The Daily Religious Life in England of the Early 17th Century

by

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I

INTRODUCTION

The religious struggles in early 17th century England, culminating in the Civil War, were just as complex as those leading to the French Revolution. Even Carlyle made the grave error—grave because of his tremendous influence on later students of the period—of interpreting the whole movement from a moral standpoint. But there were other forces of equal importance. The aim of my present study is to see why the religious factor was so important.

Religion to the Jacobians was a living and practical thing, although it was more than tinged with medieval scholasticism and mysticism. Everything that was done had some religious formality connected with it: the harvesters, before setting to work with their scythes and cradles, met in solemn prayer; Bartholomew Fair was ceremoniously opened by a church service, attended by the mayor and aldermen of London splendidly attired in their official garbs. Hugo Grotius’s opinion of England two years after the death of Elizabeth can be accepted without reservations: "Theology rules there." 1 Similarly, Isaac Casaubon, visiting there about the same time, commented: "There is

a great abundance of theologians in England, all point
their studies in that direction. 1 And likewise, Aubrey
sums up the situation: "The studies in fashion in those
days (in England) were poetry, and controversie with the
Church of Rome." 2 Later he gives his own opinion of this
habit: "I thinke it was an epidemick evill of that time,
which I thinke now is growne out of fashion, as unmannerly
and boyish." 3

This tendency was developed in the schools and colleges,
where, Mrs. Hutchinson says, John, when he attended chapel,
"began to take notice of their stretching superstition to
idolatry; . . . though as yet he considered not the empti­
ness and carnality, to say no more, of that public worship
which was then in use." 4 Not only was the routine life
of college overridden with religious exercises which often
caused disputes and ill-feeling, but at graduation the
students had to subscribe their own name in the University
book "under the Three Articles of Religions enjoined, as
the indispensable test of sound English faith, by the
36th of the Ecclesiastical Canons of 1603-4." 5

As the overwhelming interest of the age lay in religion,

1. Loc. cit.
3. Ibid., p. 173.
4. Mrs. Hutchinson, Memoirs of the Life of Colonel
Hutchinson, p. 40.
so the outstanding characteristic of it was individualism, a trait which developed during the glorious reign of the Virgin Queen and reached its ultimate expression in Puritanism. It was an age of introspection, when each man insisted on the importance of his own opinions and theories, a spirit which was furthered by the inability of the Stuarts to comprehend it. This finally caused religion, like everything else, to assume a personal trend, and "personal religion, the sense of individual responsibility to God, was regarded as the one thing needful." 1 People's entire mental outlook was changed by the acquisition of the Bible, and by the expounding and explanation of its text, rather than by the abolition of the mass; it was this, added to the increased Catholic activity, that proved a common rallying ground for all the factions opposed to Catholicism, which from its very nature advocated universal tenets.

Before passing to the daily religious life of the people it might be well to view the general situation under two inclusive heads—sects, and religion and politics.

The revolution under Elizabeth had divided the nation into three distinct factions: papists, state protestants, and the more religious zealots, later called Puritans.

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During the last years of her life the Queen lost much of her personal power, and the administration of affairs became more lax, so that by the close of her reign religion was taking on a more Puritan aspect, in spite of the enforced use of the Prayer-book. This change could be best observed in the form of worship and in the external appearances of the churches, which came to resemble more and more those of Geneva; stained glass was removed from the windows in many cases, and the surplice, which was usually worn throughout the service, was now replaced during the sermon by the Geneva gown. Although the Calvinistic spirit continued to grow during the first Stuart's regime the majority of the reformers remained within the fold of the Established Church; but as they imbued greater and greater quantities of the heretical doctrine, an open break was obviously inevitable. Its underlying characteristic was an organic connection between theology and church polity and ritual, a union which was reached through the Puritan minister, but which caused it to be diametrically opposed to Episcopal polity and ritual as prescribed by the state and followed by the ministers. Selden appropriately, if somewhat impatiently, sums up the Calvinists' viewpoint: "'Tis much the Doctrine of the times, that men should not please themselves, but deny
George Herbert, whose mystical mind naturally rebelled against the fearful but earthly doctrines of the Puritans, is the outstanding example of the devout and idealistic Anglican. For him the church was a means to an end, which was the "communion of the individual soul with God"; and in this he was the incarnation of the whole Anglican spirit, which has been very well analysed by Green:

The historical feeling showed itself in a longing to ally the religion of the present with the religion of the past, to find a unity of faith and practice with the Church of the Fathers, to claim part in that great heritage of Catholic tradition, both in faith and worship, which the Popery so jealously claimed as its own. 3

Sir Thomas Browne also had the mental make-up which led him directly to the Episcopal Church:

Whosoever is harmonically composed, delights in harmony; which makes me much distrust the symmetry of those heads which declaim against all Church-Musick. 4

Then too the Anglican conception of God differed from the nearly Manichaean idea of the Puritan. To Herbert

1. John Selden, Table-Talk, p. 46.
God is an independent person, exactly like ourselves, having foresight, skill, love and hatred, grief, self-sacrifice, and a power of action a good deal limited by the kind of world and people among whom He works. 1

Even with their love of ceremony and form, such devout Anglicans as Crashaw, Herbert, Ferrar, and Laud were just as anti-Catholic as they were opposed to the rabid Puritanism which, in a few years, was to suppress so tyrannically the faithful subjects of St. Peter's successor.

The Catholics, although negligible in numbers, were the most despised and legislated against of all the sects in the years preceding the Civil War. They were not allowed to attend any church but their own; consequently they were easily detected, and like all who absented themselves from services were liable to a fine of £20 a month.2

From the number of convictions it can be deduced that proportionately Roman Catholics were few, but that these few were hotly searched out, although they were mostly gentlefolk. The general attitude towards the Catholics can be best illustrated by John Earle's character of A Church-Papist who

is one that parts his Religion betwixt his conscience and his purse, and comes to Church not to serve God, but the King.... Once a month he presents himself at the Church, to keepe off the Church warden, and

bring in his body to save his bayle... If he be forc'd to stay out a sermon, he puts his hat over his eyes, and frowns out the houre... His maine policy is to shift off the communion, for which he is never un furnish't of a quarrel, and will bee sure to be out of charity at Easter. 1

As Earle satirised the sect in general, so Burton vented his spleen on the missionary-inclined Jesuits:

And those land-leaping Jesuits have assayed in China, Japan, as appears by their yearly letters; in Africa they have Melinda, Quiloa, Mombaza, etc., and some few towns. They drive out one superstition with another. 2

The Pope himself fared no better with that vitriolic pen:

But above all others, that High Priest of Rome, the dam of that monstrous and superstitious brood, the bull-bellowing Pope, which now rageth in the West, that three-headed Cerberus, hath played his part. 3

The main reason for this dislike of the Catholics was the more apparent than real fear of the revival of the Papacy in England; a fear which was increased when the hopes of the papists, as Mrs. Hutchinson says, were kept alive at first by the expected return of Mary, Queen of Scots, later by the proposed marriage of Charles I to the Spanish

3. Ibid., p. 381.
Infanta, and finally by the nuptials of that king and Henrietta Marie of France.

The Puritans exemplify an entirely different type of mind. So totally foreign from that of the Anglicans and Catholics was their outlook that when the two points of view were made matters of principle they became almost irreconcilable. The Puritan state of mind can be perceived in Wendell’s résumé of their creed:

We can learn from Scripture that God created man in His image, with absolute freedom of will. In punishment for (Adam’s son) God’s unbending justice forbade that the human will...should thenceforth harmonize with the Divine....So all men are doomed....However, with Divine aid, a human being could feel his own free will miraculously harmonious with God’s.

This Divine aid was derived from the Scriptures, which had to be interpreted, so there had to be preachers. But these expounders of the Word, unlike the Catholic and Anglican priests, were not intermediaries between God and man; their religion, being a personal thing for a man in whose soul there was a perpetual struggle between good and evil, needed no such medium. Similarly, this individuality caused the more zealous Puritans to consider churches more as convenient meeting places than as houses of God where closer contact with the Almighty could be made.

I. Barrett Wendell, Temper of the 17th century in English Literature, p. 217.
Although they remained within the established Church, by the beginning of the reign of James I the Puritans were a firmly established sect, and were becoming known by the opprobrious names of "roundheads" and "precisions." Some official papers report that

The imputation of the name of Puritan is now grown so odious and reproachful that many men for feare thereof are rather willing to be thought to favor some vice or superstition than to undergo the scandal of that name, and seeing many who both disapprove and are verie desirous to obey his Majesties lawes and government (as well ecclesiastical as temporal) yet only for absteyming from or not approving grosse vices or profaneness or for due frequenting publique exercises of religion or practising the private duties thereof in their owne familyes, are branded with that opprobrious name. 1

From the following contemporary pictures one can see if so ill a reputation was deserved. Mrs. Hutchinson, in characterizing her husband, says that he

was neither taken with wine, nor gaming, nor the converse of wicked and vain women; to all which he wanted not powerful tempters, had not the power of God's grace in him been above them. 2

And John Winthrop, after an apparently terrific mental struggle, concluded thus:

Finding by much examination that ordinary shottinge in a gunne, etc: could not stande with a good conscience in my selfe. ... Therefore I have resolved and covenanted with the Lorde to give over al together shottinge at the creeke; and for killing of birds etc.: either to leave that altogether or els use it, bothe very seldom or very secreatly. God, (if he please) can give me fowle by some other meanes, but if he will not, yet, in that it is (His) will who loves me, it is sufficient to upholds my resolution.

Besides the three major sects there were several others: the Brownists, the Barrowists, and the Anabaptists, all usually designated by the general term Congregationalist. These quibblers over minor points of ritual Bishop Parker called "Precisianists," a term which was later applied to all dissenters. We need not dwell at any great length on these, since Robert Burton's comment is adequately expressive:

What are all our Anabaptists, Brownists, Familists, but a company of rude, illiterate, capricious base fellows? What are most of our Papists but stupid, ignorant and blind Bayards? How should they otherwise be, when as they are brought up, and kept still in darkness?

The second general topic, religion and politics, must now be briefly discussed.

Had the religious differences remained a separate and

distinct problem, it is quite possible that a solution would have been found; but when religion and politics became practically synonymous the possibility of a peaceful settlement was precluded. In fact, what had really happened in England was that a national church had been substituted for one with universal aims, and this church was no more prone to surrender its rights than the Catholic Church on the continent which at that very moment was making, in the Counter-Reformation, a last attempt by force to regain its lost power. The effects of this conflict were felt in England, where the first two Stuarts resorted not to arms but to the devious methods of diplomacy. This policy of continental alliances was directly counter to that supported by the people who wished to render more ostensible aid to the Protestant cause, so it was doomed to failure from the very beginning. As Green has said, since the war with Spain was a fight against Catholicism, "the patriotism of the Puritan was strengthening his bigotry." ¹

In domestic politics the tactlessness of the Stuarts was just as apparent. When James, flushed with a triumph over Calvinism and democracy in Scotland, ascended the English throne, he immediately antagonized Parliament by his absolute ideas. They in turn refused to grant the king money, causing him to resort to illegal means which drove

the gentry into the opposing religious factions. In 1622 James, in order to obtain funds, allowed a Puritanical Parliament to see how he dispensed their grants. Thus the 1629 Parliamentary avowal of rights over ecclesiastical affairs was their claim to still more extensive powers which the "temperate, chaste, and serious" King Charles was not disposed to grant. As Mrs. Hutchinson so keenly recognized, he "had a mistaken principle that kingly government in the state could not stand without episcopal government in the Church." Moreover, he appointed the fanatical Laud to carry out these ideas. The Archbishop's own beliefs were quite in accord with his King's: he considered both Church and State as divinely established, "Christ... had in mind a single system of organization, doctrine, and ritual, to be set up in the world forever." In the meantime Charles had prorogued his Parliament, and for eleven years he ruled as an absolute monarch; during that time the Puritan feeling merged with the feeling that ancestral rights were being violated. Disregarding all signs of opposition, the Church blindly followed James's policy

2. Ibid., p. 68.
4. Barrett Wendell, Temper of the 17th Century in English Literature, p. 244.
of divine right: the king derived his power from his birthright, and obedience to the crown was a religious duty.

That there was much opposition to this program is confirmed by Clarendon:

Petitions (were) presented by many parishioners against their pastors, with articles of their misdemeanours and behaviours; most whereof consisted, 'in their bowing at the name of Jesus, and obliging the communicants to come up to the Altar to receive the sacraments.'

Similarly Mrs. Hutchinson comments on the religious situation:

When the dawn of the gospel began to break upon this isle, after the dark midnight of papacy, the morning was more cloudy here than in other places by reason of the state-interest, which was mixing and working itself into the interest of religion, and which in the end quite wrought it out.

In a very different light did John Evelyn view the state of the church:

And at this time was the Church of England in her greatest splendour, all things decent, and becoming the Peace, and the persons that governed.

In 1639 the Protestant Scotch revolted against the use

of the English service book, and the Catholic Irish arose against their Protestant oppressors. And in 1642 Charles I raised his standard at Nottingham.

For greater clarity I have divided this present study into chapters of varying length, depending on the subject, and attempted at the same time to follow some logical arrangement.

After endeavouring in the Introduction to present a general picture of the religious situation in early 17th century England, I have dealt respectively with churches and their administration, clergymen, sermons, congregations, and "the daily round." Since the subject of sermons seemed to be somewhat irrelevant it has been discussed only briefly, while congregations and home worship, being more to the point, have been treated at some length. There has been no attempt to meticulously divide and subdivide each topic presented.
One of the strange things of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods in England was the absence of church construction. Although they were ages of economic and political expansion and of scientific improvements, architecture was practically at a standstill, the only innovation being the Elizabethan house, a quaint but attractive structure developed by social conditions.

That religion played such a prominent part in determining even the smallest actions of daily life makes this fact all the more difficult to comprehend. As we saw above, the religion of the 17th century was largely intellectual and scholastic, a trait that may explain the lack of interest in church architecture. The mysticism which was the impetus to the great cathedral building of the Middle Ages had lost its force; while the economic rivalry of the 20th century had not yet developed sufficiently to cause sects to rival each other in erecting their gigantic structures in praise of the Almighty.

Whatever the cause of this may have been, the fact still remains that the England of the early Stuarts did not
require new churches. For a population of something under
5,000,000 in 1632 there were 9,284 parish churches,\(^1\) an
average congregation of 521. In London alone there were
about 116 fairly important churches caring for the needs of
a population of approximately 150,000. \(^2\)

The people were content to worship in the churches of
their forefathers; consequently the countryside was dotted
with small Gothic structures; but here and there the mag­
nificent medieval cathedrals, like those of Westminster,
Lincoln, Ely, and Salisbury, raised their majestic spires.
Smallness and the presence of bell-towers were the marked
features of all village churches. Anthony a Wood says that
the church at Fayrford "is built crossways, hath a stately
tower in the middle, and a tunable ring of bells. The
Church is adorned with pinacles and sculptures of men's
faces and arms." \(^3\) Aubrey also comments on Westport's
"fair spire-steeple, with five tuneable bells." \(^4\) The bells
which rang long and loud for services and on notable
occasions were things of pride to the villagers, although
the cost for wages of the ringers and for repairs was often
quite high. These bells were not however innovations of
the 17th century. Wood tells us that those of Merton college

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   p. 374.
were very ancient:

The Tenor, the best bell in England, was given, or else set up, in the time of (Henry) Abendon, warden (1401-1438), as his name upon it shows. ¹

Most of the churches were built either of stone or brick, usually in the Gothic style, although there were a few which followed the decadent fashion of the Jacobean. The church-yard, as well as the grave-yard adjacent to the church, was filled with old yew-trees, lending atmosphere, while the mural monuments of old and past lords and nobles gave the church the tradition of centuries. Often the graves not only were against the walls but nearly blocked the entrances, as, for example, Samuel Butler's grave, which he requested be placed two yards from the doorway, with his feet touching the wall. ² The very markers buttressed, as it were, the sides of the church.

The subject of graves naturally leads to the interior of the church, the inside as well as the outside being used for burial. With the churchwardens' consent and with the payment of a "lairstall" fee a member of the parish could be interred beneath his own pew or in other designated places. As this was a very popular custom, the air within the churches was extremely unhealthful, and odoriferous, so that it is no wonder they burned juniper, benzoin, and

frankincense on festival days and on such great occasions as the Bishop’s Visitation. In many churches the digging of the graves was not so great a task as it would first appear, because the unflagged floors were just bare earth, covered periodically with rushes or straw.

The interiors of churches became plainer as the Puritan influence increased, ending finally in the destruction of the beautifully decorated windows, for which outrage this sect gave as their reason the new service which required reading the responses and consequently more light. But the churches of James I’s times retained much of their old Catholic appearance. Wood, continuing his description of the Fayrford church, says that it had "a fair roof, floor, organ loft (containing a good set of organs before the warre time), altars, pedestalls, offering-places as well in the walls of the church as chancell." From George Herbert’s explicit directions for the care of the church an excellent picture can be formed:

As walls plaistered, windows glazed, floore paved, seats whole, firm, and uniform.

Secondly, that the Church be swept and kept cleane, without dust or cobwebs, and at great festivalls strawed, and stuck with boughs, and perfumed with incense. Thirdly, that there be fit and proper texts of Scriptures everywhere painted, and that all the painting be grave and reverend, not with light colours or foolish anticks.

The pews were regular stalls, with doors which could be locked, and with high backs and hard seats; but those in private chapels were often quite elaborate. In George Herbert's Bemerton chapel, or Lady Anne Clifford's at Minekirk, the pews were of finely carved oak, several of them canopied and screened, as was often the case of those reserved for the lord's family and household. ¹

There were usually a pulpit and a reading gallery on either side of the chancel. In the days of Presbyterian domination the pulpits were placed ridiculously high and looked more like a crow's nest than a stand from which to preach.

Two other common features of the churches were the water buckets which hung on the walls above the pews, and the poor box which stood just inside the door of every church.

The last but by no means the least object to attract one's notice in the 17th century church or chapel was the organ. This instrument was just becoming popular for use in the church, so that as yet many churches, especially in the parishes of the North-Country, had to depend on their band of violins. Not only were they used in the places of public worship but likewise in private homes: Nicholas Ferrar had one in his house which accompanied the singing

¹ Dr. G. C. Williamson, Lady Anne Clifford, p. 308.
in the home devotions. Moreover, in many nobles' homes organs could be found, but they naturally never attained the popularity of the virginals. The control of the Puritans, however, put an end to music in the churches, so that it was not until after the Restoration that Pepys could say that "this day the organs did begin to play."

The church-building played an important part in Jacobean society, since it was the center of social and political activity. Funerals and marriages were invariably held in the churches, being attended by elaborate ceremonies and arousing even more interest in the village than a similar event does to-day—if that be possible. Of all the appurtenances of a church, the bells were the most widely used. As was mentioned before, these were rung not only for services but for nearly every event in the daily routine of the people's lives. As the death rate of early 17th century England was exceedingly high, the sound of the "passing-bell," a notification to the parishioners of the death of one of their neighbors, was probably as familiar as our modern fire-sirens are to us. Anthony a Wood tells us that "S. Marie's bell rang out four times from 10 till 2 in the afternoon. Once it rang out for Mr. H. Bret," 1 and another time "St. Peter's bell in the East rung out for

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Thomas Killigrew's son." ¹ Not only were the bells and chimes put to practical use but they were rung for pleasure and enjoyment; one of the favorite diversions of the country boys was "ringing." And Sir John Hawkins, in writing of the York tune, says that the chimes of country churches "played it six or eight times in four-and-twenty hours from time immemorial." ²

II

The civil government was so intimately tied up with the ecclesiastical that the church necessarily became the center of administration. The Anglican Church, like the Catholic, had an hierarchial form of administration, with the king as head, two archbishops, bishops, churchwardens, vestries, and priests. Although the king was the ostensible "chief executive" of the church, the two archbishops really ran the affairs, and it was from these that the bishops received their orders. The latter acted, as it were, as liaison officers between the centralised committee at the top and the many small units at the bottom of the ladder; consequently they were more open to any aspersions which might be cast on the church in general. A rather popular opinion of these officers was expressed by one contemporary: a bishop is

"of a low condition, his Education nothing of that way: he
gets a Living, and then a greater Living and then a greater
than that, and so comes to govern." 1 What especially gave
rise to such opinions was that the bishops were also civil
authorities, using the canons of the civil law to enforce
their own decrees in the ecclesiastical courts; which courts,
moreover, were, through their fees and expenses, a constant
drain on the parish treasuries, so that the churchwardens,
the next link in the hierarchial chain, were constantly at
their wits' end to know how to replenish their coffers.
These local officials, whose duties, George Herbert says,
were the whole order and discipline of the parish, were
appointed by the select vestries of twelve or twenty-four
parishioners,2 answering therefore directly to the people.
The wardens were a kind of corporation which, by use of civil
as well as ecclesiastical law, was allowed to take goods and
other possessions for parish use;3 they were really the legal
guardians of the church property, but they also had other
specific duties: supplying their church with its required
accoutrements, such as "a comely and honest pulpit," a
strong chest with three keys for alms, a Bible, Erasmus's
Paraphrases on the Gospels, and a register book for marriages,

1. John Selden, Table-Talk, p. 15.
2. Eleanor Trotter, 17th Century Life in the Country Parish,
p. 18.
christenings, burials; keeping the accounts of the money received and disbursed; guarding the conduct of the parishioners, and presenting the offences which were within the jurisdiction of the church courts, e.g., negligence in attending church, for which there was a fine of £20 a month for the masters and £10 a month for the servants.\(^1\) With such extensive powers Earle's characterization is not exaggerated:

Hee seemes not sincerely religious, especially on solemn daies, for he comes oft to church to make a shew....Hee makes very much of his authority; but more of his Satin Doublet; which though of good yeares, bears its age very well, and looks fresh every Sunday.\(^2\)

A word might be said of the minor officials: the clerk who rang the bell for services, set the Bible and Prayer book in order for the Clergyman, made provision for Christenings and Communion, and led the congregation in the responses to public prayers; the sexton who cleaned the church, lighted fires, opened pews, dug graves and had general charge of the church, or was, in short, the janitor; and the beadle, whose chief duty was to drive the dogs out of the church.\(^3\)

The priest or clergyman and his office will be con-

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sidered in the following chapter.

The Presbyterians, on the other hand, had an altogether different set up, so simple that Selden's short paragraph aptly describes it:

The Presbyter with his Elders about him is like a young tree fenced about with two, or three, or four stakes; the stakes defend it, and hold it up, but the tree only prospers and flourishes. Lay-Elders are stakes, the Presbyter the tree that flourishes. 1

The upkeep of the parish church was perhaps burdensome to many of the people: 6d. or 8d. a week were levied on Sunday for the maintenance of the poor, although sometimes this "Rogue money" was reckoned with the ordinary expenses of the church; many parish assessments which were included in the expenses of the church were levied individually or were paid out of the parish income, which was largely derived from the houses and lands owned by the church, and from fees for "lairstails," and from rents of pews which amounted to about 4d. 2 Then of course there was the tithe, that charge about which Selden said:

'Tis ridiculous to say the tithes are God's Part, and therefore the Clergy must have them. Why, so they are if the Laymen has them. 3

Undoubtedly there was a considerable amount of corruption in the administration of the lands and in the appointments

1. John Selden, Table-Talk, p. 135.
2. Eleanor Trotter, 17th Century Life in the Country Parish, pp. 6, 14, 27.
of clergy and bishops. Simony was a common practice and naturally, to recoup these losses, the bishop or rector, as the case may be, would sometimes stoop to outright dishonest measures or perhaps adopt practices which made it nearly unbearable for the members of his flock. Aubrey relates an instance:

When bishop Caldwell came to this bishoprick (Sarum), he did lett long leases, which were but newly expired when bishop Davenport came to this sea; so that there tumbled into his coffers vast sums. 1

Thus the lot of bishops and clergymen was much as it is to-day--some were wealthy, some had only comfortable livings, and some were starving; but there is more to be said on this subject in the next chapter.

III
OF CLERGYMEN

Of the 9,000 odd churches in England only 5,439 were served by rectors regularly appointed by patrons and enjoying the rights of the benefices. The remaining 3,845 were either appropriated, i.e. in the possession of Bishops, Cathedrals, or Colleges, or were impropricated, i.e. in possession of laymen.¹ In the light of these figures, which of course varied somewhat between 1600 and 1642, it is no wonder the Puritans, to whom preaching was so important, were dissatisfied at the condition of their churches. Then too there were political reasons which decreased the number of active ministers, particularly those with anti-church tendencies, such as the shake-up in 1605 when three hundred Puritan clergy were driven from their livings² because they refused to comply with the prescribed articles.

Jacobean England still had the patron system, under which a person, after being licensed to preach by the bishop, would be appointed by a patron, who was owner of

most of the parish, to a living which included his salary and a parsonage. Of course there were exceptions to this rule, as the parishes having their own preaching funds under the control of the churchwarden, paid licensed preachers.

Broadly speaking, there were as many types of clergymen then as now, but John Earle's two categories seem to be all inclusive. First there is A Grave Divine:

His discourse there is substance, not all Rhetorique, and he utters more things than words. His speech is not help't with enforce'd action, but the matter acts itselfe. Hee shoots all his meditations at one Butt: and beats upon his Text, not the Cushion, making his hearers not the Pulpit groane. In citing of Papish errors, he cuts them with Arguments, not cudgels them with barren invectives: and labours more to show the truth of his course than the spleene. His Sermon is limited by the method, not the hour-glass: and his Devotions goes along with him out of the Pulpit....In matters of ceremonie hee is not ceremonious, but thinkes hee owes that reverence to the Church to bow his judgement to it, and make more conscience of schisme, than a surplesse. Hee esteemes the Churches Hirarchie, as the Churches glory, and how-ever wee jarre with Rome, would not have our confusion distinguish us. 

On the other hand we have a class, undoubtedly the larger of the two, typified by A Young Rawe Preacher:

His backwardnesse in the Universitie hath set him thus forward....His small standing and time hath made him a proficient only in boldnesse, out of which and his Table booke he is

furnish for a preacher. His Collections of Studie are the notes of Sermons. His writing is more than his reading; for hee reads only what hee gets without books. The pace of his Sermon is a full careere, and he runnes wildly over hill and dale till the clockes stop him. The labour of it is chiefly in his lungs. And the only thing hee ha's made of it himselfe, is the faces, and hea's a jest still in lavender for Bellarmine. His action is all passion, and his speech interjections: He will not draw his handkercher out of his place, nor blow his nose without discretion. Hee preaches but once a yeare, though twice on Sund(a)y: for the stuffe is still the same, only the dressing a little alter'd. You shall know him by his narrow velvet cape, and serge facing, and his ruffe, next his hairs, the shortest thing about him. His friends and much painfulness may preferre him to threttie pounds a yeare, and this means, to a chambermaid: with whom wee leave him now in the bonds of Wedlocke.

The lecturers, although not numerous, formed a very distinct group popular among the Puritans, deserving at least a word. Quite a number of Non-Conformist communities raised special funds to obtain the services of one of these expounders; consequently, when the civil government prohibited any but regularly licensed ministers to preach, a great outcry was raised among the Dissenters, whose arder for lecturers was increasing daily. The consensus of opinion of them among the Anglicans has been summed up by the learned Selden:

Lecturers do in a Parish church what the Friars did heretofore, get away not only the Affections, but the Bounty, that should be bestowed upon the Ministers.

2. John Selden, *Table-Talk*, p. 86.
The feeling toward the Clergy as a whole was rather hostile and they were considered as rather poor specimens of humanity. Even the pious George Herbert lamented the fact that

the Country Parson knows well that both for the general ignominy which is cast upon the profession, and much more for those rules which out of his choicest judgment he hath resolved to observe, and which are described in this Book, he must be despised. 1

Selden also remarked that each clergyman, although good, is condemned by the faults of the whole tribe; therefore, "chain up the clergy on both sides." 2

This ignominy cast upon divines was partly of their own making. Edward Davenant of the Church of Sarum demonstrates a prevailing practice among churchmen.

He granted to his nephew (this Dr.) the lease of the great manour of Poterne, worth about 1000 li. per annum; made him treasurer of the Church of Sarum, of which the corps is the parsonage of Calne, which was esteemed to be of the like value. He made several purchases, all which he left him; insomuch as the Churchmen of Sarum say, that he gained more by this church than ever any man did by the church since the Reformation, and take it very unkindly that, at his death, he left nothing (or but 50 li.) to that church which was the source of his estate. 3

Another reason for the ill-repute of the clergy was

2. John Selden, Table-Talk, p. 34.
the habitual squabbling between preachers and their bishops, disputes which undoubtedly disgusted most of the devout churchmen. This constant bickering was due to several causes, not the least that one to which Selden attributed it—preferment.

"Missing Preferment makes the Presbyters fall foul upon the Bishops: Men that are in hopes and in the way of rising, keep in the channel, but they have none, seek new ways." 1

Under such conditions it is quite obvious why the profession suffered a black eye; but, as is invariably the case, their opponents went too far and attributed to the clergy everything which would belittle them in the eyes of the people. What Selden, writing as a layman wrote, is no doubt true: "We charge the Prelatical clergy with Popery, to make them odious, though we know they are guilty of no such thing." 2

But let us look at the intellectual and cultural life of the clergy and see whether or not their sharp criticism was deserved. There is no doubt that many of the ministers, especially in the country, were of very poor caliber, and

1. John Selden, Table-Talk, p. 131. This is a manifest fact in all heresies and revolutions. It is among those who have failed personally that the seeds of dissatisfaction take root.

2. Ibid., p. 121.
would have made better shop-keepers than divines; but there was another side to the story. Perhaps most of the scholars of the day were recruited from the ranks of the licensed ministers, while many, although not famous for their learning, were cultured and well-versed in the sciences and the classics. Aubrey said that William Oughtred, rector of Albany, was famous abroad for his learning, being not only a good Latin and Greek scholar, but a mathematician.

I have heard his neighbor ministers say that he was a pitiful preacher; the reason was because he never studied it but bent all his thoughts on the mathematiques. 1

Robert Burton, besides being well-read in medicine, was a good mathematician and philologist; and Nicholas Ferrar was a fluent linguist, knowing ten or more languages, not including dialects. But this knowledge of languages must not be placed too high in the scale of accomplishments because one must remember that Latin, and sometimes Greek, were studied throughout grammar school and college, and Hebrew and Arabic were considered as extremely desirable for one entering the ministry; while, on the other hand, the modern languages, although known by many, were

considered of little value except as a convenience in traveling. Then too, knowledge, to those seeking it, was an end, not a means; they pursued learning for its own sake.

Nevertheless, a mastery of all these phases of learning was not necessarily a prerequisite for a good minister. Selden advises that

to be a Divine, let him read the whole Body of Divinity, The Fathers and the Schoolmen, but when he comes to practice, he must use it and apply it according to those Grounds and Articles of Religion that are established in the Church, and this with sense. 1

George Herbert, in his instructions for the country parson, advocates the same idea, but quite naturally he adds to his requirements farming and the teaching of it.

The hobbies and pastimes of the clergy were as varied as their technical knowledge. Since painting and sculpture were too closely connected with the Catholic Church they were alone, of all the arts, tabu, music and poetry hereby gaining. In the latter the mystical and metaphysical work of Crashaw, and Herbert, and Donne, and Vaughan is too familiar to warrant further comment.

The 17th century was a musical age, nearly every home having a virginal or hautboy or violin in it, the clergy's furnishing no exception. Robert Sanderson, lord

1. John Selden, Table-Talk, p. 94.
bishop of Lincoln, "was a lover of musique, and was wont to play on his base violl, and also to sing to it."

Aubrey also mentions the fact that George Herbert "told me that he had a very good hand on the lute, and that he sett his own lyricks on sacred poems." 2

In the scientific field the clergys' interests were also broad, embracing all except chemistry, which was too closely connected with black magic. Both astrology and heraldry were very popular; but Archbishop Laud contented himself with gathering his famous collection of coins and with building up an excellent library. And so on with a great number of examples.

Besides spending much time on his hobbies and study the minister had to devote a considerable number of hours a day to his regular duties, which were partly civil as well as religious; so he was not only a priest and preacher but to some extent an officer of the government. The country parson particularly was interested in local affairs since he was associated with the churchwardens and constables in that he signed the certificate permitting a laborer to leave the parish; he was present when a rogue was whipped; he licensed sick people to eat meat on fish

2. Ibid., p. 310.
days, for which he received 4d. as a register's fee; he sometimes had to work with the parish officials in the administration of the lands and money left for the poor. He had still another duty about which George Herbert advises:

He observes Visitations, and being there makes due use of them, as of clergy counsels for the benefit of the Diocese.

Sometimes the minister had added duties; when for example, in order to increase his meager income, he obtained from the bishop a license to teach the village school, or, as in the case of the country parson, he usually became the tutor of his patron's children.

Of course Sunday, then as now, was the busy day for the preacher. The pulpit had really become the press of the day; consequently, during the week the parson would gather all the latest news from the visitors at the squire's house and then incorporate it in his Sunday sermon. But George Herbert, in his admonitions to parsons, has perhaps best described the average minister's Sunday:

2. Ibid., p. 68.
Then having read divine service twice fully, and preached in the morning and catechized in the afternoons, he thinks he hath in some measure...discharged the publick duties of the Congregation. The rest of the day he spends either in reconciling neighbours that are at variance, or in visiting the sick, or in exhortations to some of his flock by themselves, whom sermons cannot or doe not reach. 1

Although Herbert stresses the Sunday afternoon catechizing and advises the use of the Socratic method, with such questions as: "How came this world to be as it is? Was it made, or came it by chance? Then are there some things to be believed that are not seen? Is this the nature of belief?" 2 etc., the parsons did not always do this; and when they did, certainly oft-times

The English Priests would do that in English, which the Romish do in Latin, keep the people in Ignorance; but some of the people outdo them at their own game. 3

Herbert goes on to describe the clergy's house and personal duties. He believed it better not to be married, but if a divine had a wife let her be religious and train her children and maids in the fear of God "with prayers and catechizing, and all religious duties;" 4 and let

2. Ibid., p. 266.
the parson observe fast days and be careful to avoid luxury, especially drinking; let Fridays be lean in diet, company and recreation; and let his clothing be plain but clean, "without spots, or dust, or smell; the purity of his mind breaking out and dilating itself even to his body, cloaths, and habitation." Above all the parson is to keep up with the Lord and Lady of the house, ever mindful to reprove them discreetly when occasion calls for it.

Regretfully it must be said that this is an idealised picture of the clergy. There was another side which was far more unpleasant and disagreeable, and without a doubt more common. Burton in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, in excusing himself for dealing so much with the physician's work, says that he knew many men who entered the ministry, or took orders, in the hope of a benefice, and therefore "Tis a common transition, and why not a melancholy divine, that can get nothing but by Simony, profess physick?"

Or again:

Many poor country-vicars, for want of other means, are driven to their shifts; to turn mountebanks, quacksalvers, empiricks, and if our greedy patrons hold us to such hard conditions,

2. Ibid., p. 214.
as commonly they do, they will make most of us work at some trade, as Paul did, at least turn taskers, malsters, castermongers, graziers, sell Ale as some have done, or worse. 1

Before leaving the clergy it might be well to at least glance at the poor, despised private chaplain, occupying the lowest and most degrading position a divine could have, being stigmatised as a £30 or £40 a year man and being forced to content himself with a place, not at his Lord's table, but at the "Parlour Table". Nevertheless, many of the most educated and famous clergymen in England were, at one time or another, private chaplains, and they carried no stigma with them. Both Drs. King and Duppa were £40 a year men for Lady Anne Clifford; and we find the same patroness saying she gave 20s. to James Buchanan, "our parson, when he now preached a good sermon to me and my family, in my chamber at this Appleby Castle," 2 or again, she gave him 20s. "when he administered the Blessed Sacrament of bread and wine to me and them." 3

2. G. C. Williamson, Lady Anne Clifford, p. 327.
3. Loc. cit.
IV

OF SERMONS

In the 17th century sermons were preached; they were written; they were read; and they were enjoyed. But these sermons were not always on religious subjects; they could be studies in economics, in sociology, or in philosophy, depending on the preacher’s special interest, and on the occasion. Among the various sects, however, the matter of subjects was very important. To the Calvinists "it was," as Masson so aptly puts it, "a matter of conscience to propound at full length, and without any abatement, the doctrines of election, predestination, justification by faith and not by works." ¹ Selden, on the other hand, says that "predestination is a point inaccessible, out of our reach; we can make no notion of it, 'tis so full of intricacy, so full of contradiction" ² that ministers should not preach of it because they usually end by not convincing the people but by saying they must believe and by calling them names. The same author also points out the duty of the preacher: "not

2. John Selden, Table-Talk, p. 130.
to make long Harangues, as they do now-a-days, but to tell the News of Christ's coming into the world; and when that is done, or where 'tis known already, the Preacher's Work is done." 1 George Herbert advocates much the same method when he advises the parson to choose texts of devotion and not those of controversy, "moving and ravishing texts, whereof the Scriptures are full." 2 That this advice was not well-received can be seen in Sir Thomas Browne's comment on sermons:

And truely there are singular pieces in the Philosophy of Zeno, and doctrine of the Stoicks, which I perceive, deligered in a Pulpit, pass for current Divinity.

Mrs. Hutchinson is more emphatic in her criticism:

Their pulpits might justly be called the scorners chair, those sermons only pleasing that flattered them in their vices, and told the poor king that he was Solomon. 4

That there was some basis for their criticism there can be no doubt. Cromwell, in his maiden Parliament speech in 1629, complained that popery was being preached at St.

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1. John Selden, Table-Talk, p. 124.
Paul's cross; 1 and Aubrey in speaking of Oxford and Dr. Ralph Kettell says that

he was a right Church of England man, and every Tuesday, in terms time, in the morning, the undergraduates (I have forgott if baccalauris) were to come into the chapel and heare him expound on the 36 Articles of the Church of England. 2

And in country congregations of farming classes sermons on agriculture were much in vogue.

As varied as the subjects, were the occasions on which sermons were delivered; on nearly every event that occurred some one had to preach. As Burton says:

And had I been as forward and ambitious as some others, I might have haply printed a sermon at Paul's Cross, a sermon in St. Mary's Oxon, a sermon in Christ-Church, or a sermon before the Right Honourable, Right Reverend, a sermon before the Right Worshipful, a sermon in Latin, in English, a sermon with a name, a sermon without, a sermon, a sermon, etc. 3

These sermons which Burton satirises were in addition to the two regular Sunday discourses at which Selden pokes fun:

the main Argument why they would have two Sermons a Day, is, because they have two meals a Day; the Soul must be fed as well as the Body. 4

4. John Selden, Table-Talk, p. 126.
There are quite a few allusions to the Sunday preaching at Paul's Cross which the mayor and two others, perhaps sheriffs, clad in their robes and wearing their gold chains, attended on horseback. 1

One similar characteristic of the sermons of the regularly ordained preachers was their method of construction. It was the method which they had thoroughly learned in the university 2 and which was nearly parallel to Abelard's Sic et Non, constructing an argument, offering examples and citing authorities. But it was in the sermons, as in nothing else, that the medievalism of the 17th century made itself apparent; all its theology, metaphysics and use of authority came to the surface. As one author, pointing out the medieval characteristics of the 17th century as seen in John Donne, puts it:

Pour Donne, théologie et philosophie sont étroitement liées... Physique et métaphysique se melent l'une à l'autre... Donne conserve d'une façon générale l'habitude médiévale d'appeler à l'autorité. 3

"Exempla," except when referring to a man or woman of classical times, was rarely used in 17th century sermons; 4

2. Caroline Richardson, English Preachers and Preaching, 1640-1670, p. 36.
their abundance of knowledge of the Scriptures and Church fathers sufficed. For the less learned there were plenty of sermon-helps and books on preaching and sermons.

Other common traits which the congregations heartily approved of were the verbosity, the use of metaphors, similes, puns and wit, and the long sentences. Also, theoretically at least, sermons were about the same length—when the hour-glass ran out the sermon was to cease. Unless the preacher was exceptionally good this was always a sign for the congregation to become restless.

The minister who could retain his hearers overtime was a good orator. A 17th century "auditory" liked their sermons delivered, not read, thus giving the preacher a chance to display all his oratorical and histrionic ability. Although then as now, mannerisms were identified with certain religious groups and sects, the most staid and devout Anglican had his share. Even the pious George Herbert was not avers to using those methods. He informs his country parson that

when he preacheth, he procures attention by all possible means, both earnestness of speech...and by a diligent and busy cast of his eye on his auditors...and with particularizing of his speech now to the younger sort, then to the elder, now to the poor, and now to the rich.

1. Loc. Cit.
In other words, the preacher must be a public performer, whose job is to present a finished performance. As Selden says: "To preach long, loud, and Damnation, is the way to be cried up." 2 William Whately, the Vicar of Banbury, especially bears out this assertion: he had an able body "and such sound lungs, that for his style of preaching he was called 'the Roaring Bay of Banbury;'" 3 or as his biographer, Scudder, says: "according as his matter in hand and his auditory needed, he was both a terrible Boanerges, a son of thunder, and also a Barnabas, a son of sweet consolation." 4 Aubrey, on the other hand, presents a different picture: "Our old vicar of Kington St. Michael, Mr. Hynd, did sing his sermons rather than reade them." 5

The preacher was much like John Earle's Gallant:
"He is furnishsft (with) his Jestes, as some wanderer with sermons, some three for all Congregations;" 6 but the witty minister, although he "will bring anything into the Text," 7 was far superior to the Gallant. As Aubrey records: the clever Dr. Keitell would end his sermons in St. Marie's

2. John Selden, Table-Talk, p. 43.
7. Selden, op. cit., p. 126.
Church at Oxford with, "But now I see it is time for me to shutt up my booke, for I see the doctor's men come in wiping of their beardes from the ale-house."¹ And again, gossipy Aubrey relates a story about a confirmation service of Richard Corbet, bishop of Oxford:

Another time being to lay his hands on the head of a man very bald, he turns to his chaplaine (Lushington) and sayd, "Some dust, Lushington," (to keepe his hand from slidding). There was a man with a great venerable beard; sayd the bishop, "You, behind the beard."²

Selden's Table-Talk abounds with too many priceless gibes at preaching to be dismissed without a few more examples. He sarcastically comments that

Preaching by the Spirit (as they call it) is most esteemed by the Common-people, because they cannot abide Art or Learning, which they have not been bred up in.³

And again:

In preaching they do by men as Writers of Romances do by their chief Knights, bring them into many Dangers, but still fetch them off: so they put men in fear of Hell, but at last bring them to Heaven.⁴

One result of the emphasis placed on sermon delivery

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³ John Selden, Table-Talk, p. 125.
⁴ Ibid., p. 127.
was preacher worship. Thus the minister who catered to
the public whims became quite popular and had no trouble
in filling his church. His sermon would be played up
and praised by someone until finally other people do the
same; so "preaching for the most part is the glory of the
Preacher, to show himself a fine man." ¹

¹ John Selden, Table-Talk, p. 128.
OF CONGREGATIONS

To the 17th century Englishman Sunday was a day of worship and of sport. Although the Reformation had somewhat changed their outlook, country men especially paid small respect to the day; a day when they bought and sold, wrestled and played football, danced and sang, and frequented alehouses, as well as churches. The Book of Sports of 1618 gives an excellent picture of a Sunday in Jacobean England:

And as for our good people's lawful recreation, our pleasure likewise is that after the end of divine services our good people may not be disturbed, letted, or discouraged from any lawful recreation, such as dancing, either men or women, archery for men, leaping, vaulting, or any other such harmless recreation; nor from having of May games, Whitsun ales, and Morris dances, and the setting up of May-poles, and other sports therewith used, as the same be had in due and convenient time without impediment or neglect of divine service; and that women shall have leave to carry rushes to the church for the decoration of it, according to their old custom. But withall, we do here account still as prohibited all unlawful games to be used upon Sunday only, as bear and bull-baiting, interludes, and, at all times in the meaner sort of peoples by law prohibited, bowling. 1

1. Cited in Besant, London in the Time of the Stuarts, p. 15. In 1618 James returning from Scotland found that the Puritans, in some sections, had prohibited Sunday sports. He said this barred common people from building up their bodies for war, etc., and led to drunkenness and idleness. Also common people had no other day for sports. Therefore the famous Book of Sports was published.
Besides the games many charming little customs remained. Although space prohibits any development of this subject, it is interesting to note a tradition of Palm Sunday described by Aubrey:

Antiquity—The fashion hereabouts was before the warres that on Palme Sunday the young men and maydes received the communion, and in the afternoon walkt together under the hedges about the cornfields, which was held to be lucky. ¹

Perhaps the farmer welcomed Sunday more as a day of play than of worship. George Herbert, probably recognizing the situation, advised his country parson to visit his flock on week-days when they are "wallowing in the midst of their affairs," because "on Sundays it is easie for them to compose themselves to order, which they put on as their holy-day cloathes, and come to church in frame, but commonly the next day put off both." ²

But let us look at these people in their churches. Perhaps the most distinguishing feature of a 17th century congregation was their dress. "There surely never was," says Elizabeth Godfrey, "a time when dress was so beautiful and so expressive of a dignified mode as during the reigns of the first James and Charles." ³

³. Elizabeth Godfrey, Home Life under the Stuarts, p. 259. Most of the following material on dress has been condensed from this author.
The clothes prove that this statement is not exaggerated: the black and rich velvet doublet, the short cloak, and the small close ruff of King James's reign; or the deep lace collar and cuffs; the high-crowned hat with a gold or diamond hat-band, or the broad-brimmed beaver hat with drooping feather; the long silk stockings held in place by garters with roses or knots of ribbon; and the buckled shoes of King Charles's reign.

The children, as pictured by Vandyck, are also formal and dignified: the little girls in petticoats down to their toes, stiff stomachers, and formal little lace caps and mittens; and the boys in satin doublet and breeches, silk stocking and buckled shoes with roses, and wide lace collars and plumed hats.

The common country people can be described briefly, since their dress was simple and changed little. One old book of styles pictures a countrywoman who has "a coif with a kerchief over her bosom, and wears clogs." The use of rouge, frowned upon by the gentry, was quite fashionable among the lower orders.

A word must also be said about men's hair. Since periwigs were not yet common their hair was cut in divers

1. Elizabeth Godfrey, Home Life under the Stuarts, p. 259.
ways, in the Dutch, or the bravado, or the court, or the country fashion. The close-cropped hair of the Roundheads was not a familiar sight; even, as Mrs. Hutchinson so proudly says, so staunch a Puritan as her husband had beautiful brown hair below his ears.

Since the Universities represented only a small group, Masson’s description will suffice. He says, in describing the life at Milton’s College in Cambridge, that the undergraduate wore

new fashioned gowns of any colour whatsoever, blue or green, or red or mixt, without any uniformity but in hanging sleeves; and their other garments light and gay, some with boots and spurs, others with stockings of diverse colours reversed one upon the other, and round, rusty caps. 1

No better description covering a class, that could be found in any church, can be had than John Earle’s Character,

A Shee precise Hypocrite:

A Shee precise Hypocrite is a Nonconformist in a close stomacher and Ruffle of Geneva Print, and her purite consists much in her linen. Shee ha’s heard of the Hag of Rome, and thinks it a very sluttish Religion, and raile at the whore of Babylon for a very naughty woman. Shee ha’s left her Virginity as a Relique of Popery, and marries in her tribe without a Ring. Her devotion

at the Church is much in the turning up of her eye, and turning downe the leafe in her Book when shee heares nam'd Chapter and Verse. When she cometh home, shee commendeth the Sermon for the Scripture, and two houres. She loves Preaching better than Praying, and of Preachers, Lecturers, and thinkest the Weekedays Exercise farre more edifying then the Sundaies. Her ofttest Gossipings are Sabath-dayes journeys, where (though an enemy to Superstition) shee will goe in Pilgrimage five miles to a silenc'd minister, when there is a better sermon in her owne Parish. Shee doubts of the Virgin Marie's Salvation, and dare not saint her, but knowes her owne place in heaven as perfectly, as the Pew she ha's a key to... Shee suffers them (her daughters) not to learme on the Virginalls, because of their affinity with the Organs, but is reconcil'd to the Bells for the Chymes sake, since they were reform'd to the tune of a Psalme. She overflows so with the Bible, that she aplls it upon every occasion, and will not cudgell her Maids without Scripture.

In a more humorous, but sympathetic, study of A plaine Country Fellow a view of another large cross-section of a congregation is given:

His religion is a part of his copy-hold, which hee takes from his Land-lord, and referees it wholly to his discretion. Yet if hee give him leave, he is a good Christian to his power (that is) comes to church in his best clothes, and sits there with his neighbors, where he is capable only of two Prayers, for raines and faire weather. Hee apprehends Gods blessings onely in a Good Year, or a Fat pasture, and never praises him but on good ground. Sunday he esteems a day to make merry in, and thinkes a Bag-pipe as essentail to it, as Evening-Prayer, where he walkes very solemnly after

service with his hands coupled behind him, and
censures the dancing of his parish. 1

In his A Pretender to Learning and in A Prophane Man
we see not only two of the worst and most annoying members
of a congregation, but also a few of the common habits of
people in church. The former's

pocket is seldom without a Greek Testament, or Hebrew Bible, which he opens only
in Church, and that when some stander by looks
over. 2

On the other hand, A Prophane Man is one who

never sees the church but of purpose to
sleepe in it: or when some silly man preaches
with whom he means to make sport, and is most
jocund in the Church. One that nick-names
Clergymen with all the terms of reproach, as
Rat, Black-coate, and the like which he will be
sure to keep up, and never calls them by
other. That sings Psalms when he is drunke,
and cryes God mercy in mockery; for hee must
doe it. 3

John Aubrey, in his Brief Lives, tells a humorous story
of an alderman at Cambridge:

There was then at Cambridge a good fatt
alderman that was wont to sleep at Church,
which the alderman endeavoured to prevent but
could not. Well! This was preached against

1. John Earle, Microcosmography, p. 49.
2. Ibid., p. 53.
3. Ibid., p. 98.
The poor alderman, continually seeking a remedy for this embarrassing condition, finally found one; so he
came to St. Marie's, where the preacher was prepared with a sermon to damn all who slept at a sermon, a certain sign of reprobation. The good alderman having taken his full nap before, looks on the preacher all sermon time, and spoyle the designe.

From these examples above it can be concluded that the 17th century congregation closely resembled one of our own day; and if the modern minister were to be as concerned with the conduct of his flock as George Herbert was, he would probably give them the same advice. The parson was to go on

by no means endurin either talking, or sleeping, or gazing, or leaning, or halfe-kneeling, or any undutifull behaviour in them, but causing them when they sit, or stand, or kneel, to do all in a strait and steadystance, as attending to what is done in the church, and everyone, man and child, answering aloud both Amen and all other answers which are on the Clerk's and people's part to answer.

All similarity to a modern congregation disappears in the seating arrangement in a 17th century church, sex

as well as class being a basis of separation. Since men and women sat apart, among the latter there was much disputing over position: they all wanted the first room in the stall. The vestry of Pittington finally became desperate and enacted rules governing all such situations:

Whereas some of the women were not content with any rooms in the stalls but the first, contending for the first places, to avoid suits in law and to restrain the pride of such, it was agreed upon by the twelve of the parish of Pittington that everyone should take their place as they came, such as came first to the church should have the first place in the stall appointed for them.

The seating was also roughly arranged according to rank. The naves of churches were free to all parishioners but subject to the power of the churchwardens or vestry to place them. In many parishes, however, the tenure of a certain house and farm gave the tenant a right to a pew which he had to keep in repair. Most of these pews had the names of the regular occupants written inside, and that being the only place they could sit, the churchwardens had no difficulty in checking up on attendance. Sometimes there might be other regulations for seating; as it was decreed in one parish that no young man, journeyman, or apprentice

would be allowed to sit in the choir, unless he was able to read and to help say the service. John Ferrar has given us an excellent description of the seating arrangement and interior of the church at Little Gidding:

Each as they came into the church making low obeisance, taking their places, the masters in the chancel, and the boys kneeling upon the upper step, which ascended up into the chancel from the church: the reading-place and pulpit standing, each opposite to the other, by two pillars, at the ascent into the chancel, the one on the right hand, the other on the left, close to each side of the wall: old Mrs. Ferrar and all her daughters going into an isle of the church, that joined on the north side, close at the back of the reading-place, where all the women sat always. Nicholas Ferrar being in his surplice and hood (for so in it he always went to church) stepped up into the reading-place, and there said divine service, and responses were made by all present, and the reading psalms were done so.

It was customary for the squire and the people from the hall to sit in front of the others, or on the side which was slightly raised above the rest.

On the whole, church-going in the 17th century was a rather pleasant and automatic performance. The squire and his family attending quite regularly, the tenants naturally followed, knowing that their landlord liked to

2. John Ferrar, Life of Nicholas Ferrar, p. 29.
see a full church, and they enjoyed the social gathering. Since coaches, which Stow says "were running on wheels with many whose parents had been glad to go on foot," were just coming in, the people, even in cities, usually walked to church. John Bruen's going to church is typical of that of any country gentleman. His house being but about one mile from the church, he with all his family and but two or three servants would set out on foot, picking up tenants and neighbors along the way.

Hee marched on with a joyfull and cheerfull heart, as a leader of the Lords host, towards the house of God, according to that of the Psalmist, I went with the multitude to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept Holiday.

And so it was indeed his ordinary manner, to call his company neare about him, and to joyne together with one heart and voice, to sing Psalmes as they went along, and that Psalme especially, How pleasant is thy dwelling place.... His coming to the church with all his Family, attendants and followers, was constantly before the beginning of prayers, or any part of divine Service, that so hee might more comfortably join with Gods Minister and people, in confession of sins, in prayer, and praise, reading and hearing of the Word, singing of Psalms, and partaking of the sacraments. 2

The service in practically every parish was the regulation Episcopal, with its cut and dried ritual and

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2. William Hinde, A Faithful Remonstrance, pp. 210-211.
prayers from the Book of Common-Prayer; a service prescribed by the Thirty-six Articles, decreed by law and enforced by law. The Puritans made the observed forms a matter of conscience, the cause probably being what Selden diagnosed: in wartime people had other things to think about, but now that it is peace they begin to examine all things, and take only those things they like. ¹ Men like Selden and Burton accepted ceremony for what it was worth; they recognized it as an aid to keep up the spirit. Thus it is not surprising to find the bookish divine of Oxford losing patience with those who went so far as to make outward signs a matter of conscience, and finally burst out in a tirade against them:

They will admit of no ceremonies at all, no fasting days, no Cross in Baptism, no kneeling at Communion, no Church-Music, etc., no Bishop's Courts, no Church-government, rail at all our Church-discipline, will not hold their tongues.... No not so much as Degrees will some of them tolerate, or Universities, all human learning ('tis cloaca diaboli), hoods, habits, cap and surplice, such as are things indifferent in themselves, and wholly for ornament, decency, or distinction sake, they abhor;...They make matters of conscience of them, and will rather forsake their livings, than subscribe to them. ²

But besides just a matter of conscience there was some ground for complaint; the church was in a degenerate

¹. John Selden, Table-Talk, p. 29.
state, and the regulation ceremonies themselves were not observed by even the Anglicans. There were constant complaints: men eat meat on Fridays,

eyes lean or sit or kneel at prayers, every man in a several posture as he pleases: at the name of Jesus, few will bow, and when the creed is repeated, many of the boys, by men’s directions, turn to the west door, 1

and the clergy indulged in impromptu prayers. Selden strongly expressed his opinion on this custom:

’Tis hoped we may be cured of our extemporary Prayers, the same way the Grocer’s Boy is cured of his eating Plums, when we have had our Belly full of them. 2

Mrs. Hutchinson even found cause to complain of the services in the schools:

After five years' study there, untainted with those principles or practices, though not yet enlightened to discern the spring of them in the rites and usages of the English church (John left). 3

For the ideal Anglican service we can turn to Nicholas Ferrar’s second Sunday-morning meeting at Little Gidding:

2. John Selden, Table-Talk, p. 124.
It growing now half an hour past ten, the minister of the next parish having read divine service at his own church, then came down with his parishioners to Little Gidding, where he preached on Sunday mornings. The bell then rung again to go to church. Being all in, Nicholas Ferrar went up into the chancel, and at the communion-table with an audible voice there read the second service. Which done, a psalm sung, the minister went up into the pulpit and preached. 1

Of all preachers, Nicholas Ferrar was the most likely, when reading the divine service, to bear himself like George Herbert's ideal parson, who

composeth himself to all possible reverence:
lifting up his heart and hands, and using all other gestures which may express a hearty and unfeyned devotion. 2

One part of the service which warrants special mention is the music. This was furnished usually by organs, or by groups of "fiddles" or violls (especially popular in northern England where organs were not so common) or by bands of singing-men. These singers, it appears, performed in the average parish church only on special occasions, as at the Bishop's Visitation to Little Gidding when John Ferrar takes special care to mention that "the Peterborough singing-men and their music was not wanting in the church." 3

1. John Ferrar, Life of Nicholas Ferrar, p. 51.
3. Ferrar, op. cit., p. 68.
One of John Earle's best characters is that of The Common Singing-men in Cathedral Churches:

Their pastime or recreation is prayers, their exercise drinking, yet herein so religiously addicted that they serve God oftest when they are drunke... Though they never expound the Scripture, they handle it much, and pollute the Gospell with two things, their Conversation, and their thumbes. Upon Workdayes they behave themselves at Prayers as at their Pots, for they swallow them downe in an instant. Their Gownes are lac'd commonly with streamings of Ale, the superfluities of cups or throat above measure. Long-liv'd for the most part they are not, especially the base, they overflow their banke so oft to drowne the Organs. Briefly, if they escape arresting, they dye constantly in God's Service; and to sake (take) their death with more patience, they have Wine and Cakes at their Funerall. 1

Since hymns were not yet a natural form of devotion, the musical part of the church service was quite dissimilar to ours. This form of worship, developing very slowly throughout the reigns of Elisabeth and James, attained no great popularity even during Charles's time. In fact, it was not until 1623 that George Wither published the first hymnal ever to appear in England. Although the English Prayer Book, mainly a translation of the Roman Breviary, contained many hymns, they were not translated, 2 thus leaving the English Protestants to do with versions of the Psalms set to music. Aubrey refers

Till Oxford was surrendered we sang the reading psalms on Sundayes, holy-dayes, and holy-day eves; and one of the scholars of the house sang the gospell for the day in the hall, at the latter end of dinner. 1

Although many of the prescribed usages of the Anglican Church had fallen into disuse during the reign of James, the fanatical state-churchman Laud restored them. He sought to purify the church by restoring the supposed relics of popery: the surplice, the sign of the cross in baptism, and kneeling for communion, were restored, while the Geneva Bible and lecturers, both dear to the hearts of the Puritans, were suppressed. These decrees, enforced by the notorious Star Chamber, were destined to only a short existence before the Puritan dictatorship purged the church of its last vestiges of popery.

It might be well, before concluding this chapter, to say a word about the sacraments. In the two most important, baptism and communion, most of the sects fundamentally agreed, so that the ideal set up by the devout minister of Bemerton was perhaps acceptable to all. His parson was to celebrate communion, if not once a month, at least five or six times a year, thus granting the people, who were

required to partake of it not less than three times a year, ample opportunity to attend. It was also his duty to see that the churchwardens furnished not ill-tasting and unwholesome but the best possible elements for the service. ¹

As for baptism, his own words adequately describe it:

At Baptism, being himself in white, he requires the presence of all, and Baptizeth not willingly but on Sundayes or great dayes. ²

One last word concerning fasting, about which Robert Burton has said all that is necessary:

Not that fasting is a thing of itself to be discommended, for it is an excellent means to keep the body in subjection, a preparative to devotion, the physick to the soul, by which chaste thoughts are engendered, true zeal, a divine spirit, whence wholesome counsels do proceed, concupiscence is restrained, vicious and predominate lusts and humours are expelled. ³

² Loc. cit.
Religion played an extremely important part in the routine life of the average Jacobean. In fact, so many hours were taken up by the religious observances that it is a mystery when he found time to do anything else. In an especially devout family of to-day grace may be said before meals, but this would by no means have sufficed for the 17th century Englishman, who attended morning and evening services in the church or private chapel, who held a daily family prayer, and perhaps a session of instruction on catechising for his children and servants, and who devoted considerable time to private prayers. These devotions played a much more important part in the life of a contemporary of the first two Stuarts than reading the newspaper, or listening to the radio, do in ours; so common among all sects was this practice of private worship that it formed one of the few subjects on which Anglicans, Puritans and Papists agreed.

One of the first duties of George Herbert's ideal parson is questioning "what order is kept in the house: as about prayers morning and evening on their knees, reading of Scripture, Catechizing, Singing of Psalms at their work
and on holy days." 1 Similarly, another in Herbert's profession gives his opinion:

This Gentleman knew right well, that family exercises were the very goads and spurs unto godliness, the life and sinews of grace, and religion, the bonds and cords of love, drawing or leading to perfection. 2

That this was the opinion held by most of the people there can be no doubt, as there are innumerable examples showing the sincerity and devotion with which both Puritans and Anglicans followed the practices of daily worship. As Masson in his Life of Milton points out, a Puritanic piety was common in nearly all the respectable houses of London, especially in John Milton's, where "religious reading and devout exercises would be part of the regular life of the family." 3 Also Mrs. Hutchinson, when speaking of her husband's father, says that "it was his custom to have his chaplain pray with him before he went out (hunting)." 4

As remarked before, this was not solely a characteristic of Puritans; Anglican families also had their daily devotions and were just as faithful in pursuing them as any Puritan family. Lady Anne Clifford appointed and paid chaplains for each of her many residences, so that

2. William Hinde, A Faithful Remonstrance, p. 66.
wherever she happened to be, she could have a chapter of
the Bible and morning prayers read to her. 1 Not only did
she have her own chaplains, but on each of her estates was
a private chapel, thus enabling her to have the following
quiet service:

The next day she sent for the chaplain, Mr. Rand, and told him that she did not feel herself 'fit to receive Communion,' and as soon as Lord Dorset (her husband) heard what she had decided, he said that Communion was to be put off for the whole household at Enole, excepting any of them that liked to go to church. In consequence, Mr. Rand preached in the private chapel, but there was no communion that Easter in the house, only at the Church.

Of all the forms of private worship prayer was naturally the most convenient and common. In what was not the ordinary exhortation of a minister, but the statement of an everyday occurrence, George Herbert says that all Christians pray twice a day, and four times on Sunday, while the Godly have other hours of "additionary" prayers, as at nine, or three, or midnight. 3 At Little Gidding the neighbors of Herbert, Nicholas Ferrar and his little group, led an almost monastic life, going even beyond their friend's advice concerning prayer; they prayed six times

1. G. C. Williamson, Lady Anne Clifford, p. 305.
2. Ibid., p. 133.
a day, twice publicly in the chapel from the Book of Common-Prayer, and four times privately at home for the benefit of the family. 1 This is perhaps an exaggerated example, but in A Form for ye Government of ye Earl of Cork’s Family at Stalbridge the Earl notes that

1. Firste all ye servants excepte such as are officers, or are otherwise employed, shall meete every morning before dinner and every night after supper at Prayers. 2

At these gatherings of the family and servants for prayer the chaplain usually led the devotions. Anne Murray (later Lady Halkett), in the description of her visit to Naworth Castle, Sir Charles Howard’s estate, refers to "an excellent preacher for there chaplain, who preached twice every Sunday in ye chapell and dayly prayers every morning and evening." 3

Besides, or sometimes instead of, the regular gatherings in the house for prayers, there was a morning service in the chapel, meeting any time from five to eleven. Clarendon says that when he lived in Jersey he went to church every morning at 11 o’clock; 4 but Lady Halkett led a different life.

2. Cited from Mary Rich, Countess of Warwick, in Godfrey’s Home Life under the Stuarts, p. 616.
3. Cited from The Letters of Mr. Endymian Porter, Ibid., p. 221.
4. Ibid., p. 234.
My mother's greatest care, and for which I shall ever owe to her memory the highest gratitude, was the great care she took that, even from our infancy, we were instructed never to neglect to begin and end the day with prayer, and orderly every morning to read the Bible, and ever to keep the church as often as there was occasion to meet there either for prayers or preaching. So that for many years together I was seldom absent from divine service, at 5 o'clock in the morning in the summer and 6 o'clock in the winter, till the usurped power put a restraint to that publick worship so long owned and continued in the Church of England.

We must not get a mistaken idea of these services; they were distasteful neither to the members of the family nor to the servants. One biographer has told us that the servants, of their own accord,

did usually also exercise themselves into godliness, by mutual exhortations, and admonitions, drawing on one another in every good way, and praying unto God in their courses together, in the evening for a blessing upon their desires and labours, which they ordinarily performed in the kitchen, more privately, after prayer in the Parlour with the whole family.

From the same source, A Faithful Remonstrance, so clear an insight into the daily religious life of a country gentleman can be gained that it will be worthwhile

2. William Hinde, A Faithful Remonstrance, p. 64.
to quote at some length.

John Bruen, the master of the house, would rise at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning for his own prayers; then, after meditation upon some part of God's words and works, he would write out sections of sermons on which he had taken notes. By this time the family could be called, which being done, and they having congregated in the parlor, he prayed a set prayer:

Blessed Lord God, and our most mercifull father in Christ Jesus, we thy poore children do humbly beseech thee graciously to assist us by thy Holy Spirit, in this our morning exercise, that we may faithfully perform the same to thy praise and our comfort, and that for Christ his sake our onely Saviour and Redeemer, Amen. 1

Then the service continues.

After this short prayer...hee therefore did usually call the whole family to sing some of the Psalms...with grace in their hearts unto the Lord, which they ordinarily performed with such melodious and sweet voices and affections, himselfe beginning the tune....When the Psalme was ended, he read a chapter himselfe out of the Bible, keeping an orderly and constant course in his reading, to make his family better acquainted with the order, and matter of the Scriptures....Hee therefore with all his family, bowing the knees of their hearts, as well as the knees of their bodies before the throne of grace, did in the next place commend themselves unto God in humble and heartie prayer, making their requests knowne unto God, in all manner of supplications with Thanksgiving. 2

Each then went about his or her chores, thus passing the day, until the evening meal, at five or six o'clock,

2. Ibid., p. 70.
after which there was another service.

He called them again to the like service, and sacrifice in the evening, which he very religiously and constantly performed, much after the same manner, saving that then he took some more pains with them, having more liberty, and better opportunity so to doe: for then he ordinarily instructed and taught his family, out of that portion which he took in the chapter, read at that time unto them, propounding and applying some wholesome doctrine.

The particular community of Little Gidding, although perhaps not quite typical, illustrates however so clearly the extreme and mystical side of the Anglicans that it cannot be ignored in any discussion of the daily religious life of the 17th century. Already reference has been made to it, but so remarkable an organization justifies a detailed description.

The oldest member of the group was the founder's mother, Mrs. Ferrar, of whom we have no better appraisal than Bishop Linsell's:

And for her devotion towards God, her piety, her charity, her love to God's word, her constant daily reading scripture, her singing psalms, when she sat at work with her children and maids about her, and hearing them read chapters, and her often reading in the Book of Martyrs, her going to the church-prayers Wednesdays and Fridays,
her having heard, as it was computed in her lifetime, twelve thousand sermons (for she was also addicted that way). 1

This was the mother of Nicholas Ferrar, who, during an epidemic of the plague, took his whole family from London and set up an establishment at Little Gidding; a group which came to be admired for its devoutness, and condemned for its popish tendencies. The detailed and interesting account of their proceedings by Nicholas's brother, John, shows how, depending on one's opinion, both positions were tenable.

First, for their rising (the bell ringing), it was about four o'clock,...And having in their chambers given thanks for their night's preservation, with speed making them ready, they one after the other came into the great chamber, and there said to Nicholas Ferrar what psalms and chapters they had learned, and made repetition of formerly gained by heart....

At six o'clock, the bell tolling, they all came to the great chamber again, and then that company that had the charge to begin that hour's psalm (for each hour of the day had certain psalms to be said)....This said, a hymn of morning prayer was sung by all, the organs playing it. So then each came to the little table, that stood in the midst of the room, at which stood a great chair (upon which table lay the Holy Bible and a Common-Prayer Book). There each standing at the back of the chair said some one sentence of Scripture, such as they thought good at that time, every one having a new sentence to say.

This performed, they all went in their order, two by two, to church....Then Nicholas Ferrar went up into the reading-place and officiated; which done, home they all came in decent order, and all going up to the great chamber, the

1. John Ferrar, Life of Nicholas Ferrar, p. 63-64.
second company went to the great large compass window at upper end of room... and it being now seven o'clock, there were the psalms said, and another head of the concordance repeated without book, and the short hymn sung. 1

Ten o'clock striking, the bell rung to church:... so as in the morning, they all went in their orders, and there was only the litany said, every day in the week....

Then (at 4 o'clock) rung the bell to prayer, which was performed by all, going to church again to divine service, and so home again. And at five the bell rung to supper, which was performed in the great parlour, with reading, etc., as you heard at noon....

Eight o'clock coming, the bell rung to prayers for bed-time. 2

This was a week-day in the Ferrar household; Sunday was spent even more devoutly. This day the ceremony at dinner was somewhat longer, with the singing of a hymn, the playing of the organ, and the reading of a chapter from the Bible during meal-time. About two o'clock they all went to the neighboring parish church at Steeple Gidding to hear the sermon; returning from this they followed practically the same procedure as on other days.

Little Gidding is an exaggerated example of an everyday occurrence; in somewhat simpler forms the same spirit

1. This was probably quite a picturesque meeting; all the children and others sitting on high, four-legged stools, cushioned and trimmed with fringe, while the master, or a distinguished guest, if one happened to be present, occupied the one, or one of the very few chairs, which, in the reign of Charles I, were just becoming popular.
2. John Ferrar, Life of Nicholas Ferrar, p. 35-44.
can be seen to pervade nearly every household; from the lowliest to the highest, Grotius's opinion that theology rules in England can be recognized as the statement of a fact, and not the mere vaporings of a learned man. In the court of James I this overwhelming interest in theology was perhaps more predominant than in any other place in his kingdom. As it was his custom to have someone read to him during dinner, it is quite probable that, as it was said, the bishop had read to him the four tomes of Bellarmine's controversies. 2 Thanks to John Ernest, the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, we have an interesting description of one of the king's services held in the presence-chamber:

Two Chamberlains stood also near the King, and next to his Majesty a Bishop, a tall-dignified man, dressed in a black gown with white sleeves, with whom the King very frequently conversed during the service. The Minister, who stood at a window, commenced the service, delivered first a long prayer for the welfare of the King, the Queen, and the Young Prince, and also for the Elector Palatine and his wife; afterwards kneeling he said the Lord's Prayer. And thus the service lasted about an hour and a-half. 3

Another, but more understandable, instance of this extreme love of theological subjects is the case of Bishop Williams, at whose table "a chorister read a chapter in

1. Bellarmine was a famous Catholic controversialist.
2. Cited from Hacket's Life of Williams, footnote in Life of N. Ferrar, p. 40.
the English translation at dinner, and one of his gentlemen another in the Latin Translation at supper."

This love of theology is more understandable after glancing at their schools; for from the grammar schools through the universities a similar interest prevailed. Bishop Ken's advice to his scholars gives us a general idea of their religious duties.

If you are a Commoner, you may say your prayers in your own chamber; but if you are a Child, or a Chorister, then, to avoid the interruptions of the common chambers, go into the chapel, between first and second peal in the morning, to say your morning prayers, and say your evening prayers when you go Circum.

The master of Winchester, in defence of the instruction of his pupils, has given a more detailed account of their religious observances:

For their instruction in Religion they have a Catechism Lecture every Lord's day in the afternoon; and before it begins the Usher is appointed to spend half an hour in the examination of them, what they remember of the former lecture. They are also appointed to take notes

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2. During the reign of Charles I Cambridge became a hot-bed of Puritanism; and many of the best men in Plymouth and Massachusetts colony came from here.

Circum was an old custom of the students of going around the campus in the early evening singing psalms, and then meeting for prayer. By the beginning of the 17th century however, it was disappearing and had lost much of its original significance.
of the forenoon sermon, and to give account thereof to the schoolmaster in writing. Besides they learn every Saturday some part of Novell's Catechism in the school. They have prayers every morning before they go to school performed in the chapell by one of the Fellows or Chaplains, and so likewise at night before they go to bed. And after they are in bed a chapter of the Bible read by the Prepositor in every chamber. 1

The life at Cambridge was more similar to that of the average citizen: at five o'clock the ringing of the bell called the students together in the college chapel to hear the morning service, followed sometimes by short homilies by the fellows, but lasting altogether about an hour. After the regular evening chapel services, groups for the expression and clarification of student's doubts were sometimes formed by one of the teachers, meetings which were also closed by joint prayer.

These many private and semi-private devotions did not, however, adversely affect public services; rather, they acted as an impetus to attendance. Since, for all sects, the Bible, as the principal authority for all actions, needed interpretation, the public service, containing a sermon, acted as a source for more inspired and devout private worship.

VII
CONCLUSION

We have seen that religion was extremely important to the people of the 17th century; that the various sects made form and ritual a matter of conscience; and that religion was inseparably related to politics. But we have been more concerned with the religious observances in the daily life. It might be well to summarize the main points of our discussion.

(1) The churches of 17th century England, dating from the period of Catholic domination, were Gothic, with bell-towers and glazed windows. Burial within the church, as well as in the adjacent graveyard, was common, the graves usually being placed under the carved oak pews. The care of these Anglican churches was in the hands of the churchwardens, who, with their superiors, the king, the archbishops, and the bishops, constituted the hierarchial government. All these officers were to a great extent also civil officials, enforcing their authority through the ecclesiastical courts.

(2) The clergymen, towards whom there was an hostile feeling, were appointed, after they had obtained their preaching licenses, by patrons to a living. The mass of the clergy was probably of low caliber, although many of the greatest scholars of the century in mathematics, philology,
poetry, music, and in other fields were drawn from their ranks. The ministers had of course their regular duties of officiating at public services, besides often being teachers in the village schools and tutors to their patron's children. Among all the divines the private chaplain occupied the most despised position.

(3) In the sermons the medieval and mystical strain of their religion is most apparent, following in both subject and method of construction medieval conceptions. Sermons were, nevertheless, very popular, no event being too insignificant to warrant one. The people liked their sermons delivered, not read, so that many were undoubtedly displays of oratorical and histrionic ability.

(4) The congregations, in their elaborate but dignified dress, were separated by sex and rank in the seating arrangement. Although there were many complaints against the church service, especially during the dictatorship of Archbishop Laud, church-going on the whole was a rather pleasant and automatic performance. The music for the service was usually furnished by organs, viols, and bands of singing-men, but as hymns had not yet become a natural form of worship, the people were content with the singing of psalms.

(5) The religious observances in the home formed a
very large part of the people's worship. There were private prayers at least twice a day, private chapel services, and services in the home for the family and the servants. There was no lack of theological interest either in the court or in the schools.
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