CAROLINE PURITANISM AS EXEMPLIFIED IN THE
LIFE AND WORK OF WILLIAM PRYNN.

BY

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The aim of this thesis is to present William Prynne, in his life and work, as an example of Caroline Puritanism.

It was originally intended to write a well documented record of Prynne's life, but when it was discovered that E.W. Kirby had published such a work as recently as 1931, the direction of this research turned towards a study of Prynne's religious outlook. Since, however, Puritan religious and political ideas are closely connected, it was essential to make also a close study of Prynne's political views, particularly with regard to the constitutional struggle in which he took an honourable and powerful part.

A word of explanation is required regarding the substance of chapter one. Therein an effort is made to gauge the political and religious atmosphere of the period during which Prynne lived and worked. In my opinion, Basil Willey depicts a seventeenth century background of which Prynne was unaware. Prynne did not move in the rarefied atmosphere of philosophical speculation. Real religion and practical politics were his main concerns. Accordingly, the aspects of seventeenth century England summarised are those which bore an influence on Prynne's life. To portray a background other than this would be not only superfluous but irrelevant.
Although Prynne claimed to be "no ill proficient" in his profession as a lawyer it should be noted that by far the largest part of his literary output dealt with subjects related to other spheres of thought and activity. As a result, Prynne has been and is known chiefly as a writer of books and pamphlets rather than as a practising lawyer. Consequently, in the following pages, an effort has been made to state his religious and political convictions, and at the same time to recapture something of his spirit, thus seeking a true estimate of the man.

I have pleasure in gratefully acknowledging my indebtedness to my two supervisors, Principal Watt of New College, and Principal Duthie of the Scottish Congregational College, for guidance received during the preparation of this thesis.

My thanks for services rendered are also due to the officials of the libraries which I have visited, and not least, to the librarian and assistant librarian in New College, Edinburgh.

It is a pleasure to record with gratitude the able assistance of Mr A. J. Roberts and his family in the preparation of the typescript.
CHAPTER I.

SOME ASPECTS OF 17th. CENTURY ENGLAND IN WHICH WILLIAM PRYNNE LIVED AND WORKED.
SOME ASPECTS OF SEVENTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND.

One outstanding feature of that part of seventeenth century England with which this study is concerned, was a constant sense of tension, conflict and insecurity. The climax was reached in civil war, but not even with the cessation of hostilities nor, later, with the Restoration, was this bewildering situation altered. It was only towards the close of the century that men began to feel sufficiently secure to live their lives in a normal way.

The outstanding example of this conflict, and one which dominated the whole scene, was the struggle between King and Parliament. This controversy over "sovereignty" not only disturbed the relations between the King and his Parliament but divided the country into two camps. In the end "the transference of sovereignty from Crown to Parliament was effected", but only after a long, hard and bitter struggle.

Although the previous century had witnessed the successful reign of a Protestant Queen, and the established religion of the Church of England was Protestant, the adherents of Rome had not given up the struggle, and they constantly made both subtle and strenuous attempts during the seventeenth century to overthrow the Protestant supremacy. Occasions such as Charles I's marriage and James II's accession must have made

the Romanists hopeful of success, but the end of the century saw the Protestant cause firmly established and it had come to stay.

The Protestants, however, were divided among themselves, and this condition was a further source of friction and dissension. Apart from the question of toleration to Roman Catholics, the problem which caused many embittered arguments and much unchristian conduct, was the measure of toleration—if any—to be practised by one section of the Protestant community towards another. Toleration might well have been the means by which to end the fratricidal strife, but only a few rare spirits, who saw a glimmer of this light, were prepared to follow it. Intolerance was a feature of the century, and it was not effaced with the passage of time.

While a political revolution was taking place, another was in progress in the general outlook of the educated classes. Theologians, philosophers and scientists combined to inaugurate a new era of thought. Scholasticism was left behind, the authority of tradition was undermined, and an effort to distinguish truth from error was made. According to the seventeenth century thinkers, to establish truth a philosophical test was required. It was only possible in this way to decide whether traditional material was fictitious or true. There were those indeed who claimed that "truth" was the exclusive possession of the real philosopher. ¹

¹ Willey. The Seventeenth Century Background. p.213.
Where formerly there had been a picture in theological thought there was now required an "idea" or "abstraction", for "only what could be conceptually stated, could claim to be real."¹

While this revolution was taking place the desire to restate Christian doctrine in terms which would be reason-able, naturally arose, and this task the Cambridge Platonists set out to accomplish.

Amid all the upheaval of civil strife, intellectual revolution, and religious contention, there was one authority to which all men were prepared to submit, namely, the Scriptures. The Bible was recognised by all to have a special authority. The King on the throne, the Bishop in his cathedral, the member in the House of Commons, the scholar in his study, the pamphleteer at his desk and the soldier in his tent, all looked upon the Bible with reverence, and as the repository of truth in a unique sense. Yet, despite this common ground, divergence of view continued, and paradoxically the Bible was at the very centre of all the contention.

It should be noted that the philosophers of the time had little influence upon any who did not move in the same mental strata. They lived, as it were, in a thought world of their own, which scarcely affected the tensions which were shaping

¹ Willey. The Seventeenth Century Background. p.133.
the course of the country's history. Prynne, on the other hand, was right at the centre of affairs and moving in the circle of political activity. So we now turn, for the background of our present study, to a consideration of some of those aspects of seventeenth century England which directly influenced Prynne.

THE RULERS.

From 1603 to 1685, with the exception of the years of the Commonwealth 1649-1660, the throne was occupied by three Stuart Kings. James I (1603-1625) was followed immediately by his son Charles I (1625-1649), and he in turn, at the Restoration, was succeeded by his son Charles II (1660-1685). The Stuarts were unlike in character and ability, but alike in belief in the dogma of the divine right of Kings. Consequently a similarity in the general trend of the policies they pursued can be observed, which may be stated under the following four points.

(1). They championed the cause of Episcopacy. This was natural enough since the Anglican Church fully recognised the ruling monarch as supreme in ecclesiastical affairs. The close relationship between absolute monarchy and the Episcopal tradition represented in the phrase "No bishop, no King", was fully recognised. In the long constitutional struggle which ensued Anglicanism and the monarchy were closely allied, and
it was generally recognised that they would rise or fall together. Hence the lead which James had thus given was closely followed by his descendents. Charles I's early training, his own piety, and his desire for uniformity, made him seek the ascendancy of the Anglican Church in all his dominions, while his son continued the same policy, if not from the same motive nor with the same enthusiasm, at least with a greater measure of success.

(2). They were opposed to Presbyterianism and Puritanism. James had experienced many difficulties in association with the Presbyterians of his Northern Kingdom, and he was determined that this form of Church government should not take root in England. The belief in two Kingdoms, in one of which the earthly King was only a member, struck at the very heart of the theory of divine right, and such views were not to be propagated. James, too, made perfectly clear that he was not a supporter of Puritan ideas. Many Presbyterians and Puritans came to know the bitterness of the royal opposition through the harsh sentences of the High Commission and Star Chamber during the reign of Charles I. This persecution was mainly due to Laud, but a great part of the blame must be apportioned to Charles. Although Charles II had promised toleration, he was not long upon the throne
before those with Presbyterian and Puritan sympathies became aware that they were singled out as the target for renewed persecution.

(3). They repudiated the authority of Rome. Each Stuart King in turn repudiated the authority of Rome, but it is necessary to amplify this statement to arrive at the actual truth. For, there is a sense in which the Stuarts turned a sympathetic ear to their Romanist subjects. James desired to relax the Recusancy Laws, but Parliament would not agree. Charles, his son, married to a devout Roman Catholic, was willing for her sake at least, and in response to her appeal, to lighten the burden placed on those of similar faith. Charles II's intentions regarding toleration were ostensibly to procure liberty of conscience for all, but the real purport was to obtain liberty of worship for the adherents of Rome. He, too, was frustrated in his efforts by Parliament. It is quite evident that while repudiating completely Roman authority within their realms, the Stuart Kings were prepared, if times had been propitious, to permit a measure of toleration to those who were followers of Rome.

(4). The fourth sphere in which the Stuarts followed a similar policy was in their opposition to the growing authority of Parliament. James was not long in discovering that he could not ignore the English Parliament with impunity, nor
could he coerce it into legislating as he desired. Since he was dependant upon Parliament to meet his financial needs, and Parliament was not always willing to satisfy his demands, he had to brace himself for conflict. His son, too, was not long on the throne before he was in difficulties with Parliament. Indeed, his whole life became one continuous struggle, and his eleven years of personal rule without a Parliament availed him nothing. In the end Charles not only lost his crown but his life. At the Restoration the old struggle reappeared. Charles II, determined that he would not go on his travels again, at first followed a policy of appeasement. But his desire to be as absolute as Louis XIV of France soon brought him into sharp conflict with Parliament. For the remainder of his life the struggle continued, but Charles had the satisfaction of achieving a greater measure of success than either of his predecessors.

Cromwell must now be mentioned as the ruler during the period of the Commonwealth. He refused the title of King, but he exercised all the powers associated with that title. Cromwell, who believed he was a specially chosen agent for the fulfilment of the Divine will in a time of crisis, set his heart on achieving toleration in a broader sense than it had been contemplated by any previous ruler. In matters of state he desired a properly constituted Parliament and
government, which would be revered at home and respected abroad. While not fully achieving his aims, Cromwell nevertheless succeeded in raising British prestige in the eyes of the world.

PARLIAMENT.

Early in the century differences arose between King and Parliament over the question of prerogative. As the century advanced the breach widened and the contest assumed greater proportions. Eventually both sides resorted to armed conflict, but even with the cessation of hostilities the constitutional problem remained unsolved. Indeed this problem continued to exist throughout the period in which we are interested.

What was the source of the trouble? The answer to that question cannot be simply stated, but, generally speaking, it arose from the Stuart theory of divine right and its corollary of unquestioning obedience. Parliament refused to submit to this domination for it claimed a legal and constitutional right to exercise authority in certain directions without interference. While it did not desire to encroach upon royal prerogatives, it was strenuously opposed to Parliamentary prerogatives being encroached upon by the King or his favourites.

Of James it has been said "In England his foreign policy, his high Anglicanism, his persecution of Puritans, his arbitrary proclamations, his irregular taxation and, above all, his gross favouritism, had aroused against him a host of
Towards the close of his life it was with difficulty that open conflict was being restrained. Charles, his son, continued the same type of policy. Buckingham, who had been the previous King's favourite and one of the major causes of disagreement between Crown and Parliament, unfortunately was now the new King's close companion. The policy of this reign in its early part was directed by Buckingham, and his successive failures, together with his illegal taxation and his personal arrogance, brought about his impeachment. But although Charles was able to save his favourite from Parliament by dissolving it he was not able to save him from the assassin's weapon. In 1628 Charles was forced to agree to the Petition of Right which granted Parliament redress of many of its grievances, but from 1629 to 1640 he endeavoured to rule without a Parliament. During these years one of his main advisers was Laud (1573-1645) who, as Bishop of London, and later as Archbishop of Canterbury, directed the whole ecclesiastical policy of the Crown, a policy to which a rising and influential tide of opinion in the country was strenuously opposed. Another minister of importance was Wentworth, Earl of Strafford (1593-1641) - the ablest of the men around the King - who cooperated closely with Laud in the policy of "Thorough" to make Charles "the most absolute Prince of Christendom."

Laud and Wentworth and their ideas were disliked by the

Parliamentary party, and their work only served to alienate still further the King and his people.

When Charles, in need of money, was compelled to summon Parliament, he found the assembled members in no mood to grant his requests until he had listened to their story of abuses and attended to their complaints. Disgusted with Parliament's attitude, Charles dissolved it within three weeks, but as he was in extreme necessity his only recourse was to recall it, and so on 3rd November, 1640, commenced the chequered history of the Long Parliament.

Opposition to the King was by this time well organised, and among his opponents were strong, resolute and experienced men such as Pym, Selden and Hampden. In face of the opposition Charles had to make many large concessions to obtain the grant he required. Parliament now began to feel confident in its power, and in its first session proceeded to carry through a constitutional revolution. "It impeached attainted and executed Wentworth, Earl of Strafford; it imprisoned the obnoxious Laud; it secured its own continuance by a Perpetuation Act, and ensured the frequent calling of future Parliaments by means of a Triennial Act; it proclaimed the illegality of ship-money and other non-Parliamentary levies; it abolished the prerogative courts i.e., the Star Chamber, the High Commission Court, the Council of the North; the Council of Wales etc."¹ And this it did almost unanimously.

To those who were in the think of the struggle it was becoming increasingly obvious that open armed hostilities could not be averted. Hurried preparations were being made on both sides. Eventually, on 22nd August, 1642, the Royal Standard was unfurled, and during the next six years England was the scene of full-blooded civil war.

In the end Charles lost to the Parliamentary forces, and in the second civil war (1648) the Army completely overthrew both Parliamentarians and Scots and took over the government of the country. Charles was brought to trial and executed.

With the end of civil strife, and with the government of the country in the hands of the Army leaders, the constitutional question entered an intricate period of its history. We shall not here discuss the problem, but it should be noted that, during this whole period of the Commonwealth, any Parliament which sat was not truly representative of the people.

Pride's Purge of the Long Parliament brought into being the Rump, which declared that the House of Lords was "useless and dangerous and ought to be abolished."¹ This was the first step in altering the constitutional machinery. The task of the Rump was to produce a new constitution, but its members appear to have been more concerned with consolidating their own position than attending to their allotted task, with the result that they were expelled by force. Cromwell then nominated the Barebones Parliament (1653), and the first

¹ Trevelyan. England under the Stuarts. p.239.
Protectorate was brought into being by the Instrument of Government - a new constitution. Its first Parliament was dissolved by Cromwell at the end of five lunar months (1655), and its second Parliament (1657) created the Second Protectorate (1657-1658). By this time the need for an Upper House was realised, and during this Second Protectorate arrangement was made for "the other House."

With Cromwell's death, Richard took over his father's position, but quickly resigned. The Army taking control recalled the Rump, but Lambert intervened and it was again expelled. Once more the Rump was restored, on this occasion by Monk, and to the Rump were called all who had been excluded by Pride's Purge. The Long Parliament then dissolved itself, making way for the Convention Parliament, which recalled Charles II.

The Constitutional struggle was not over with the Restoration, for the religious question again assumed grave proportions. The Cavalier Parliament, which was "more zealous for loyalty than the King, more zealous for Episcopacy than the bishops," passed laws aimed at the Puritans, e.g., the Act of Uniformity (1662), despite the Declaration of Breda and Charles's own desire for a measure of toleration, and when Clarendon was dismissed in 1667 Charles thereafter acted as his own Prime Minister with the Cabal (1667-1673) as Ministers.

It is generally recognised that the year 1667 was a turning point in Charles's career. From then onward his policy was marked by clearly defined aims. He desired to become absolute monarch, to secure tolerance, to re-establish Catholicism, and to increase his revenue by foreign alliance and foreign trade. Parliament disagreed with him in his policy, and the old struggle took on a new lease of life. Unfortunately, Parliament was now divided into two parties and a united front against the King was scarcely procurable. The "Court party", often on the side of the King, was opposed to the "Country party", the members of which were drawn from those who remained of the Roundheads. Skillfully Charles played off these parties against each other and carried out his own nefarious schemes while they were thus engaged.

The influence of Parliament in the country's affairs, however, was not dead. On two occasions at least, alarmed by Charles's association with Louis XIV and rumours of secret treaties, these two parties showed a united front, and the Triple Alliance negotiated by Sir William Temple was signed in 1668, while Charles was compelled to withdraw his Declaration of Indulgence and consent to the Test Act of 1673.

The Parliament which succeeded the Cavalier Parliament in 1679 was led by Shaftesbury and the Country party. The tussle between King and Parliament entered a new phase.
wreaking vengeance on many Catholics, Shaftesbury brought in the Exclusion Bill (1679) to prevent the succession falling to James. "To this demand Charles refused to yield." For two more years the battle continued until Shaftesbury was compelled to flee the country, and Charles was left master of the situation in the battle of divine right and royal prerogative.

**CHURCH AND RELIGION.**

At the beginning of the 17th century the Church of England in its doctrine followed the Genevan tradition, but in organisation it was in line with the Lutheran Church. During the previous century division in the Protestant Church had become marked with the rise of Puritanism and Independency, and the new century had not advanced far before Arminianism, so called by the name of its principal exponent on the Continent, had not only invaded the thoughts of men but had been generally accepted by many who held positions of authority within the Church. The rise of Arminianism caused a distinct cleavage separating the Calvinists from Arminians. The distinction between the thought of Calvinism and Arminianism, as it appeared to contemporary minds, may be judged by the following extract which is quoted in full from William Prynne's Anti-Arminianism, pages 73-75;
Anti-Arminianism.

The Anti-Arminian orthodox assertions now in controversy (which I shall here evince to be the ancient, the undoubted, the established doctrine of the Church of England) contract themselves into these seven dogmatical conclusions:—

1. That God from all eternity, hath by His immutable purpose and decree, pre-destinated unto life; not all men; not any indefinite or undetermined; but only a certain select number of particular men, (commonly called the elect, invisible true Church of Christ); which number can neither be augmented nor diminished; others hath He eternally and perpetually reprobated unto death.

2. That the only moving or efficient cause of election, or predestination unto life, is the mere good pleasure, love, free grace, and mercy of God; not the pre-consideration of any foreseen faith, perseverance, good works, good will, good endeavours, or any other pre-required quality or condition whatsoever in the persons elected.

3. That though sin be the only cause of damnation, yet the soul, the primary cause of reprobation, or non-election (that is, why God doth not elect those men that perish; or why He doth pass by this man rather than another; as He rejected Esau, when He elected Jacob;) is the mere freewill and pleasure of God;

Arminianism.

The whole erroneous doctrine of Arminianism (which hath been oppugned by the Church of England from the beginning of Reformation to this present) may be reduced to these seven general propositions:—

That there is no absolute, no irrecoverable, but only a conditional a mutable decree of pre-destination both to life and to death; and that not of any particular persons, but indefinitely of all believers, and unbelievers in the gross. And that the number of the elect and reprobate is not so certain, but that it may be either diminished or augmented.

That the pre-consideration or foresight of faith, perseverance, good works, and the right use of grace received, are the pre-required conditions; the efficient causes of election, or predestination unto life; not God's free grace, and mercy only without respect to these as to a cause.

That the original, the impulsive, primary and proper cause of reprobation, (that is, of its decree, not of its execution; of non-electing, not of damning some men, or one man rather than another) is only the pre-consideration, the pre-vision of infidelity, sin, or final impenitency in
Anti-Arminianism.

3. (contd.)

not the prevision, the pre-
consideration of any actual
sin, infidelity, or final
impenitency in the persons
rejected.

4. That there is not any such
freewill, any such universal,
or sufficient grace communi-
cated unto all men, whereby
they may repent, believe, or
be saved, if they will them-
selves.

5. That Christ Jesus died suff-
ciently for all men; (His
death being of sufficient
intrinsical merit in itself,
though not in God's intent-
ion, or His Spirit's appli-
cation, to redeem and save
even all mankind;) but
primarily really and effect-
ually for none but the
elect; for whom alone He
hath actually impetrated,
effectually obtained remiss-
ion of sins and life eternal.

6. That the elect do always
constantly obey, neither do they,
finally or totally resist the inward
powerful and effectual call
or working of God's Spirit
in their hearts, in the very
act of their conversion;
nor is it in their own
power, to convert, or not
convert themselves, at that
very instant time when they
were converted.

Arminianism.

the persons rejected; not the
mere freewill and pleasure
of God.

That there is a universal, a
sufficient grace derived
upon all men since the fall
of Adam, by virtue of which
they may all repent, believe,
and be saved if they will
themselves.

That Christ Jesus died alike
primarily, and effectually
for all men whatsoever,
whether elect or reprobates;
without any special intent
to save the elect alone, or
any particular persons more
than others; with a general
purpose to save all men
alike, upon condition of
believing and applying of
His death; which is suspended
principally on every man's
own actual will and power;
not on Christ's actual app-
lication of it to them by
His Spirit.

That it is in the very will
or can they, finally or
totally resist the inward
powerful and effectual call
or working of God's Spirit
in their hearts, in the very
act of their conversion;
nor is it in their own
power, to convert, or not
convert themselves, at that
very instant time when they
were converted.
Anti-Arminianism.

7. That true justifying, saving faith, is proper and peculiar to the elect alone, who after they are once truly regenerated and ingrafted into Christ by faith, do always constantly persevere unto the end; and though they sometimes fall through infirmity into grievous sins; yet they never fall totally nor finally from the habits, seeds and state of grace.

Arminianism.

That true justifying faith is neither a special fruit of election, nor yet proper unto the elect alone; that it is oftimes found in reprobates; and that the very elect by falling into sin, may, yea, and oftimes do, fall totally and finally from the very habits, seeds and state of grace.

Arminianism, however, received a temporary setback at the Synod of Dort in 1618, where the Arminians were defeated and expelled from the Synod. Yet in England the seed had been sown and was already producing a harvest, so that Anglicans and Puritans found an additional line of cleavage within the Church of England. It was not, however, until William Laud assumed control that the struggle took on grave proportions, and the religious question became one of the main elements in the great national struggle. Let us pause to examine briefly the chief religious parties in existence at this time, since they continued to exist throughout the period.

The Anglican Party.

The outstanding name associated with this party is William Laud. Arminianism, the divine right of Kings, passive obedience, and the divine right of bishops, were all tenets in Laud's faith. With the full consent of the King, Laud sought to enforce uniformity of worship, contending that "Unity cannot long continue in the Church when uniformity is shut out at the Church door." 1 The ceremonial to which all had to

conform included a number of ritualistic forms which were obnoxious to many. Kneeling to receive the sacrament at the altar, which was railed in; bowing to the altar and at the name of Jesus; making the sign of the Cross in baptism, the use of the ring in marriage and the wearing of vestments, were all items Laud sought to enforce but to which the Puritans objected.

Throughout Laud's regime ruthless methods were used in pursuance of conformity. The Court of High Commission for ecclesiastical offenses, and the Star Chamber for civil offenses, were busily engaged, while they existed, in prosecuting those who were opposed to the Laudian regime and their unjust and barbarous sentences reveal the spirit of intolerance at its worst.

While this ruthless pursuance of uniformity engaged the attention of the official leaders of the Church, there were other high-ranking Anglicans who were not in full agreement with the spirit in which it was conducted. The latter argued that tolerance and understanding should be shown to the clergy and laity, who for conscience sake were not able to conform. 1 Unfortunately, their plea was stated neither with sufficient force nor persuasion as to affect the conduct of those who were responsible for the direction of the official policy.

THE PURITANS.

The Puritans desired a simpler form of service, and

believed that the Scriptures were the supreme rule for the government of the Church as well as for Christian doctrine. They wished to reject many symbols in which Rome had expressed its character, and which the Anglicans practised. It was their desire to restore to worship "The simplicity, purity, and spirituality of the early Church."¹ Their doctrine was Calvinistic, and in politics their support was generally given to the Parliamentary party. The Puritans sought to achieve reform of the Church of England from within, and they exercised their influence in this way until the Act of Uniformity (1662) drove them out. By this Act, Non-Conformity went outside the Church, when possibly two thousand Puritan clergy-men resigned their livings.

**SEPARATISTS.**

While the Puritans remained within the Church of England, the Separatists went outside, desiring "reformation without tarrying for any."² They "disliked the whole constitution of the Church lately reformed; charging upon it many gross remainders of Popery; and that it was still full of corruptions not to be borne with; and anti-Christian; and especially the habits the clergy were enjoined to use in their ministration and conversation. Insomuch that these (latter) separated themselves into private assemblies, meeting together not in Churches but in private houses, where they had ministers of their prayer, they used the book of prayers framed at Geneva,

² " Ibid. p.76.
for the congregation of English exiles sojourning there.  

Horton Davies, in his book "The worship of the English Puritans", contends that the term "Separatists" cannot be legitimately applied to the Independents, but his argument is not wholly convincing, and for our purpose Independents are included among Separatists.

The Separatist movement took various forms, and included many sects. In the early days Barrowists, Brownists and Anabaptists could be recognised, but as the century wore on, and more particularly during the period of the Civil Wars and the Commonwealth, many more sects were added to the number. The following is a list of names of sects to be found: Antinomians, Familists, Millenarists or Chiliasts, Seekers, Anti-Sabbatarians, and Traskites, Soul-Sleepers or Moralists, Arians, Socinians, Anti-Scripturists, Atheists, Fifth Monarchy men, Ranters, Muggletonians, Boehmenists, and Quakers. To mention these is at the same time to present a picture of religious anarchy, or, as Professor Masson phrases it, "Teeming chaos."

ROMAN CATHOLICS.

Any attempt to assess the religious condition of the period must take note of the position of the Roman Catholics. Officially, they were denied the right to worship in their own religious form; they were penalised if they refused to worship in the parish church; and they were excluded from any post of National or local authority. Insistence upon obedience to these

laws varied according to time and place. As we have seen, the Stuart Kings were not wholly unsympathetic, yet there were occasions when the laws were stringently enforced. Nevertheless, the Romanists had always the threat of the law hanging over them which compelled restraint.

Such were the various religious bodies of which we have to take note. What, however, was their relation to each other? This can best be seen by rapidly surveying the whole scene again.

The Anglican party were in the ascendency until the opening of the Long Parliament, and during that time every effort was made to enforce uniformity. With the advent of the Long Parliament, Presbyterian Puritanism came to the forefront, and many who were suffering as Puritans were released from prison and given an opportunity of claiming indemnity. It was this Parliament which substituted Presbyterianism for Episcopacy in the Church of England, but Presbyterianism was never fully established, as the Army, demanding a large degree of toleration, prevented it.¹

The Westminster Assembly was called by the same Parliament, and after several years in existence it produced a strong Calvin- istic Directory for public worship, the famous Westminster Confession of Faith and the two catechisms of Presbyterian Theology.

During Cromwell's period of supreme power, a large measure of toleration was allowed. An Independent himself, he was for a time opposed to the idea of a State church, but later he

realised the advisability of having a recognised established church which would not deprive others of the right of exercising liberty of conscience.

With the Restoration, Episcopacy was again established. No mid course was found at the Savoy Conference, with the result that Baxter's Liturgy was rejected, and despite the promise made by Charles in the Declaration of Breda, the Act of Uniformity (1662) was passed, and liberty to tender consciences was denied. Henceforth Puritans, Sectaries, Papists, all alike, were liable to prosecution and punishment, until the arrival of William and Mary relieved the situation for some.

SCOTLAND.

James VI, once in London, with the exception of a single visit to his difficult Northern Kingdom, governed it from the English capital. Among other aims, he purposed to bring the Church of Scotland completely under his control, and to make it uniform with the English church. By the Five Articles of Perth (1618) he achieved a measure of success in introducing several practices "of order and decency in a correspondence with this Church of England", which more fully established the Episcopacy already in existence. This, however, was still only an "Episcopacy superimposed on Presbyterianism", but James felt he could go no further, for the time being, although he was urged by Laud to impose more complete conformity to the English system.¹

¹: Watt. Recalling the Scottish Covenants. p.47.
It was left to his successor, Charles I, whose whole ecclesiastical policy was dictated by Laud, to endeavour to impose complete Episcopacy in Scotland. Laud's stupid interference at Charles's coronation (1633), and the imposition of the Canons of 1636 and the Liturgy of 1637, produced in Scotland such a united front against domination from London that the National Covenant (1638) was received with enthusiasm, and Charles's last hope of reaching his goal vanished. Charles attempted to gain time by promising a free assembly and a free Parliament. When the Glasgow Assembly met, the extreme nature of the division between Charles and his Northern Kingdom became apparent, for Alexander Henderson, the Moderator, disregarded Charles's Commissioner's dissolution, and continued the business of the Assembly.

The first and second Bishops' Wars which followed found Charles unprepared to deal adequately with the situation, and he was obliged to summon the English Parliament in the hope of obtaining assistance to overcome the resistance of his Northern Kingdom.

When civil war broke out in England, both sides appealed for Scottish support and, after deliberation, the Scottish authorities decided to support the Parliamentary side. A league of mutual assistance was arranged, based upon the Solemn League and Covenant. Scottish support, thus enlisted, played an important part in the course and result of the civil war.
Before the execution of Charles, and the advent of the Commonwealth, Cromwell found he had to deal with the Scottish support of the English Parliament. This he completely crushed.

During the rule of the Commonwealth a legislative union of the two Kingdoms was effected (1654). It was only after a few Assemblies had been held, in which there was bitter internal feud between Resolutioners and Protestors, that Assemblies were officially discontinued, yet the cause of religion did not suffer in Scotland. Many who had known persecution previously now rejoiced in the measure of toleration practised. Yet the end of the Commonwealth was hailed with joy by many Presbyterians, and they looked forward with anticipation to the return of Charles II.

The high hopes entertained of Charles II were, however, doomed to disappointment. It was not long until the people realised that Charles intended to take away most of their hard-won privileges. Episcopacy, of a kind, was again imposed, Acts aimed at the destruction of the people's liberty were passed, and torture had a new lease of life. For many in Scotland Charles's reign was a period of terror.

Long years of grim, bitter, and self-sacrificing conflict were borne before Scotland emerged into untroubled times and was free to progress in her own characteristic fashion.

THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

A brief statement must now be made of England's relationship with the outside world.
The foreign policy of James I was dictated by his desire to avoid war. Consequently, he aimed at maintaining friendly relations with the nations of Europe, and not even the difficulties of Frederick, his son in law, could move him further than to make some fruitless diplomatic gestures. By 1625, however, England was involved in the Thirty Years War, but due to lack of essential funds, failure to arouse support in the country, and engrossment in internal difficulties, her part was wellnigh negligible.

The Cromwellian years found England exercising a powerful influence on the Continent, particularly in the interests of Protestants, and the English navy, under Blake, won renown as she swept the seas of all opponents.

Charles II continued the policy of Cromwell, and cemented the alliance with France against Spain. The three Dutch wars reveal the nature of the strained relationship between England and Holland during the period. In addition, it was a time of English expansion abroad. Trade was fostered, and despite the conflict with the Spanish and Dutch traders, English seamen, enduring many hardships, won a place in the more distant parts of the world. Settlements were made in India, Africa, and on the Continent of America. In the latter considerable expansion was made. There were colonies in New England, some further North, and in the West Indies there was "a considerable population of opulent settlers."¹

Much of this colonist expansion on the American continent was due to the lack of religious toleration in the home country. Not only Puritans emigrated, but Anglicans and Roman Catholics as well, and, once settled, their numbers were gradually augmented from outside as well as within themselves.

Thus, despite all the difficulties and upheavals within her own borders, England was able to share in some of the great movements outwith her borders.

It has not been possible to make mention of all the important aspects of 17th century England within the compass of this chapter. Her social life, her advancement in the realms of education, her unique contribution to the world of thought and other illuminating features of English life, have been omitted. Enough has been written to suggest, at least, the nature of the atmosphere - religious and political - in which William Prynne expended his energetic life.
CHAPTER II.

A GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE LIFE OF WILLIAM Prynne.
A GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE LIFE OF WILLIAM PRYNE.

EARLY DAYS. 1602-1628.

Swainswick, a few miles from Bath, has the distinction of being the birth-place of William Prynne. Born there in 1602, he was in his early days cradled in the atmosphere of English Puritanism. His father, for a time, was warden of the Parish Church of Swainswick, and on his mother's side he was a grandchild of William Sherston who was eight times Mayor of Bath and five times Member of Parliament for that constituency.  

Of his early days not much is known, but some important events within the country must have had an effect upon his growing and inquiring mind. In 1611 appeared the first edition of the Authorised Version, and it is a safe conjecture that, from the earliest, young William made acquaintance with it, for his later writings abound with quotations from and references to it.

Another event of quite staggering importance was the untimely death of Prince Henry. Much loved by all who knew him and by the whole nation in general, the early demise of Prince Henry meant that the nation had lost a bulwark against Rome and the Puritans an avowed Protector.

These events, much discussed by their elders, must have formed part of the conversation of intelligent boys, and

1. See Appendix A for this date.
helped to mould their characters and shape their destinies. William Prynne at this time probably attended Bath Grammar School, and we may assume that he made good progress as a scholar, for from Bath he went to Oxford University.

No details have been preserved for us of his life in Oxford, where he matriculated in 1618 as a student of Oriel College. On 22nd January, 1621, he graduated Bachelor of Arts. Life for a man with an outlook like Prynne must have been difficult enough in these days, for attempts were being made to restrict Puritan ideas and practices by force. Possibly in these years the fires, which had been kindled earlier, began to burn more strongly until they could no longer be contained within himself, but burst forth in the hot flame of invective so regularly found in his books.

He had chosen as his career the pursuit of law, and so on 16th June, 1621, he entered Lincoln's Inn. There he continued his studies, passing through the various stages, and was made successively barrister, utter barrister, bencher and reader. While resident there in his early days he, like most other students, was tempted to attend the stage-plays which were in great vogue in the London of that time. Having attended on four occasions his soul recoiled from the licentious interludes, and forever after he was a bitter opponent of theatres, stage-plays, and all associated with them. In Lincoln's Inn he began strenuously to oppose the drunkenness

2. Lincoln's Inn Admission Register. Vol. I.
and Sabbath breaking so prevalent among a certain section of the students. Due to his remonstrances to the authorities, which were supported by others, much of this impiety was curtailed.

If at Oxford the religious atmosphere and teaching had not been all that his soul could have desired, at Lincoln's Inn he was fortunate to sit under the soul stirring sermons of Doctor John Preston. With the study of law he included the study of theology. Prynne's first book, published in 1627, was a treatise on a subject concerning which there was much division in the Theological world, namely, "The Total and Final Apostacy of the Saints", but nothing daunted he undertook the task of proving "The Perpetuitie of a Regenerate Man's Estate."

**IN TROUBLE. 1628-1640.**

Prynne had only been a short time engaged in writing pamphlets when he found himself in trouble with the authorities. It was impossible that one who took sides so determinedly and wrote with such force and vehemence could pass unnoticed. While he still continued to exercise the profession of law it is as a pamphleteer that Prynne is known, and once entered upon that course he never seemed able to resist the urge to set on paper the thoughts which surged in his mind. With the exception of some of the years in prison, during which he was deprived the use of pen and ink, he produced an almost incredible amount of material for the public to read. From the earliest Prynne

2. Biographical Fragment XXV. Docs. relating to Prynne. (Camden Soc. 1877).
was a marked man, for already by 1628, when he wrote "Mr Cozens, his cozening devotions", exception was being taken to his works. 1.

It was, however, his "Histriomastix; the players scourge and actors Tragedy", published in 1633, which gave Laud the opportunity he had been seeking to prosecute Prynne. The records show that he was charged in the Star Chamber with writing against the King, Queen and Commonwealth. With forensic skill he ably defended himself, claiming that his words were made to say what they did not mean and what in mind was never intended.

Around the time of the publication of Prynne’s book the Queen had taken part in a play. Now in the Histriomastix Prynne severely castigated women to dared to perform in public. The prosecution thereupon charged him with making these statements concerning the Queen. Prynne in his reply pointed out that the book had been written before the performance and therefore could not possibly have had any reference to the Queen. However, there was no escape for him. He was convicted and a savage sentence passed upon him. The sentence included the loss of both ears, degradation from Oxford University and Lincoln’s Inn, imprisonment for life, and payment of a fine of £5,000.

His University and Inns of Court carried out their part of the sentence, and later Prynne lost a piece of one ear while standing in a pillory in front of Westminster Hall; three days afterwards he lost the upper part of the other ear in a pillory in Cheapside. Copies of the "Histriomastix" were burned under his nose.

1. Prynne. Mr Cozens, his cozening devotions. 1628. QQ. 3.
Although he made humble submission and appealed to the Privy Council to intercede for him with the King, there was no clemency. This treatment and the harsh sentence probably embittered his soul. From the Tower on 11th June, 1634, he wrote a "most sharp and Libellous Letter to the Lord Archbishop."¹ The Attorney General, to whom Laud took the letter on instructions from the King, called for Prynne and asked if the letter came from his hand. Prynne, subtly, said he could not tell without seeing it. When it was placed in his hands he tore it to pieces and threw it out of the window, remarking that it should never arise in judgment against him. Through lack of evidence the Star Chamber could do nothing further.²

For the next few years Prynne was immured in the Tower. Not even there could he keep out of trouble. In March, 1637, he was again summoned before the Star Chamber with Henry Burton and John Bastwick.³ After some delays, caused through the devices of the three accused and their failure to submit their answers in time, they were considered to be convicted pro confessed. Prynne staunchly affirmed that having presented his answer it had been refused.

During the course of the trial the members of the Star Chamber made fun of Prynne and his supposed earless condition.⁴ He had allowed his hair to grow, with the purpose of covering the scars left by the execution of his former sentence. When

2. See Appendix B.

Prynne. New Discovery of the Prelates Tyranny. p. 2. 2nd. pt.
the Chief Justice commanded the usher to hold back Prynne's hair; it was seen that his ears had been only partially cropped, consequently the sentence for the three accused was as follows; they had each to lose their ears on a pillory at Westminster, to be fined £5,000, and condemned to imprisonment for life in remote parts of the country. Prynne had in addition to be branded with the letters S.L., standing for Seditious Libeller.

On 30th June, 1637, the sentences were duly executed upon the three prisoners. Crowds came to witness the spectacle and, according to many reports, were largely in sympathy with the victims. Each comported himself with dignity. Mrs Bastwick's words to her husband "Farewell, my Dearest, be of good comfort. I am nothing dismayed" reveal the spirit in which these punishments were viewed.

Prynne, on his return to prison, composed lines concerning the branding of the letters S.L., treating them, not as Seditious Libeller, but as Stigmata Laudis.

Triumphant I returne, my face discryes
Laud's scorching scarrs,
God's grateful sacrifice,
S.L., Stigmata Laudis,
Stigmata maxillis referens insignia Laudis
Exultans remeo victima, Grata Deo.

1. Prynne. A New Discovery of the Prelates Tyranny. 1641. p. 34.
From London Prynne was taken by Order of the Council to the Castle of Carnarvon, where he was to remain prisoner without being permitted the use of pen, ink or paper or of any other books but the Bible and Book of Common Prayer. On the journey thither Prynne was entertained by some friends in Chester. These friends later appeared before the High Commission at York and suffered for their kindness shown to Prynne. The same Court ordered that Prynne's portraits were to be burned in public.

On 5th August, 1637, Prynne arrived in Carnarvon Castle, but he was only detained there for a short time. Try as they might, it was impossible for Laud and his associates to isolate completely the Puritans, and many sought to keep in touch with Prynne. Accordingly a new Order was made by the Court of the Star Chamber for his removal to the Isle of Jersey where again he was to be kept close prisoner, no person being admitted to speak with him. He arrived at Mount Orgueil Castle, Jersey, on 17th January, 1638. Prynne has left on record that the kindness of the Governor, his wife and family made his three years compulsory sojourn upon the Island not altogether unhappy.

From this period of oppression and imprisonment Prynne was liberated by the Long Parliament, and under a House of Commons warrant he left Jersey on 19th November, 1640, arriving in London on 28th November, accompanied by Burton, amid great rejoicing.

3. Ibid. p.81.
4. Ibid. p.90.
5. Mount Orgueil or Divine & Profitable Meditations. 1641.
and many evidences of the popular esteem in which they were held.

When in March the following year the House of Commons agreed that reparation should be made to Prynne, there came to an end eight years of tragical grievances and sufferings, and he was again vindicated in the eyes of the world. Prynne has summed up the sufferings of this period of his life in Pauline manner thus, "Having been such an eminent martyr, both in body and estate, suffering near eight years imprisonment, close restraint, exile, 3 Pillories, stigmatizing, a double loss of ears and excessive fines, for the defence of our religion, laws, public wealth, and liberty of the nation." 3.

FREEDOM AND FURTHER RESTRAINT. 1640-1653.

The next period of Prynne's life was one of ceaseless activity. He was near to the centre of national affairs and engaged in work for Parliament. His busy pen was seldom at rest as he denounced the enemies of Parliament and stated Parliament's case for the necessity of waging a defensive war against the supporters of the King. With the ascendancy of the Army, however, the emphasis in Prynne's writing changed completely, and his sympathies for the King, which suffered a partial eclipse during the ascendancy of Parliament, were shown in their full strength. His antagonism to the rule of the regicides again brought him into complete disfavour, and once more his turbulent spirit was restrained; suffering a period of

rigorous imprisonment, from which he was released only after many vigorous protests.

Prynne from the very outset of the freedom secured for him by the Long Parliament, took a lively interest in the popular cry for the overthrow of the bishops. His was a conspicuous share in keeping the public mind alive to the evils of prelatic rule, which he did in producing and publishing, along with other pamphlets, "The Antipathie of the English Lordly Prelacie both to Regal Monarchy and Civil Unity" and "New Discovery of the Prelates tyranny."

Not only was he engaged on the Parliamentary side against the Anglican party, but he was busy in the defence of the Parliamentary position. Prynne was clear in his statement of the case that Parliament was not opposed to Monarchy, but only against the King's counsellors and the abuses which they advised him to practise.

The prosecution of Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes, which he undertook in association with Clement Walker, occupied much of his time during 1643. His part in this was not so successful as Prynne could have wished, being opposed by astute and powerful men. Although Fiennes was convicted and sentenced to death he was reprieved by the General, and Prynne and Walker suffered in a measure for their share in the prosecution. Walker in the midst of the proceedings was fined and imprisoned for a short spell, in the Tower, by the House of Lords, for his attack on Lord Saye, and Prynne, for a time, ceased to be an auditor for the accounts of the Kingdom.

2. Ibid. p.69. Check to Britannicus, 1644. p.7.
Undoubtedly what occupied much of Prynne's time in 1643 and 1644 was the preparation for and the actual trial of Archbishop William Laud. That Prynne should prosecute this case with complete ruthlessness and the utmost vigour was to be expected, for Prynne had suffered grievously at the hands of Laud; Prynne was not one who could lightly forgive; and he sincerely believed that most of the nation's troubles could be charged against Laud. The relationship of these two antagonists is a study in itself which we shall deal with in another chapter, but let it be here mentioned that Prynne busily, assiduously and untiringly sought out evidence against the Archbishop. Despite all Prynne's herculean and at the same time somewhat demoniacal efforts it was found impossible to convict Laud of the charge preferred against him. Prynne, however, saw his enemy brought low. An Ordinance of Attainder was brought in against Laud and passed in the House of Commons amid the great rejoicing of the London rabble. The House of Lords, to which it was sent, demurred for some considerable time, but in the end gave way before pressure and threat, and on 4th January, 1645, the Lords acquiesced and the Ordinance was passed. On 10th January Laud was executed. ¹

Carefully watching the rise of Independency, particularly in its association with the Army, Prynne had begun to oppose its errors as he saw them. Once having subscribed his name to the Solemn League and Covenant he remained an indomitable supporter of it. Independency was contrary to the promise ¹. Trevor-Roper. Laud. p.427 ff.
made in the Covenant, and for this reason and on theological grounds he pressed his opposition against the Independents. This antagonism was maintained throughout his whole life, but during this particular period he was seeking, by all means in his power, to confute them in argument and to expose their errors.

These writings, with others, reveals his interest in the work of the Westminster Assembly which, we may deduce, he followed with careful and painstaking interest. It is suggestive to find that Prynne, though at this time recognised as a Presbyterian or, at least, one with Presbyterian leanings, wrote against over-rigid Presbyterianism. The title of his work "Diotrephes catechised; or, Sixteen Important Questions touching the Ecclesiastical Jurisdictions Pretended to by Some Over-Rigid Presbyterians and Independents", 1645, reveals the nature of his criticism.

When the victorious Army began to make demands upon Parliament, Prynne was not yet a member of the House of Commons, but he sprang immediately to the defence of the eleven members who were impeached by the Army in the declaration dated from St. Albans June 14th., 1647. His agile pen was occupied with this subject in a number of pamphlets throughout 1647.

On 1st May, 1647, an ordinance of the two Houses of Parliament for the visitation of the University of Oxford was.

1. Prynne. Independence examined. 1644; Fresh discovery of some prodigious new wandering blazing stars. 1645.
3. Nine queries upon the printed charge, 1647; Full vindic. and answer of the eleven accused members, 1647; Brief justification of the eleven accused members, 1647.
agreed upon. Twentyfour non-Parliamentary Commissioners were appointed for this visitation, and Prynne's name appeared on the list of Commissioners.¹ This was an engagement which delighted his heart and to which he addressed himself with all the enthusiasm of his exuberant nature.

In November, 1648, he entered the House of Commons as member for Newport (Cornwall). According to Prynne, his return was completely unanimous, not a dissentient vote being recorded.²

One notable speech by Prynne, of a length which must have taken hours to deliver, was made to the House on the receipt of the King's terms.³ He had already shown his antagonism to the Army remonstrance, and now put forth a strong plea for acceptance of the Royal conditions. When the House voted in favour of treating with the King, Pride's Purge took place, and it is not surprising to find that Prynne was one of the excluded and secluded members.

This affront to the dignity of Parliament and to his own personal dignity aroused all the fury within him. On various occasions he recounts what took place and the callous treatment meted out to himself and his fellow prisoners by the Army leaders.⁴

² Prynne. Speech in House of Commons. 3rd edition. 1649. p.27.
³ "Ibid.
⁴ "Ibid. Appendix.
During the closing days of 1648 and in the early part of 1649, pamphlets, broadsides and legal arguments were all used by Prynne in an effort to obtain satisfaction. He hurled statement after statement at the Rump, denouncing it as illegal and, therefore, incapable of governing the country. The Army, also, came under the fire of his invective, but all to no useful purpose. For the moment Prynne was a voice crying in the wilderness.

When he was released is not known. "On March 25th., he published his last attack from his imprisonment, and in May he was resting in his Swainswick home."¹

By July, 1650, Prynne found himself again a marked man, and he was arrested, under a warrant issued by Bradshaw, in his own home in Swainswick, and carried a prisoner to Dunster Castle². His bitter complaint during this time of imprisonment was that his treatment was considerably worse than that which he had experienced at the hands of the Prelates. From Dunster Castle he was taken on the 12th June, 1651, to Taunton Castle, but he was confined there only for a short time, for in the following month he was taken and quartered in Pendennis Castle in Cornwall. There he remained until released in the following year.

Pendennis Castle proved a most uncomfortable prison. Prynne said that it was "nearest the extremest part of Cornwall", and his quarters were very poor, because of wind, rain, smoke and noise. Here he was treated much worse than some Royalist prisoners who had been in complete opposition to Parliament and

Army. For six weeks at least he was in solitary confinement, and for a considerable time was not even allowed to go to Church. Professor Masson says that Prynne yielded when offered his release on the terms as found in this note from the Council Order Book Tues. Feb. 1, 1653 "That Mr W. Prynne be released from his imprisonment, he giving his own bond to the sum of £1,000 that he will not for the future act anything to the prejudice of this Commonwealth and the present Government thereof." Prynne, however, says that he refused to be released on bond, and received an absolute release on February 28th, 1653.

AT LIBERTY AND STILL IN OPPOSITION. 1653-1660.

Prynne's acerbity was not in any way diminished by imprisonment. During the next few years his pen moved with the old-time facility, and there poured from the press pamphlets, some anonymous, others bearing his name, on all major contemporary subjects. As the leaders in the Commonwealth produced their new measures for Church and State Prynne had also something to say. He was much opposed to church lands being dispensed with, and he wrote in favour of the continuance of tithes; the right of patrons to present incumbents to Parish churches upon vacancies; while he courageously penned several treatises in defence of the Fundamental Liberties of All English Freemen. In some of these he attacked the leaders of the Commonwealth and the system which they had brought into being.

   To the Reader. A3.
They had, to Prynne, no basis in tradition or law; they were opposed to the fundamental institutions of the land. On that account they could not be tolerated.

It is quite remarkable that amid all this political activity he found time to turn to other subjects. The Quakers received the full force of his virulent vocabulary. One wonders if he were at all just in this indictment of the Quakers, whom he called the spawn of Romish Frogs, Jesuits and Franciscan Freers. Jews also discovered the power of his pen. He wrote "A short demurrer against the Jews", which achieved its object, for Jews were denied the right of entrance into the country and those domiciled in England were compelled to leave.

The offer of Kingship to Cromwell could not pass unnoticed. "King Richard the Third Revived" was written anonymously, but it is generally recognised as the work of Prynne, and it is not flattering to Cromwell. The Royalist plot which brought Sir Henry Slingsby and Doctor Hewit to the scaffold was supposed to involve Prynne. His name, however, was not mentioned among the conspirators, but it is almost certain that he assisted Doctor Hewit with his defence. "Prynne had stood by him, and prepared his demurrer", roundly states Professor Masson.

The Commonwealth was all so unsatisfactory to Prynne. He seized every opportunity which came his way to show to the country its illegality and futility. Before Cromwell died Prynne had written explaining what was necessary to restore

1. Prynne. The Quakers unmasked. 1655.
the country to order. With the death of Cromwell all was in confusion, and Prynne favoured and proposed the restoration of the Stuart monarchy. With characteristic fearlessness he published his "Probable Expedient for Present and Future Publicque Settlement", advising Richard what he should do.

From the time of Cromwell's death the country was in a ferment, and Prynne was in the midst of it, sometimes openly and sometimes secretly, supporting the Royalist cause. The incidents associated with the recall of the Rump to the House of Commons are of interest to us in that Prynne was one of the central figures. Characteristically enough, he was foremost in demanding admission when that portion of the Long Parliament, which had sat from 6th December, 1648, to 1653, returned and took their places. Prynne, with two other excluded members, managed to gain entrance to the House, but of the three only Prynne remained. On being requested to leave by Sir Henry Vane, Prynne replied that he had a right to remain and intended to do so. The Rump, to get rid of Prynne, went for dinner, and Prynne, returning in the afternoon, was forcibly excluded.

Between the time of the renewal of the Rump and Monk's assuming command, Prynne was busily engaged in publishing a number of pamphlets. These all dealt with matters of the moment and kept the public alive to what was taking place. "Prynne continued, in subsequent pamphlets, to attack the Rumpers for the wrong done to him and the other secluded members in still debarring them from their seats."¹

When Monk appeared in London he discovered that a powerful current of opinion had set in for the restoration of the Long Parliament, and Prynne, "more than any other man, had created the feeling that now prevailed."  

On Tuesday, 21st February, 1660, when the secluded members entered the House and took their seats, Prynne was among the foremost.

The Long Parliament proceeded to business without waste of time, and Prynne became busy with Committee work. It was agreed that a new Parliament should be called. In what name were the writs to be issued? This was not a problem of easy solution, but Prynne, undaunted, suggested the name of Charles II. This was not acceptable. In the Parliament eventually called, Prynne was returned as member for Bath. Other places vied for the honour of having Prynne to represent them, but he, no doubt because of the family connection with Bath, accepted its nomination.

As he had been foremost in the events connected with the restoration of the Long Parliament, so he was much in evidence in the steps which led up to the restoration of the Stuart monarchy.

When Charles II entered London amidst the tremendous plaudits of an enthusiastic people, Prynne looked on, glad of heart and proud of his share in the achievement, for he had worked zealously, unsparingly and courageously for the overthrow of the Commonwealth, the restraining of Republicanism and the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy.

The closing years of Prynne's life were marked by a mellowing of character which comes to most men of similar age. Compared with his earlier years it was a period of quietness. Occasionally the stillness was disturbed, but never with the noise and upheaval of the earlier days.

With the Restoration Prynne entered into the good graces of the King, who showed him remarkable favour. For the work Prynne had undertaken towards restoring the Monarchy he was appointed Keeper of the Records in the Tower of London at a Salary of £500 per annum. In his Brevia-Parliamentaria, dedicated to Charles II, Prynne acknowledged his indebtedness to the King and revealed that other positions had been offered to him. His employment was "of your own special grace and mere mention, as most suitable to my genius upon my waiver of more honourable, profitable public vacant places of Judicature and other preferments, of which your Majesty most graciously tendered me the free choice."¹

When in 1661 a new Parliament was summoned, Prynne was again returned for Bath. There were two seats for Bath, and Alexander Popham was returned with Prynne. They did not, however, take their seats easily, for they were opposed by Sir Thomas Bridges and Sir Charles Berkley. The outcome of this electoral struggle was that Prynne and Popham took their seats in the House of Commons, having been declared the truly elected members.

One incident, which is of particular interest because it shows Prynne's zeal for Puritan ideals, and the Anglicans' desire for ceremonial at an early stage in the Restoration, occurred in St. Margaret's church. Both Houses of Parliament were receiving Communion, but the officiating clergyman did not allow Prynne to commune because he refused to kneel to receive the elements.¹

During the sitting of the Cavalier Parliament, Prynne realised that Puritanism was on the defensive. He championed its cause again by staunchly opposing the Corporation Act, which excluded all save Anglicans from Municipal office. Accordingly he produced a pamphlet entitled "Sundry Reasons humbly tendered to the Most Honourable House of Peers, by some Citizens and Members of London, and other Cities and Boroughs and Corporations and Ports against this new Intended Bill of Governing and Reforming Corporations." For this, he was required to make abject apology to the House, which he did, but declared he had no mischievous intent. Prynne in his answer enlarged upon his service to the nation and the graciousness of the King to him. However, he was

severely censured, and to the surprise of many con-
curred in the censure of the House, "from which time"
says Wood, "to the day of his death we had no more libels
published by him."¹

Worthy of note is one further incident which
again brought Prynne into disfavour. During 1664, he
brought before the House of Commons, as the spokesman
for his Committee, certain suggested alterations in a
bill regarding the sale of wines. Two of his amend-
ments were accepted and one was rejected. When the
bill was eventually passed it was learned that the
original had been changed, and the Committee appointed
to investigate proved this to be the case. The House
took a serious view of the position. Prynne, summoned
to appear before the House, readily admitted the
charge, but claimed he had reframed the bill in order
to correct mistakes and clarify the meaning. According
to Pepys,² the King interceded on Prynne's behalf, and
the House finally decided to remit the offence. This
is the last of the differences which Prynne had with
the House.

These closing years of his life were not only
taken up with his Parliamentary duties. He still
continued to write as much as ever, but the later publicat-
ions of this decade were of a historical and antiquarian
nature. Several tomes of immense volume issued from

². Pepys. Diary, June 6th., 1664.
his pen. His History of King John, King Henry III and King Edward I, for example, is a volume of 1,307 large pages. It was published posthumously and had just been completed before Prynne died. The sub-title of this book, "An exact History of the Pope's intol-er-able usurpations" reveals the undying nature of his antipathy to Rome.

In these pursuits his position as Keeper of Records in the Tower of London gave him opportunity and scope for the research that delighted his heart. He complained bitterly of the condition in which he found the records. Some were in miscellaneous bundles heaped together in corners, covered with dust and the cobwebs of years. He set women, soldiers and clerks to undertake the work of clearing, cleaning and sorting these. They, however, grew tired of such work, and Prynne, with his clerk, undertook the odious task and sorted them out to his satisfaction.¹

The preparation for his publications "for some months space", he explained, "ingrossed most of the hours allotted to my repastes, natural rest and refreshment every night, by reason of my other public Implemments, Diversions all the day; and of these

Christmas Holy daies or Play-daies, which I intended to have spent in other studies.\textsuperscript{1} Not only have we this picture of his assiduous pursuit of study, but John Aubrey provides us with a word picture of the way in which he continued at his desk. He wore "a long quilt cap, which came, two or three, least inches over his eies, which served him as an umbrella to defend his eies from the light." About every three hours his servant would bring him "a roll and a pott of ale to refocillate his spirits." In this manner "he studied and dranke and munched some bread; and this maintained him till night; and then he made a good supper."\textsuperscript{2}

In the middle of 1669 Prynne, still busily engaged in writing, became ill. On his recovery he made his will and settled his estate, and with the affairs of this world satisfactorily arranged he felt ready to be taken from it. Later in the year he again became ill, and died on Sunday morning, 24th October, 1669, in his chamber in Lincoln's Inn. He was buried under Lincoln's Inn Chapel.\textsuperscript{3}

\begin{enumerate}
\item Prynne. \textit{Brevia-Parliamentaria.} 1662. To the Reader.
\item Aubrey. \textit{Brief Lives.} Prynne.
\item Black Books of Lincoln's Inn.
\end{enumerate}
William Prynne never married, and this fact possibly explains in part his continuous industry and his unrestrained vigour of life as well as of speech and writing. It would have been difficult for any man to have undertaken all the work that Prynne accomplished had he at the same time been shouldering the responsibilities of home and family.

When Prynne died, there passed from this world a man who, despite all the changing nature of the years through which he lived, sought to remain true to what he believed. He made a marked impression on his age, and his life and writings must be studied to breathe the atmosphere, and to assess adequately the merits, of the epoch in which he lived.
CHAPTER III.

PRYNNE AND LAUD.
PRYNNE AND LAUD.

"Laud and Prynne were the prophets of two incompatible interests." So wrote Trevor-Roper in his study of Archbishop Laud. Therein he reveals the cause of the bitter antagonism which existed between these two men, and which continued as a deadly feud until the execution of Laud.

Both Prynne and Laud, from their earliest days, were at opposite extremes in their religious outlook, and since some of the characteristics of their nature were not unlike, it was natural to expect a clash when they each expounded their views.

Laud was twenty five years the senior of Prynne. Both went as commoners to Oxford; Laud many years before Prynne to St John's, and Prynne to Oriel. When Prynne arrived in Oxford, Laud was President of St John's, with which college since 1603 he had maintained a close relationship.

These two may never have met at Oxford, but it is likely that Prynne, while a student, knew about Laud, and the particular brand of theology which Laud championed. Prynne there devoted much attention to the ancient patristic writings which, in his day, were made compulsory on the students. Later, he was to use them continuously in his arguments with readiness. Laud was partly responsible for this line of study,¹ and it might well be that this

¹ Biographical Fragment of Prynne. Camden Society. 1877. pp. XVIII and XIX.
was the first influence exerted by the one life upon the other. Here, too, might well have begun Prynne's violent antagonism to Laud and his Arminian outlook as he learned of Laud's strong partisanship of that which Prynne recognised as Popery.

In the year that Prynne left Oxford and came to London to study law, Laud resigned the Presidency of St John's, on his promotion to the bishopric of St David's, and under Buckingham's favour was rising at Court.

While Laud, with increasing influence, was championing Arminianism by advancing the clergy who staunchly supported its ideas, Prynne was studying theology with a totally different purpose.

When Prynne published his first book in 1627, Laud sought at once to pounce upon him, "but Prynne's fellow lawyers came to his rescue and saved him by a prohibition."¹ At this stage in his career Prynne was acting as lawyer for many of the Puritans who were being prosecuted in the High Commission and Star Chamber. He was present at the trial of Leighton, and he recounts himself how this was only one of several appearances before the High Commission.²

Whenever he could, Laud took opportunity to say something against Prynne. Two illustrations of this can be given. In 1631, when the Vicar of Sudbury, Suffolk, brought an action against some of his parishioners for refusing to kneel for the Sacrament, Prynne undertook their defence.

before the Star Chamber, and so championed their cause that Laud took it upon himself to rebuke him. The other illustration arises from a case in the High Commission. Three sectaries were on trial because they proclaimed that "to the believer all things are pure, and that David, when he committed adultery, pleased God as well as when he danced before the Ark." Included in their beliefs were other strange notions. While Laud sentenced them to imprisonment, he added, "and let Mr Prynne be articled against for the same. We must not sit here to punish poor snakes, and let him go scot free."  

It is evident from the foregoing that Laud would not lose any opportunity to punish Prynne, and Laud had not long to wait. With the publication of Prynne's Histriomastix in 1633, Laud saw an opportunity of attacking his enemy, and he seized upon it.

Prynne's Histriomastix - his best known, but not his best work - is a volume of nearly 1,100 pages. Into it he packed an immense amount of learning, drawing from ancient, classical and patriotic writers to prove his various points. The language is coarse and scurrilous, and the spirit it breathes is one of intolerable bigotry. The theme is the monstrous iniquity of theatres and all associated with them. Stage plays are an abomination which

should not be tolerated by any Christian state. Those who act are most base, especially females, who sink to the lowest and become the chattels of men. No Christian, since his baptismal vows include the renunciation of the devil and all his works, should engage in, or be present at, any of these devil begotten plays. The baneful effects can be seen on every hand: family life is destroyed; youth is corrupted; duty is forsaken; money is squandered; God's commandments are disobeyed; the Church of God is neglected, and the national life is weakened. No one, including Royalty and the highest in the land, who would associate in any way with plays, whether for gain, pleasure, or education, escaped the scorching lava of invective which belched forth from the erupting volcano of Prynne's mind.

Laud lost no time in setting in motion the instruments for the prosecution of Prynne, and immediately gave the task of ferreting out evidence from the book to his chaplain, Peter Heylin. This duty Heylin undertook with alacrity, and soon produced evidence with which Prynne was charged in the Court of Star Chamber in February, 1634. ¹

The charge was that Prynne had written and published a scandalous and libellous book against the state, the King, and all his people; that he was a malignant man to the state and Government of the Realm, a mover of the people

¹ Docs. relating to William Prynne. Camden Soc. 1877.
to discontent and sedition; that in his Histriomastix he had presumed to cast aspersions upon the King, the Queen, and the Commonwealth, and had contended that it is lawful to lay violent hands upon princes that are either actors, favourers or spectators of stage plays.¹

The prosecution was conducted by the various charges being spoken to by the several judges. For example, the Recorder dealt with the charge concerning the Kingdom, another treated of the scandals and aspersions against the King's house and court; Sir John Finch charged him with that which concerned the Queen, and the Attorney General with the crimes and assertions against the King's person.

Much was made of the fact that at the time of publishing the Queen was about to take part in a production of Wat Montague's Shepherds Pastoral at Somerset House, and that Prynne, aware of this, was thus publicly censuring the Queen.

For his defence, Prynne claimed that his book had been licensed by Doctor Buckner, both in the written and printed copies.² Moreover, his words were often taken completely out of their context and made to mean what was never intended. Further, he could show the book was in process of production over a number of years, and had been printed and published at least more

2. Ibid. p.52.
than four weeks before the Queen had appeared on the stage.

There was, however, no escape for the defendant. Each member of the Star Chamber found Prynne guilty, and before the sentence was passed spoke of the enormity of his offence. Though there were some differences of opinion in the matter of the sentence all concurred in what was ultimately passed upon Prynne. It was a "heavy and brutal" sentence. He was fined £5,000, sentenced to imprisonment for life, to stand in the pillory, to have both ears cropped, and to be degraded from Oxford University and Lincoln's Inn.

Archbishop Laud, like the others, had his remark to make before sentence was finally pronounced. "He was sorry," he said, "that a man that had been so painful and had so good breeding should so ill bestow his labour to such heinous ends." No word in defence, however, could be expected from the Archbishop. Like the others, he proceeded to show where Prynne was at fault, and he sought to correct some of Prynne's errors, concluding this, "He was glad that their Lordships have already so well vindicated the wrongs the Church received by this man." It must, however, be noted in fairness to Laud that while he concurred in the sentence, he added "saving in the cropping of his ears." This humanitarian thought of Laud's was attributed by Prynne to a sinister motive, as the following extract from his letter to Laud shows.

"Yea, your own severe censure of me, your violent execution of my sentence upon me, even to the loss of my ears and diffusion of my blood (in which you alone would have no voice in the sentence, that so you might have the only hand and be more singularly bloody in the execution, which all wholly attribute to your despiteful malice to me and my profession), is proof you were out to defame me."

Before sentence was carried out, Prynne made petition to the Privy Council. Professing his unfeigned sorrow for the offences, and acknowledging the justice of the severe sentence, he asked their Lordships to become "his favourable mediators to his Majesty for the mitigation and pardon of his fine and corporal punishment." There was no mitigation of the sentence for Prynne, which was duly carried out, and if the executioner only cropped part of his ears, what remained was only spared for a later occasion.

Prynne's next move was to write a letter from the Tower to Laud. The letter charged Laud with making mis-statements during the Star Chamber trial. Prynne had reason to believe, from reports he had been receiving, that the Archbishop's spleen against him, far from being satisfied with Prynne's loss of ears, was "restless, endless, without all bounds of reason." Evidently Prynne realised, as he wrote, that the temper of his letter was not likely

to commend itself to the Archbishop, for, continued Prynne, "If I have manifested more distemper, choler, or dealt more plainly, more uncomely, with your Lordship than beseems me, I hope you will consider that...your violence, your injustice, have given me just occasion a little to forget myself."¹

Because of this letter Prynne was again brought into the Star Chamber, but since the original had been destroyed, nothing could be done about it. In commenting on this, Laud records, "I there forgave him." Prynne, however, had his comment to add to this. "Because nothing was there proved, for Mr Attorney knew not how to proceed, or make good his accusation,"²

In the letter Prynne complained that in defiance of justice, Laud on his own authority and by verbal command, without any warrant, had seized his books. Laud, later, denied having given the order.³ There was no doubt, however, that the books had been seized.

For the next three years there was no further meeting of these two opponents. It is almost certain, however, that the bitterness which animated their enmity became more acrid. For Prynne in his captivity, constantly heard of the Prelate's accumulating tyranny, which news, added to his own unjust restraint, made him writhe in the

impotency of his captive state. Laud, on the other hand, was facing the consequences of his policy of Thorough. So far he had not been able to silence the libels that continuously poured out surreptitiously from hidden presses. Many of these virulent pamphlets were unsigned, while other writers covered their identity under a fictitious name. "News from Ipswich", 1636, was the pamphlet which brought matters to a head. This pamphlet, written by Prynne, was, however, attributed to Henry Burton, though published under the name of Matthew White. It was a strong indictment of the Bishops, especially of Bishop Wren, who was one of the foremost in prosecuting with vigour in his own diocese of Norwich, the policy which was dear to Laud.

In these circumstances, Laud decided to prosecute Prynne, Burton and Bastwick. These three had been associated together over a period of years, and as far back as 1628 had together raised the cry of Popery against the Bishop of Gloucester. Burton was a minister with strong puritan sympathies, and Bastwick was a physician who, already, because of his puritan outlook, had been sentenced by the High Commission to a fine of £1,000, to exclusion from the practice of medicine, and to imprisonment until he retracted. 1

Laud appears to have considered Prynne, despite his imprisonment, the major offender. It would appear also

that he had his suspicions about Prynne's complicity in the works of others, for "Laud made a careful and painstaking scrutiny of Burton's sermons to discover traces of Prynne's influence."¹

Accordingly on 14th June, 1637, the three appeared before the Star Chamber to answer a charge of libel. For three months they had kept their opponents at bay, due to the legal knowledge and skill of Prynne. But their efforts had only postponed the evil day. Not even their cross-bill against the Archbishops and Bishops availed them anything.

They were held pro confessis, for although they had answers Prynne and Bastwick could not find a lawyer who would give his signature, while Burton's answer, though signed by counsel, was rejected by the court as irrelevant.

Each endeavoured to say something in his own defence, but from the start of the trial it was a foregone conclusion what the decision would be. Lord Cottington moved that the three accused be condemned to lose their ears, to be each fined £5,000, and to be imprisoned for the rest of their lives in remote castles where it was hoped no puritan sympathy would reach them. Lord Chief Justice Finch suggested that Prynne should be branded on the cheeks with the letters S.L., for Seditious Libeller, and

¹ Trevor-Roper, Laud, p.319.
this suggestion was unanimously adopted. During the trial
Laud had listened silently but with keen interest and, one
almost feels, with relish. That he agreed completely with
the savage sentence is shown in these words, "Craving pardon
of their Lordships for his necessary lengths, he thanks
them for their just and honourable censure of those men in
their unanimous dislike of them, and defence of the
Church." ¹ Well might Prynne contend that the S.L., stood
for Stigmata Laudis!

When sentence had been passed Laud addressed the Star
Chamber in a long prepared address which took about two
hours to deliver. It was an answer to Burton and a
defence of his own position. Heylin, in his Life of Laud,
"acted Phocion's part in cutting short the long and well-
studied speech of this grave and eloquent Demosthenes."²
Laud spoke of the error of defending religion by the way of
libels; defended himself in maintaining that everything he
did was for the good government of the Church of England;
argued that Bishops were iure divino, and any so-called
innovations in the church were circumspect and right. These
innovations he dealt with separately and in detail, and not
without a measure of reasonableness. It was impossible,
he claimed, to exhaust all the arguments against Burton, but
Burton's book would be answered in due course - his book but
not his railings.

² Ibid. p. 320.
This study does not necessarily include a description of the execution of the sentence upon the three accused. It must take note, however, that as they stood in the pillories each addressed the crowd who had gathered, and the puritan cause was thereby strengthened and possibly considerably advanced. Could Laud have had his way these three would not have been allowed to speak. "What say you", he wrote to Wentworth, "that Prynne and his fellows should be suffered to talk what they pleased while they stood in the pillory?" According to Laud, "they ought to have been gagged."2

So in due course Prynne, Burton and Bastwick set out on their long journey to their remote prisons; Prynne to Carnarvon; Burton to Lancaster, and Bastwick to Launceston. In their imprisonment they were to be deprived the use of pen, ink and paper, and of any "books but the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, and such other books of devotion as the several keepers of the said castles will be answerable for that they be consonant to the doctrine of the Church of England."3

The next occasion on which Prynne and Laud met, the tables were completely turned. The whole situation in the country had changed, bringing into being the Long Parliament, which allowed Prynne to return in triumph from his

captivity and to hear that his sentences of 1634 and 1637 were entirely rescinded. Laud on the other hand had found his fortunes not merely on the wane but indeed completely collapsed around him. He was imprisoned in the Tower on 1st March, 1641, following ten weeks restraint in the house of the Usher of the Black Rod.

The occasion of Laud's imprisonment in the Tower was his impeachment by the Commons, which was unanimously agreed upon on fourteen charges. These articles charged him with subverting the fundamental laws and government of the Kingdom; denying the authority of Parliament; subverting the course of justice, and corrupting the courts of justice. In ecclesiastical matters it was charged against him that he was responsible for the composition and publication of Canons without warrant; had assumed to himself a papal and tyrannical power; had endeavoured to subvert the true religion in setting up popish superstitions; had abused his Majesty's trust in him and appointed to ecclesiastical offices those popishly affected; had endeavoured to reconcile the Church of England with the Church of Rome; had silenced many pious divines and had endeavoured to cause division between the Church of England and other reformed churches. The two remaining items were that he had plotted to stir up enmity between England and Scotland, and that to preserve himself he had sought to incense his Majesty against Parliament.¹

Once committed to the Tower the Archbishop had a long time to wait before there was any further move in his case. Parliament was too busy with many grievances, and as time went on there were the difficulties with the King, and eventually civil war.¹

Prynne, too, was busily engaged in other matters, as well as collecting material for the Archbishop's prosecution. Once relieved from other duties, however, he relentlessly proceeded with the task of accumulating evidence against Laud. His interest in the case was not merely personal or academic. On the death of some eminent members of the House of Commons who were particularly interested in Laud's case, the Committee responsible for the prosecution requested Prynne "to make good the grand charge against this Arch-Prelate and bring him to his long expected Tryall."² Prynne declares "that he would gladly have declined such a task"," surely a statement open to question. Yet against the charge, which some would be inclined to make, that he undertook the task principally from malice or revenge, Prynne had a ready answer; "My own conscience and forbearance to meddle with this prosecution, till publicly called and necessitated thereunto, acquitting me from any such imputation."³

Prynne, of course, had a large quantity of material

already in his possession. His published works against
the Prelates were all aimed in the first place at Laud.
This can be seen in his works, The Antipathy of the
English Lordly Prelacy both to Regal Monarchy and Civil
Unity; A new discovery of the Prelates Tyranny; and the
continued onslaught on the Archbishop is evident in the
works which appeared at the time of the preparation of
the trial and during the course of the trial itself.
The titles of these publications were; The Treachery and
Disloyalty of Papists to their Sovereigns; Rome's Master-
-Piece, and the Popish Royal Favourite.

On 30th May, 1643, Prynne received an order from both
Houses of Parliament to visit the Tower, with a guard of
ten soldiers, and to search all the prisoners remaining
there.1 Because the incident reveals much of the
character of Prynne it seems advisable to include the
narrative here. With his ten soldiers at his heels,
Prynne entered the Tower, placing some of the men at
strategic positions, and, while others made search of the
other prisoners, Prynne reserved for himself the pleasure
of searching the Archbishop and his quarters. Let us
continue the story in the Archbishop's own words. "He
made haste to my lodging, commanded the warder to open my
doors, left two musqueteers sentinels below, that no man

might go in or out, and one at the stairhead; with three others, which had the musquets ready cocked, he came into my chamber, and found me in bed, as were also my servants in theirs. I presently thought upon my blessed Saviour, when Judas led in the swords and staves about Him. Mr Prynne, seeing me safe in bed, falls first to my pockets to rifle them; and by that time my two servants came running in, half ready. I demanded the sight of his warrant. He showed it me...... When my pockets had been sufficiently ransacked, I rose and got my clothes about me, and so half ready, with my gown upon my shoulders, he held me in the search till past nine of the clock in the morning. He took from me twenty and one bundles of papers, which I had prepared for my defence; the two letters before named, which came to me from his gracious Majesty about Chartham and my other benefices; the Scottish Service Book, with such directions as accompanied it; a little book, or Diary, containing all the occurrences of my life; and my book of private devotions; both these last written through my own hand. Nor could I get him to leave this last; but he must needs see what passed between God and me; - a thing, I think, scarce ever offered to any Christian. The last place which he rifled was a trunk which stood by my bedside. In that he found nothing but about forty pounds in money for my necessary expenses, which he meddled not with, and a bundle of gloves. This
bundle he was so careful to open, as that he caused each
glove to be looked into. Upon this I tendered him one
pair of the gloves; which he refusing, I told him he might
take them and fear no bribe, for he had already done me
all the mischief he could, and I asked no favour of him.
So he thanked me, took the gloves, bound up my papers,
left two sentinels at my door, which were not dismissed
till the next day noon, and went on his way. "1.

On 23rd October, 1643, ten further Articles of Impeach-
ment by the Commons against Laud were sent to the House of
Lords, and the Archbishop was ordered to put in his answer
in writing within a week. These ten Articles are not much
different from the earlier Articles of Impeachment, with
the exception of a few particulars. 2. Owing to unprepar-
edness on both sides, some more time elapsed, and it was
not until 12th March, 1644, that the trial began in
earnest.

To enter into the details of the trial is beyond the
scope of a chapter like this. From the outset Laud was
at a disadvantage. He was a man of 72 years of age, and
daily he was expected to answer charges made by the prosec-
ution all morning until two o'clock, with only two hours
between to prepare his answers; after which some of the
Committee replied, and then at about 7-30 the prisoner was

3. Ibid. p. 50.
rowed back to the Tower "full of weariness with a shirt as wet to my back with sweat as the water could have made it had I fallen in." ¹

The outcome of the trial was that Prynne was worsted in the contest. With all his skill; with all his power of ferreting out evidence; with all his past accumulation of knowledge to assist him; with assistance from other lawyers whom he knew; with even manipulating of some witnesses, and all these unified together by an indomitable will and implacable hatred, Prynne was unable to prove the charges preferred against Laud.

His ingenuity, however, had not failed. On 2nd September, the day on which Laud appeared before the Lords to recapitulate his whole defence, at his own request, he saw each Lord in possession of a new thin book in folio. ²

This was Prynne's latest move, for it was his Breviate of the Archbishop's life with his own marginal notes and the word "Note" opposite items that should be specially observed.

If this failed in its purpose of gaining a conviction, it was nevertheless partly instrumental in producing the ordinance of attainder which eventually the Lords were compelled to pass.

There is one criticism that is constantly levelled at Prynne in his conduct of Laud's trial. It is summed up

¹. Trevor-Roper. Laud. p.423
somewhat trenchantly by Trevor-Roper.¹ "With complete unscrupulousness, he had emended, glossed and misinterpreted the text, in order to give a less favourable picture of its author. Any passage that might reflect credit on Laud was studiously omitted, and sentences were stopped short rather than permit the reader to reach their favourable conclusions. Where Laud had concealed his meaning by an abbreviation, Prynne had provided a damning explanation. The Latin passages were mistranslated to suit his purposes; and where the text had been destroyed by fire, Prynne had supplied it from his own imagination. " And again, " that he tampered with witnesses was not doubted even by contemporaries. "² Faber, too, in a footnote exclaims " this clause is maliciously omitted by Prynne. ".

Trevor-Roper in his monstrous charge, is almost guilty of the offence with which he charges Prynne, for has he not taken what little material he has before him and made it appear other than it is? If it is not possible to clear Prynne wholly of the charges now produced, it is at least possible, yea, indeed, necessary, if we are to be just, to view them in a more favourable light.

First let it be noted that Prynne, in his Breviate of the life of Laud, clearly stated both in the title page and in the Epistle Dedicatory that he had not made a

² Ibid. p. 422.
complete verbatim copy but made room for omissions when he said "Extracted ( for the most part ) verbatim out of his own diary."

Secondly, anyone who edits the work of another has the right to make notes, just as Faber himself does in his Autobiography of Laud.

Thirdly, can it be shown that any of the omissions or emendations were of sufficient worth to secure conviction? History answers they were not, and it would be difficult to show that any had much influence whatsoever. Take, as an example, the clause which Faber accuses Prynne of maliciously omitting. Laud had just been made Bishop of St David's. "The King gave me leave", he wrote, "to hold the Presidentship of St John's" with the Bishopric. Then follows the omitted clause, "But by reason of the strictness of that statute which I will not violate, nor my oath to it under any colour, I am resolved before my consecration to leave it." Principal Hugh Watt has shown that the "Diary also reveals he administered his Welsh diocese from London, making only two brief visits in five years; and that concurrently with it he was Dean of Gloucester, a prebend of Westminster, a prebend of Lincoln, and held in addition three country livings."1 Consequently the omission of this clause was not to his detriment. Moreover, Laud's own comments on Prynne's omissions from and additions to the diary reveal the trivial nature of the emendations.

1. Watt. Recalling the Scottish Covenants. p. 34.
Fourthly, since the book was published for the particular purpose of exposing Laud, and time was short, it was only natural that attention should be drawn to any passage which would further that cause. Moreover, in that age and with the bitter spirit that existed between these men, it would have been something to marvel at if, when the opportunity to interpret a passage in an unfavourable light arose, the opportunity was let slip. Here is what Prynne said himself, "As for his Diary, I published it as I found it, not so much to do him 'honour' as 'right', which is due to the very Devil himself."¹

To turn to the other aspect of the charge, that of tampering with witnesses; not so much need be said by way of defence. The only evidence for it is from the Archbishop himself, and the person who was supposed to have been so indignant at Prynne tampering with the witnesses, was so contemptible as to refuse to give evidence on behalf of the Archbishop.²

In all these charges against Prynne, what seems to have been forgotten is that Prynne was not the judge, nor the counsel for the defence, but the prosecutor. This fact remembered puts in entirely different light what, viewed in another light, would appear sinister and reprehensible. So far, then, from proving Prynne so odious and completely unjust as Trevor-Roper suggests, it would

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¹ Prynne. A Fresh Discovery of some prodigious new wandering blazing stars. 1645. p. 39.
² Faber. Autobiography of Dr. Wm. Laud. p. 335.
be difficult to prove any real inconsistency with his profession as a lawyer and as the chief counsel in the prosecution of a state trial.

The relations of Prynne and Laud stand as a dark blot in the history of both Puritanism and Anglicanism. Nothing can mitigate the horror of the sadistic record. They professed to be Christians, yet they were possessed of a mutual and implacable hatred, that burned and refused to be quenched until the price of a life had been paid. Nothing can condone the offences of Laud against Prynne, and nothing can reduce the stigma of Prynne's relentless pursuit of Laud to death. Each had a blind spot in his mental vision which made him totally incapable of viewing the world from the other's standpoint. They were too much alike in their native characters, and too bigoted and intolerant ever to be anything but opponents.

Yet each pursued the policy of his life with determination and vigour, because it was to him the pursuit of the divine will. Since they thought each other wholly mistaken the battle had to continue. In the end there was not much to choose between them. Laud's book of devotions, suggesting a reverent piety, only made his conduct all the more reprehensible. Prynne, with his surly dogged, aggressive manner continuously with him, could still note good qualities in his opponent though he
immediately endeavoured to discredit him with them, as the following quotation shows, "To give him his due, he made as full, as gallant, as pithy, a defence of so bad a cause, and spake as much for himself, as was possible for the wit of man to invent, and that with so much art, sophistry, vivacity, oratory, audacity and confidence, without the least blush or acknowledgment of guilt in anything, as argued him rather obstinate than innocent, impudent than penitent, a far better orator, sophistor than Protestant or Christian, yea a truer son of Rome than of the Church of England." ¹.

Might not Laud's be the greater crime, in that from his exalted position he had the opportunity of showing magnanimity, which might well become an Archbishop, while Prynne, from his lowlier state, had to use every device in an endeavour to overcome the entrenched position of his adversary. And when a measure of power was actually in Prynne's hands he was not at liberty to show mercy, but only to seek the ends of justice which he fully believed he was doing.

It must be admitted, however, that in prosecuting each other, they are seen in characteristic poses. The picture produced does not commend either of them, but our duty is to portray them as they were. There they stand.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION.
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In the opening chapter an effort was made to show the nature and scope of this subject. It must now be dealt with in greater detail, and here we are concerned with Prynne's relation to it. In other words, the subject of this chapter is not the constitutional question as such, but the contribution Prynne made to it. Nor can this be relegated to any subsidiary place in a treatise which undertakes to deal with Prynne's work, for a considerable part of his life was occupied in studying and writing about this subject.

Prynne was intensely interested in the relationship of the King and Parliament, and vice versa, and in the relationship of the subjects of the Kingdom to both. His interest was aroused and enlisted on various counts. As a lawyer he claimed that, "To defend our laws and liberties against Prelatical encroachments is one principal part of a lawyer's profession." As a member of Parliament he felt the indignity of Parliament under domination; as a Puritan he was anxious that the problem should be settled in favour of Puritanism, though the Puritans were not always found on the same side in this matter, and as a citizen interested in current events he was keen to make his position known and to have it accepted.

There were few so amply equipped as Prynne to understand the problem, to argue it logically, and to deal

with it adequately. His whole legal and religious background fitted him for such a controversy, and from his vast store of knowledge he could draw material in detail and accurately, ready for use at any given moment.

In this chapter it is claimed that Prynne in his presentation of the case was consistent throughout as he pleaded and worked for constitutional monarchy. The method adopted in the following pages to state clearly Prynne's position brings its own difficulties, but each interested section within the Kingdom will be treated separately, his attitude to them stated, and then any seeming inconsistencies examined.

First, then, the King. Prynne believed in monarchy. From that position he never swerved. The King was King with his own prerogatives and rights. This, however, was not a completely unlimited sovereign power. Prynne suggested to sovereigns that the best way to perpetuate their thrones was so to use their prerogatives as to win the hearts and affections of their subjects and not to strain them beyond law. 1. The King's prerogative was thus conditioned by law, but his power, if conditioned, was, however, still great. Prynne maintained that the King could not alter any law without consent of Parliament, and so in this respect he must bow to Parliament and Kingdom as in the end the sovereign power. 2. But he was anxious at

2. Ibid. p. 46.
all times not to detract from the King's position or authority. Take this as an example. While arguing for the sovereignty of Parliament and Kingdom he made this comment, "This point I have thus copiously debated, not out of any least intention to derogate from his Majesty's just Supremacy and Prerogatives Royal, which I have oft solemnly sworn to maintain to the utmost of my power!"¹

He had already taken up this position in the previous year, when he wrote his "Sovereign Antidote to Prevent, Appease and Determine Our Unnatural and Destructive Civil Wars and Dissensions", 1642. In it he had written, "Kings by their Coronation Oath are subject to their laws, not their laws to them." p.29. That his opinion had not changed in 1656 is shown by his work on the fundamental laws of the land, where in summing up one part he noted that the King could not alter established laws.² And in 1660 Prynne had not altered. Then he clearly stated his position with regard to the King's prerogative, and it was in keeping with what he had previously written.³

Nowhere does Prynne take it upon himself to define clearly the King's position in relation to Parliament, the Laws or his subjects. Yet here and there he reveals his defence of the King's prerogative against the encroachments of others. In this way he had much against the Bishops.

3. " Signal Loyalty and Devotion of God's True Saints. 1660. (To the reader.)
To Prynne, according to tradition and the law of the land, the Bishops only held their position from the King. There was no such thing as holding their authority by divine right, and many of their actions initiated and carried out by themselves without the King's sanction, were encroachments upon the King's prerogative. So argued Prynne. In defence of the King Prynne felt that his Majesty was unaware of the misrule of the Bishops.  

In this, of course, he was working in the dark, for Charles was an accomplice in nearly all the malpractices of the Bishops. Prynne's position, however, serves to show that he ardently supported the King's legal prerogative.

The King's relation to his subjects was also touched upon by Prynne. According to him, the King was the chief defender of the people's liberties, and there was a close connection between these two, as the following quotation shows; "The people's liberty strengthens the King's prerogative and the King's prerogative is to defend the people's liberty." This close link between King and subject Prynne returned to in another of his pamphlets, and one can sense a note of pathos in what he there stated. "We do not accuse your Majesty, our hearts abhor it", but he continued later on in the argument, "All our oaths depend upon the oath your Majesty hath taken."

2. Ibid. p. 75.
4. Vox Populi. 1642. pp. 2 and 5.
With this view of Royal prerogative strongly held and vehemently stated, the question as to Prynne's participation in opposition to the King, is raised. The answer which Prynne himself gave was that he was not opposed to the King, but only to those who were the advisers of the King.1 This is abundantly clear in many declarations which he made. "Take away the wicked from before the King", was the plea which Prynne reiterated.2 Those associated with the King were the real culprits and were traitors, and so Prynne saw no inconsistency in waging war against the King for the King's own good and safety. It is doubtful if Prynne would ever have supported a cause which had openly confronted the King with armed resistance. His legalistic mind; however, saw the King taking up an illegal position in raising an Army against his people and thus denying his Coronation oath. Henceforth the Parliamentary cause was legal in waging a defensive war, but even during the period of civil war Prynne never detracted from the King's legal prerogatives. He deplored the war, suggested means by which it could be brought to an end,3 and urged the House of Commons to come to terms with the King on the basis of the King's answer in December, 1648.4

Sov. Antidote to prevent...Civil Wars. 1642. First proposition.

2. " Mr Prynne's Last Declaration to the Commons of England. 1649.

3. " Sovereign Antidote to prevent, appease....Civil War. 1642. In this pamphlet he gives his reasons for opposition to the King.

The trial of the King was illegal,¹ and his execution was murder.²

A Proclamation, proclaiming Charles, Prince of Wales, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, was printed immediately after the execution of Charles I. This work was attributed to Prynne, and most likely he was the author. It reveals the strong royalist strain in him. The constitution of England required a King, and anything that usurped his position was illegal and to be opposed. Throughout the Commonwealth period, Prynne suffered for his antagonism to those who had usurped regal power, and his activities against Cromwell and his supporters continued without abatement. In 1659 he fearlessly put the case for the return of the King,³ and in the following year he witnessed the success of his labours in the restoration of Charles II.

The House of Lords.

Three estates formed the Parliament of England, and they met in two Houses. The Lords Spiritual and the Lords Temporal sat in the House of Lords, and the members of the House of Commons formed the third estate.

In the Constitution of England there was a place for the House of Lords, and Prynne was at pains to show the long and ancient tradition of this House. It had a longer history by far than the House of Commons, and because it was

1. Prynne. Six serious Queries concerning the King's Trial. 1649.
3. " True Narrative of what was done. 1659. p.95.
venerable, respect should be paid in accordance with its age. There was a time when the whole legislature was in the control of the King and Lords, and up to the time of writing "the ordinary judicial power or judicatory of our Parliament... resided and continued in the King and House of Peers."¹

Although the Upper and Lower Houses occasionally came into conflict their differences were usually smoothed over, so that until the rise of the Commonwealth Prynne found no occasion to write in defence or otherwise of the Upper House. With the rise of the Commonwealth, however, and the abolition of the House of Lords, Prynne had reason for writing, and in book and pamphlet he sought to defend the place of the Peers' House in the Constitution of the Country. This he undertook by tracing the history of the rise of both Houses of Parliament, by making a special plea for the Lords and House of Peers and by attacking the Levellers especially in that part of their teaching dealing with the abolition of the House of Lords.² The Levellers Prynne dealt with effectively when he showed them that they had no argument in law. "No law or Act of Parliament can be made by the King and Commons without the Lords' concurrent assent, no more than by the King and Lords without the Commons' assent." So contended Prynne, and then continued, "Therefore to

dream of holding a Parliament or making laws without the Lords is a sign of an intoxicated brain. 1.

Before passing from this section it is necessary to consider Prynne's attitude to the Lords Spiritual in relation to the Upper House.

There is no uncertainty as to his attitude to them in holding secular offices. This he deplored, and he strongly protested against any prelate holding a secular position concurrently with a spiritual office. To all such he would quote the action of those in the past who gave up the one if they held the other, and he would respectfully suggest that their example should be followed. Prynne pointed out that there were those who "even in the light of Popish darkness" gave up the secular for the spiritual. 2. He was never a reformer in any sense, but this was one place where he would have disturbed the status quo. He was prepared to exclude prelates from the House of Peers, and the Royal assent to an act excluding Bishops from the Upper House, given on 13th February, 1642, gave great satisfaction to him. 3. By the time they were restored in 1661 by the second Parliament of Charles II, Prynne, somewhat mellowed, was in favour with the King and less inclined to contend for anything unless he felt very strongly about it. It is noteworthy, however, that Pepys in his diary mentions

3. " A Gospel Plea for the Lawfulness... Tenthes. 1653. a To the reader,
that Prynne was bitter in the House against the Bishops.¹ This might well have been opposition to their restoration to the House of Lords.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

During the early part of his life Prynne was an interested spectator of what took place in the House of Commons, and from 1648 until his death as a member of the House he was actively associated in all its work. With the exception of the years during which he was forcibly excluded he took his full share in the work of the House.

The Commons House had its own privileges and rights which, Prynne claimed, could not be withdrawn by King or Lords, nor should they be encroached upon by either of these. Indeed Prynne was as jealous for the privileges of the House as any member, and strongly resented any interference by the King.

Members' personal right to speak freely in the House and to be free of arrest Prynne defended with all the energy and skill which he possessed.² The imposition of the tax of Ship Money awoke in Prynne a determination to champion the cause of those who opposed it, and his Humble Remonstrance against the tax of Ship Money, though not published until 1643, he claimed to have been much earlier in circulation, and to have had a strengthening effect upon the opposition to the illegal tax.

When the King made the abortive effort to arrest the five members by his raid upon the House of Commons, Prynne was again set for the defence of the privileges of the House. In one of his pamphlets, written much later and with another object in view, he traced the steps taken by Parliament in defence of its members and privileges, with all of which he was in hearty agreement.

From the time of Pride's Purge until the Restoration he never ceased to make known his opposition to a so called Parliament which permitted the exclusion of the majority of its members, thus denying them their rights. These illustrations reveal that Prynne was set for the defence of the privileges of the members. Many other examples could be given to prove the same point. He endorsed the claims of the Petition of Right, and he agreed with the House determining the questions relating to contested elections.

The question of Sovereignty.

It is in this question that the real problem of the Constitutional struggle lay. Prynne had little difficulty in giving his own answer, which is to be found in a consideration of his claims for Parliament. We have seen that he recognised that each section of the governing body had its own privileges and rights, which it ought to be free to exercise without restraint from anyone. But Prynne

1. Prynne. The Lords and Commons first love...impeached members. 1647. p.8.
2. " Many pamphlets during the period reiterating the illegality of the Rump and the abuses suffered by the excluded members.
argued further that there must be no encroachment by the one prerogative upon the other. It should be noted Prynne did not claim that each acted in its own sovereign sphere as if it were an isolated unit. There was an association formed to govern the Kingdom and therefore someone or a body of persons must be sovereign or supreme.

Parliament, that is, Lords and Commons, working together - for a house divided against itself cannot stand - is, according to Prynne, the supreme power. "The High Court of Parliament may in divers respects be truly and properly said to be the Highest Sovereign Power of all others and above the King himself." The followers of the King accused Parliament of claiming a power and jurisdiction above his Majesty. Prynne showed them by many precedents that this was no new thing. Continuing his argument, but not on such secure grounds, he added, "To speak impartially, though the King's royal assent be generally requisite to pass and ratify laws, yet I humbly conceive that the original, prime legislative power of making laws to bind the subjects and their posterity rests not in the King's own royal person, or jurisdiction, but in the Kingdom and Parliament which represents it."

The rest of Prynne's teaching follows logically from this, and it may best be observed by noting, on the one hand,

1. Prynne. Lords and Commons first love to...impeached members. 1647.
4. " Ibid. p. 46.
the King's relationship to Parliament which, as Prynne saw it, became wholly illegal by absenting himself wilfully from Parliament and waging war against his subjects, and on the other hand, by observing his claim that Parliament was completely legal in its relationship to the King. Let us look at these two aspects of Prynne's thought.

First, the King's offences against Parliament. The well worn illustration of the Tax of Ship Money will suffice to remind us of his high handed actions against Parliamentary rights before open armed conflict took place. Prynne claimed that the King had no authority to issue a writ for an annual tax for defence of the sea.¹ Any such levying was a Parliamentary power, and the King's action was not only contrary to the statutes of the realm but against common law.² Abuses which the King permitted against the laws of the realm were continually practised in the High Commission, Prelates Consistories, Council Chamber and Star Chamber.³

If these show the King's position to be indefensible from a legal aspect, Prynne had a still easier task when he came to show the King's actual position in relation to his Parliament during open hostilities.

The King absented himself willingly from Parliament, and although Parliament had made repeated efforts to obtain his return he had still chosen to be absent.

While thus absent he had refused to give his signature to Acts of Parliament, had sought to frustrate all Parliament-ary proceedings, and had detained the Lord Keeper and Great Seal at York. " In all these particulars ", according to Prynne, "(he had) proved cross to his Majesty's regal office. "

Further, in setting up his standard he had broken this solemn oath ; " I will keep peace and godly agreement entirely (according to my power) both to God, the holy Church, the Clergy and the People. " Moreover, what already had been taking place, daily became more evident, namely, the King's favour to and protection of recusants, so that they occupied positions of authority around him, and the sad spectacle was witnessed of Roman Catholics slaughtering in battle good Protestant citizens. Other lawless acts of the King had been his policy of persecuting Protestants and his vandalism in sacking towns. This course of the King, in Prynne's judgment, amounted to a Royal Popish Party in open hostility against our Religion, Laws, Liberties and Parliament. "

Accordingly, " When your Majesty recedes from your Kingly office, you are so far absent from the object of our allegiance ", and if the King continuously acted contrary

1. Prynne. A Sov, Antidote to prevent...Civil Wars.1642. Second Proposition.
5. " Vox Populi. 1642. p. 5.
to his solemn oath he must not forget that " all our oaths depend upon the oath your Majesty hath taken." 

Prynne would call upon the King to return to his Parliament, and so to his lawful power.

Now we turn to Parliament's relation to the King. The war with the King was not of Parliament's seeking. But since war was inevitable it was perfectly in order for Parliament to wage a defensive war against the King's forces.

It cannot be too strongly stated that Prynne never in any sense desired civil war. From its beginning until the end he abhorred it and constantly spoke against it, suggesting various methods whereby a settlement could be made. This appeal which he made should be sufficient evidence of this fact. "Let us all put forth our utmost best endeavours, and pour out our fervent prayers to God to prevent and cease these civil combustions, to aid and preserve our dear country, Kingdom, Religion, the Parliament, ourselves and our posterity against these malignant Incendiaries, who seek their utter destruction." 

But since the King had set up his standard, "against his oath and without cause," Parliament and Kingdom may take up arms for the preservation of the Kingdom's peace. "

Nor can this be accounted treason. "Let none dare affirm that the Houses of Parliament are, or can be, traitors

   " p. 31. Also First Proposition.
Far from that being the case the opposite, Prynne contended, was true, namely, "War against Parliament is no less than High Treason." This was what Parliament by their Declaration of August, 1642, had resolved.

It is not difficult to follow him in his argument for Parliament's right to make a new Great Seal when we know his theory concerning King and Parliament. His tract, "The opening of the Great Seal of England", 1643, is carefully and clearly argued and stated. Here again he refuses to detract from the King's authority or liberties, but he concludes that although King and Parliament have both an interest in the use of the Great Seal, since Parliament gave the custody of the Great Seal to the King, it may also lawfully cause a new Great Seal of England to be engraved if the original is abused. That the Lord Chancellor had taken the Seal away without consent of Parliament constituted an abuse, and so the House may and ought to make a new Seal and appoint a Keeper.

The authority of Parliament in matters of Religion was also stressed by Prynne. This subject will be treated more

adequately in another chapter; suffice it to state here that according to Prynne the authority and jurisdiction of Parliaments in matters of religion was clearly established.¹

We must note that in all this Prynne very carefully showed that he had no desire to derogate from the King's prerogative proper. Charles remained King and was treated with all the deference due to his position. Right to the end Prynne was anxious to make a settlement with the King.²

The next section in this chapter discusses Prynne's attitude to the Commonwealth, so that to complete this present section it may be noted that on the Restoration Prynne had not much to say concerning sovereignty. What he did write was in keeping with his previous record, but the emphasis had undergone a change, for he was inclined to stress the position of the royal prerogative.³

Parliament during the Interregnum.

There need be no lengthy discussion of Prynne's attitude to the rulers during this period. His contention that their position was wholly illegal has been endorsed by students of Constitutional law so that, in one sense, a lengthy statement of his outlook has little value. This was, however, an exceedingly busy period in Prynne's literary career, as a survey of the bibliography of his works clearly demonstrates. What we are passing over so lightly

². " Speech in the House of Commons. 1648.
³. " Signal Loyalty...of true saints... towards their King. 1660
was no light matter to Prynne, since the position for which
he contended, if accepted now, was hotly contested in his
day. Credit, therefore, must be given to him in that he
saw clearly the true legal position when others could not
or would not see it.

Prynne, let it be said, was strongly antagonistic to
the Army authorities and the governing power which they
set up. To him, they were manifestly guilty of treason
in disobeying the orders of Parliament, and the Articles
of impeachment against Cromwell and others clearly show the
deep seated nature of his antipathy to the rising power of
the Army leaders.

The death of the King dissolved Parliament. That was
Prynne's contention. F. W. Maitland, speaking on this
very point, supports him. "It had been accounted well-
settled law that the King's death, the demise of the Crown,
would dissolve Parliament." Consequently any semblance
of a Parliament as a continuance of the Parliament sitting
before the death of the King had no place in law, yet
despite all protests the Rump continued to sit and exercise
authority.

Accordingly a second and secondary argument was called
for, and this Prynne supplied as he forcibly stated that a
governing body sitting under the domination of armed forces

1. Prynne. The case of the Impeached Lords, Commons
etc. 1648. pp.15/16.
2. " A brief nec. vindication of the old and new
secluded members. 1659. p. 27.
could not possibly be a free authority. Even if during this period he was compelled to recognise Parliament as a de facto Parliament, he proceeded to show that it was not a de jure Parliament, since the majority of the freely elected members had been forcibly excluded, and thus it was neither a fully representative body nor a free body that was sitting as a Parliament.

Any legislation produced, therefore, was null and void. To this point Prynne returned again and again. Hence it is no surprise to find that he totally opposed the new oath of loyalty to the Commonwealth; wrote against new taxes, which he refused to pay, and made fun in his pamphlet, "New Magna Charta", 1649, at the expense of the new rulers and their laws.

One of Prynne's bitterest accusations against the regime was presented in a contrast between the Prelates tyranny and the tyranny of the Army authorities. He boldly complained that the encroachments on the people's liberties were far greater by the latter than the former. The conditions and rigour of his imprisonment were more severe in his latest imprisonment than that which he

1. Prynne. Prynne the Member reconciled to Prynne the Barrister. 1649. p.23. Full Declaration of True State of secluded members. 1660.
2. " Summary reasons against the new Oath and Engagement. 1649.
3. " Declaration and Protestation against...New Tax...and Excise. 1654.
4. " Reasons against maintenance of the Forces. 1649.
experienced under the malice of the prelates.\(^1\). Of the leaders themselves Prynne wrote in scathing terms. They were "greater traitors", enemies of the Kingdom and Republic, than Strafford, Canterbury or the beheaded King.\(^2\).

**The Subjects' Liberties.**

In our statement of Prynne's thought with regard to the various sections which had a part in the constitution of the Kingdom, we have seen that the individual subject had rights and privileges. We noticed both the King's position in this relation and also Parliament's responsibility in guarding the liberties of citizens as also keeping vigilance against any unlawful encroachments. We now turn to examine briefly this section of our study a little closer. Prynne felt bound to defend the legal rights of his fellow men. His wide knowledge of precedent and law provided him with a sure grasp of what individuals could justly claim, and his knowledge and skill were at the disposal of those who were unjustly prosecuted.

In summarising the people's privileges he made the following four points:--\(^3\).

(1) Privileges and freedom of their Parliaments and their members.
(2) The safety and liberty of their persons.
(3) The propriety of their estates.
(4) The Free course of Common Law, Right and Justice.

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1. Prynne. *A New Discovery of Free State Tyranny.*
   1655. 2nd Letter.
During the course of his life Prynne discovered that these were encroached upon by two completely different authorities. The two authorities were King and Prelates, and the Leaders of the Commonwealth. And in defence of these rights Prynne suffered at the hands of both.

Against the two opponents of the subject's privileges Prynne argued that the liberties, customs and laws contained in the great charters of the past were fundamental, perpetual and unalterable. In the early days of the prelates' maladministration and their employment of the High Commission and Star Chamber, he had used the whole force of his powerful personality to bring to light their inconsistencies and lawlessness, and to defend, as far as he was permitted, the unfortunate persons who found themselves marked out for prosecution. But to Prynne the later days in which Cromwell and his confederates ruled were full of many of the same illegal encroachments. Indeed Prynne often exclaimed that the latter days were in this respect much worse than the former days. These fundamental laws were to the body politic as arteries, nerves, veins were to the body, and, therefore, they could not be taken away without doing serious damage to the life and constitution of the nation.

A further point, which might easily be overlooked, to

1. Prynne. First and Second part of a seasonable...vindic. of Fundamental Laws.... 1655. p. 11.
3. " First and Second part of a seasonable...vindic. of Fundamental Laws.... 1655. p. 49.
show Prynne's care of the subjects' rights may be noticed in the way he grouped together on several occasions Parliament and the Kingdom. For example, in speaking of Sovereignty he carefully chose his words as he wrote that the power to make laws was in the Kingdom and Parliament which represented it.1 This phrase, Kingdom and Parliament, he used occasionally, 2 which would suggest that the subjects' rights were here conserved as well. Parliament, in other words, was not an isolated unit responsible to no one. It was responsible to the Kingdom—that is, to the subjects of the Kingdom, whose privileges it defended and whose laws it made.

Thus the dignity of the subject was upheld and his position in the constitutional scheme of things was important.

There were several criticisms made of Prynne in his own day which are worthy of consideration. Why should he have sought so persistently to take his seat in the House of Commons in association with a Parliament which, according to his teaching, was dissolved by the King's death? The answer to this does not need to detain us long. Prynne was a legalist, and in that sense an idealist, but he was also a realist. Though it had no right by law to sit, yet a Parliament of a kind was sitting. Prynne had no other course but to recognise it.

as such, and in seeking to obtain his seat he felt this was the only way whereby redress could be made, and events proved that he was right.

A second and more important criticism of Prynne's work is that he was inconsistent and sometimes contradictory in his statement regarding sovereignty. It is said that at one time he made Parliament completely sovereign and at another time the King.

Now it is true that if isolated statements were taken from various works and placed side by side they would appear contradictory. But the answer to the apparent inconsistency is that on these occasions Prynne was speaking about a particular subject with his mind on one aspect of the whole, but when his whole teaching is taken into consideration it can be shown that these statements were not contradictory but complementary.

Because of this seeming change of position a pamphlet, "Prynne against Prynne" was printed, in which an effort was made to demonstrate that Prynne the member of Parliament was opposed to Prynne the Barrister. This was not difficult for Prynne himself to confute. Owing to his monarchist activities during the period immediately after Cromwell's death Prynne has been accused of being a sincere convert to Royalty.

1. Prynne. Pryne the Member reconciled to Pryne the Barrister. 1649.
2. " A Short... Prescription to recover our Kingdom. 1659. Somer tracts. Note.
There could be no more ridiculous charge made. Throughout his career Prynne clearly saw the true legal position, and held to it. True, the emphasis changed slightly according to the side which he was supporting at the moment, but the fundamental truth never altered. What, then, was his position? England was a constitutional monarchy. Her legal position was that she should be governed by a King with a free Parliament of a hereditary Upper House and a Lower House freely elected by the people, each with their own privileges and prerogatives, and all working together for the good of the Commonwealth.

That this was Prynne's position throughout his life the following quotations will demonstrate. Far from trying to adopt an inconsequential course, he followed the path that law and conscience demanded, as the story of his life clearly shows.

Let us then conclude his defence against the charge of inconsistency on the question of sovereignty by these quotations, which will also sum up the substance of this chapter and his teaching on the question of the constitution.

In 1643 he wrote, "O that all the delinquents and malignants about the King would now...voluntarily yield themselves to their legal trials." 1.

In the same year we read, "For my part I profess sincerely, I love and honour both King and Parliament alike, and in the controversies now between them concerning their

jurisdictions, stand as a man indifferent to do right to both, without prejudice to either." 1.

He maintained in 1649 that he was, "Always a defender of Kings and Monarchy, but will not flatter nor court Parliament or people to the prejudice of Kings just royalties but carry an equal hand as shall do right to both." 2.

In the year 1656 he wrote, "That no ordinance of Parliament whatsoever can be made without the threefold consent of King, Lords and Commons in Parliament." 3.

Three years later Prynne contended that, "The restitution and preservation of our old hereditary Kingly Government by Common Consent is the only true public interest of Englishmen, both as men and Christians." 4.

His last book was published posthumously in 1670. Part of its title reads thus;

"The History of King John, King Henry III and the most illustrious King Edward I therein the ancient sovereign dominion of the Kings of England, Scotland, France and Ireland over all persons in all causes, is asserted and vindicated against all encroachments and innovations whatsoever. . . .

Now published for the better advancement of learning, maintenance of the Kings' supremacy, the subjects' liberties, and the law of the realm." 5.

5. " See Appendix C.
CHAPTER V.

PRYNNE AS A CHURCHMAN.
Prynne was an ardent Churchman. Both his life and writings bear conclusive witness to this fact. When, however, the question is asked; *To what section of the Christian Church did he belong?*, the answer is not so certain. Some writers speak of Prynne as a Presbyterian, but when all the facts are examined this claim can be shown to possess only part of the truth. So we now turn to a study of this problem.

It can be definitely stated that Prynne was not a Romanist. This is clearly demonstrated by an examination of his attitude to the Church of Rome. In his biographical fragment of Prynne, J. Bruce is careful to draw attention to the fear of the Church of Rome which existed in Prynne's day. Continuing his thought he wrote, "Some people think, it may be, that this dread of Rome was unreasonable or exaggerated. For our present purpose that matters not. It existed and operated upon the minds of the whole nation." 1 Prynne by his writings helped considerably to keep alive in the minds of his contemporaries the fact of this menace.

A spirit of bitter hostility breathed through all Prynne's literary work when the subject was the Church of Rome. The nature of this spirit can be seen in his reference to a new book of devotions published by Dr. Cozens. Prynne showed that Cozens had borrowed much of his material

from Popish sources, and charged him with endeavouring to bring in Popery. He enumerated several items which he condemned. These included practices which, according to Prynne, "our Church hath long since quite exploded, and cast out as Menstruous and polluted reliques of the Romish Whore."¹

Throughout the whole of his life he kept constant vigilance against any possible advance in the position of the Church of Rome in England. The material which came forth from his pen in the last years of his life was impregnated with the same bitter hatred of a Church which to him was Anti-Christ.²

The Jesuits, as the main instrument of the Pope's evil work,³ were the special target of his attack, and many were the plots and evil designs, real and imaginary, which Prynne discovered and disclosed to the world. His Rome's Master-Piece (1645) has as its sub-title, "The Grand Conspiracy of the Pope and his Jesuited instruments, to extirpate the Protestant Religion, re-establish Popery, subvert Laws, Liberties, Peace, Parliaments, by kindling a Civil War in Scotland, and all his Majesties Realms, and to poison the King himself in case he comply not with them in these their execrable designs." This is another example of his antagonism to, and hatred of, Papacy in general and of the Jesuits.

3. " First and Second part...Vindic...Fundamental Laws. 1655. To the Christian Reader.
in particular, and it reveals what Prynne always held, that their goal was the overthrow of the Kingdom and the re-introduction of Papacy by any means whatsoever.

Prynne could find traces of the Jesuits and their work almost anywhere. He found them associated with the King and Court. They were obviously at work in the Church; Parliament was not closed to them, and they travelled all over the country in various disguises. Their tactics, as recorded by Prynne, seemed to be directed by no definite policy. At one time they were found as supporters of the King, at another time rejoicing in his death. Some were with the King and his army, others supported the Parliamentary side, and the army leaders' defiance of Parliament, also, was the result of the hidden designs of the Jesuits. The absurd extent to which Prynne carried his persecuting inquisition of the Jesuits is seen when he called the Quakers the spawn of Romish Frogs, and charged the Jesuits with responsibility for the rise of the Commonwealth.¹

But his antipathy extended beyond those who were actively engaged in furthering the cause of the Roman Church. His ire was aroused against many who, though not professing themselves to be Catholics, seemed to Prynne to be assisting the Roman cause, e.g., the King in protecting recusants; Laud, Montague and Cozens with their Popish ceremonial and Arminian outlook, Independents and Sectaries who, Prynne

¹ Prynne. Brief Necessary Vindication. 1659. p.34.
believed, were guided by Jesuits and Popish provincials,\(^1\) were all traitors to the true Church and were to be exposed. They were labouring to bring the whole body of Popery into the Church again.\(^2\)

From the foregoing it is obvious that Prynne, so far from being a Romanist in any sense, was bitterly hostile to anything which savoured of Papacy. His desire was to maintain the Protestant cause, and he made every endeavour to hold up to view Romanists and their friends in their true character as enemies of the Kingdom and of the Church of England. His labours were not without reward, for if Lilburne in one of his many irresponsible moments could say that the Pope would canonise Prynne as a Saint, Prynne could answer, "I can without vanity or ostentation affirm before all the world, that I have done more disservice to Priests, Jesuits, and the Pope; made more discoveries of their Plots and written more against them and Popery than all the whole generation of Sectaries and Independents put together."\(^3\)

With equal definiteness we can say that Prynne was not an Independent. The title of one of his pamphlets is sufficient testimony to this. He named it "Independency examined, unmasked, refuted by twelve new particular interrogatories" (1644), and the position he there adopted was

   Fresh Discovery...New Wandering Blazing Stars. 1645. p.46. 
   First and Second part...vindic...of Fundamental Rights. p.D2. 1655.


3 " A fresh Discovery of...New Wandering Blazing Stars. 1645. p.35.
characteristic of his attitude to the Independents throughout his life. Here he parted company with his old friend and fellow sufferer in persecution, Henry Burton. Here also he found himself opposed by John Goodwin, and both of them spent considerable time and labour in an endeavour to refute each other in argument.¹ The controversy, however, was conducted in a more friendly spirit than Prynne showed in his opposition to the Catholics, but it lacked nothing in definiteness, and at times it descended to the level of bitter recrimination.

It must not be concluded that the Independents and Prynne held nothing in common. Both had the Puritan outlook, using the word Puritan in its broadest sense, but there were many points at which Prynne was completely opposed to the Independent position. Here are several examples.

According to Prynne the Independents said, "That every particular congregation of visible saints, and Independent Church, is under the government of Christ alone, as the only Head, King, Governor, Lawgiver of it, and subject to no other jurisdiction."² With this Prynne was wholly in disagreement and called upon the High Court of Parliament to have a special care for its undoubted rights and privileges in matters ecclesiastical.³

Not only was he opposed to congregations assuming

¹ Prynne. Faces About. 1644.
supreme authority in matters connected with themselves, but he deprecated their use of special covenants. In their covenants they promised "to adhere, defend, maintain to the utmost of their powers, and contend for even unto blood, the establishment of the independent form of Church government which themselves have set up and submitted to, and oppose the Presbyterian in contempt of the Parliament's authority." To Prynne it all savoured of a conspiracy against the Solemn League and Covenant, the Assembly and the Presbyterian Party. For this he asked Parliament to take proceedings against them.

Moreover, Prynne bitterly complained,"The excluding men from their Church assemblies, sacraments, Christian Communion, yea their very innocent infants from baptism itself in their independent churches unless they will conform to their arbitrary church covenants, dictates, prescriptions (...) is a far greater grievance, violence, coercion to the persons, consciences of Christians, than all imprisonments, racks and corporal tortures in the world."

These foregoing examples of Prynne's disagreement with the beliefs of Independents lead to the conclusion that he was not one of them. Their differences were of a nature that could not easily be removed, and Prynne had little patience with those who were turning their backs on the Established Church. "He professed" he said "The Independent way to be a Seminary of Scisme, Libertinism, Heresie, Errors,

1. Prynne. Fresh Discovery...New Wandering Blazing Stars. 1645. A.
and a Babel of Confusion. 

When a study is made of his relationship to the Sectaries another emphatic verdict can be given. Prynne did not belong to any of the Sects. Throughout his writings he mentioned many of them by name, but not all called for special attention as meriting exposure through the medium of his pen. But his passing reference to some Sects, such as Millenarians and Fifth Monarchy men, as well as his particular writings concerning others, testify to his antagonism to, and hatred of, them.

The Quakers were specially reprehensible to Prynne. His pamphlet written against them reveals the deep seated nature of his antagonism. To Prynne the Quaker movement was the child of Rome, or, as we have already seen, "the spawn of Popish Frogs." He compared them to the Jesuits, and produced evidence to show that a number of Franciscans were readily accepted among the Quakers. He associated them with Rome as Anti-Christ, and he found a parallel to their ecstatic visions in St. Francis and Ignatius Loyola. He made further charges against them, including the use of witchcraft and sorcery.

4. The Quakers Unmasked. 1655.
5. Conscientious Legal Queries. 1660. p.34.
The Levellers also brought forth a special pamphlet from Prynne; "The Levellers Levelled to the very ground" was published in 1647. Against the Levellers' effort "to extirpate monarchy and magistracy, nobility and gentry" and "to bring down the House of Peers", Prynne produced his arguments, some of which would still be used to-day in support of the claim for the retention of the House of Lords. He concluded his argument by maintaining that the Levellers' policy was "a project to extirpate monarchy and nobility and set up a popular anarchy and polarchy", and so they were "more guilty of high treason than Strafford."¹

Prynne's attitude to the Jews may here be introduced and briefly stated. In his "Short Demurrer against the Jews" (1656) he stated the case for their exclusion from the country, and as we have already noted in a previous chapter, this work was partly instrumental in procuring the banishment of some Jews and the refusal of entrance into the country of others.

This short summary of Prynne's attitude to some of the Sectaries makes perfectly clear that he did not belong to any of them.

Was, then, Prynne a Presbyterian? Many writers describe him as such, and without doubt several good reasons can be given for assigning him this designation. In the following pages some of the more important reasons are given for

describing Prynne in this way.

Prynne, significantly enough, gave his signature to the Solemn League and Covenant. ' For him to sign was not a mere formal act, since he wholeheartedly agreed with its provisions, and he was enthusiastic in seeking the fulfilment of its purpose. To set up the Presbyterian form of church government in the three Kingdoms was clearly stated, and Prynne intended to further that cause thus delineated. It is impossible to read the works of Prynne written during the period of the Civil Wars and at the time of the Commonwealth without being made aware of this fact. It was one of his strong arguments against the army leaders that they had broken their oath. For although they had signed the Solemn League and Covenant they were engaged in pursuits contrary to that which were there stated. He specially charged Cromwell with this default, and made mention of the occasion on which his name had been appended. Moreover, Prynne claimed that it was only on the basis of this Covenant that the distractions of the Kingdom could be settled, and it was in this way, too, that Church uniformity could best be achieved. Thus it is shown that Prynne set a very high value on the Covenant, but what has been said gives an inadequate conception of Prynne's strong partisanship of this truly Presbyterian Covenant. Its merits he lauded,

2. " Fresh Discovery...New Wandering Blazing Stars. 1645. (Section 3).
and even he found it difficult to find language able to
describe the despicable character of those who, having put
their names to the Covenant, went back on their word.

Another item which proved Prynne as a defender of the
Presbyterian form of church government was his oft-repeated
claim that bishop and presbyter and minister were the same.
Several pamphlets issued from Prynne on this subject.¹
Possibly the best known was his "Unbishoping of Timothy and
Titus." In this book, first published in 1636, and again
issued in 1661, he pointed out that a number of eminent men
had shown "Bishops and Presbyters, by Iure Divino, to be
all one, equal and the same; and the difference that is
between them to be only by custom, human institution and the
grant of princes, not by divine right."² In his published
speech, delivered in the House of Commons in December, 1648,
he declared that he was not in favour of bishops except in
the New Testament sense where they are one and the same with
minister and presbyter.³

Further evidence of his Presbyterian sympathies was
given in his own definite statement that of the various
forms of church government the Presbyterian system was the
most agreeable to the Word of God.⁴ Moreover, he was
opposed to the bishops at the Restoration demanding that
Presbyterian ministers should be re-ordained. This, he
complained, was contrary to the law of the land,⁵ so he

¹ Prynne. Catalogue of Testimonies. Evidence Bishops and
Presbyters. the same. 1641.
² " The Unbishoping of Timothy and Titus. 1661.
³ " Speech delivered in House of Commons. 1646. pp. 65/86.
⁴ " Suspension Suspended. 1646. p. 2.
⁵ " The Unbishoping of Timothy and Titus. 1661 Postscript.
called upon the bishops to recognise Presbyterian ordinations. satisfactorily
"Let bishops resolve and convince us by solid arguments and henceforth
reasons, or else forever hold their peace and admit our late
Presbyterian ordinations valid, both in law and conscience,
without any future opposition."  

In our examination of his attitude to the Independents we noticed Prynne's antagonism on several grounds. Had we then proceeded further with the investigation it would have been necessary to record, what has been reserved until now, that his arguments, while directed against Independency, were all pro-Presbyterian. It is true to say that in these pamphlets Prynne was stating his case for Presbyterian-ism. He could say "Old Presbytery, old unlordly Episcopacy are (no doubt) far better for us than New Independency."

When Presbyterianism became the established form of government for the Church of England, Prynne was chosen among others to draw up a suitable division of the County of Somerset into distinct classical presbyteries, and to state, at the same time, the number of ministers and others who were fit to serve in each classis. This work Prynne undertook and accomplished in cooperation with his colleagues in his usual thorough manner. This document is of interest to us since it sheds light on the nature of Prynne's activity in relation to the Church of England while Presbyterian in form. Two matters emerge, first, that Prynne was not merely

Postscript
1. Prynne. The Unbishoping of Timothy and Titus. /p.52. See also p. 84.
   " New Presbyt. Light...out of Independent Darkness. 1647.
on the fringe of affairs but at the centre of activity, and, second, that he was prepared to serve as an elder in that Church, in Somerset.¹

In addition to these facts, which undoubtedly show Prynne's Presbyterian sympathies, it would not be difficult to demonstrate that in several points of doctrine Prynne was in agreement with the Presbyterians. Prynne's theological outlook, however, is reserved for another chapter, but it should be carefully noted that although, generally speaking, he was in agreement with Presbyterian doctrine, there were several important points at which they and he separated, as, for example, in their views of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.²

The cumulative evidence of these several arguments draws us to the unavoidable conclusion that Prynne was a Presbyterian. Yet a few other items must be considered to give a more accurate statement of Prynne's actual position in this matter.

If a careful scrutiny is made of the dates during which Prynne wrote defensively or polemically for Presbyterianism, it will be noted that in the main they fall within a particular period of his life. That period could roughly be given as the twenty years between 1640 and 1660. For part of this period Presbyterianism was the established form of government for the Church of England, and during this period

¹Prynne. The County of Somerset divided into Several Classes: 1648.
²A Vindic. of four Serious Questions. 1645. p. 40.
also there was a strong rising tide flowing in favour of Independency. This fact is important in reaching any final decision regarding the religious denomination to which Prynne belonged.

This, too, should be noted. Prynne was careful to guard against any tendency on the part of Presbyterian ministers to assume any spirit of lording over their flocks. What he had denied to bishops he would not tolerate in Presbyterian ministers. When some of them began to claim their position as by divine right, Prynne was as strong in attack against them as he had been in opposition to bishops. In addition, he could write in scathing terms of over-rigid Presbyterians.

In this connection one further point should be stressed. Prynne was perfectly consistent even in his defence of the Presbyterian way. As we shall see later, he was sufficiently Erastian in outlook to contend that church government was a matter for the ruling power to decide. Parliament had decreed in favour of Presbyterianism, and while it happened to coincide at the moment with his own outlook, this fact nevertheless clears Prynne of any charge of inconsistency in the matter.

We come now to an examination of Prynne's attitude to Episcopacy. The case has been made out for those who have claimed him as a Presbyterian. But this question has still to be answered. Did he ever advocate Episcopacy? What

was his real relationship to this form of church government as practised in the Church of England? These questions are not easily answered, and to give anything like an adequate answer an extensive survey of Prynne's literary work must be made.

To begin with, let it be noted that there is considerable material which tends to show Prynne in the light of a strong opponent of Episcopacy. His antagonism was mainly directed against the prelates. This was no light matter to him. Time and again he returned to attack the bishops. If the importance of this part of his thought were measured by the quantity of material which came from his pen it would hold a place of honour. His attitude to the bishops will be examined under the following three divisions.

First. The bishops' claim to hold their office and position by divine right was hotly contested by Prynne. In various ways he showed that their contention was not in accordance with scripture, tradition, law or precedent. The bishops held their position from the King and from the King alone. Yet they continued to exercise authority which, to Prynne, largely encroached upon the King's prerogative. Their illegal practices, such as visitations on their own authority, and making new ecclesiastical laws, were matters which King and Parliament must not permit to continue.

Prynne suggested that the bishops be brought to condign

2. " Ibid. p.72.
punishment for their offences. 1.

Second. Their innovations, which they sought to introduce into worship, were contrary to the laws of the Established Church. This was a feature of the case concerning which Prynne felt strongly, and he argued convincingly against the bishops and those who supported them. He was on sure ground when he showed Arminianism to be completely contrary to the doctrine of the Church of England, which had been strongly Calvinist. The innovations within the church building were also matters which brought Prynne into open conflict with the bishops. The position of the Communion Table 2; bowing at the name of Jesus 3; kneeling to receive the Sacrament 4 and the Clergy's vestments 4 were all subjects which received careful attention from Prynne, who claimed that such innovations were contrary to the accepted customs of the Church of England. 5 He exhorted the bishops to cast off all works of darkness and to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. 6

Third. Not only were these innovations contrary to the traditions and customs of the Established Church of England, but Prynne also saw in them the very substance of Popery. We have seen that the menace of Popery was a constant source

3. " Certain Queries to Bowers at the name of Jesus. 1636.
of fear to all good Protestants. Consequently Prynne con­sidered it his duty to expose this tendency in the prelates. Repeatedly he charged the Arminian Archbishop and those who agreed with him with leanings towards Rome. In his indict­ment of them he made a much more serious charge, namely, that they were endeavouring to re-introduce Popery into England. Sometimes he qualified his charge by saying they were seeking to accomplish this purpose by degrees. That, however, to Prynne demanded the vigilance, for against an open effort an adequate guard could be maintained, while gradual recognition of Popish customs would enable Popery to be firmly entrenched before due notice was taken of it.

Prynne throughout his life, for these and other reasons, such as their worldliness,¹ and their illegal proceedings against the King's subjects, displayed an open and bitter hostility to the prelates of his day. Loyal subjects were advised by him not to obey the prelates in their practices of lording over the people; church wardens were given special instructions regarding their illegal visits,² and the bishops, while admonished, were exhorted to change their ways. "Let your portion be priestlike, not prince like."³

Something of Prynne's true spirit can be caught in the title of a book which he contemplated writing, "That bishops have been, if not the sole, yet at least the chief authors of all the schisms that ever infested and rent the Church of God."⁴

2. " Brief Instructions to Church Wardens. 1637.
What has been said makes clear Prynne's bitter antagonism to the ruling prelates, and the question naturally arises, could Prynne possibly have been an Episcopalian holding these views? This question, however, cannot be answered satisfactorily as yet, for only one side of the problem has been stated. That there is another aspect the following paragraph will disclose.

While Prynne certainly held this strong antipathy to the prelates of his day, proof can be given that his antagonism was directed more against their illegal practices than against the office of bishop. Nowhere did he contend that the title of bishop should not be used. Even when he argued that presbyter and bishop were alike he never suggested that the name bishop should be discarded. A careful scrutiny of any summary of complaints discloses that each item was a particular malpractice of the bishops at that time, and nothing was said about a bishop as such. 1. It was the Lord Bishops who were none of the Lord's Bishops. This point can be further stressed by noting his action shortly after the Restoration. He accepted Episcopacy, yet still continued to write about the Popish practices which were being introduced into the churches. 2. Indeed, there can be no doubt whatever on this point, for Prynne agreed with Bastwick when he definitely stated that he had nothing against bishops who

2. A Short Examination of some Exuberances...to Common Prayer. 1661.
A Moderate apology for tender consciences in not bowing at the name of Jesus. 1662.
acknowledged their authority as coming from Kings and Em­
-ors. The thought already taken from his speech delivered
in the House of Commons endorses what we have here been
claiming, that Prynne only opposed bishops who claimed auth­
-ority not in keeping with the New Testament usage of the word.

Thus any suggestion that Prynne was completely opposed to
Episcopacy as a form of church government cannot stand before
the evidence here produced. Further, positive testimony can
now be gathered to show that Prynne was not opposed to the
Episcopal form of church government.

Prynne, as must be generally recognised by those who
study his works, was a true lover of the Church of England.
He was baptised according to the form of baptismal service in
its Prayer Book, and he grew up under its influence.
Throughout his writings he used many terms of endearment in
describing the Church, and he never showed any desire to
stray from it. Nor did he ever stray from it. His Puritanism
was of the variety which sought a purer Church by working to
that end from within. And he was not opposed to a State
Church. He finished his life as a Communicant of the Church
of England, for not even the Act of Conformity turned him
against the Church of his youth. Thus both at the beginning
and at the end of his life he was an Episcopalian.

In discussing his relationship with Presbyterianism it
was noted that though he held much in common with them in

1. Prynne. The Humble petitions of Bastwick etc.1641.p.11.
theological outlook, there were also differences of thought between them. Prynne also had much in common with the recognised theology of the Church of England, and at those points in which he was at variance with the Presbyterians he was usually in agreement with the Thirtynine Articles. It is interesting to note also that at the Restoration Prynne sought to reconcile Episcopal and Presbyterian clergymen.¹

Prynne was, therefore, not antagonistic to the Episcopal form of church government, but for the greater part of his life conformed to it. A further interesting situation arises when it is shown that even in the period during which he was in sympathy with Presbyterianism he had not completely turned his back upon Episcopacy. In 1644, to the question, "Why not Episcopacy as well as Presbyterianism?" Prynne replied, "If you mean it of Lordly Episcopacy there are abundant pregnant texts against it, to prove it opposite to God's word. If of moderated or regulated Episcopacy, the same with Presbytery; if the Parliament by the Synod's advice unanimously establish it as most consonant to the Scriptures and most agreeable to the Civil Government, I shall readily submit unto it without opposition, and why not you and all others?"²

Before drawing this chapter to a conclusion it should be remembered that Prynne must have renounced the Solemn League and Covenant to remain a communicant of the Church of England.

¹. Prynne. The Unbishoping of Timothy and Titus. 1661. p.29.
After all he had said about those who, like Cromwell, had denied their oath, he himself was found guilty of the same accusation. Yet Prynne cannot be charged with inconsistency. The last quotation made acquits Prynne of any such charge. Parliament had unanimously agreed that the Episcopal form of church government should be established, and that completely absolved Prynne of his oath in connection with the Covenant. And it should not be forgotten that Prynne did make an effort - even if it did end in ignominious failure - to stand by those who found it difficult on grounds of conscience to follow his example. His opposition to the Corporation Act, if sincere, was unfortunate.

Prynne, we can now say, was an Episcopalian for the greater part of his life, and even during the time of his allegiance to Presbyterianism would have been prepared to accept Episcopacy. Accordingly, the conclusion to which I have come, from the facts produced for inspection, and by seeking to understand the spirit of the writer himself, is that Prynne's Presbyterianism was never deep rooted, that he was an Episcopalian at heart, and that he never strayed far from the Episcopal fold.
CHAPTER VI.

THE CHURCH AND ITS GOVERNMENT.
In the previous chapter the conclusion has been reached that Prynne was at heart an Episcopalian, and that, for an important part of his life, he was a practising Presbyterian. This interesting and somewhat intriguing situation reveals Prynne as distinct from the characteristic Puritan of the time. He was an individualist, and therefore it is not possible to place him in any one specific category. This is true of his thought concerning the church and its government, and in the following pages Prynne's own particular teaching will be investigated.

CHURCH AND STATE.

There were certain foundation principles upon which the structure of Prynne's thought was built. All he had to say was dependent upon these principles, and his whole doctrine, if we may so call it, followed logically from these.

His most fundamental principle he revealed in his argument against one who maintained that there was a set immutable form of church government for all Christian nations. Prynne asked the question, "What scripture has he for such a contention?" His own reply was, "Christ hath in the scripture preserved to us all necessary rules and laws both for our faith and lives either in a general or special manner,
but that Christ hath punctually and particularly set down any exact unalterable form of Church Government for all Christian Nations, Churches to follow under pain of being unfaithful in all the former respects....remains on your part to make good."¹ His opponent, according to Prynne, could not make good his contention for there was no scriptural warrant for such a belief. Prynne held firmly and advocated stoutly that there was no settled and unalterable form of church government to be found in scripture.

Immediately this position was taken up there arose a further question. "Who, then, decided the form of Church government ?" Prynne's answer to this question contained the second basic principle for this subject, namely, that the church itself did not decide the nature of its government; the decision was part of the prerogative of the supreme temporal authority. ² In studying the many references to this important point one is confronted with the difficulty, already encountered in another connection, of apparent contradictions. The King, Parliament and Supreme Magistrates were each mentioned as having complete sovereignty in this matter. The following quotations will illustrate this point. (1) "The King hath as absolute an Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction as any of his Royal progenitors enjoyed both by the laws of God and of the Realm."³

1. Prynne. A Full reply to certain brief observations, 1644. p.5.
(2) "He who hath seriously surveyed the statutes of our Kingdom, shall find religion and church affairs, determined, ratified, declared and ordered by Act of Parliament and no ways else." ¹.

(3) He wrote on the last page of the epistle dedicatory of "Truth Triumphing over falsehood" of, "The ancient and undoubted ecclesiastical power and jurisdiction of Parliaments, Christian Princes and Magistrates."

The problem of seeming contradictions in Prynne's statements has already been examined, but attention must be paid to this second main principle, namely, that supreme ecclesiastical jurisdiction belongs to the civil authority.

From these two fundamental statements the following points emerge. (1) Prynne believed in a State church. (2) The supreme authority of the church was the existing legal ruler of the Kingdom. (3) The nature of Church government could vary. The decision as to its form rested with the supreme authority. (4) The authority of Bishops, Presbyters, Ministers was derived from a human source, and in no sense could one of them claim to hold his position iure divino.

Expressing these views Prynne came into conflict with some of those with whom he was associated in religious work. For neither Episcopalians, Presbyterians nor Independents were

likely to agree with his contention that the temporal authority was supreme in ecclesiastical affairs. Moreover, many disagreed with his interpretation of Scripture in which he claimed that there was no settled form of church government to be found in the Bible. Yet this was the Erastian position which Prynne adopted and held throughout his life. And having taken this standpoint as fundamental the rest of his beliefs followed naturally. No matter what the form of church government might be, at any particular time, the ecclesiastical authorities were unable to formulate new laws or decide points of doctrine without the authority of the temporal head. Thus Convocation could only meet by authority and even articles presented for Episcopal and Archdiaconal visitations and spiritual courts, "Should be passed by the whole Convocation sitting under King's licence, ratified by Parliament and confirmed by the King himself under the broad seal."\(^1\)

There was no difference in the case of the Westminster Assembly, whose members were to be guided by instructions, "Concerning the Liturgy, Discipline and Government of the Church of England or the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the same from all false aspersions and misconstructions as shall be proposed unto them by both or either of the said Houses of Parliament and no other."\(^2\).

Synods and Councils, however, were very useful to the Church of Christ, even though they worked under direction. For example, the Westminster Assembly, while set up to advise Parliament, would make no proposals until they could be shown to be sound by undeniable proofs. A harmonious liaison between temporal and ecclesiastical authorities was obviously to the advantage of both parties.

For Prynne, then, the church was a state church working under the control of the sovereign authority, yet advising that same authority in matters of theology, religion and ecclesiastical policy.

MAINTENANCE OF THE CHURCH.

The state church which Prynne envisaged was to be maintained by the method which had for long obtained in the Church of England. It was Prynne's claim that the Church and Ministry should be supported by the recognised method of tithes. Towards the defence of tithes he set himself, particularly when about August, 1653, a powerful effort was made to abolish this time honoured method of financing the church. Just at that time Prynne was engaged in writing a treatise named "A Gospel Plea for the Lawfulness and Continuance... of Tithes", which he purposed to complete in five chapters. The haste with which the opponents of Tithes were prosecuting the cause for abolition, however, made Prynne

publish, earlier than he intended, the first part of his work in an endeavour to anticipate them. So, in 1653, the first two chapters appeared, but owing to many unforeseen circumstances the remainder or second part of the treatise was not published until 1659, when, according to Prynne, there were still those who were "Now again as malicious against them as ever. "

In 1659 there also appeared his pamphlet entitled "Ten considerable queries concerning tithes", the main purport of which was to discredit the petitioners for the total abolition of tithes, by certain pertinent questions. The ten questions were directed at the petitioners and their petition rather than offering any real contribution to the controversy regarding tithes.

His argument for the maintenance of the Church and Ministers by tithes is found in his Gospel Plea for Tithes. It is of interest to note in passing that Prynne charged the Quakers with strong opposition to Tithes, in the following words, "There being since...a new dignified Antichristian sect of Quakers sprung up amongst us, more virulently opposite to our ministers and their maintenance by Tithes, than any other, which they not only decry in all their pamphlets, but totally subtract and detain from them with such wilful obstinacy, that

many of them choose rather to lie in prison, upon mean process, or executions, than set out or pay their tithes. "¹.

Prynne first set himself to show that preachers and ministers of the gospel had, by divine right, a claim to a just, competent and comfortable maintenance, which should be supplied by the people. His next step was to show — and this is what most interests us here — that the method of collecting this money by tithes was the best possible arrangement. This, his second proposition, he stated in this way; "That the maintenance of the Ministers of the Gospel (and of Places and Houses for God's public worship) by Tithes, Glebes, Oblations (yea and spoils won in battle by Generals, Colonels, Captains and Soldiers) is not only lawful and expedient, but the most fitting, rational and convenient Maintenance of all others, warranted by direct Precedents and Precepts, both before and under the Law and likewise by the Gospel, which doth no ways abolish or condemn, but approve and confirm this way of maintenance." ².

This, then, was Prynne's considered arrangement for the upkeep of the Church and Ministry, and anyone who refused to pay their legal tithe was to be prosecuted.

Another important aspect of Prynne's teaching concerning the Church and its Ministry may be introduced here. On the question of filling vacancies in Parish churches, Prynne

¹. Prynne. A Gospel Plea for Tithes. 2nd part, 1659, p. 3.
wrote a pamphlet in 1654 in support of the ancient custom of Patrons rights to present incumbents to Parish Churches and vicarages, upon vacancies. This pamphlet was called forth because an effort was then being made to strip Patrons of their legal, just and hereditary rights. To Prynne it was an attack upon the Church of England, its ministers, congregations, and ancient settled system of government. First showing that this effort aimed at suppressing parish ministers, abolishing parochial congregations, abrogating ministers' right to tithes, and erecting a new vagrant and unordained ministry, he next proceeded to show that the patron's position was legal and could not be taken away without the highest injustice. For evidence Prynne traced the early history of patrons and showed that the first patrons obtained the right to present incumbents because they had given the land. To deprive them of that which legally belonged to them could not be contemplated, and hence Prynne pleaded for the continuance of patrons' lawful and equitable rights. This method of supplying ministers to vacant Parish churches was, therefore, advocated by Prynne as a most suitable arrangement, within a state church.

THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH.

Preaching the word and administering the Sacraments together constituted the main task of the Church. This aim

1. Prynne. Ine Patronatus, 1654.
could only be achieved through the work of the ministry, and Prynne had a very high conception of the office of the ministry. Ministers were God's ambassadors and Christ's under-shepherds. They were the mouth of Christ, and so must preach and speak his language; they had no other commission but to preach the gospel to men; they were the stewards of the mysteries and manifold graces of the gospel and these alone they must dispense; and they were sent to open men's eyes and to turn them from darkness to light. Human learning they should not use because it was a dim light compared to the brightness of the glorious gospel of Christ. They would not win men by the wisdom of the world which human authors taught, but only with the wisdom of God which the Holy Spirit taught. Ministers could not fulfil their high office unless they were resident with the parishioners. Against non-resident clergy Prynne was scathing in denunciation. In this connection, as well as in the case of non-preaching clergy, his main target was the Bishops. It was contended that Bishops were not ordained to preach, to which Prynne rejoined, "It being too mean an office for them, unless it be sometimes at the Court...to gain either more honour or preferment thereby, or for some such private ends; not out of any great zeal of converting souls to God."  

He made the accusation that for many of them, "The study of virtue is turned into the appetite of transitory things." ¹
Nor did he agree with the vestments of the Prelates, which were unbecoming to their office; "Is there not a law calling for imprisonment against Prelates, using strange vestments; would they not be better as scare-crows?" ²

Since he held a high conception of the minister's function, one can understand Prynne's hatred of clergy who did not in any way approximate to the standard. Whether they undertook it or not, their duty was to preach the gospel and regularly dispense the sacraments. To read homilies was not preaching, though they were better than having no word preached. Although he did not wholly approve of homilies Prynne ardently supported the lectures, which he attended as opportunity arose. It was a regular and full time occupation for any minister who conscientiously undertook the task. Indeed one of the criticisms made against the Puritans and their demand for the constant preaching of the Word has always been that it taxed the spiritual resources of the Ministers. ³

The ordained ministry as an order distinct from the laity within the church was fully recognised by Prynne. Here was one point at which Anglicans, Puritans and Separatists in

2. " Sixteen New Queries proposed to our Lord Prelates. 1637. Quest. 15.
general could agree. They differed in the mode and doctrine of ordination, but they were one in recognising the importance of the ordinance. This was the case even among those who held firmly to the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. And Prynne was in complete agreement with all who held ordination in high esteem.

Prynne's main concern when he touched upon the subject of ordination was to claim that the power and right of ordination belonged to Presbyters and ordinary ministers as well as to Bishops. This claim he was called upon to defend particularly at the Restoration. It will be recalled that then, when the dispute was at its height, Prynne called upon the Bishops to admit our late Presbyterian ordinations valid. For the Bishops to demand all clergy not episcopally ordained to be re-ordained was to Prynne completely contrary to the law of the land.

Prynne admitted the ordination of the Church of Rome as valid. Priests who entered the Protestant Church were to be accepted without re-ordination. Thus Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Roman ordinations were on an equal footing. Of ordination outside these Communions Prynne had nothing to say.

2. Prynne. The Unbishoping of Timothy and Titus, 1661. p. 84.
3. Ibid. p. 52 Postscript.
4. The Unbishoping of Timothy and Titus, 1661. p. 33.
THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH.

As a Puritan member of the Church of England it is doubtful if Prynne could have agreed with the Westminster divines' affirmation, "That the Liturgy used in the Church of England hath proved an offence, not only to many of the godly at home, but also to the Reformed Churches abroad." 1. For, Prynne himself found the prayer book of value and used it, stating that he always approved the ancient practice of liturgies, 2. yet he was clear in his own mind that it was not absolutely essential. Moreover, he was distressed at the alterations to the Prayer Book which the Prelates were frequently inclined to make without authority, 3. and one of his main arguments against Arminianism was that its teaching was contrary to the doctrine of the book of Common Prayer. 4. Accordingly it seems true to say that Prynne considered a liturgical service in worship helpful but not essential to real worship, and therefore its use should not be enforced upon any worshippers.

Ceremonial, however, Prynne would exclude from worship in the Church of England. To him, as to many, it was nothing less than Popery, and should never be countenanced in any Protestant service. In his antagonism to it he wrote

3. " News from Ipswich. 1636.
copiously and trenchantly. If Arminian doctrine was Polish error then these concomitants were of the same nature and were to be opposed even at the risk of one's life. He believed that true devotion could be shown in withstanding error and protecting truth, and so he set himself the task and engaged in it throughout his life. With iconoclastic zeal Prynne condemned Altars, Images, Tapers and Crucifixes. Items of the Arminian type of service, such as the frequent repetition of "Glory be to the Father"; standing up at each repetition and at the reading of the gospels and creeds, received his severe censure. These were completely alien to the type of service which Prynne desired. Moreover, kneeling at the Sacrament; the sign of the cross in baptism; the use of the ring in marriage, and bowing at the name of Jesus, were all ceremonials for which there was neither command nor example in Scripture.

In order that some idea of Prynne's thought in this matter may be better understood, let us examine in more detail one of these items to which he was so definitely opposed. The practice of bowing at the name of Jesus was closely studied by Prynne. Several treatises came from his pen on this subject. The titles can be seen by referring to the Bibliography of Prynne's tracts. Clearly the

1. Prynne. Censure of Mr Cozens. 1628. p. 76.
2. " Anti-Arminianism. 1630. q. 4.
3. " A short...exam...of exuberances...to the Common Prayer. 1661. pp. 8, 19 and 24.
problem must have been an issue of importance in his day, for this is the only reasonable explanation for expending so much time and labour on a subject which to-day is comparatively unimportant.

The scriptural passage which was supposed to sanction the practice of genuflections, namely Philippians 2, Prynne examined with meticulous scrutiny. In his exegesis he arrived at the conclusion that the passage could not in any way bear the meaning which the ceremonialists endeavoured to foster upon it. On scriptural grounds, he claimed, there was no sanction for such practices.¹

He turned the argument against his opponents contending that the name Christ was more worthy than the name Jesus. Only One was called Christ; many others had the name Jesus.² Yet no external sign of reverence was mentioned at the recital of the name Christ.

Moreover he showed conclusively, and challenged his opponents to prove otherwise, that the origin of the ceremonial was not, as many contended, to be found in the early Fathers, but to be traced to the Anti-Christian Popes and the Church of Rome, "who propagated it by their indulgencies to justify their idolatrous bowing to images, crucifixes, hosts and altars."³

1. Prynne, Bowing at the name of Jesus. 1630. Appendix to Anti Arminianism.
3. " A short relation of the beginning... of bowing... 1630.
The certainty with which he pursued his course, and the assurance that he possessed the facts, is abundantly illustrated in a passage taken from a pamphlet in which he castigated Giles for his claim that the early Fathers interpreted Philippians 2, in the Arminian way. Prynne's comment was, "This passage I dare boldly aver is as fabulous as any in the Golden Legend, there being not one Father, one ancient expositor this day extant, that did ever interpret this text of any corporal genuflection or bowing at the recital of the name of Jesus in time of divine service only."¹

Prynne's attitude is thus shown to have been one of open hostility to ceremonial in worship within the Church.

There is not conclusive evidence in Prynne's works of his attitude to the place and use of music in worship. Without doubt he had something to say and in a very definite manner—for the most part against its use. Yet there is also evidence to show that he was not totally opposed to it as he was to other parts of the service. How Prynne viewed music in the church in his time can be gathered from the following outburst, "But now adays Music is grown to such and so great licentiousness, that even at the ministration of the Holy Sacrament, all kind of wanton and lewd trifling songs, with piping of Organs, have their place and course. As for the Divine Service and Common Prayer, it

¹ Prynne. Lame Giles His Haltings. 1630. p. 38.
is so chanted and minced, and mangled, of our costly hired, curious and nice musicians (....) that it may justly seem, not to be a noise made of men, but rather a bleating of brute beasts; whiles the choristers may descant as it were a sort of Colts; others bellow a tenor, as it were a company of Oxen; others bark a counter-point, as it were a Kennel of Dogs; others roar out a treble like a sort of Bulls; others grunt out a bass as it were a number of Hogs; so that a foul evil favoured noise is made, but as for the words and sentences, and the very matter itself is nothing understood at all; but the authority and power of judgment is taken away, both from the mind and the ears utterly. It is not surprising to find that Prynne concludes, "(It) is altogether displeasing unto God, corrupts His Worship, and filthily defiles His Holy House." In all fairness to Prynne, it should be noted that in the Histriomastix at the point where he makes this strong denunciation, he is speaking of a particular type of church music which to him, at least, was sacrilege to permit within the church. A scrutiny of the section reveals that Prynne did conceive of a type of church music which would stir up the worshippers," To devotion and compunction as all church music (which should be grave and serious) ought to do." 1. Prynne. Histriomastix, 1633. pp. 284-5. 2. " Ibid p. 286. 3. " Ibid p. 287.
Thus Prynne had no desire to discard music completely from the service of worship, but agreed that appropriate music for worship could be used with profit within the House of God.

**DISCIPLINE.**

To what extent and in what manner should the church exercise discipline were contemporary controversial topics which Prynne discussed at length in some of his pamphlets. Ecclesiastical censures were taken as a recognised institution by all the chief religious denominations, but the method and extent were very much open to question.

It was a matter of general agreement that discipline, including admonishment and excommunication, had New Testament sanction. Prynne fully agreed with this, but he parted company with many of Puritan outlook when he forcefully argued that the civil magistrate must share in the enforcement and execution of the censures. "Hath the magistrate no coercive powers in matters of religion?" he asked in 1644, and his own answer to the question was a most definite affirmative. This same viewpoint he stressed when examining Independency. In the answer to the twelfth question of the treatise he demonstrated that Christian magistrates had power to further the cause of Christ by censures and punishments.

2. *Independency Examined.* 1644. Quest. 12.
   A vindic. of Four Serious Questions. 1645.
   To the Reader.
Prynne, moreover, postulated and defended the extreme view of inflicting corporal punishment for spiritual offences.

A matter of keen controversy which occupied a considerable amount of Prynne's time was the nature of the discipline to be practised on persons found guilty of misdemeanours. Some ministers had established the practice of excluding delinquents from the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Prynne argued that if the supreme censure of excommunication had to be executed it should include not only loss of the privilege of sharing in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, but also deprivation of every ordinance which the church could provide. To Prynne exclusion from the Lord's Table only, was not a New Testament censure. He was at pains to show that to keep ignorant and scandalous persons from the Sacrament alone was an authority which ministers had taken upon themselves without scriptural warrant. Nevertheless he was prepared to admit that Parliament, in setting up Presbyterial government for the church, "gave ministers in a prudential way" power to keep ignorant and scandalous persons from the Lord's Supper but he would not allow that this was an authority derived from the New Testament.

2. " Four Serious Questions...Excommunication.1645.Ql.
Prynne's theory was bound up with his doctrine of the Lord's Supper, which will be discussed in the next chapter, but on the topic of discipline he claimed that a bare suspension of persons from the Lord's Supper only, without a seclusion of them from other ordinances, was no censure appointed by Jesus Christ in His Word.

There was another side to discipline about which Prynne also wrote. This was discipline as it referred to the clergy. In this action the magistrate had to play an important role. During the earlier part of his public life Prynne sought to use the law courts to bring to punishment Bishops for their illegal acts, but in this he had little success. When later in life he discovered certain ministers dispensing communion only very infrequently, so that many christians were deprived of the right of regular participation in the Sacrament, Prynne advised magistrates to exercise their undoubted legal powers and compel the delinquent ministers, under threat of deprivation of their benefice, to perform their duty.

Not only were the clergy to be carefully watched, but there were individuals who were absenting themselves altogether from the Lord's Table. This was a serious matter, and Prynne endeavoured to show that discipline should be exercised in such cases. He found examples in Queen

Elizabeth's time of fellows of Lincoln's Inn being expelled because they had refused to receive communion at convenient times. Further cases he discovered during the reigns of James and Charles, then Prynne concluded, "Which Godly discipline, I heartily wish may now be carefully revived, severely executed in all our Inns of Court, and all Churches throughout the Realm, as well on refactory ministers, who obstinately refuse to administer the sacrament to their people, as on negligent or obstinate Non-Communicants." ¹

Prynne did not fail to recognise an ethical value in ecclesiastical discipline, but that was an aspect of the truth upon which he did not dwell. It was as a legalist he made his contribution to the subject, and his approach from that angle tended to obscure any other viewpoint.

That ecclesiastical discipline should form no incon siderable part of the Church's authority, reinforced by the civil power, was, however, the clearly stated belief of Prynne.

Prynne thus advocated a state church, in which the Sovereign temporal authority was also in control of ecclesiastical affairs. Patrons were to continue to exercise their ancient legal rights, while tithes furnished the necessary financial requirements of the

¹ Prynne. An Appendix to a seasonable vindic... of Holy Communion. 1657. p. 9.
church. A resident ordained ministry to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments was envisaged, and each minister was to conduct public worship according to the liturgy of the prayer book or in some other dignified form. The service must be devoid of ceremonial and the church itself cleared of any unnecessary trappings. Authority would mark the church from beginning to end, for its discipline, where necessary, would be enforced by the secular power.
CHAPTER VII.

PRYNNE'S THEOLOGICAL OUTLOOK.
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Prynne never made any claim to recognition as a Theologian. Yet of his intelligent interest in Theology there can be no doubt, and that he possessed a competent knowledge of the prevailing theological position of the time there is abundant evidence. As a layman he claimed the right, which some would have denied to him, to express in writing his views on Christian thought. 1. Of his many published works, a few have subjects illustrative of the important controversial theological problems of the day. This study he pursued in his usual thorough manner, making careful research of the works of ancient and modern writers, the records of councils, the statements of creeds, and the relevant testimony of Scripture. No attempt, however, was made at presenting a complete systematic statement of Christian Theology. The material which he produced for the public to read usually dealt with a matter of importance around which lively discussion was taking place at the moment.

It is impossible to place Prynne in any one single theological class. To place him among the Calvinists is to be nearer the truth than to associate him with any other class of theological thinkers, but he was obviously not in complete agreement with that school of thought. He

exclaimed himself, "I will not wholly pin my faith on Calvin's sleeve," though at the same time he paid high tribute to Calvin. Refusing to acknowledge the title "Calvinist", he was nevertheless constantly in opposition to those who differed from Calvin in doctrine. Most of his treatises on Christian doctrine criticise the Arminian position and, in my judgment, Prynne in seeking to avoid the name "Calvinist" was careful to use the title "Anti-Arminian", which title he would have accepted if applied to himself. What, then, were some of the beliefs which were to be heard in this Anti-Arminian school of thought?

THE SCRIPTURES.

In a previous chapter we have observed Prynne's difference of opinion with the generally recognised Puritan attitude to the authority of Scripture as a rule for Church Government. The quotation then made furnished evidence of his agreement, however, with Goodwin's contention that the Word of God is the rule for faith and life. Herein Prynne acceded with the general Protestant outlook, and it is rather ironical that he should make reply to Goodwin, at another time, in such a way as to suggest that Goodwin had not wholly held to this position. On that occasion Prynne charged Goodwin with judging what was of God and what was not, by the event according as it prospered or not.

1. Prynne. Perpetuitie of a Regenerate Man's Estate. 1627. xx
2. See page 117.
"Whereas he should have judged according to the truth, and the rule of the Word, let the event be what it may."  

Prynne's method in stating his case was to marshal the evidence, both Scriptural and patristic, and make the combined testimony carry all the weight of unquestioned authority. In thus giving an honourable place to the writers patristic/ he was more in line with the Anglican than the Puritan tradition. It must not be supposed, however, that Prynne placed the authority of Scripture and of the Fathers on the same level. An appeal could certainly be made to the Fathers, but the ultimate authority was Scripture. Yet Prynne himself, on occasions, tended to build his argument more on the testimony of writers than of Scripture. Lilburne called him to task for this. Commenting on Prynne's latest publication Lilburne complained that Prynne summoned "Old rusty authors to prove that Kings, Counsels, Synods and States have, for so many hundred years, meddled with matters of religion." Then Lilburne continued, "I grant you they have; but I demand of you, by what right or by what authority out of the Word of God they have so done?" At this point Prynne was not quite in keeping with the Westminster Divines. They set about their task with the Scriptures before them as the sole rule of Faith, but

Pathers and Councils, when cited, were not considered "as authorities, but only as witnesses." \(^1\) Care must be taken, however, in stating Prynne's position. His almost incredible knowledge of patristic writings, and his constant use of them, tend to obscure the fact that he, too, held that Scripture was the sole ultimate authority for Christian life and doctrine.

**GOD AND MAN.**

Prynne did not argue for the existence of God. That was assumed. His knowledge of God came to him first through the Revelation given in the Scriptures, which he accepted without question, and then through his own experience. It was in the interpretation of the Scriptures, however, that he was shown to be at variance even with some who, like himself, held the Scriptures as the rule of life and doctrine. Prynne was not concerned with speculative thought. He was a practising Christian, who was interested in the purposes of God, particularly where they affected the lives of men.

To Prynne the Sovereignty of God was clearly stated in Scripture, and he interpreted that Sovereignty in a full Calvinistic sense. The cumulative testimony obtained in the study of this section will demonstrate the truth of this statement, but one specific example may be here stated. To the

the question, "Why does God convert one by His Word and not another?"; Prynne answered, "Because it is His good pleasure." 1

This Sovereign Omnipotent One, Prynne was convinced, took an active interest in the affairs of men. There was a close connection between the country's moral condition and the God-sent judgements of plague, fire and civil war. 2 Thus man was responsible for such conditions and held the remedy in his own hands. God waited to exercise mercy upon a country which would put away grievous sins. "So shall His judgements be diverted, His favour regained, His mercies enlarged, His gospel continued, our foes subverted, our church reformed, our kingdom established, our grievances redressed, our fears removed, our peace prolonged, and our souls eternally saved." 3

When Prynne approached the subject of the fundamental need of the individual man, he thought of God as active on his behalf. The nature and extent of this divine activity can best be seen in first considering the nature of man.

Man was, to Prynne, a corrupt, fallen creature. There was no uncertainty in this matter. Here are his own words. "Every Son of lapsed Adam is born into the world a sinful, unclean, depraved creature, overspread with a universal leprosy of corruption; all the imaginations of his heart.


Ibid. 1628. b. 3:
are evil, yea, only evil, and that continually; yea, all his righteousness is but as menstruous rags, and in him there dwells nothing that is good. "1.

In this unmitigated state of depravity man could do nothing whatever to better his condition. Hope there was, but only for some. Not all could enter into this hope. At this point Prynne stated in stark terms his belief that God had decreed that only a definite number of souls would experience salvation. " God from all eternity hath by His immutable purpose and Decree, predestinated unto life; not all men; not any indefinite or undetermined, but only a certain select number of particular men (commonly called, the Elect, invisible true Church of Christ;) which number can neither be augmented nor diminished; others hath He eternally and perpetually reprobated unto death." 2. It followed that man was helpless. He was either one of the elect or he was not, with a nature "more pendulously prone to vitious than to good examples", he had no endowment such as free-will. Whoever was of the elect, however, ultimately was regenerated and could never wholly fall from grace.

In the new relationship between the elected and regenerated Soul and its Sovereign God, the individual was secure for ever. The Arminians held that a man, though one of the elect, may through sin fall totally from the benefits of Grace. The Anti-Arminian position Prynne

strongly advocated, and his first published work undertook the task of proving the perpetuity of a regenerate Man's estate. This book is a volume of over four hundred pages. In it Prynne, having collected his facts from Scripture and from human authorities, argued from these and from the dangerous consequences which would arise if his contention were not true, that a man once regenerate can never totally fall from Grace.

Of Soteriology Prynne had not much to say. But he did speak of the death of Christ as for all men. Christ's death, however, while sufficient for all mankind, was effectually for none but the Elect, and true believers, who alone were saved by His death.

THE CHURCH.

The usual distinction of visible and invisible Prynne recognised. The church on earth was the divinely appointed instrument to fulfil the divine purpose. It was impossible for the visible church to be completely pure. Tares and wheat should therefore be allowed to grow together. This, according to Prynne, was the doctrine of the Church of England. "That it is the will of God and Christ that sheep and goats, Tares, Chaff and wheat, Good and Bad, should live, grow and continue together in the visible church, till Christ Himself shall separate them at the day of judgement, and that no visible church on earth ever did

1. Prynne. The Perpetuity of a Regenerate Man's Estate. 1627.
or shall consist only or mostly of real Saints and Christians truly regenerate. 1. This doctrine of the church which Prynne expounded will be seen in clearer light when we examine his views about the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

This church represents God upon earth. "That which the Church doth lawfully bind on earth is bound in Heaven; those therefore who are justly excluded out of, condemned by the militant church, as Players and Play-haunters ought to be, are excluded likewise out of Heaven, are condemned in Heaven, unless they do repent." 2.

On this ground church discipline was most important, for the Church's censures were not only of value for time but for eternity. It is possible now to recognise more clearly Prynne's reason for the appointment of discipline to a dominant position within the church.

In his doctrine of the church Prynne was rather more in the Anglican than Puritan tradition. The Puritan demanded that the membership of the church be pure— at least, in so far as that was a human possibility. The church, in other words, was a body of saints—the true elect of God, and none but such should be allowed to share in the special benefits of the true Christian, for example, all others should be excluded from the Sacraments.

So we now turn to a consideration of Prynne’s doctrine of the Sacraments, in which we shall discover his view of the church endorsed, and where too we shall see an epitome of his whole theological position.

**THE SACRAMENTS.**

On the doctrine of the Sacraments there were a number of divisions of opinion. Not only was it the distinction between the Roman and Anglican forms of the Eucharist which occupied the minds of men, but also the various distinctions as propounded by the several reformers were carefully studied and discussed. It was a matter of extreme importance to all churchmen of our period, and hence to pay particular attention to Prynne’s outlook in this matter will serve a useful purpose in the study of Prynne’s thought. Against the generally accepted view that Christ’s presence was more real in the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper than in other ordinances, Prynne stated his belief that “God’s Sacraments, Ordinances are all of equal holiness, and God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost equally present with us, and as immediately conversed with by us in them all, as in the Lord’s Supper.”

Prynne was a true Protestant in admitting only two Sacraments, namely, the Sacrament of Baptism and of the Lord’s Supper. Before turning to consider his views of the Lord’s Supper, a brief statement of his attitude to the Sacrament of Baptism may here be made.

1. Prynne. A Seasonable vindic. of Holy Communion. 1656. p. 44.
Prynne's thought on Baptism is gathered from a few scattered references throughout his voluminous works. There is no pamphlet in which he contributed any studied article to the question of baptism.

That he was strongly opposed to the Anabaptists and to their doctrine and method of baptism is apparent in his works. Hence when he speaks of baptism it is usually infant baptism that he has in mind. There was no scriptural authority for the baptism of infants of Christian parents. This he clearly stated in the following words, "There is no express precedent in sacred writ for the baptism of Infants born of Christian Parents, but only by way of necessary consequence."¹ That is not to say, however, that Prynne did not favour the baptism of infants of Christian parents. It is evident from the general tenor of his thought that he would not have denied baptism to children of parents who professed the Christian religion, whether truly regenerate or not. Though it was different from his earlier standpoint, Prynne later in life seems to have believed that baptism was a converting ordinance; at least he asserted that the Fathers had proved Baptism to be of that nature, and he used the fact in such a manner as to suggest he agreed with their conclusion.²

That Baptism and the vows taken in baptism had an influential role to fill in the life of those baptised,

Prynne clearly showed by the many references he made to it, particularly in the Histriomastix. There he pleaded for the vows made in baptism to be the guide for the conduct of life. "If the ancient contract between God and us in Baptism, (confirmed and ratified in the precious blood of our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ) stand good... how can, how may we then approve of Stage-Plays? how can we tolerate, act, admire or frequent them as, alas, we do?" Baptism meant for Prynne that in life the Devil and all his works should be constantly renounced.

**SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.**

Prynne diligently studied the various theories relating to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and in two pamphlets he left for us a careful statement of his own belief.

The doctrines of Transubstantiation and Consubstantiation Prynne refused to accept. Both were repugnant to his thought. "There it is. Hoc est Corpus meum; there we eat and drink (say they) the very Body and Blood of Christ itself." Then continued Prynne, "which ridiculous Popish dream of Transubstantiation [ushered in] Various Papal Superstitions and Idolatries." In another passage he exhibited the same bitter spirit towards Transubstantiation. There he spoke of many Romish errors, which to him were,

2. " (A Seasonable Vindication of... Holy Communion. 1656."
3. " The Lord's Supper briefly vindicated. 1658."
"flowing from that monstrous absurdity of Transubstantiation, and Christ's corporal presence in this Sacrament, which all Protestants abominate, refute, renounce. "¹

Of Consubstantiation Prynne wrote with the same determined spirit of opposition. He charged it with causing grievous division in the ranks of the Protestant Church. "The erroneous Doctrine of Consubstantiation in the Sacrament, hath totally and almost irreconcilably divided the Lutherans from the Calvinists, and other Protestant Churches, and set them at open variance, hostility one against the other. "² Prynne thus agreed with the fourth thesis of the Bern Disputation of 1528 which said, "It cannot be proved from the Scripture that the Body and Blood of Christ are substantially and corporeally received in the Eucharist."

Though there was no corporal presence³ in the Sacrament for Prynne, yet he had a lively sense of its importance for the Christian life. His was a high conception of the Sacrament, for he spoke of it as, "This soul-converting, heart refreshing, Grace communicating heavenly Supper, wherein the rememberance, fruits, benefits of our Saviour's passion are most lively represented to their senses, and applied to their souls. "⁴

In this quotation Prynne wrote of the Lord's Supper as a soul-converting Sacrament. An examination of this statement now calls to be made since it was a view with which Puritans in general disagreed. There is unmistakable evidence to show that this was Prynne's mature and considered belief. Yet it has been suggested that it was not his original standpoint as stated in his first book. Samuel Shaw, a contemporary of Prynne, wrote an answer to Prynne's published statements regarding the Lord's Supper. Therein he showed that in the Perpetuity of a Regenerate man's estate, Prynne had strongly stated that there was no soul-converting power in the Sacrament, whereas his lately published works claimed that the Lord's Supper was a soul-converting Sacrament. "In his book I am very sensible to his change of spirit, since he wrote his useful Book of the Perpetuity of the regenerate." But it is certain Prynne believed the Sacrament to be a soul-converting ordinance. On several occasions he clearly stated this, and argued strongly against those who held the opposite view. Indeed on this particular subject he wrote one of his pamphlets. It is an answer to the contention that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was no Grace-engendering, Soul-converting, but only a confirming ordinance, of pre-existent Grace. And his whole argument

aimed at overturning what he termed, "This error." Part of the sub-title explained the nature of the burden of this pamphlet. The Sacrament was clearly demonstrated by Scripture and other authorities to be a Grace-begetting, Soul-convert ing (as well as confirming) Ordinance.

In 1646 he had contended for the same point of view. "The Lord's Supper is a converting, regenerating, as well as a confirming or sealing ordinance." When he replied to those who had sought to answer his pamphlet on church government he again stated the same belief.

Recognising this as Prynne's position, it is not difficult to see how he was able to hold the view that all visible Christians should participate in the Sacrament. This, then, we must now examine in the light of the current conditions, for Prynne was again in conflict with the general Puritan attitude.

It was held that only truly regenerated Christians should be permitted to communicate at the Lord's Supper. Any others who participated were drinking unworthily, and so bringing condemnation upon themselves. In consequence of this, certain ministers considered they had the prerogative to state who should be permitted to the Lord's Table and who should be excluded. Thus they set a guard upon the Table. Another aspect of the situation was that

whereas in some churches there were only infrequent celebrations, in other churches the Lord's Supper had not been dispensed for years.

Prynne set himself the task of remedying these defects. To the first of the objections that only the elect should participate, Prynne replied that no visible Christian should be excluded from Communion. Only those who were under discipline and ex-communicated were to be refused. Prynne left no room for dubiety as to his true meaning. He would include in the Sacrament those who might be termed unconverted, unregenerate Christians. For authority for this he held, as against many who completely believed otherwise, that Judas was present at the inauguration of the Lord's Supper. This he stated on several occasions, and added that not only Judas was present but Peter who denied his Lord, and all the other disciples who forsook him and fled.

Since, then, the Sacrament was a soul-converting ordinance, not simply for the use of those truly regenerate but also for sinners, it followed that it should be engaged in frequently and regularly. In this way Prynne answered the second problem. "It is now apparent that in the primitive church the Lord's Supper was administered to Christians every day, at least every Lord's Day, and that the Ministers

2. " Ibid. p.28.
   " Seasonable Vindic. of Holy Communion. 1656. p.72.
and Fathers in those times pressed all their auditors to a frequent participation of this heavenly Banquet; upon this very ground, that those who always sin, might always receive the medicine of this heavenly Sacrament against their sins, and daily receive it, that they might be daily healed by it; and because nothing was more effectual to an holy and unblameable life, than the frequent participation of it.”

And so, according to Prynne, the Sacrament must be celebrated regularly, and all should be invited to partake. Indeed, as has already been observed, Prynne went considerably further than this. So far from keeping any from the Sacrament who desired to participate, there should be compulsion upon those who refused to avail themselves of the open opportunity, and ministers should be compelled to perform their duty and administer the Sacrament regularly.

One further point is worth noting. Prynne considered that preparation was unnecessary. Preparation was a Roman custom, which should not be continued in the Protestant church. And he disagreed entirely with those who claimed that while the Sacrament was common to all it should only be administered to those who had been prepared by examination and auricular confession. Moreover, the early

church did not consider preparation necessary, nor did Jesus Himself suggest that to come to His table special preparation was essential. 1. Prynne expressed this last point thus; "Christ's sudden institution and celebration of this Sacrament at His Last Supper, without giving any previous notice of it to His Disciples to prepare themselves for its worthy reception, their former preparation, fitness to eat the Paschal Supper, and hear Christ's heavenly instructions given them, John 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 being deemed by Christ Himself a sufficient preparative to communicate with Him at His Table." 2.

Other items of controversy relating to the celebration of the Lord's Supper, Prynne dealt with throughout his works. He refused to admit that the Communion Table was in any sense an altar. To make it an altar was nothing less than to usher in Popery. Nor would he endorse Laud's words, "The altar is the greatest place of God's residence upon earth." 3. In the controversy over the position of the Communion Table in church Prynne had his decided opinion. Its most proper place was, without doubt, in the midst of the church or chancel, 4: it should not be railed in, and no one should be compelled to kneel for the Sacrament.

TOLERATION.

With only a few rare exceptions, the idea of toleration, involving liberty of conscience, never seemed to have been considered as a practicable possibility until the Seventeenth century was well advanced. Trevor Roper says of 16th century that religious toleration was considered a shocking error.² Prynne, despite all his clamour against Papacy and Prelacy, and despite all that he himself suffered at the hands of the Prelates for the sake of conscience, found no place whatsoever in his thought for religious toleration. Indeed it is as one who was most intolerant that Prynne must be known in history.

It seems almost incredible that anyone, even in his day, making such a loud Christian profession, could set up his own standard for conscience, condemn any other standard, and be intolerant of any who thought otherwise. Yet that was exactly Prynne's position. Fortunately for many, and possibly for his own reputation as well, he never occupied a position of authority in which his ideas could be carried out upon others.

The extreme of Prynne's intolerance can be seen in a passage like this: "Till his Majesty shall see these purgations rectified, superstition and idolatry removed, God's Sabbath duly sanctified, the suppressed preachers

² Trevor Roper. Laud. p. 4.
and preaching of God's word restored and hang up some of these Romish Prelates and Inquisitors before the Lord as the Gibeonites did the seven sons of Saul, we can never hope to avert any of God's plagues. 1.

Not only Catholics and Romish Prelates were condemned in this way, but the Independents and Sectaries were treated to frequent tirades of bitter invective with, in addition, the threat of the magistrate's powers of banishment and capital punishment being exercised. The title of one of his pamphlets expressed clearly the extent to which he was prepared to pursue his intolerant zeal; "The sword of Christian Magistracy supported or a Full Vindication of Christian Kings and Magistrates Authority under the Gospel, to punish idolatry, apostacy, heresy, blasphemy, and obstinate schism, with pecuniary, corporal, and in some cases with Banishment and Capital Punishments." 2.

It was clear towards whom this was directed; "Consider whether Lilburne Overton, with other seducing Sectaries, since this Archbishop's beheading, be not more openly, professedly and transcendentely guilty than Canterbury of undermining and subverting our Established Religion, Church, Laws, Government, but especially the Rights, Privileges, Ordinances and Proceedings of Parliament." 3.

The edge of the Sword for Christian Magistracy was, in a measure, blunted by making it clear that the treatise referred to, "Idolaters, Apostates, Heretics, false teachers, obstinate schismatics and Blasphemers not to tender consciences in matters of Church Discipline." Moreover, he also made clear that every effort at reform must first be made by the church using methods like exhortation and the preaching of the Word, before the magistrates should be asked to exercise their authority.

A careful survey of Prynne's works, however, reveals a hard, bitter, intolerant persecuting spirit, which was prepared to administer punishment even in some of its most brutal forms. Certain guilty persons should be branded with a hot iron with the word "Slanderer;" he suggested to the King that he should cut off the heads of those Prelates who usurped his crown; Parliament was petitioned to deal effectively with Independents, and Magistrates were urged to compel ministers to regularly administer the Lord's Supper.

To say that Prynne was merely a man of his own generation does not absolve him from judgement for his intolerant outlook. For it was nothing exceptional for Prynne to charge others with intolerance and the spirit

of persecution, while he himself was an open personal example of the very charge he made. Were there any extenuating circumstances? Prynne inherited the sixteenth century idea of "the godly prince", in which, "As a matter of fact the prince was chiefly responsible for the form of church order and government adopted by the territorial church of his dominions." 1 Prynne, as we have shown, with a slight adaptation of this view, argued that since idolatry, apostasy and heresy bring down punishment upon all and the country generally, then it is the urgent duty of the ruling authority to keep the kingdom free from such polluting sins. 2 Since there was Old Testament authority for godly Kings and Magistrates to punish even with death obstinate idolators, rigid discipline must still be exercised.

Moreover, Prynne looked to the moral effect of punishment, not only on the individual punished but on all others. This thought he expressed in relation to obstinate sinners, thus; "If they will not be reclaimed better some should suffer, than all perish." 3

While acknowledging the validity of these two arguments, Prynne can in no sense be absolved from guilt. His attitude was surely unchristian. He, on the authority of Scripture, claimed toleration for himself which he was not prepared to grant to all others.

Moreover, there were those who, beginning to see in clearer light what toleration and liberty of conscience implied, were even then prepared to practise it. Against these, however, Prynne launched much of his invective and sought to prosecute them.

This survey of Prynne's theology has sought to present his thought particularly with reference to points of contemporary doctrine which tended to divide the church. Moreover, the effort has been made to show where Prynne disagreed with what might be considered the general Puritan outlook.

It reveals him as an individualist, not belonging to any particular theological group, but holding certain beliefs characteristic of various parties in the Protestant church. Basically Calvinist, he was wholeheartedly Anti-Arminian, yet at the same time he had something in common with the Lutherans; and in his doctrine of the Lord's Supper especially, he was practically in line with the later teaching of Zwingli.
CHAPTER VIII.

PERSONAL RELIGION.
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The Puritan Movement in the course of its history produced many prominent and even outstanding men. Each made his own contribution to one or more of the various departments of public life,—ecclesiastical, political, intellectual, military and social. Some of them extended the scope of their authority and played important roles in more than one sphere of influence. While diversity of gifts characterised them, there was also unity of purpose observable underlying their work, which revealed them to be strikingly similar in the power with which they were infused. This spirit of unity and power was the outward expression of their deep spiritual experience. Prynne was no exception to this general rule. His own religious convictions unified the whole of his activity and gave direction and dynamic to his many tasks. Although he never attained to the spiritual maturity and power which were the distinguishing features of many Puritans, yet a deep spiritual tone pervaded his life's work.

Unlike many Puritans, Prynne has left no record of his conversion. Shenk says that conversion was "the most important event in the life of a Puritan"; yet nowhere does Prynne tell us whether his experience was cataclysmic or quiet. Of his vital relationship to God, however, he

was never in doubt; that he was one of the elect he was assured, and he wrote from that safe vantage ground.

As a young man Prynne was a robust Christian, and showed spiritual growth which testified to the reality of his religious experience. In Lincoln's Inn as a student he was not moved by the prevalent worldly life of the student body, and a little later he published his first book which revealed mature thought, undoubted scholarship and a thorough grasp of the dominant theological outlook of the times. Nor when persecution, suffering, imprisonment and injustice had to be endured, did he lose faith. Indeed his faith and knowledge of his Saviour sustained him throughout those difficult experiences.

In his little booklet, "Comfortable Cordials" he showed that imprisonment could not completely shut in the soul who was truly in the keeping of God.

"He in no place can once imprisoned be, who in all places is by Christ set free." ¹

To Prynne, as to many who have suffered like him, the restraining hand of the law only made possible an enlargement of soul,

"A godly man's at large in every place." ²

Another expression of Prynne's spiritual life is to be found in his sense of sin. Indeed he had a few notable passages relating to the Christian's sense of sin. Here

² Ibid. p. 3.
is one of these passages. "Every true penitent must be
sensible of sin; he must feel the sting, the venom of it,
see the filth of it, bewail the guilt of it, hate the very
appearances and resemblances of it; fly all the occasions
of it, all the allurements to it, yea utterly abhor the
very sight and hearing of it, as a most execrable, horrid,
and accursed thing. "¹.

The dominant passion of Prynne's life can be gathered
from this quotation taken from the Epistle Dedicatory of
his volume, "A Gospel Plea for Maintenance and Tenthes
of the Ministers of the Gospel." Prynne dedicated the
book to God in the form of a prayer in which he said "In
Thee alone I live, move, and have my being. Thou art the
strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. My whole
Spirit, Soul, Body, Parts, Endowments Natural, Spiritual,
are only of Thee, through Thee; O sanctify them wholly for,
and only to Thee; to whom alone I desire entirely and eter-
nally to devote them; as due to none but Thee, and that by
right of Creation, Redemption, Resignation, Preservation, and
that extraordinary Tribute of gratitude I stand most deeply
engaged to render to Thy most gracious Majesty. "².

Such a life elected of God and devoted to His service he
depicted in describing what Christians are. "You are the
saints; the sons and heirs of God, the Redeemed, the Breth-
ren, Spouse and best beloved of Jesus Christ; the vessels

¹. Prynne. Histriomastix. 1633. p.544. Fol. See also P.90.
1653. p.a.
and temples of the Holy Ghost; the Lights the glory and judges of the world, the companion, nay, the charge and care of Angels, the citizens of the New Jerusalem; the vessels of holiness, the first born of heaven, the inheritors of glory and Everlasting life. * * *

For the maintenance and deepening of this life Prynne practised the diligent use of the means of grace. He had a love for the Scriptures, which he must have studied regularly and with care, for the knowledge which he exhibited in his literary work was extensive. On occasion he could cite as a witness the Greek of a New Testament passage, but it was the Authorised Version with which he was familiar.

In addition to his knowledge of the Bible, his spiritual life was nurtured in religious literature of many ages, and this study he pursued, as was his custom, with avidity and with profit. Though there was much of the antiquarian in his nature, he did not lose touch with his own age. He was abreast of most of the theological literature of his day, as his many references and quotations abundantly prove. Much of this literature was studied for purposes other than the nurture of his spiritual life, yet even though its primary purpose was often polemical, some of it contributed to satisfy his spiritual appetite.

The value of prayer as an aid to spiritual life and Christian witness, Prynne also recognised. It was his daily

1. Prynne. Health's Sickness. 1628. p. 44.
practice to spend time in private worship and devotion; he made request to others that they should pray for him; and on special occasions he made earnest prayer to God for direction. There is no record of the manner of his prayer or of the time he spent in this spiritual exercise. It is an omission to be regretted. To have known this would possibly have helped towards a right understanding of Prynne's complex personality, for the temptation exists to criticise Prynne on the ground that this part of his life was not commensurate with the rest of his religious activity, with the result that his Christian walk was sometimes inconsistent with his Christian profession.

Attendance at divine service for public worship Prynne also considered to be essential for the maintenance of his spiritual life. To be deprived of public worship was an incalculable loss. He made this clear when he related that he was refused liberty to attend church while he was a prisoner. It was the habitual practice of his life, and he felt strongly the loss of liberty to worship in this time honoured way. Writing to Bradshaw he remarked that in Mount Orgueil Castle, as a prisoner of the King, he had been granted free access to all God's public ordinances, and complained

3. " A True and Perfect Narrative of what was done. 1659. p.16.
that Bradshaw refused him similar facilities.1. From all that has been said previously about Prynne's belief concerning the Lord's Supper, and from other statements which he made, it is certain that he frequently participated in that Sacrament. As it was one of God's special provisions for conveying nourishment to his spiritual life, Prynne was often to be found participating in this divinely ordained feast.

With this carefully nourished spiritual life, Prynne maintained his Christian profession amidst all the difficulties and perplexities of his chequered career. He was never blown about with other winds of doctrine, and was always ready to give a reason of the hope that was in him.

Service to God was the outcome of this life. Not only the minister was called into a life of service, but each Christian had work for Him to do. Prynne's busy and industrious life, he would have claimed, was directed towards the glory of God. It is not likely that he ever preached, but his pen was busied towards the same end as preaching. Unfortunately much of his time was occupied with the negative side of a problem, which to him was necessary, as there were many errors to be rectified. This service, so wholeheartedly rendered to God, was, as the previous chapters show, largely in the nature of literary activity, which involved him in much suffering and considerable loss of his earthly substance, but for conscience sake he continued to fulfil what he believed was God's life purpose for him.

If his whole life could be accurately

described as the outward expression of an inward grace, it is quite fitting to conceive of him as one who lived a purposeful christian life with the inward dynamic of a burning passion for the glory of God.

What was Prynne's attitude to the Lord's Day? It was impossible to live in Prynne's time without forming some opinion on the use to be made of the Lord's Day. Prynne had something to add to the controversy. Some of his contentions were that the day begins with the evening and ends with the evening; \(^1\) the whole day and not part of the day should be observed; \(^2\) the Declaration for Sports was contrary to the teaching of Scripture; \(^3\) the Prelates had a completely erroneous idea of the day, \(^4\) and it should be observed by all throughout the land. It was a day for quietness and meditation, and for the worship and service of God's house. Works of mercy he would have undertaken on the Lord's Day.

It was customary for the religious life of the Puritan to reveal itself in its relationship to what might be termed "the outside world". Prynne displayed this Puritan characteristic in a striking manner. The name "Precisian", often applied to Puritans, was an apt designation to Prynne, for he was most punctilious, not only

4. " Censure of Mr Cozens. 1628. p. 79.
in the practice of religious observances, but also in refraining from every prohibition which his beliefs demanded.

Prynne's contribution to the literature of this subject composed several volumes, but the most outstanding work was the Histriomastix. We have already observed the unfortunate circumstances associated with the publication of this volume, and we also noted, at the same time, the trend of its teaching. It might be advisable at this point to demonstrate more accurately the nature and scope of this, his best known work.

Despite his aversion to plays the form he chose for the book was roughly that of a play, with the exception that the language was not in dialogue. He divided it into two main parts, the first of which occupied the major portion of the book and contained eight Acts, each with a number of scenes and with an occasional appearance of the chorus; the second part had five acts, and a number of scenes, and the grand finalle he called "Catastrophe."

Prynne's purpose was to present to Christian men the unlawfulness and the mischievous qualities and effects of stage plays, and in pursuing this purpose he not only denounced plays themselves, but everything and everyone closely or even remotely associated with plays and the theatre. The minute detail which he investigated has to be read to be fully understood. By way of example, Act III
may be taken. This act is concerned with the style and subject matter of plays, and the material is treated in the following manner:—

Scene I. The style and subject matter is Lascivious, Scurrilous and Filthy.

2. The style and subject matter is Bloody and Tyrannical.

3. The style and subject matter is Heathenish and Profane.

4. The subject matter consists of sundry forged fables, of artificial, merry affected lies.

5. The subject matter is oftimes impious, sacrilegious, blasphemous and that in sundry respects.

6. The style and subject matter is ordinarily satirical and invective, being fraught with bitter scoffs or jests against Religion, Virtue, and Religious Christians.

7. The whole style and subject matter is but vain, frivolous, and ridiculous, bringing no glory at all to God.

This Act extends from page 62 to 132, and from this can be gathered a rough idea of the ridiculous detail which Prynne imposed upon the reading public.

He contended that plays proceeded from the devil; their original purpose was association with idolatrous worship;
their subject matter and style should never be contemplated by Christians; Actors and spectators alike were culpable; the chief part of acting was counterfeiting and hypocrisy and its concomitants were unlawful and sinful; the baneful effects of plays entered into every part of public and private life, bringing down God's judgments upon the nation and eternally damning men's souls; all of which was abundantly proved by the testimony of Scripture, the writings of the Fathers and the decisions of Synods and Councils. Nor could the advocates of plays produce arguments to disprove what he claimed. In the second part of the book Prynne turned to show that the professions of play-writing and acting were unlawful to Christians, and after dealing with many objections he made an appeal to all poets, players and play-haunters to seriously consider all he had said and to turn from their unlawful and pernicious ways before it would be too late.

This long book he closed with a nine page quotation from a Spanish Jesuit, and in the concluding paragraph of the book he wrote, "What have I said more against them (plays, theatres, actors, spectators) in this Treatise than this great Jesuit hath done?", to which one almost spontaneously exclaims, "Would it had all been done in the same short space!"

The language of the book is often abusive, offensive and
most objectionable, and he made no attempt to win his readers to his viewpoint by any other means than by the multiplication of testimonies of those with whom he agreed and by firing constant broadsides of scurrilous invective.

On reflection, the book's chief and most valuable contribution is not the denunciation of the stage and its concomitants, but the manner in which it depicts the moral life as the normal for Christian experience. There is no allowance here for Anti-Nomianism in any form. Schenk says of the age that, "A tendency toward what is called, in theological language, Antinomianism, was very noticeable." Nothing of it can be traced to Prynne. The Commandments carried equal validity with the teaching of Christ, and a strict moral life was demanded of all Christians.

Other features of worldliness were dealt with in passing. Prynne's attitude to dancing, for example, is mainly gathered from the Histriomastix. As might be expected, it was again an attitude of condemnation. Dancing, like plays, was an invention of the Devil and first used in pagan worship. Prynne claimed it was condemned by Scripture, Councils, Fathers and even pagan writers. Christians should not teach their children, especially their daughters, to dance, nor should they permit it at marriages or on any other occasion. The sum of the matter was, Scripture "Allows no other dances but such, in which the heart is more active than the feet; in which God's glory (not carnal jollity) is the utmost end."^2

As regards music Prynne had also his own opinion to express. His attitude to music in general was much the same as his attitude to it in relation to the service of the church. Music usually associated with the stage was described by Prynne as effeminate, delicate, lust-provoking, and he hotly argued that Christians should not be associated with it because of its tendency to corrupt the mind and to provoke to unchaste practices. But Prynne was just as clear and definite that music in itself was not necessarily harmful. He condemned only what was detrimental to Christian character and spiritual growth. Here is his testimony in his own words: "That music of itself is lawful, useful and commendable; no man, no Christian dares deny, since the Scriptures, Fathers and generally all Christian, all Pagan Authors extant, do with one consent aver it."2

This view held by Prynne was probably the generally accepted Puritan view of music, with here and there modifications and change of emphasis according to varying circumstances. The notion, which held the field for a long time, that the Puritans were apostles of gloom and wholly antagonistic to music cannot be held any longer in the light of the contribution to the subject made by D. Percy Scholes in The Puritans and Music (1934). It is quite impossible to think of Prynne having any music

2. " Ibid.
within his soul, but the sanity of the view he propounds — with the exception of his over-emphasis on the evil effects of light music — cannot be denied.

Another evil against which Prynne spoke in very definite terms was drinking, especially in its relationship to drinking of healths. Drunkenness, he had noticed, was the mother of many sins, and much drunkenness was caused through the prevailing custom of drinking of healths. Among his earliest pamphlets is to be found one in which he discussed this problem and which he dedicated to King Charles. He adopted the usual method of stating his case, by appealing to authorities and answering objections, and the conclusion he reached was that it was unwise to enter into association with others in this custom, as it led from one drink to many and so to drunkenness. That he was prepared to practise what he preached is evident in the way that he refused to drink the King's health.

Prynne misspent valuable time in writing against Lovelocks. "The Unloveliness of Lovelocks" appeared in 1628 attacking the prevalent custom of wearing lovelocks. This effeminate method of dressing the hair was obnoxious to Prynne, and he felt called upon to hold it up to ridicule. It was one of the sins which were responsible for God's judgments coming upon the nation. Hence this was

another worldly fashion which the Christian should shun.

There were also other customs which marked the character of his age some of which Prynne refused to practise, while he urged Christians to follow his example. For instance, New Year's Days should not be observed in any special way, and the sending of New Year's Day gifts he condemned. These were practices with a pagan origin; they had been condemned by Christian Councils, and therefore should not be countenanced.

It must not be supposed that Prynne had no place in life for legitimate and honest recreation. He recognised its need and value, which he expressed on several occasions, but especially in a few pages written near the end of the Histriomastix. There, too, he explained the manner of such recreations, and gave various suggestions for a Christian man's proper use of his leisure.

Nevertheless Prynne carefully pointed out that the Christian had little time for merriment or laughter. "Christ Jesus our pattern, our example, whose steps we all must follow, if ever we expect salvation from Him; was always mourning, never laughing (....) and shall we do nothing, but rejoice?" Christians, therefore, who make this world a paradise of earthly pleasures, do not imitate Christ or his apostles.

Prynne realised that time was our most precious commodity. "Our time it is our richest treasure", he wrote,

2. Ibid. pp.945, 965-970.
3. Ibid. p.294.
4. Ibid. p.302.
and added later in the same work, "Our time is too swift already; it runs while we sit still." Consequently life was a solemn business; time must be redeemed, and there must never be crowded into life anything unworthy. Only that which brought glory to God should occupy the interest and time of the Christian.

To Prynne, as to most Puritans, religion was a serious and full-time occupation. The mystery and yet the reality of a relationship with God into which he had been brought by the sovereign grace of God, while it humbled him, constantly made him aware of his privileged position. Though this life which was lived in close touch with God could never be lost, it had to be preserved and nurtured by patient waiting upon God and diligent obedience to divine commands. There was no part of life excluded from this sovereign control, and while it did mean renunciation of all evil and sometimes of much that was legitimate in itself, this was all necessary because only thus could the highest Christian life be experienced, and without this denial of self God could not be glorified.

Personal religion involved his relationship to God and his duty towards his fellow creatures, and provided also the answer to the problem of himself.

CHAPTER IX.

AN ESTIMATE OF THE MAN.
Occasionally in the course of this study we have paused to criticise or appraise Prynne's thought. We turn now in this final chapter to contemplate the whole, and to form an appreciation and criticism of the Man and his work.

Prynne, in the past two years, has been my constant companion. He has not always been a pleasant associate—occasionally one would blush for him and be slightly embarrassed in his company, but the admirable qualities of his mind and heart, the solidity and strength of his rugged character, and his rare courage in always answering to the demands of his conscience, first called forth an unwilling admiration which gradually assumed greater proportions until his faults and blemishes, which are all that so many see, have been almost forgotten by one's attention and gaze being held by the amazing character and performance of the man.

Had Prynne been of a more kindly disposition it has been suggested that his work would have had a more ready acceptance during his life and in later years, but, it may equally well be argued that with a more lovable disposition the work might never have been undertaken.

Prynne was a national figure whose influence, undeniably, was felt throughout England, and which was extended to the Continent by the translation of some of his works
into Dutch and French.

It is as a writer that Prynne has been most criticised. In the wide reading that has been undertaken for this study, very few eulogistic references to Prynne have been found. There were many during his lifetime who were scathing in their criticism of him and his pamphlets, and since then many others have added their denunciation. General opinion has decided that Prynne cannot lay claim to fame on literary merits. One contemporary, whose opinion no doubt coincided with others, wrote to him saying that he knew his nature "was such that it could no more forbear scribbling than a paralitic his shaking."

Professor Masson, after quoting Prynne, comments thus; "He does not take the trouble to know the names of the persons he writes about, but plods on like a rhinoceros in blinkers," and Trevor-Roper in our own day makes this comment; "The reader...learnt...skip much of Prynne's literary productions."

It is true that, as a writer, Prynne is most unattractive. His style is ponderous, with long intricate sentences, which it would be difficult to equal. Moreover, he had the disturbing habit of constantly repeating himself. He is guilty of this particular charge in the Histriomastix, where it is possible within the short compass of a few pages to

collect a number of instances of the same vocabulary of scurrility being used to pour his wrath upon those who formed the subject of his attack. In his epistle to the Christian reader, he makes defence of his many repetitions, but this does not clear him of a practice which would annoy even the most patient and kindly disposed readers. Not only is he guilty of this repetition within the bounds of a particular work, but the same tendency is evident when his various works are compared. That is to say, Prynne frequently wrote with the same topic as subject, and in almost identical terms. A study of the Bibliography of his works gives only a partial conception of this, for on occasions a pamphlet contains much that had previously been written, though the title does not reveal the fact. Accordingly, the student has to plod laboriously through much uninteresting material without discovering any fresh thought. While it must be recognised that Prynne wrote much which was of vital importance, probably had he refrained from these repetitions, not only would the volume of his work have been considerably decreased, but its value would have been enhanced.

Another aggravating practice in which Prynne indulged was in citing a totally unnecessary number of witnesses as testimony in the proof of any point. In one particular instance he gives the number of those as one hundred and fifty, and in other instances literally pages are covered with the names of witnesses. Prynne. Histriomastix. 1633. See pages 97, 68, 69, 70 and 71 as one example.

Ibid. p. 688.
names of writers whom he called to substantiate the point he was making, thus adding considerably to the volume of the book and to the weariness of the reader, but not to the quality of the work.

Prynne's literary style does not lend itself to appreciation. He had no shortage of vocabulary, and occasionally he turned out a passage of powerful rhetoric, but on the whole there is little literary merit in his productions. He does not even compare favourably with many of the lesser known writers of his own day, and when Milton and Prynne happen to be studied together the contrast is most marked.

Along with his prose writings Prynne made an effort at writing in verse. He had no talent whatever for this. The following quotation expresses the contemporary view of his poetry: "Had you to receive as recompense a buffet for every bad line, you had been buffeted to death, though you had as many lives as nine cats." ¹ Anyone who reads his attempts has no alternative but to conclude that his verse is execrable.

Yet it is through his writings that Prynne may best be known. Whoever takes time to read patiently through his many books and pamphlets discovers in them the man self-revealed. The personality disclosed presents many strong and varied distinctive characteristics.

He was a loyal English patriot. Prynne had a sincere and deep rooted love for his country. Next in his affections to the glory of God, came the welfare of the land.

which gave him birth. Nor were these two thoughts in any way opposed to each other. In seeking the true advancement of his country, he was also seeking the divine glory. He claimed that all the work he undertook, and everything he suffered, was for the sake of his country, and he was prepared to sacrifice liberty and substance, and to suffer persecution, even the loss of life itself, for the interests that were so dear to him. Nor was this an idle boast; he did suffer, and although there were occasions when he enjoyed the fruits of victory there was no monetary reward for him. Parliament voted reparation for his long imprisonment, but he never received any of it, and Michael Sparke informs us in the following unsolicited testimonial that he took nothing from the sale of his books; "His only end in compiling all these ensuing Treatises, was God's glory, the public good of our Church and State, not any private gain (he freely giving all his copies to those who printed them, and never taking penny for any of them)."

Whether he opposed the lordly Prelates, or the leaders of the Commonwealth, the purpose was the same. They were acting, in Prynne's judgment, in a way that was detrimental to the good of the nation at home, and to the prestige of England abroad. It was necessary, therefore, that they should not be permitted to continue unchallenged.

Apart from the self aspect which creeps into even the noblest actions of the best of men, there was no ulterior motive in Prynne. Where his country was concerned he was genuinely altruistic.

Although Prynne did not subscribe to all the views which have been considered Puritan, he was nevertheless in many respects a characteristic Puritan. He claimed, for example, that the whole Arminian outlook was contrary to the doctrine of the Church of England. Laud and those associated with him were guilty of introducing innovations, as well as teaching doctrine which could not be fitted into the declared faith of the Church. Prynne showed that this traditional Puritan standpoint could be upheld and maintained.

Again, his whole life was a constant testimony to his Puritan faith. He remained within the Church of England, seeking to achieve the end he had in view from within. This was the position of Puritanism in its narrowed sense, yet there was so strong a strain of Erastianism in his theology that not even the Act of Uniformity could make him turn from the Established Church. At that time he severed his connection with the majority of Puritans who had until then remained within the Church, but Prynne himself, still continued to be a Puritan.

His writings reveal him at one with the Puritan desire for the establishment of the rule of law, the upholding of the rights of the individual, and the curtailment of
automatic power. For Puritans to undertake such a task meant scaling the heights where unbridled authority held command, and endeavouring to throw down the tyrants from their exalted positions. Prynne's life was one intense struggle in this capacity. The irony of it all is that when success seemed well within his grasp it was dashed from his hand, and in seeking to overthrow another usurper he only made way for one more tyrant.

Religiously, politically, and socially, Prynne was always reckoned to be a Puritan. His whole life was set towards the defence of the Puritan outlook, and in him Puritanism had an able defender.

He had a capacity for an amazing amount of learning. Throughout his works he quotes from an extraordinary number of authors. These quotations are drawn from innumerable sources, both ancient and modern, and they reveal quite a fantastic acquaintance with writers of many ages, and many lands. Laud, because of this display of learning, argued that Prynne must have had accomplices in his work, but Prynne, in answer, claimed that it was all his own unaided effort, having perused all the books and quotations with his own eyes. Although it was an almost impossible feat to Laud, Prynne did not consider it extraordinary, for he doubted not, but hundreds in this Kingdom, not many years

elder than myself, have read more authors than I have cited."

Such learning could only have been acquired with untiring industry, and intense concentration, to state which leads on to another characteristic of Prynne. He seemed to live his life for the sole purpose of work. It is staggering enough to consider his literary output as the contribution of one man, but when his publications are examined, revealing their contents to be of such a nature as to demand length of time, specialised talents and patient research for the accumulation of data, the outstanding nature of his performance becomes more remarkable and more laudable.

In addition, other items of his busy life must be taken into consideration. There was the call of his own profession, the work entailed in the prosecution of Laud, the activities into which the Long Parliament called him and, later, his own position as a Member of Parliament, involving much committee and other work, such as the disbanding of the Army, his lively interest in the movement leading up to the Restoration, and his care of the Records in the Tower. Whatever we may deny to Prynne, he has the unchallengeable right to be recognised as one who gave of himself unsparingly to the tasks which he had been called upon to undertake.

Although Prynne contributed some constructive work, the major portion of his activity had definitely a destructive turn. To state the case thus needs clarification lest a

wrong impression be given. A survey of the pamphlets of Prynne reveals him in this characteristic pose of adopting the attitude of the opposition. For example, he is Anti-Arminian, he opposes the Prelates intolerable usurpations, he makes declarations against new taxes and excise, and he briefly and truly anatomises the Republicans spurious Good Old Cause. These are a few illustrations of Prynne's tendency to take up the side of the opposition, and it is definitely a mark of his character. His own defence is usually undertaken by an assault upon the position of his opponents. Prynne's standard of work in opposition is higher than on the constructive side. He had a talent for exposing the shortcomings and errors of others, but he lacked the power to criticise his own work. Yet this must be added; Prynne had no desire simply to be destructive in his work. Beyond the immediate there was for him a very real constructive ideal, but it could not be attained without first breaking down everything that impeded progress towards its achievement.

Another characteristic of the man and his work is that he was essentially a legalist. One agrees with Kirby that Prynne had a legal rather than a judicial mind. His training and occupation as a lawyer fostered what was fundamental in his personality, and grace did not alter this in any appreciable way. Well versed in the law, he always
made appeal to it as an infallible authority which permitted no deviation from its commands. The occasions on which he did make appeal to the spirit of the law were rare occurrences.

It was possibly this outlook that made him very much the man of his own day. Traditional practices were to be continued, and it was on this score that he attacked innovations both in Church and State. There was little scope in Prynne's outlook for progress of any kind, in the constitution of the nation or the church. But that is not the whole truth, for he supported wholeheartedly the Petition of Right, and he was keen that bishops should have no place in the House of Lords. Furthermore, there were points in the law which he felt should be altered, and had circumstances permitted he would have been the first to endeavour to legalise any alterations he proposed.

We can understand how Prynne with this outlook had no message other than for his own generation. He seldom looked forward. His mind always referred to what was already known, and applied it to the circumstances of his own day. There was reforming zeal in Prynne. Vision he had, but it was not a resplendent vision hitherto unknown in experience towards the attainment of which he must devote all his energies; rather did he seek a return to that which had existed in the past, and which in a measure had become fixed as an ideal in his mind.
That Prynne, however, did influence his day and generation to a marked degree, and that he had a not inconsiderable share in shaping the course of history, both in Church and State, is the bold and lofty claim we now make for him. The circles in which Prynne moved were closely associated with the governing body at any given period in his life. Of the earlier portion it is true that his contribution was of a negative character, opposing the Anglicans in their exalted position. His influence here, however, was of such a nature that Laud considered it necessary to silence him, and Strafford had to take notice of him. The effort to silence him was not wholly successful, for with the loss of his freedom Prynne still exercised a considerable influence during his first imprisonment through the medium of his pen.

When the tide turned in favour Prynne's favour he was nearer to the heart of national affairs than before, and his powerful position is shown in that he shouldered the responsibility of Laud's trial, and was largely instrumental in securing his execution. Here, too, his influence is marked by his acquiescence in, and support of, the change from Episcopal to Presbyterian government for the Church of England. Throughout the 1640's he was a strenuous advocate of Parliament's position and cause, and due to his industry the legal position, as he saw it, was kept constantly before the English public.
With the rise of the Army and the advent of the Commonwealth, once more he was considered too formidable an antagonist to be allowed his freedom. But immediately he regained liberty his pen mercilessly castigated the rulers of the time, and exposed the illegality of their position and their demands. Henceforward his zeal for royalty was unmistakable, and in many ways his efforts prepared the way for the return and restoration of Charles II.

The claim here made is substantiated by another line of evidence. That Prynne was not merely a man of no consequence is seen in the many references to him in contemporary literature. His enemies made parodies of his earless condition, his friends wrote in support of him, many sought to correct what they considered were his errors, he was known as a public figure as far afield as Chester, and even there a number of his portraits were procurable for burning. He could speak of "my much renowned friend Mr J. Pym", he included among his friends Sir Thomas Fairfax, and Charles II befriended him. Add to this the recognition which came to him from Lincoln's Inn, and there is presented the picture of a man who, moving among the ruling circles of the land, wielded an influence the extent of which has not been fully recognised, and for which he has not yet received due credit.
Prynne's material was not of inflammatory stuff; rather was it of the nature which could be studied, and over which one might ponder. A judgment in favour, once formed, commanded the allegiance of mind and heart, and so there were enlisted to the cause those who were prepared to sacrifice, if need be, in order to achieve their ideal.

Prynne was indeed a fanatic. He was an extremist who stated his case in a very dogmatic and often insolent way. There was no mid course possible, and he pursued his way with dogged stubbornness, urged on by inbred distaste for the things he opposed. This fanaticism made him blind to the position of others and to his own faults. Indeed he was guilty of using two sets of standards, one by which he measured others, and another by which he measured himself. In the Histriomastix he dares to exhort others, "Let your speech be always gracious"\(^1\), while the book itself is a flagrant breach of the exhortation. Another example of the same attitude may be quoted. In this instance he exhorts in the words "Love one another", but what he himself writes in the same pamphlet is the negation of what he demands from others.

It is this type of conduct, together with an inclination to overstate his case, and his perpetual use of grandiose and exorbitant language, which has lost for Prynne the admirers which, undoubtedly, his work deserves.
Prynne's portrait, by Adrian Hanneman or Cornelius Johnson, hangs in the Benchers' room at Lincoln's Inn. The painting shows his long hair, which he grew to cover his earless condition, and the artist has carefully omitted any trace of the disfiguring marks. It is not an unpleasant face, and if there is a tinge of sadness or gloominess hovering around it, the expression is not altogether unkindly. One imagines that a keen and intelligent mind, and a determined and self reliant spirit, are depicted there. Whatever else he may convey to the mind, the artist belies the generally conceived picture of Prynne as a ghoul-like figure.

This may be taken as a parable. Overlook the excesses of language, the violent prejudices, and the bitter animosities so regularly found in Prynne's writings, and it will be discovered that his works contain much that is of real worth. If he primarily spoke to his own generation, and specially adapted his message to meet its peculiar circumstances, the impact he then made was such that its effect was carried forward to later generations. Prynne by his tireless energy helped in no small measure to lay the constitutional foundation upon which later generations were able to build securely. Consequently he ranks with those who were the forerunners of modern democracy, and like many of them drew his resources from the well of a deep religious experience.
APPENDIX A.

Three different dates have been given for the birth of Prynne. These are 1600, 1602, and 1604. The claim now made is that 1602 was the year in which he was born. Let us examine the evidence.

Take 1604. This date is based upon the publication of a single sheet, or broadside which appeared in 1653, claiming for Prynne "Anno 53, Aetatis 49." It also included a portrait of Prynne with the words "Aetat Suae 49 - 1653." This portrait is also to be found in some of his published works. No one of any consequence appears to have accepted this date, and the Parish Register of Swainswick, though it has entries for 1604, makes no reference to William Prynne.

Now for 1600. Most writers have accepted this date, but the evidence for it is far from conclusive. Prynne's tombstone states "Died 24th Oct. 1669 - aged 69", but its testimony possibly rests upon the record found on another portrait of Prynne on which is marked "Aetat Suae 40 - 1640." There is no further evidence, and unfortunately the Parish Register, through some omission, has no entries for the turn of the century, so that 1600 can neither be proved correct nor shown to be incorrect.

For 1602 there is more conclusive evidence. Both Registrum Orielensis and Alumni Oxonienses, although clearly stating the date of birth as 1600, contradict themselves by
recording Prynne’s matriculation as having taken place on 24th April, 1618, at the age of sixteen. Now we may take it that this matriculation entry is an accurate copy of the original, for, although I was unable to see the original entry at Oriel College, I handled what was a transcript taken from the original by Shadwell when he was compiling Registrum Orielensis.

Further testimony was discovered in a book which Prynne gifted to Lincoln’s Inn inscribed, in what is recognised as his own handwriting, thus, “Donum Gulielmi Prynne, clarissimi Lincoln iensis Hospitii Treasurarii 15 die Junii, anno incarnationis Dom. 1657, aetatisque suae 55.” Here the date is clearly 1602.

Another witness may be called, though in this case the evidence is open to question. Prynne in his letter to Laud dated June 11, 1634, made reference to his own age in the following words, “I am not above thirty-three years old.” These words are open to various interpretations, but the exact meaning is that he had not yet attained the age of thirty-three. Might it not be that these words are equivalent to the modern statement, “I am in my thirty-third year.”?

On the authority of this evidence, 1602 has been given as the year of Prynne’s birth.
Kirby is inaccurate in her statement that Prynne was deprived of the use of pen and ink during his first imprisonment. When he appeared before the Star Chamber to answer for his letter to Archbishop Laud, it was then suggested that he should not be allowed pen and ink, but the Archbishop demurred, and no definite order was given. Trevor-Roper makes the claim, no doubt on this evidence, that Laud secured writing facilities for Prynne.

While serving his sentence in the Tower, Prynne wrote a number of books, and his output was far too great to have been accomplished in a purely secretive manner. Prynne himself stated that he wrote while in the Tower, and Michael Sparke, in the catalogue of Prynne's works, named several books which were written during his first imprisonment.

Because of this inaccuracy Kirby found it necessary to assume that Prynne was at liberty in 1636. But there is no evidence for this assumption. The one mistake led to further error.
The conclusion reached in Chapter IV may be difficult to uphold if a pamphlet, attributed to Prynne and named, "The title of Kings proved to be iure divino," by W.P. 1660, is accepted as his work. For various reasons it must, however, be rejected as belonging to Prynne.

1. The general teaching of the pamphlet, while forcibly and clearly stated, is not in line with Prynne's thought. A few illustrations will suffice. The following are quotations from the pamphlet:

"It is wrong to lift the sword against the King - even when ruling arbitrarily."

"The subject cannot call the King in question."

"The King hath no superior but Almighty God."

"The King can do no wrong."

While there is a faint possibility of Prynne penning sentiments not far removed from some of these statements, not even in his most enthusiastic pro-Royalist moments could he have written that the King could do no wrong.

2. Not only is its substance at variance with Prynne's general outlook, but, what is more to the point, it is different in emphasis to Prynne's work of the same year, for example in "The signal loyalty and devotion of God's true saints and pious Christians towards their Kings." (1660).
3. It was unusual for Prynne to use only his initials. At this time there was no need that he should cover his identity. Had he desired to do so he would not have used "W.P.", and in ordinary circumstances he would have kept to his full title. It is suggestive, too, that an earlier pamphlet published under the initials W.P., was repudiated by Prynne.

The pamphlet appears to be another effort by Prynne's enemies to discredit him.

Accordingly it has not been included among Prynne's works.
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It is almost impossible to compile a completely accurate list of Prynne's writings. The task is complicated in that:

1. Many of his pamphlets were published unsigned.
2. Prynne's enemies, to discredit him, produced publications in his name, and
3. Occasionally, Prynne himself resorted to the use of a fictitious name, e.g., News from Ipswich.

Kirby's bibliography of Prynne's pamphlets has been invaluable, but it has had to be corrected at various points. Several pamphlets listed by Kirby have been excluded, while others not included have been added. Another alteration undertaken has had the effect of bringing together as one, pamphlets which were issued separately under different titles but the contents of which were identical.

There are frequent references to Prynne in contemporary manuscripts, but no additional knowledge of him is gathered from this source. Hence no list of manuscripts is given.
THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF THE LIBRARIES VISITED
FOR PURPOSES OF THIS RESEARCH ;-

NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH.
NATIONAL, EDINBURGH.
UNIVERSITY, EDINBURGH.
TRINITY COLLEGE, GLASGOW.
UNIVERSITY, GLASGOW.
MITCHELL, GLASGOW.
TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.
BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON.
DR. WILLIAMS', LONDON.
LINCOLN'S INN, LONDON.
BODLEIAN, OXFORD.
ORIEL COLLEGE, OXFORD.
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Perpetuitie of a Regenerate Man's Estate, 1627, 1629.
The Unloveliness of Love-Lockes, 1628.
Briefe Survey and Censure of Mr Cozens His Cozening Devotions, 1628.
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(The three "Leaves" were also published separately.)
On Popish Crucifixes and Images of Christ, 1641.
Pleasant Purge for a Roman Catholike to Evacuate His Evil Humours, Consisting of a Century of Polemical Epigrams wherein Divers Grosse Errours and Corruptions of the Church of Rome are Discovered, Censured, Refuted, in a facetious, yet Serious Manner, 1641.
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Demand of His (Prynne's) Liberty to the General, 26 December, 1648, with His Answer thereto, and His Answer and Declaration Thereupon, 1648. Broadside.
Letter to General Fairfax, January 3, 1648/49. Broadside.
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Mr Pryn's Last and Finall Declaration to the Commons of England, concerning the King, Parliament and Army; Shewing that It Is High Treason to Compasse the Deposition or Death of King Charles, January 5, 1649.
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Examination of Mr William Prynne by Order of the House of Commons with His Answer, Likewise Several Votes in Prosecution of the Tryal of the King's Majesty, 1649. Unsigned.

Six Serious Queries concerning the King's Tryal by the New High Court of Justice, 1649.

A Publick Declaration and Protestation of the Secured and Seccluded Members of the House of Commons against Treasonable and Illegal Acts... of Some Few Confederate Members of That Dead House since Their Forcible Exclusion, February 13, 1649. Broadside. Unsigned.

Six Propositions of Undoubted Verity, Fit to be Considered of in Our Present Exigency, by All Loyal Subjects and Conscientious Christians, 1649.

Prynne the Member Reconcile to Prynne the Barrister; Or, An Answer to a Scandalous Pamphlet intituled Prynne against Prynne, June 4, 1649.

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Summary Reasons against New Oath and Engagement and an Admonition to All Who Have subscribed to it, December 22, 1649. Signed "W.P." (same as above pamphlet).

The time-serving Proteus and Ambidexter Divine, uncased to the world; containing two letters of Mr John Dury, 1650. Unsigned.
A Brief Apologie for All Non-Subscribers of the New Engagement, February 28, 1650.
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The Quakers Unmasked and Clearly Detected to be but the Spawn of Romish Frogs, Jesuites, and Franciscan Freers, Sent from Rome to Seduce the Intoxicated, Giddy-Headed English Nation, February 19, 1655.
New Discovery of Free-State Tyranny, Four Letters, together with a Remonstrance of Several Grievances, October 22, 1655.
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Old Parliamentary Prognostication for the Members There in Consultation, 1655. Unsigned.
Short Demurrer to the Jewes Long Discontinued Remitter into England, 1st part, 1655; 2nd part, 1656; repr. 1656.
A Legal Resolution of Two Important Quaeries of General Present Concernment. Clearly Demonstrating the Bounden Duty of Ministers and Vicars of Parish Churches to Administer the Sacraments as well as Preach to Their Parishioners, July 20, 1656.
A Seasonable Vindication of Free Admission to, and Frequent Administrations of, The Holy Communion, to All Visible Church Members, Regenerate or Unregenerate, September 1, 1656. or Theodidactus. 1659.
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Beheaded Dr. John Hewyt's Ghost Pleading for Justice, March 27, 1659, 1660. Unsigned.

True and Perfect Narrative of What Was Done between Mr Prynne, the Secluded Members, the Army Officers, and Those Now Sitting in the Commons and Elsewhere, 7 and 9 May, 1659.


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Ten Considerable Quaeries concerning Tithes, June 27, 1659.

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A Brief Necessary Vindication of the Old and New Secluded Members, from the False Malicious Calumnies, and of the Fundamental Rights, Liberties, Privileges, etc., from the Late Subversions of Joh. Rogers 2. of March. Nesham, September 23, 1659.

Short, Legal, Medicinal, Useful, Safe, Easy Prescription to Recover Our Kingdom, Church, Nation, from Their Present, Dangerous, Distractive, Destructive, Confusion and Worse than Bedlam Madness, November 5, 1659. Repr. in Somers Tracts, VI.

Histrioarchos; Or, The Exact Recorder: Being the Most Faithfull Remembrancer of the Most Remarkable Transactions of Estate and of the English Lawes. Collected out of the Antiquities of the Saxon and Danish Kings unto the Coronation of William the Conqueror, and Continued unto the Present Government of Richard, Now Lord Protector, December 6, 1659.


Ten Quaeries upon the Ten New Commandments of the General Council of the Officers of the Army, 22 December, 1659. Unsigned.


Answer to a Proposition, in Order to the Proposing of a Commonwealth or Democracy, 1659.

The Curtaine Drawne; Or, The Parliament Exposed to View, 1659. Unsigned.

Brief Narrative of the Manner How Divers Members of the House of Commons, That Were Illegally and Unjustly Imprisoned or Secluded by the Army's Force in December, 1648 and May an. 1659, Coming on the 27th of December 1659 to Discharge Their Trust, Were Again Shut out by the Pretended Order of the Members Sitting, 1660. Unsigned.

Privileges of Parliament which the Members, Army and This Kingdom Have Taken the Protestation and Covenant to Maintain. Reprinted for Consideration and Confirmation on the 5th of January, the Day Appointed to Remember Them, January 5, 1660. Unsigned.

Case of the Old Secured, Secluded, and Twice Excluded Members, Briefly and Truly Stated for Their Own Vindication, January 13, 1660.


Seasonable and Healing Instructions, Humbly Tendered to Freemen, Citizens, Burgesses... to be Seriously Recommended by Them to Their Respective Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses, March 26, 1660. Broadside. Unsigned.

Letter and Proposals to King Charles (respecting the Drinking of Healths) and His Majesties Gracious Resolves (respecting Drinking and Duelling), August 17, 1660.

Conscientious Quaeres to the Westminster Juncto, September, 1660 (reprint).


Sundry Reasons Humbly Tendered to the Most Honourable House of Peers... against this New Intended Bill for Governing and Reforming Corporations, 1660.

The Signal Loyalty and Devotion of God's True Saints and Pious Christians towards Their Kings, 1660, 1661.

Seasonable Vindication of Supream Authority and Jurisdiction of Christian King, Lords, Parliament as well over Possessions as over Persons of Delinquent Churchmen, November, 1660.

Copy of the Presentment and Indictment Found and Exhibited by Grand-Jury of Middlesex in Upper Bench at Westminster on Last Day of Hilary Term 1659 against Collonel Matthew Allured, Collonel John Okey... and Edward Cooper (one of the Door Keepers) for Assaulting and Keeping Sir Gilbert Gerrard, one of the Knights of the Shire for Their Country, by Force and Arms out of the Commons House of Parliament, 27 December, 1660. Broadside. Unsigned.

A Short Sober Pacific Examination of Some Exuberances in, and Ceremonial Appurtenances to the Common Prayer, April 23, 1661.

Moderate Seasonable Apology for... Not Bowing... to the Name of Jesus and Not Kneeling in the Act of Receiving the Lord's Supper, May 1, 1662.


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Brief Animadversions on the Fourth Part of Institutes of Laws of England concerning the Jurisdiction of Courts, 1669.

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Pamphlets of which Prynne was joint author;-

With John Bastwick;

Flagellum Pontificis and Episcoporum Catialium, 1635.

Prynne wrote: "Appendix, Supplementum and Epilogue."

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Articles of Impeachment in Parliament against Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes touching His Dishonourable Surrender of the City and Castle of Bristol, 1643.

A True and Full Relation of the Prosecution of Col. Nathaniel Fiennes, 14 December, 1644, 1645.


With Thomas Salusbury;

Thomas Campanella, An Italian Friar and Second Machiavel, December 16, 1659. Prynne wrote preface.

With other imprisoned members;

The following pamphlets have been deleted from Kirby's list:—

The Bloody Project; or, A Discovery of the New Designe in the Present War. 1648.

( This pamphlet cannot be traced. )

A New Declaration concerning the King. 1649. Signed " Wil. Eryn. "

( This pamphlet cannot be traced. )

New Babell's Confusion. 1649.

( This would appear to have been duplicated in Kirby's list. )


( See Appendix A. )

The Title of Kings Proved to be Iure Divino. 1660. 1666.

( See Appendix C. )
A SMALL GROUP OF PAMPHLETS SELECTED FOR USE IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS THESIS.

An answer to some statements of Wm Prynne concerning Howell in his Popish Royal Favourite. 1644.

Answer to William Prynne. Judge Jenkins 1647. (Somers Tracts Vol. V.)

Additions to the first part of a dialogue between A. and B. concerning the Sabbath's morality etc.


An antidote against four dangerous queries. 1645.

Charge against the King taken out of Prynne's books. 1648.


A Divine Tragedy lately acted, or, a collection of sundry memorable examples of God's judgment upon Sabbath-breakers. 1636.

The Fallacies of Mr William Prynne discovered and confuted. Written in answer to a letter sent by J.F., to his friend.


A Loyal Vindication of the King, an answer to Vindiciae Caroli Regis. N.D. 1645.

The Lord's Day the Sabbath day. (Dialogue) Unsigned 1636.

Mola Asinaria 1659. Attributed to but disclaimed by Prynne.


Mr Prynne's Good old cause stated and stunted. (J. Rogers). I.R. London 1659.


Preface by a true lover of monarchy and christian liberty to a memorable New Years Gift. 1727.

Mr William Prynne his defence of Stage-plays. London 1649.


The Sovereignty of Kings an absolute answer to Ps.105:15. London 1642.

Sixteen Antiqueries propounded to the Catechiser of Diotrephes. London 1646.

One Sheet or if you will a winding sheet. 1659. Attributed to, but disclaimed by Prynne. Signed W.P.

To the supreme authority of England and Scotland. 1659.

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