

**AN EPISTLE TO THE  
TERRIBLE PRIESTS OF THE  
CONVOCATION HOUSE**

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An Epistle to the Terrible Priests of the Convocation House by Martin Mar-prelate

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**MARTIN MAR-PRELATE**

**AN EPISTLE TO THE  
TERRIBLE PRIESTS OF THE  
CONVOCAATION HOUSE**



**Puritan Discipline Tracts.**

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**AN EPISTLE**

TO

**THE TERRIBLE PRIESTS**

OF THE

**CONVOCATION HOUSE:**

BY

**MARTIN MAR-PRELATE, GENTLEMAN.**

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**Re-printed from the Black Letter Edition,**

WITH

**AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES.**

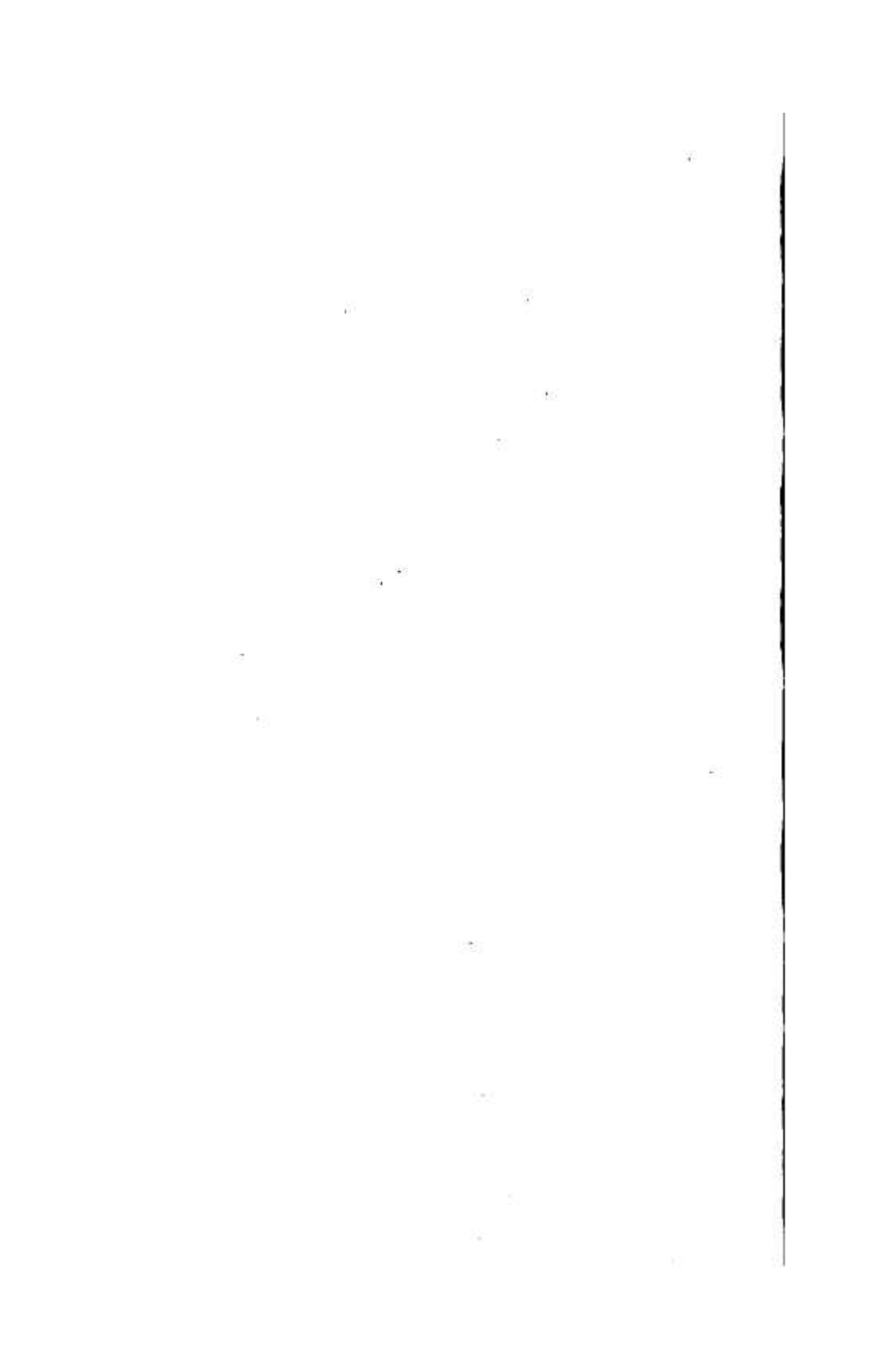
**Second Edition.**

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**LONDON:**

**JOHN PETHERAM, 71, CHANCERY LANE.**

**1843.**



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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE original, from which the following tract is reprinted, is a small quarto volume, in black letter, of 52 pages. There are several tracts which bear the general title of Martin Mar-Prelate, Martin Senior, Martin Junior, &c., but this, which is the "Epistle," and another, called the "Epitome," are frequently confounded together, arising probably from the similarity of appearance in the titles, the first paragraph in each being exactly alike, and the second very similar, though in other respects they differ; and, whereas the "Epistle" was printed "oversea," the "Epitome" (which is a continuation of the Epistle) was "Printed on the other hand of some of the Priests," both without date, though it must have been towards the end of 1588, which may be collected from several circumstances mentioned in the tracts themselves; and, from the appearance of the type, they were most probably printed by Richard Schilders, at Middleburgh, in Zealand. Another reason, perhaps, why these two tracts are so frequently confounded together, may arise from both having been written against the same work, namely, "Dr. John Bridges' Defence of the Government of the Church of England for Ecclesiastical Matters against a Treatise of Ecclesiastical Government," &c., a quarto of 1500 pages, the bulk of which, in more than one instance, appears to have excited Martin's spleen.

The authors of *Martin Mar-Prelate* were never discovered; it is, however, probable that John Penry, "the hot-headed Welshman," as his enemies called him, was the author. He confessedly wrote several works on behalf of the Puritan cause, and in 1593 suffered death for them.

In the following tract the reader will have an opportunity of judging of the manner in which the other works, announced in the *Prospectus*, (should sufficient encouragement be given to continue them,) will be published. In the text I have faithfully adhered to the original copy, both in orthography and punctuation; in the notes to the giving some few particulars for illustrating the allusions in the text. Although some of the words to be met with are now obsolete, the readers, into whose hands it will come, will hardly require a glossary of them. The same care in the text, and, I trust, even more attention in the notes, will be given to the subsequent publications.

In conclusion, I must disclaim any personal or politico-religious feelings in bringing once more before the world these curious productions of by-gone times. Personality and scurrility were used freely by the Martinists and their opponents; and however much it is to be wished that they had written with a gravity and decorum more suited to the object they had in view, I could only give that which I found, faithfully and unreservedly, and this I have done.

J. P.

*London, Sept. 20th, 1842.*



Oh read ouer D. Iohn Bridges, for it is a worthy worke :

**Or an epitome of the  
fyrste Booke of that right worshipfull vo-  
lume, written against the Puritanes, in the defence  
of the noble cleargie, by as worshipfull a prieste, Iohn  
Bridges, Presbyter, Priest or elder, doctor of Diuinitie,  
and Deane of Sarum. Wherein the arguments  
of the puritans are wisely prevented, that  
when they come to answer M. Doctor,  
they must needes say something  
that hath bene spoken.**

**Compiled for the behoofe and overthrow  
of the Parsons, Fyckers, and Currats, that have lernt  
their Catechismes, and are past grace : By the  
reverend and worthie Martin Marprelate  
gentleman, and dedicated to the  
Confocationhouse.**

**The Epitome is not yet published, but it shall  
be when the Bishops are at conuenient leysure to  
view the same. In the meane time, let them  
be content with this learned Epistle.**

**Printed oversea, in Europe, within two fur-  
longs of a Bounsing Priest, at the cost and  
charges of M. Marprelate, gentleman.**



TO THE  
RIGHT PUISANTE, AND TERRIBLE PRIESTS,

MY CLEARGIE MASTERS OF THE CONFOCATION-HOUSE,  
WRETHEE PICKERS GENERALL, WORSHIPPULL PALTRIPOLITANE,  
OR ANY OTHER OF THE HOLY LEAGUE OF SUBSCRIPTION :  
THIS WORKE I RECOMMEND VNTO THEM WITH ALL MY HEART, WITH  
A DESIRE TO SEE THEM ALL SO PROVIDED FOR ONE DAY,  
AS I WOULD WISE, WHICH I PROMISE THEM  
SHALL NOT BE AT ALL TO THEIR HURT.

RIGHT poysond, persecuting and terrible priests, the  
theame of mine Epistle, vnto your venerable master-  
domes, is of two parts (and the Epitome of our brother  
Bridges his booke, shall come out speedily). First,  
most pitifully complayning, Martin Marprelate, &c.  
Secondly, may it please your good worships, &c.

Most pitifully complayning therefore, you are to vn-  
derstand, that D. Bridges hath written in your defence,  
a most senceles booke, and I cannot very often at one  
breath come to a full point, when I read the same.

Againe, may it please you to giue me leaue to play  
the Duns for the nonce as well as he, otherwise dealing  
with master doctors booke, I cannot keepe *decorum*  
*personæ*. And may it please you, if I be too absurd in  
any place (either in this Epistle, or that Epitome) to  
ride to Sarum, and thanke his Deanship for it. Because  
I could not deal with his booke commendable according  
to order, vnles I should be sometimes tediously dunsti-  
call and absurd. For I haue heard som cleargie men