neither were Independents Hugh Peter, William Dell, and John Saltmarsh, who were all involved with the army. Of the Assembly Independents, only Philip Nye can be suspected of consistent political involvement.

It has been seen that the pamphlet war originated in 1640-43, but was largely suppressed by virtue of the Calamy House Agreement. It erupted in 1643-4 as the direct result of the Apologetical Narration and thereafter developed its own momentum, bringing vituperation and mutual recriminations

to poison the controversy, although schemes of accommodation and voices of moderation sometimes bridged the fast widening gulf. The emphasis in the pamphlet literature not surprisingly reflected the dominant questions of the time; thus in 1643-4 the theories of Presbytery and Independency were placed in detail before the public, whereas by 1644-5 the emphasis was changing to the questions of a national church, toleration and the role of the civil magistrate in church affairs. The Erastian controversy in 1645-6 led to pamphlet debates between Presbyterians and Presbyterians, whilst Independents supported Erastian denunciations of clerical tyranny, camouflaging their own limitations on magisterial authority. Toleration continued to be the crucial issue, but in 1646-8 radical Independent pamphleteers were anxious to stress the involvement of Presbyterian ministers in the moves of Holles and the political Presbyterians. Radical Independents defended the army actions from complaints by Presbyterians, whilst moderate Independents kept silent. Operative on a dual level, the intellectual and the scurrilous, the pamphlet controversies both reflected and magnified the divisions between the two groups.

The sad fact remains that whilst their distinct theories must be recognised and appreciated to the full, the religious Presbyterians and Independents had far more in common than they ever had in conflict. The problem was that this only made the extremists on both sides more convinced that their

opponents should fully concede defeat. Constant stress was laid by moderates on the partial identification of the two theories. Baxter believed that Presbyterians, Independents and Episcopalians all had a portion of truth and of error, and could not understand why the Independents wanted to "tear the Garment of Christ all to pieces, rather than it should want their Lace".¹ Walter Cradock knew that "Presbytery, and Independency ... are not two religions: but one religion to a godly, honest heart; it is only a little ruffling of the fringe".² Nathaniel Fiennes felt that the names "Presbyterian" and "Independent" were invented by the Devil to create confusion, yet despite them, some honest Christians could still be "of one heart and one soul, walking together as brethren".³ A scurrilous pamphlet claimed in 1648 that the Presbyterian-Independent controversy had been nothing more than a trick to ensure England's enslavement to the clergy, and accused ministers of fomenting the pretended divisions so that

"seemingly opposite, we can open our pack by turnes, now the Presbyterian, then the Independent, and passe our wares at what price we please upon the shallow world".⁴

1. Reliquiae Baxterianae, i, 103, and ii, 139.

2. Quoted by G.F. Nuttall, "Presbyterians and Independents. Some Movements for Unity 300 years ago", Journal of the Presb. Hist. Soc., (1952), p.15. Cf. Charles Herle's comment in The Independency on Scripture of the Independency of Churches (1643). See above p.219.

3. N. Fiennes, Vindiciae Veritatis, 1654, p.146.

4. Anon, A Fraction in the Assembly: or the Synod in Armes, 14 June 1648, p.9, E.447(17). This caricatured the reverend divines of both persuasions, feasting and wenching in merriment at their power.

But the conflicts were real enough, and only merited Burroughes' weary conclusion that

"those that come nearest together, yet differing in some things, are many times at greater variance one with another, then those who differ in more things from them".¹

The Presbyterian-Independent conflict ruined the euphoric vision of a godly reformation seen by so many divines before 1643. By 1648-9 only Norfolk Fifth Monarchists could envisage the drowning of Presbyterian-Independent divisions in the rule of Christ's saints.² Even John Price had stressed that they "must both unite and live, or both divide and perish",³ and although the 1650s were to become a period of increasing accommodation on a local basis, 1662 showed Presbyterians and Independents the truth of a remark made in 1644:

"Are not you like the couple of men, that strove for the Beares skin, before she was dead? And shee bit them both: So this Beare of a civill warre, will bite you both, before it end".⁴

One effect of the Presbyterians' and Independents' preoccupation with each other in the 1640s was that both sides tended to overlook the Episcopalians. Thus, when

1. J. Burroughes, Irenicum, 24 October 1645, p.240, E.306(9).

2. Certain Quaeres humbly presented ... throughout the County of Norfolk and City of Norwich, 19 February 1648-9, pp.7-8, E.544(5).

3. J. Price, The pPulpit Incendiary, p.43.

4. J. Eachard, Good Newes for all Christian Souldiers, 3 March 1644-5, sig. A2 verso, E.271(6).

"the Presbyterian experiences during the Cromwellian period proved the futility of attempting any understanding with the religious Independents",¹ on a national basis, the moderate Presbyterians, turning to the Episcopalians, found that the latter had been estranged for too long to be willing to compromise. As a result, the establishment of Episcopacy alienated sincere Presbyterians no less than the Independents, although the many ministers whom Baxter knew "had addicted themselves to no Sect or Party at all; though the Vulgar called them by the Name of Presbyterians",² would revert to Episcopacy in 1662, just as they had adapted to Presbytery in the 1640s and Presbytery-Independency in the 1650s.

Dr. Shaw thought that the contribution of the Assembly Independents to ecclesiastical and intellectual freedom was accidental, since they were no less insistent on church authority than the Presbyterians.³ But the fact remains that the Independent theories allowed more power to the people in the affairs of the church than did the Presbyterians, their idea of discipline by church officers was more limited, and, most important, they were prepared to stand for toleration.

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1. G.R. Abernathy, op.cit., p-7.
 2. Reliquiae Baxterianae, ii, 146.
 3. W.A. Shaw, History of the English Church, vol.ii, pp.34-61

Thus, despite the bitter acrimony and intolerance engendered by the Presbyterian-Independent conflict, it can be said to have planted the seeds of toleration, although after 1660 the fruits were not again visible until 1689.¹ Ironically, the Presbyterians too would profit from the toleration they had once decried.

1. In 1689 the Toleration Act was passed, whereby dissenters could worship freely, although they were still excluded from full political and educational privileges.

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Articles.

Abbreviations used:-

Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc. for Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society,

Journal of Presb. Hist. Soc. for Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society.

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