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John Milton, *The Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* [1660]

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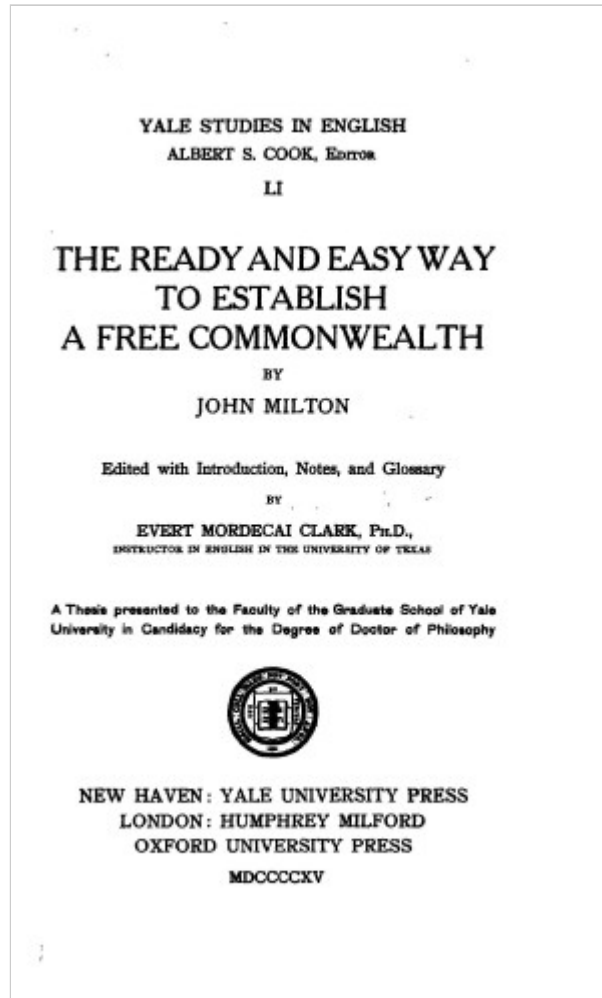
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## Edition Used:

*The Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth*, edited with Introduction, Notes, and Glossary by Evert Mordecai Clark (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1915).

Author: [John Milton](#)

Editor: [Evert Mordecai Clark](#)

## About This Title:

A defence of the Republic written on the eve of the restoration of the monarchy. Milton persisted in opposing rule by one man in favor of rule by those to whom power had been delegated by the people.

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## PREFACE

*The Ready and Easy Way* marks the close of Milton's long public career, and exhibits his political ideas crystallized into a definite republican proposal. It presents a remarkable opportunity for observing Milton the idealist and doctrinaire contending with Milton the practical man of affairs. It is in some degree drawn from the ancients, but it also proceeds from the modern democratic movement that had its origin in the Middle Ages. And it is peculiarly a reflection of events, feelings, and utterances during the last days of the Interregnum. Hence, in the following Introduction and Notes, I have attempted to point out the relation of the treatise to previous political theory, to the events of its day, and to contemporaneous publications.

But perhaps the most distinctive feature of the present edition is to be found in the treatment of the text itself. Owing to the rapid shifting of the situation in England during February, March, and April, 1660, and the resistless sweep of men and affairs in the direction of kingship, Milton subjected the first edition of *The Ready and Easy Way* to thoroughgoing revision, and, a few weeks after its first appearance, reissued the treatise in a practically reconstructed form. The changes introduced are so radical, and the deftness with which they were accomplished, notwithstanding Milton's blindness, is so remarkable, that it has seemed to the present editor worth while to form a text which should present, in their proper connection, the author's first thought and his afterthought, and at the same time exhibit the interesting process of revision. Accordingly, the first edition (which has been so neglected by editors and publishers for two hundred years) has been reproduced as the basis of the present text, and into this have been inserted all the variants and additions found in the revised edition. Omissions from the first edition have been indicated also. Hence the text as it appears in this volume affords a picture of the process of revision, and at the same time presents, in smallest compass, the entire thought of both original editions.

I desire to express my gratitude to Professor Albert S. Cook for invaluable criticism and advice, and to Professor Henry A. Beers and Professor William Lyon Phelps for encouragement and helpful suggestions. My thanks are due, also, to Professor Williston Walker, of the Yale Divinity School, for information on questions of church history; to Horace Hart, Esq., of Oxford, England, for certain information in regard to original editions of the treatise; to the officials of the British Museum; to my friend and predecessor in this field, Professor William T. Allison, of the University of Manitoba; to Mr. W. A. White, of New York City, for the use of his unique copy of the revised edition; to Mr. Andrew Keogh, for aid in matters of bibliography; and to Mr. Henry A. Gruener and other officials of the Yale University Library, for special privileges and assistance.

A portion of the expense of printing this book has been borne by the Modern Language Club of Yale University, from funds placed at its disposal by the generosity of Mr. George E. Dimock, of Elizabeth, New Jersey, a graduate of Yale in the class of 1874.

E. M. C.

Yale University,  
May 1, 1911.

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## INTRODUCTION

### A.

#### Editions

Milton dictated two editions of *The Ready and Easy Way*, and original copies of both have been preserved. The first edition is entitled *the Readie & Easie Way to establish a Free Commonwealth, and The excellence therof Compar'd with The inconveniences and dangers of readmitting kingship in this nation*. It is a small quarto of eighteen pages. Masson seems to be in error in stating that it was published by Livewell Chapman. The title-page shows that the book was printed by 'T. N.,' who doubtless was Milton's old publisher, Thomas Newcome (see first note). However, the pamphlet was put on sale, about the end of February, 1660, at Chapman's book-store in Pope's-Head Alley.

The second edition is a duodecimo volume of 108 pages. It retains the original title, but its title-page shows quite a different make-up in other respects. No hint as to printer or stationer is given. It is simply: 'The second edition revis'd and augmented,' and 'Printed for the Author' at London in 1660. The book appeared toward the end of April. Chapman was then a fugitive (see second note), and doubtless by this time no printer was willing to risk even his initials on a title-page with Milton's. Certainly Newcome was already trimming his sails to the breeze from Flanders. 'I should have liked very much to know,' says Masson, 'whether Livewell Chapman was nominally publisher of the second edition, . . . or whether Milton was obliged to put forth the second edition without any publisher's name.' The title-page, as we have seen, furnishes answers to both these questions. It contains also the important addition of the following motto (see third note):

\_\_\_\_\_ *et nos*  
consilium dedimus Syllæ, demus populo nunc.

This is an adaptation from Juvenal 1. 15-7:

et nos ergo manum ferulæ subduximus, et nos  
consilium dedimus Sullæ, privatus ut altum  
dormiret.

The treatise is the result of a thorough revision of the first edition. Many passages have been omitted; some have been altered; and much new matter has been incorporated, the additions swelling the volume to nearly twice its original size.

No record of the publication of the revised edition is to be found in the Stationers' Registers, or in the Thomason Collection of pamphlets. It was long a matter of speculation whether the second edition actually got into print in 1660. Masson was

never able to locate a copy. ‘In my perplexity,’ he says, ‘I began to ask myself whether this was to be explained by supposing that Milton, after he had prepared the second edition for the press, did not succeed in getting it published, and so that it was not until 1698 that it saw the light, and then by the accident that his enlarged press-copy had survived, and come (through Toland or otherwise) into the hands of the printers of the Amsterdam edition of the Prose Works. But, though several pieces in that edition are expressly noted as “never before published,” . . . there is no such editorial note respecting *The Ready and Easy Way*, but every appearance of mere reprinting from a previously published copy of 1660. On the whole, therefore, I conclude that Milton did publish his second and enlarged edition some time in April 1660; and I account for the rarity of original copies of this second edition by supposing that either the impression was seized before many copies had got about, or the Restoration itself came so rapidly after the publication as to make it all but abortive.’<sup>1</sup>

Masson was reasoning well. A copy of this ‘all but abortive’ edition was once owned by the late Dr. Joseph F. Payne, of New Barnet, England, and is now to be found in the library of Mr. W. A. White, of New York City. Through the kindness of Mr. White, the writer has been privileged to examine this rare volume, and to make use of it in the present edition.

Masson was not quite correct, however, in the implied assumption that *The Ready and Easy Way* did not again see the light until 1698, as both first and second editions were reprinted before that date. The first edition appears in the folio ‘Prose Works’ of 1697. The second edition was reprinted (if we may trust the title-page of ‘Five Tracts’) for the first time in 1694. The sections entitled ‘Four Tracts,’ ‘Five Tracts,’ and ‘Four Miscellaneous Tracts’ all bear the date 1694, and are bound into a single volume, which is stamped with the same date. It is probably true, however, that these 1694 sections did not get into circulation before 1698; for we find them incorporated as an integral part of Toland’s edition of 1698. The title-page of this so-called Amsterdam (really London) edition is, in part, as follows: ‘A Complete Collection of the Historical, Political, and Miscellaneous Works of John Milton, Both English and Latin. With som Papers never before Publish’d. In three Volumes. . . . Amsterdam. Finished in the year M.D.C.XC.VIII.’ This last statement may mean that the publication had been begun at a considerably earlier date, possibly as early as 1694.

*The Ready and Easy Way* has been frequently reprinted—in the editions of Milton’s prose published in 1697, 1698, 1738, 1753, 1806, 1833, 1853, and in numerous publications of selections. It is interesting to note that the treatise was revived during the revolutionary days of 1791, and neatly published in separate form as a refutation of the arguments of Edmund Burke.

It is the enlarged edition that has been used almost invariably. From 1697 to the present time the original edition has never been republished in any of the collected works; nor, so far as is known, in any of the volumes of selections.



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B.

## Dates Of Composition And Publication

I.

### The First Edition

1.

#### Preface

The first line of *The Ready and Easy Way* makes it clear that the preface was added at some time subsequent to the writing of the main body of the treatise. In this interval ‘the members at first chosen’ had been ‘readmitted from exclusion, to sit again in Parliament.’ This readmission of the secluded members took place Feb. 21, 1660. It is certain, therefore, that the preface was written as late as Feb. 21. Moreover, ‘writs for new elections have bin recall’d.’ In the morning session of Feb. 21 the Rump passed the resolution ‘that all Votes of this House, touching new elections of Members to sit and serve in this Parliament, be, and are hereby, vacated.’<sup>1</sup> But the specific annulment, or recall, to which Milton undoubtedly refers passed the House the next day, and was as follows: ‘*Ordered*, That a Committee be appointed to bring in an Act for repealing the Act appointing the Form of a Writ for Members to sit and serve in Parliament.’<sup>1</sup> It is probable, therefore, that Milton added his preface on or after Feb. 22. This conclusion is strengthened by the further fact that Milton professes to be rejoicing over ‘the resolutions of all those who are now in power, jointly tending to the establishment of a free Commonwealth.’ Those ‘now in power’ were, of course, Monk, made commander-in-chief Feb. 21, and the restored Parliament. As for Monk, he had privately assured the secluded members, on the morning of Feb. 21, that he had nothing before his eyes ‘but God’s glory and the settlement of these nations upon commonwealth foundations’<sup>2</sup> (see p. xxxiii). But we learn that his public declaration (see p. xxvi) was drafted, signed, and sent forth ‘that night’<sup>3</sup>; so the reassuring news undoubtedly did not reach Milton until Feb. 22. As for expressions from the Parliament, we find that ‘the secluded Members declared, as to Government they intended no Alteration in it, or to act further than in Preparation for a Parliament to succeed them’<sup>4</sup>; and that, on Feb. 22, they voted ‘that a new Parliament be summoned to appear upon the 25th Day of *April* 1660.’<sup>5</sup> As these joint assurances of good affection toward the commonwealth-cause upon the part of Monk and the Parliament got abroad in London on Feb. 22, it is fairly certain that the preface was not written earlier than that date.

The Thomason copy of the pamphlet is dated March 3; but there is evidence that the treatise was in circulation before the end of February. Wood (*Fasti* 1. 485) records:

‘(21) *Ready and easy Way to establish a free Commonwealth and the Excellencies thereof compared with, &c.* Lond. 1659 in two sheets and an half in qu. This being published in Feb. the same year.’

The preface was therefore written in the interval Feb. 21 (probably Feb. 22)-Feb. 29.

2.

## Body

From the evidence just considered, it is clear that the whole treatise was completed and published not later than March 3; and, if Wood’s information be correct, not later than Feb. 29. But it is apparent from the preface, and from the whole tenor of the treatise, that it was composed before the readmission of the secluded members on Feb. 21. There is no mention of any rupture between Monk and the Rump. Besides, the central argument of the pamphlet is one in support of the perpetuation of the Rump as a grand council—a project which of course became impossible the instant the Presbyterian majority, pledged to speedy dissolution, returned in overwhelming numbers on Feb. 21. But there is also interesting external proof that the main body of the treatise was written before Feb. 21. Roger L’Estrange, writing immediately after March 16, mocks at Milton’s predicament as follows: ‘I could only wish his *Excellency* [Monk] had been a little civiller to Mr. *Milton*; for, just as he had finished his *Modell of a Common-wealth*, directing in these very Terms the Choyce; . . . “men not addicted to a Single Person, or House of Lords, and the Work is done.” *In come the Secluded members and spoyle his Project.*’<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, internal evidence makes it extremely probable that the body of the work was completed before the middle of February. The people are ‘mad,’ ‘misguided,’ ‘strangely infatuated.’ The sentiment in favor of kingship has suddenly become ‘a torrent,’ ‘an epidemic madness,’ a ‘general defection.’ And—most significant of all—Milton himself is in imminent peril. These were precisely the conditions in London on and immediately after Feb. 11; for when, on that day, General Monk suddenly turned upon his masters and sent a peremptory command for the Rump to ‘fill up,’ the rabble instantly went mad with joy, and amused itself not only with bonfires, bell-ringing, and the roasting of rumps, but also by assaulting Rumpers and stoning their houses. Praise-God Barebone had his windows broken, and Speaker Lenthall himself was affronted on his way home that night. Milton complains that the small number in Parliament ‘is of late’ ‘made a by-word of reproach to them.’ And although the term ‘Rump’ had been used occasionally ever since 1648 (see note on 20. 25), it took on an immense accession of popularity upon this occasion, the odious assembly being ‘given this night the lasting Name of *Rump* Parliament,’ and this ‘Saturday Night February 11, . . . called the roasting of the Rump.’<sup>2</sup> These facts all seem to indicate that Milton is writing during this very reign of terror among republicans. Indeed, at the very close of the pamphlet, he declares that he is venturing ‘with all hazard’ to speak out. There can be little doubt, therefore, that the period of composition did not extend beyond Feb. 15.

As to the other limit, it is certain that the treatise was begun after Feb. 4. ‘The Parliament have voted to fill up their number.’ We know from the *Commons Journals* that, after promising and dallying about the matter during January, the Rump finally, on Feb. 4, voted ‘that this Parliament . . . be filled up to the Number of Four Hundred, for *England* and *Wales*.’ That it was begun about this date is rendered probable by the fact that General Monk entered London on Feb. 3, and aroused unparalleled interest in the great question of settlement. Would he declare for the king or for a commonwealth; for restoring the secluded members, for a free Parliament, or for perpetuating the Rump? Upon all hands it was agreed that the new-comer should not lack advice; and every one set to work upon his model. Undoubtedly, Milton at this time began *The Ready and Easy Way*—and very probably about Feb. 6; for on that day Monk delivered a brief speech (see p. xxiii) which, although ambiguous, republicans generally interpreted as favorable to a commonwealth. We may conclude, therefore, that the body of the work was certainly written during the interval Feb. 4 to Feb. 21, and probably in the ten days between Feb. 4 and Feb. 15.

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## II.

### The Second Edition

‘It was but a little before the king’s Restoration,’ says Milton’s nephew, ‘that he wrote and published his book *In Defense of a Commonwealth*; so undaunted he was in declaring his true sentiments to the world.’<sup>1</sup> And a study of the additions, omissions, and other alterations made in the process of revision shows that the treatise must indeed have been almost the last pre-Restoration protest of the republicans.

There are many references to contemporary events. The restored Rump has already become the ‘last Parliament.’ This dissolution occurred on March 16. Those who are bent upon recalling the king are now engaged in ‘cheapning’ the ‘price’ of subjection. Monk held his first interview with the royal agent, Sir John Greenville, on March 17, and dispatched him to Brussels with proposals on March 20. It is not likely that Milton knew of this business immediately. Yet he seems to be writing with full knowledge of Monk’s and of the Presbyterians’ negotiations with the king. *The Censure of the Rota* appeared on March 30. It is evident that Milton is writing after that date, for the gibes and criticisms contained in the pamphlet are freshly and poignantly in mind (see Appendix A. 2). Furthermore, Milton thinks that what he has written ‘may now be of much more use and concernment to be freely publishd, *in the midst of our Elections to a free Parliament, or their sitting to consider freely of the Government.*’ The writs for this election had been agreed upon by Parliament on March 16, and Whitelock reports several members elected as early as March 26.<sup>1</sup> But Milton’s sentence indicates that he is writing, not at the beginning, but in the full swing of the elections—very probably well along in April. As these elections proceeded, it became apparent that the Parliament about to meet would be almost solidly Royalist. The return of Charles was therefore a certainty. Milton concedes the fact, and drops, as no longer applicable, the allusion to Coniah in his terrific peroration. He laments the ‘absolute determination . . . to enthrall,’ and admits the hopelessness of staying the deluge. There is no longer a possibility of convincing opponents, but only of confirming those who yield not—probably Lambert and the Fanatics, then making a last appeal to arms. Lambert escaped from the Tower on April 9, and was captured on April 22. In view of the internal evidence just considered, we may be reasonably certain that to this interval, April 9-22, belongs the composition of the second edition.

We do not know the exact date of its publication; but there is evidence that the book appeared after April 20. Milton himself mentions the possibility of its coming out during the ‘sitting’ of the new Parliament—that is, after April 25. Roger L’Estrange, Milton’s tireless pamphleteering opponent and critic, writing on April 20 in reply<sup>1</sup> to the *Notes on Dr. Griffith’s Sermon*, quotes several passages from *The Ready and Easy Way*, and invariably from the first edition. It seems incredible that L’Estrange, who pounced with such zest and fury upon every utterance of his renowned antagonist,

should have been ignorant of the more daring edition, or have failed to quote from it, had it been at that time in print.

It would seem, at first thought, that the book must have appeared before April 24, when Lambert was brought captive to London, and all signs of armed resistance disappeared. But Phillips' statement indicates that the pamphleteers were the last in the field: 'The Defeat of Lambert did not make the Fanaticks leave the Pursuit of their Mischiefs, several seditious Pamphlets being published in Print, to deprave the Minds of the People.'<sup>2</sup> It is not unlikely that *The Ready and Easy Way* was one of them.

The conclusion, then, is that the second edition was written certainly between March 16 and April 25, and very likely during the interval April 9-22; and that it was published upon the eve of the Restoration, almost certainly after April 20, and probably in the last six days before the setting up of kingship on the 1st of May.

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C.

## Historical Setting

I.

### ‘Anarchy And Confusion’

A study of the historical situation with which *The Ready and Easy Way* attempts to deal may well begin with a *résumé* of the more important events of 1659. Early in that year the Cromwellian protectorate had gone to pieces; and in May the army, by resurrecting the Rump Parliament, restored the republic as it had existed from 1649 to 1653. Eager to exert its authority, and especially to subordinate the military to the civil power, the Rump’s first business was the reorganization of the army. Week after week a steady procession of the ‘well affected’ filed in before that august assembly, received new commissions from the venerable speaker’s hands, and filed out again better ‘affected’ than ever. At last the weary process was completed—and just in time. A general rising of Royalists had been planned to occur on August 1; but only Sir George Booth, in Cheshire, made any considerable demonstration, and he was easily suppressed (Aug. 17-9) by the new-modeled army. From this achievement General Lambert returned with high notions of his own and of the army’s importance. In September the Parliament was suddenly dumbfounded by demands, couched in no uncertain terms, from Lambert and his clique of ambitious officers. Among other things demanded, Fleetwood was to be made commander-in-chief, and Lambert himself was to be placed next under him. The wary and insecure Rump instantly scented a conspiracy. It was convinced that Lambert ‘aspired to succeed Cromwell,’ and that ‘when he should have so gotten the Sword, he would not long want the Scepter.’<sup>1</sup> It refused these and other demands, reproved the petitioners, and being secretly assured of support from Scotland, finally cashiered Lambert and eight of his associates. The next morning (Oct. 13) Lambert threw his troops around Westminster, and put an end to the sitting. ‘Illegal and scandalous, I fear me barbarous,’ protested Milton, ‘that a paid army should, for no other cause, thus subdue the supreme power that set them up.’<sup>2</sup>

But the army-officers boldly assumed control, set up a committee of safety, and fell to work upon a constitution. The sword was law. Citizens were ‘knock’d on the head,’<sup>3</sup> or killed outright. The soldiers, in turn, were hissed, jeered, and pelted until they grew ashamed and afraid to march.<sup>4</sup> L’Estrange was inflaming Royalists with his pamphlets. ‘No quiet was enjoyed by any party,’<sup>5</sup> and on Dec. 20 poor Whitelock was wishing himself ‘out of these daily hazards.’<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile the army in Scotland was preparing to march against Lambert. Suddenly Ireland and the fleet declared for the Parliament. The army-*régime* collapsed. Fleetwood now admitted that ‘*the Lord had blasted their Counsels, and spit in their Faces.*’<sup>7</sup> On Dec. 24 even ‘the Soldiers declared to live and die with the Parliament’; and they ‘stood in Ranks, and made

Acclamations,' as the triumphant little Rump marched back to Westminster on Dec. 26.<sup>1</sup>

The most potent factor in the overthrow of the Lambert tyranny had been the silent pressure of Cromwell's old lieutenant-general, George Monk, military governor of Scotland, who now emerged as the dominant individual force in England. Monk was by no means the loftiest character on that remarkable stage; but he possessed a unique combination of qualities that fitted him to glide into the midst of turbulent factions, preserve order, and guide the overwhelming sentiment of the nation to its logical expression in restored kingship. He was a blunt, rough soldier, having had his 'education in a commonwealth whose soldiers received and observed commands but gave none'<sup>2</sup>; a man of decision and vigor, of much shrewdness and common sense. He stuck not at dissimulation, and knew how to think much and say little. Phillips calls him 'the most reserved man then living.'<sup>3</sup> He was generally known in his army as 'silent Old George.' It was precisely this cunning and this incomparable impenetrability that fitted him so uniquely for the rôle he now proposed to assume.

The turn of the year found Monk crossing the Border. The movement was begun immediately upon his hearing of the downfall of the army-*régime*. This is all the more curious, as his announced intention had been merely to restore the Rump. The apparent aimlessness of the movement argued some deep design, which none could positively fathom, but which every faction chose to interpret as tending to promote its own cause. The very name 'Old George' had a pleasurable thrill of mystery about it, and during the month of January all eyes were riveted upon the column of veterans moving steadily southward across snow-covered England. Everywhere they were greeted with acclamations and the ringing of bells. Monk was welcomed as the deliverer, and was petitioned for a free Parliament, termination of the Rump, and readmission of the secluded members. The sphinx heard all and said nothing, except to reaffirm his championship of the existing Parliament.

Meanwhile, all factions in London were stimulated to fresh hopes and enormous diligence by the near approach of this tremendous and mysterious new force. There should be no dearth of good counsel if Milton and the host of pamphleteering politicians could help it; there should be no stone left unturned to enlist 'the General' in the 'cause' of this, that, or the other faction.

The political alignment at the beginning of February, 1660, should be understood. The two grand divisions were, of course, Royalists and Commonwealth-men; but each of these had several distinct subdivisions. Of the former there were, first, the Old Royalists, including cavaliers, clergymen of the Church of England, and a large part of the gentry and country-folk generally, whose loyalty to kingship had remained unshaken. These were for unconditional restoration. The second sub-group were the New Royalists, including the entire body of Presbyterians—'new royalized Presbyterians,' as Milton calls them; that part of the Cromwellians who, upon the downfall of Richard, had gone over to Sir George Booth and his Royalist forces; the City, or Municipal, party; and that vast mass of the common people and 'rabble' who, either from sheer fickleness and desire for change, or from motives of personal safety, were now indulging in extravagant demonstrations of loyalty. The Presbyterian



element was for a constitutional monarchy, and restoration upon rigid Presbyterian conditions. But the whole group was unanimous in demanding an end of the Rump, admission of the secluded members, and the calling of a free Parliament.

Both Old and New Royalists rejoiced at Monk's coming; for, in spite of his emphatic declarations to the contrary, they persistently believed that he was, at bottom, for the king, and would yet bring him in. That there was good foundation for this faith cannot be doubted. Overtures from the king had reached Monk the previous summer through the medium of his brother Nicholas, and he had made ready to cooperate with Booth in the Royalist rebellion. That he 'demurred two days,' until a fortunate arrival of mail warned him of Booth's defeat, was all that saved him from committing himself at that time.<sup>1</sup> 'By the grace of God I will do it if ever I can find it in my power,'<sup>2</sup> he declared to his chaplain, Mr. Price, just before beginning his march. His own army would not be convinced but that he would restore the king.<sup>3</sup> From these and other similar indications, it seems perfectly certain that such was his real intention; and all that he might say could not rob the Royalists of joy and hope in his coming.

The second political grand division—the Commonwealth-men—was still more heterogeneous. It included (1) that small remnant of Cromwellians who had not turned Royalist, but who favored a protectorate, or single-person government (not kingship), and still cherished a design to reinstate Richard. The movers of similar conspiracies among the superior officers may be classed with this faction. In this division were (2) those Cromwellians who returned with enthusiasm to the commonwealth of 1649-53 as a model settlement. To this group belonged Milton. Here, of course, were (3) the uncompromising republicans—those who had stood for the old republic, had not accepted the protectorate, and were now advocating a commonwealth 'without single person or house of lords.' Such were the Rumpers—or a sufficient number of them to characterize the body. To this group belonged also the rank and file of the army, and the Independent clergy. Finally, this division included (4) miscellaneous anti-Royalists—Anabaptists, Fifth-Monarchy-men, etc.

These various branches of Commonwealth-men looked upon Monk's coming with some degree of misgiving. The Independent ministers had solemnly endeavored to dissuade him from marching against Lambert, inasmuch as the '*Canaanites* and *Perizzites* were in the land.'<sup>1</sup> The Rumpers, who knew how it felt to be pulled out by the ears, would have preferred the influence of this masterful man at a safe distance rather than his actual presence with a grim army of veterans at his back. But whatever they felt, they could hardly do less than extend a seemingly hearty welcome to their approaching savior and professed champion. So they made him Ranger of St. James' Park, voted him £1000 a year for life, and sent Masters Scott and Robinson to escort him to London—and to ferret out all they could of his designs. If Monk would only fall in with their filling-up scheme of perpetuating themselves, and take the abjuration-oath, his coming might turn out to be a good thing after all! The Cromwellians saw a possibility of making Monk protector; while Milton, and Commonwealth-men in general, decided, upon the whole, to accept with good grace Monk's vehement declaration in favor of a commonwealth.



Into the midst of this welter of faction and boundless curiosity, on February 3, came marching 'Old George' the mysterious, with 5800 weather-beaten troops. No less sumptuous an abode was tendered him than the Prince's Lodgings at Whitehall. On Monday, Feb. 6, he was escorted to Westminster, and compelled to endure a panegyric from the speaker. When the ordeal was over, Monk delivered a brief reply, in which he recommended to the astonished Rumpers their early dissolution; 'a free and full Parliament; . . . a Gospel Ministry; encouragement of Learning and Universities; and . . . admittance of the Members secluded before 1648, without previous oath or engagement.'<sup>1</sup> Sir Roger Gifford, writing on Feb. 8, expresses the general feeling of mystification: 'Monck was at the House on Munday last who expresst himself so obscurely that most men know not what construction for to make of it.'<sup>2</sup>

What did Monk mean? What would he do next? The curiosity of the anxious members was to be satisfied before the end of the week. But meanwhile Milton and the other pamphleteers labored amain to supply the blunt, apparently nonplussed general with abundance of 'light.'

On Feb. 8 the City voted to pay no more taxes to the odious Rump, in which it had not a single representative. The Parliament decided to test Monk's sincerity, and, as Burnet<sup>3</sup> thought, to render him harmless by making him as unpopular as themselves. On Feb. 8 the citizens of London were astounded to find him and his soldiers at work demolishing their gates, posts, chains, portcullises, and other defenses. Parliament had commanded; Monk had obeyed. On the next day he finished the job, and retired from the scene with every shred of popularity gone—the most thoroughly hated man in London. The Rump had scored. 'Now George, we have thee for ever,' cried Haslerig, 'body and soul!' But Monk marched back again on the 11th, no longer the servant of the Rump, but its dictator! 'By Friday next,' ran his ultimatum, 'they should issue out Writs to fill up their House; and when filled, should rise at their appointed time, to give Place to a full and free Parliament.'<sup>1</sup>

The demonstrations of joy that greeted this sudden and complete change of front were unparalleled. Pepys' vivid account<sup>2</sup> is as follows: 'I saw many people give the soldiers drink and money, and all along in the streets cried, "God bless them!" . . . In Cheapside there was a great many bonfires, and Bow bells and all the bells in all the churches as we went home were a-ringing, . . . it being about ten at night. But the common joy that was everywhere to be seen! . . . I could at one view tell thirty-one fires. In King-street seven or eight; and all along burning, and roasting, and drinking for rumps. There being rumps tied upon sticks and carried up and down. The butchers at the May Pole in the Strand rang a peal with their knives when they were going to sacrifice their rump. On Ludgate Hill there was one turning of the spit that had a rump tied upon it, and another basting of it. Indeed it was past imagination, both the greatness and the suddenness of it. At one end of the street you would think there was a whole lane of fire, and so hot that we were fain to keep on the further side.'

'This blow was it,' says Clement Walker, 'made Independency stagger, for so highly were both City and Country pleased with this Declaration, that they did hardly know in what manner to express their joy, ringing their bells, making bonfires, the air

resounding nothing but the name and praises of Monck, and the Streets filled with gratefull hearts, who on bended knees prayed for blessings on the head of the hoped restorer, both of the Church and Commonwealth.<sup>1</sup>

But if the Royalists exulted in the assurance of a free Parliament, and, through this, of an early restoration, the Commonwealth-men were in despair. Milton especially must have felt the blow, as it shattered in an instant his favorite scheme of perpetuating the Rump, and paved the way for a return to kingship. Indeed, we find that his pamphlet, which was apparently nearing completion at the time of these mad tumults, was thrown aside, and, for the time being, left unpublished.

Encouraged by Monk's stand, the secluded members pressed him more closely than ever to espouse their cause. As they were out-and-out Royalists, Monk feigned unwillingness; but he consented to hear them debate the matter with certain of the Rumpers—really only delaying until the army was in 'temper' for the move. And finally, pledging them to (1) army-settlement, (2) maintenance and arrears for army and navy, (3) a new Parliament, and (4) their own legal dissolution at an early date, he restored to their seats in Parliament, on Feb. 21, those members who had been excluded by Pride's Purge in 1648. 'This began to infuse a new spirit of life into the Kingdom,' says Walker, 'in whom at this springing season of the year, began a new to bud and peep out the bloomes of a too long frost-nipped loyalty, so that one now might have seen what twenty years before could never shew, countenances, that lately were dejected through the cruell tyranny of their Ægyptian task masters, now gather cheerfull looks, and like fresh blown roses yield a fragrant savour.'<sup>1</sup>

But Monk as yet dared by no means to renounce his republican pretensions. A few days before the readmission of the secluded members, he declared to Ludlow that they 'must live and die together for a Commonwealth,'<sup>2</sup> and to Haslerig, 'I do protest I will oppose to the utmost the setting up of Charles Stuart, a Single Person or House of Peers'<sup>3</sup>; and on the night of Feb. 21 he dispatched with all haste letters to the different regiments in England, Scotland, and Ireland to satisfy them '*that nothing was intended for Alteration of Government, but that it should continue as a free State and Commonwealth.*'<sup>4</sup> It was such assurances as these, together with the fact that the restored Parliament, although strongly Royalist, resolved to terminate soon, and leave the whole question of settlement to a free Parliament, that led Milton to take up again his neglected pamphlet, which he now prefaced with a brief reference to the altered situation, and published at the end of February.

After setting up a council of state, and making provisions for general elections, the famous Long Parliament dissolved on March 16; but only 'after many sad pangs & groanes,'<sup>1</sup> for there was a growing inclination among its members to sit on, and bring in the king themselves, and on their own terms. Monk now began to play more boldly his game of negotiation. On the 'next Evening after the Dissolution of Parliament'<sup>2</sup> he consented to a private audience with his cousin, Sir John Greenville, who put into his hands a message from Charles. Three days later, Sir John was posting back to the Continent with Monk's advice to the royal exile (see note on 16. 31). Among other things, he recommended a proclamation of general pardon, confirmation of titles to real estate, and toleration as to matters of religion.

In the last days of March, amidst the greatest enthusiasm and keenest rivalry ever known, began the general elections. Every one was eager for a place in the 'free' Parliament, whereas no one but the excluded members had cared to sit with the Rump. As early as Feb. 23 Lady Anne Rochester writes: 'Good Mr. Yates, next to my sonne Lee, let not Sr. Raphe Verney faile of being chosen.'<sup>3</sup> These two seats, she thinks, will be 'as many' as they 'can compas.' The elections continued through the greater part of April. From the first the Royalists, of course, carried all before them. Very soon it became obvious to every one that the king's return was only a matter of weeks. On the 9th of April, Monk felt so confident of this that he sent Charles an absolute assurance of unconditional restoration.

Even Milton admitted as much. He had been revising his *Ready and Easy Way* with the design of influencing elections, or at least the Parliament. But as the returns began coming in, it became apparent that his efforts were to be as futile in the one case as in the other. Nevertheless, he was not quite alone. There was Lambert, just escaped from the Tower, and gathering together the desperate remnant of Fanatics, who were determined to oppose kingship to their last drop of blood. Milton owned them as kindred spirits, and resolved to make *his* forlorn fight at their side. Apparently in the very last days before the capture of Lambert on April 22 and the assembling of Parliament on the 25th, and probably after April 20, he finished, and soon after sent forth, the enlarged—and embittered—edition; 'not so much to convince these,' which he little hoped, 'as to confirm them who yield not.'

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## II.

### ‘Aierie Modells’

The one question upon which there was universal agreement during the months immediately preceding the Restoration was the urgent necessity of settling the government upon permanent foundations. ‘This care of timely settling a new government,’ declared Milton, ‘too much neglected, hath been our mischief.’ The republic of 1649-53 had been merely tentative; the protectorate, in spite of its noble achievements, had utterly collapsed within a year after the death of the great ‘Single Person’; the resurrected Rump delayed the attempt until turned out by the army; the army-*régime* evolved elaborate proposals, only to fall to pieces again in favor of the Rump; and, finally, the Remnant, after its second restoration, seemed utterly incompetent, or strangely unwilling, to go about the great business. In a word, proposal, experiment, and failure had been the history of the past eleven years, and the half-year preceding the Restoration is well called the reign of ‘anarchy and confusion.’ ‘Like a drowning man,’ declared one of Monk’s gratuitous advisers, ‘this nation hath laid hold of every thing that came in its way; but all things have proved but straws and helpless twigs, that will not bear it above water.’<sup>1</sup> Monk himself told the Parliament on Feb. 6 that, as he marched from Scotland, he ‘observed the people in most counties in great and earnest expectations of Settlement.’<sup>2</sup>

But if there was unanimity as to the need, there was the greatest possible diversity of opinions as to ways and means. Every faction had its ‘only cure’ or ‘easy prescription.’ And, as *The Ready and Easy Way* was one of these contributions of advice, it will be best understood in relation to the more important, at least, of these numerous proposals.

Of no statesman of his day had Milton a higher opinion than of Sir Henry Vane, whom Clarendon describes as a man ‘unlimited and unrestrained by any rules or bounds prescribed to other men, by reason of his perfection, . . . a perfect enthusiast’ who ‘did believe himself inspired.’<sup>3</sup> In the well-known sonnet, Milton addresses him as

Vane, young in years, but in sage counsel old,  
Than whom a better senator ne’er held  
The helm of Rome.

Vane and Milton were both republicans, both champions of the Rump, and both believers in freedom of conscience, and separation of church and state. It is not surprising, therefore, that their solutions of the problem of settlement show a considerable similarity, particularly in the advocacy of a perpetual council. In *A Healing Question propounded and resolved, . . . with a Desire to apply Balsome to the Wound before it become incurable*,<sup>4</sup> Vane inquired whether a ‘standing council of state settled for life in reference to the safety of the commonwealth, and for the

maintaining intercourse and commerce with foreign states, under the inspection and oversight of the supreme judicature, but of the same fundamental constitution with themselves, would . . . be disliked.’ By such recommendations, urged by such worthy members as Henry Vane, Milton was undoubtedly persuaded into championing the perpetuation of the Rump as a grand council. Vane’s council was to have been even more absolute than Milton’s: vacancies, ‘by death or otherwise, might be supplied by the vote of the major part of themselves.’ This idea may have suggested to Milton his modified form of rotation (see p. 23). Vane is clearly in advance of Milton in his recommendation of distinct legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the government. ‘Would there be any just exception to be taken,’ he asks, ‘if (besides both these) it should be agreed (as another part of the fundamental constitution of the government) to place that branch of sovereignty which chiefly respects the execution of laws in a distinct office from that of the legislative power, (and yet subordinate to them and to the laws) capable to be intrusted into the hands of one single person, if need require, or in a greater number, as the legislative power should think fit?’ Like Milton, Vane concludes his model with a rhapsodic expression of faith in its efficacy, exclaiming: ‘How suddenly might harmony, righteousness, love, peace, and safety unto the whole body follow hereupon, as the happy fruit of such a settlement, if the Lord have any delight to be amongst us!’

Vane’s influence did not cease with the downfall of the Rump in October, 1659, but is apparent in the constitution drafted by the general council of army-officers, the main provisions of which were as follows: that there be (1) no kingship, (2) no single person as chief magistrate, (3) no house of peers, (4) no imposition upon conscience; (5) that an army be continued; (6) that the legislative and executive powers be in distinct hands; and (7) that Parliaments be elected by the people.<sup>1</sup> In this constitution, Vane’s idealism is tempered and restrained by the conservatism and legal acumen of Bulstrode Whitelock.

On the last day of October, 1659, William Prynne, the most voluminous of the pamphleteers, came forward with *A short, legal, medicinal, useful, safe, easy Prescription, to recover our Kingdom, Church, Nation, from their present dangerous, distractive, destructive Confusion*,<sup>2</sup> in which he recommended, as ‘the only just, legal, probable means now left,’ the following: (1) ‘for all the antient nobility of the kingdom . . . to assemble themselves by common consent at Westminster’ and issue writs for a Parliament; (2) ‘for all freeholders in every county’ . . . to elect ‘the ablest, honestest, wisest, stoutest gentlemen for their sheriffs,’ and ‘the wisest, ablest, stoutest, discreetest persons . . . knights, citizens, and burgesses’; (3) for all to resolve not to obey ‘new, illegal, tyrannical, upstart powers, officers, conventicles, committees, or councils,’ and to punish all resisting these measures as traitors.

Denouncing Prynne as a ‘crop-eared pettifogger, a reviler of the saints, a constant opposer of powers, an unwearied scribbler, a demoniack possessed with a legion of hellish fiends, the spirit of contradiction,’ the author of *Democritus turned Statesman*<sup>3</sup> wished to know ‘whether it be not the purest and safest kind of free state, to have a free parliament elected annually, or twice a year, as it was before the Conquest, and after many years, without restraint on the wills of the free people of the nation; which parliament may constitute and elect a senate, that shall act according, and subject to

the law of the land in the interval of parliament, and so to be elected from year to year by each parliament.’ This was the notion of ‘successive Parliaments’ with which Milton regrets to find men’s minds ‘prepossessed.’

A most remarkable anticipation of the presidency and house of representatives, as constituted in modern republics, is found in *Twenty-five Queries: modestly and humbly, and yet sadly and seriously propounded*<sup>1</sup>: ‘If it shall be thought fit to have a single person to govern these nations with the advice of his council in the intervals of parliament: first, Then will it not be the safest way for the people to have this single person and council invested only with power to execute the laws, and the whole legislative power to be settled in the people’s representatives? And again, considering the temper and constitution of the nation, will it not be most equal and just to have this single person elective, to continue for one or two years, and he and his council to be accountable to the parliament for mal-administration? . . . Will not this way be far less chargeable and burthensome to the nation than hereditary kingship?’

Among these numerous advisers there were few who agreed with Milton upon perpetuation, but the sentiment in favor of a commonwealth in some form was predominant in publications up to the decisive turn of affairs on Feb. 11. A typical plea for an ‘equal commonwealth’ is found in *A Letter of Advice to his Excellency Lord-General Monk*<sup>2</sup>: ‘Thus hath this poor nation, within these few years, tried all sorts of government, but an equal commonwealth. We have experienced monarchy in the old line, and in the two protectors, a select senate, an oligarchy, the government of an army; what not? And have not as yet met with the ends of a good government. . . . And now, sir, can anything else save us, but an equal commonwealth? Which in truth is no more than a free and full parliament; but a free and full parliament more truly elected and better formed.’

Monk himself pretended to be strong for a commonwealth, as is evident from *The Speech and Declaration*<sup>1</sup> of Feb. 21: ‘. . . I thought good to assure you, and that in the presence of God, that I have nothing before my eyes but God’s glory, and the settlement of these nations upon commonwealth foundations. . . . Only give me leave to mind you, that the old foundations are by God’s providence so broken, that, in the eye of reason, they cannot be restored but upon the ruins of the people of these nations; . . . for if the people find that, after so long and bloody a war against the king for breaking in upon their liberties, yet at last he must be taken in again, it will be out of question, as is most manifest, he may for the future govern by his will, dispose of parliaments and parliament men as he pleaseth, and yet the people will never more rise for their assistance.’

Harrington’s important proposals are considered in the section entitled *The Rota Club*.

On October 20, in *A Letter to a Friend, Concerning the Ruptures of the Commonwealth*,<sup>2</sup> Milton himself sketched in outline a proposal which four months later he elaborated in *The Ready and Easy Way*. It ran: ‘Being now in anarchy, without a counselling and governing power; and the army, I suppose, finding themselves insufficient to discharge at once both military and civil affairs, the first thing to be found out with all speed, without which no commonwealth can subsist,

must be a senate, or general council of state, in whom must be the power, first to preserve the public peace; next, the commerce with foreign nations; and lastly, to raise monies for the management of these affairs: this must be either the parliament readmitted to sit, or a council of state allowed of by the army, since they only now have the power. The terms to be stood on are, liberty of conscience to all professing Scripture to be the rule of their faith and worship; and the abjuration of a single person—the former implying also ‘the removal of a forced maintenance from ministers. . . . That which I conceive only able to cement, and unite for ever the army, either to the parliament recalled, or this chosen council, must be a mutual league and oath, private or public, not to desert one another till death: that is to say, that the army be kept up, and all these officers in their places during life, and so likewise the parliament or counsellors of state. . . . And whether the civil government be an annual democracy or a perpetual aristocracy, is not to me a consideration for the extremities wherein we are, and the hazard of our safety from our common enemy, gaping at present to devour us.’ Finally, ‘well-order’d committees of their faithfulest adherents in every county may give this government the resemblance and effect of a perfect democracy.’

We may now turn from this embryonic constitution to its full development in *The Ready and Easy Way*.



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D.

## Milton'S Ideal Republic

The ground upon which Milton was to erect his commonwealth was first cleared of all traditional rubbish. There was to be no king or duke or protector—no single person of any kind. There were to be no bishops, no House of Lords; nor was there to be any ‘distinction of lords and commoners’ that might ‘any way divide or sever the public interest.’

In the way of positive proposal he began, as he did in the *Letter to a Friend*, with an aristocratic council. Supreme power should be vested in a ‘full and free Council of ablest men,’ elected by the people from such as were ‘not addicted to a single person or house of lords.’ This council should have control of the naval and military forces, manage the public revenue, make laws, and attend to all affairs with other nations. The tenure of office in this body should be for life, or during good behavior; but if this would not be accepted, then the expedients of rotation, or of submitting to the people the question whether the several members should retire or remain in office, might be adopted.

To facilitate the handling of matters requiring much ‘secrecie and expedition,’ and to act as a kind of executive head, the grand council must choose from its own members a smaller council of state. ‘No single person, but reason only,’ was to rule in all its deliberations.

Every county in England was to be constituted a ‘little commonwealth,’ of which the chief town should be the capital. Here the chief gentry were to reside in befitting palaces, and participate in the local legislative, executive, and judicial organizations, which should be subordinate only in matters affecting the national government. But even the legislative enactments of the grand council were to be submitted, by a species of referendum, to ratification or rejection at the hands of the majority of these subordinate commonwealths. Thus there were to be, not ‘many sovranities united in one Commonwealth, but many Commonwealths under one united and entrusted sovranitie’—not a loose confederation, but the largest amount of local sovereignty consistent with a supreme and efficient national authority.

Offices were to be filled by popular election; but suffrage must be well hedged about with qualifications. By no means should all be left to ‘the noise and shouting of a rude multitude.’ These qualifications were designed to restrict suffrage and magistracy to those who were ‘well affected’ toward government without single person or House of Lords. Those ‘rightly qualifi’d’ might nominate as many as they would; from these nominees, ‘others of a better breeding’ were to ‘chuse a less number more judiciously, till after a third or fourth sifting and refining of exactest choice,’ those were left who were the ‘due number,’ and ‘by most voices’ thought ‘worthiest.’ Thus ‘worth and merit,’ rather than rank or wealth, were to govern in the choice of public servants.



Moreover, these worthies were to be unsalaried; for magistracy should be undertaken, not from motives of personal ambition, but solely as an opportunity for unselfish service.

The good and the wise, however few, were to rule. But ‘due libertie’—not license—and equality proportioned to merit should be guaranteed to all. In every town there should be free schools and academies. Church and state should be absolutely distinct and independent; and liberty of conscience must be assured. Finally, there were to be the fewest possible laws, in order that there might be the largest possible degree of individual freedom; one universal, divine law should prevail—the law of nature, ‘the only law of laws truly and properly to all mankind fundamental.’

When the government was once settled on this foundation, virtue would flourish and happiness abound. The people would soon be ‘satisfi’d and delighted with the decent order, ease, and benefit’ of such a government. And the republic itself should never know decay, but should ‘so continue . . . even to the coming of our true and right full and only to be expected King, . . . the Messiah, the Christ.’

Milton vigorously resented any suggestion that his model was ideal and impracticable. Again and again he insisted that his ‘way’ was ‘plain,’ ‘open,’ ‘easy,’ ‘without intricacies . . . or any considerable objection . . . that it is not practicable.’ He professed to follow Aristotle rather than Plato, whose ‘fancied republic . . . in this world could have no place.’<sup>1</sup> He desired ‘to ordain wisely, as in this world of evil’—not ‘to sequester out of the world into Atlantic and Utopian politics, which never can be drawn into use.’<sup>2</sup>

In Milton’s claim there was some degree of force. His plan was extremely simple. It meant merely perpetuating a body of men already in power, and further elaborating systems of local sovereignty and popular education already in existence. Many of its recommendations have long since become a part of the actual workings of modern republics. Such are its combination of local and national authority, the referendum in legislation, and the merit-system of civil service. Besides, he announced no socialistic principles of absolute equality, equal division of lands, or community of goods. He attempted, at least, to lay the foundations of his commonwealth, not upon some undiscovered Oceana, Utopia, or New Atlantis, but in the England of February, 1660.

But while Milton, in modeling his republic, endeavored to play the rôle of a practical statesman, he nevertheless remained the great idealist and poet. Hence we find that, in spite of its air of practicality, his republic has much in common with those of Plato and other political idealists. With Augustine and the mystical mediævalists, Milton loves to think of the race as a great brotherhood, and of God’s ‘governing from heaven’ as the ‘universal Lord of all mankind.’ With Plato, he conceives of office-holding as public service. The right of the wise to rule, and the obligation of the ignorant to follow; aristocracy of merit; the exaltation of spiritual interests over every other in the state—these are all a part of Plato’s republic. Like Plato, Milton saw no reason why a state, so constituted, should not endure for ever.

The impracticability and real Utopian character of Milton's republic, however, are to be found in its most fundamental proposal—government by a supreme and perpetual council of ablest men. To Milton, who looked upon magistracy as unselfish service, and believed that 'nothing is more agreeable to the order of nature, or more for the interest of mankind, than that the less should yield to the greater, not in numbers, but in wisdom and in virtue,'<sup>1</sup> it seemed so easy, so desirable, so safe, to constitute the Parliament then sitting a perpetual council. As their literary champion, Milton had come to believe that these men were absolutely worthy and incorruptible—'faithfull worthies, who at first freed us from tyrannie, and have continu'd ever since through all changes constant to thir trust.' But by February, 1660, Milton stood practically alone in this belief. The Rump had become a national byword. No Utopian model ever dreamed could have been less acceptable to England at that time than was Milton's proposal to perpetuate this obnoxious assembly. *The Ready and Easy Way* was greeted with a roar of derision. Instantly and mercilessly were its fundamental weaknesses laid bare. *The Censure of the Rota* is typical: 'Though you brag much of the people's managing their own affairs, you allow them no more share of that in your Utopia, as you have ordered it, than only to set up their throats and bawl, instead of every three years, which they might have done before, once in an age, or oftener, as an old member drops away, and a new one is to succeed,' etc. (see Appendix B. 3).

So far as the adaptability of Milton's model to then existing conditions was concerned, there can be no doubt that the critics were right. Had there been infallible means of finding out who were the best and wisest; had all men looked upon magistracy as unselfish service; had officers, once chosen for life, been absolutely incorruptible, then, and then only, could Milton's scheme have been successful. But notwithstanding twenty years of participation in public affairs, Milton seems to have been unable to perceive the utter impracticability of his proposal, or to realize, as did Sir Thomas More, that 'except all men were good, everything cannot be right.'

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E.

## Two Formative Influences

I.

### Mediæval Republican Thought

Milton entertained no very high opinion of scholasticism, and the present work shows no appeal whatever to mediæval authorities. Nevertheless, he belonged to a school of political thought that had had its origin in the heart of the Middle Ages; indeed, the radical doctrine of *The Ready and Easy Way* is in large measure an unacknowledged inheritance from the republicanism of the mediæval church. One should remember, of course, that Milton was debtor also to the Greeks, and to all the learning and political experience of antiquity—as were in some degree the mediævalists themselves. However, in this pamphlet not only did he base his opinions concerning covenant, resistance, and tyrannicide upon sixteenth-century revolutionary thought, which itself was derived from the Middle Ages; but his three fundamental conceptions—sovereignty of the people, government by supreme representative council, and federation—have, in the form in which they came down to Milton, distinctly mediæval beginnings.

The doctrine of popular sovereignty was a political expression of the belief in the intrinsic importance of the individual—a belief peculiar to Hebrew and Christian philosophy. Man had been created in the image of God, and endowed with immortality and the possibility of direct communion with his Creator. A tradition prevailed that in the far-off beginning, before the advent of sin, men had lived together in a state of nature, as free and equal sons of God, and under His direct guidance. This body of thought was augmented by the revelations of Christ, who clearly taught the fatherhood of God, and the immortality and infinite worth of even the humblest soul. From such teaching arose the Christian conceptions of universal brotherhood and equality; and from the practice of the apostolic church descended even a tradition of the community of goods. St. Augustine, in the *De Civitate Dei*, which, of all books, next after the Bible, most profoundly influenced mediæval thought, cordially embraced the new philosophy, and declared that God ‘did not intend that His rational creature should have dominion over anything but the irrational creation—not man over man, but man over the beasts,’ and that those who are in authority should really ‘serve those whom they seem to command; for they rule not from a love of power, but from a sense of duty they owe to others.’<sup>1</sup> And Milton further notes that ‘ad subditos suos scribens, Constantinus Magnus non alio nomine quam fratres appellat.’<sup>2</sup>

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the sovereignty of the aggregate of individuals, each of infinite worth, was recognized in the great world-empire which

arose under the inspiration of the Christian philosophy. The earliest form of this doctrine, however, was very different from its radical development as found in Milton and the extremists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The mediæval conception of popular sovereignty was by no means incompatible with loyalty to kings and popes. These were upheld by the people as necessary heads of the temporal and spiritual orders of life in the great quasi-mystical empire over which God himself reigned supreme. But they were nevertheless regarded as servants. John of Salisbury (1120-80), that most interesting and modern of twelfth-century Englishmen, pupil of Abelard, and friend of Thomas à Becket, in his famous book, the *Policraticus* (4. 1-3, 5), speaks of a king as ‘minister populi,’ and ‘publicæ utilitatis minister.’ A century later, Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) is still more explicit: ‘Principes terrarum sunt a Deo instituti, non quidem ut propria lucra quærent, sed ut communem utilitatem procurent’ (*De Regimine Judæorum* 6).<sup>3</sup> The pope himself, although nominally supreme, was also a chosen servant, and subject to the council of the church.

While there was pretty general agreement as to the fact of popular sovereignty, there were two opinions as to its transference to rulers. Some held that the transfer of supreme authority to king or pope, made voluntarily by the people or their representative, was irrevocable. But the more dominant idea was that the investiture of rulers was a delegation of sovereignty, to be valid only as long as the terms of the contract were observed. This mediæval doctrine of contract, which flows down the centuries in a strong and unbroken stream, carrying with it tremendous significance as a justification of popular revolts against tyrants, kings, and popes, found formal expression in the writings of the Abbot of Admont, Engelbert of Volkersdorf (1250-1311). In the *De Ortu, Progressu, et Fine Romani Imperii Liber* (c. 2) he shows the origin of all *regna et principatus* to have been in a *pactum subjectionis*. These idea of delegated sovereignty and contract are very prominent in Milton’s treatise. ‘Sovrantie,’ he affirms, must not be ‘transferred, but delegated only.’

As kings and popes were public servants, instituted by the sovereign people for its own welfare, it followed that they were also subject to the will of the people. The law of God and the law of nature alone were absolute; and when regal or papal decrees ran counter to these higher mandates, they might, and must, be disobeyed. Even Thomas Aquinas, a powerful supporter of the papal power, clearly recognizes the supremacy of the higher law. God is to be obeyed before the pope (*Summa Theologiæ* 2. 1. 96. 4). William of Ockham expresses the same idea with reference to the emperor, who is only to be obeyed ‘in licitis’ (*Dialog.* 3. 2. 2. 20). The statement is made general by Philippus Decius (1454-1536) in the *Consilia* (72. 2): ‘Superiori non est obediendum quando egreditur fines sui officii.’

But popular sovereignty implied more than the possibility of passive disobedience. As early as the eleventh century the doctrines of active resistance and tyrannicide were being taught by Manegold. In the following century John of Salisbury boldly wrote *On The End of Tyrants*, and in the *Policraticus* he justifies every means of tyrannicide except poison.<sup>1</sup> In the hands of the pope, during the papal supremacy, this became an effective instrument for reducing arrogant emperors to a proper subordination. In the sixteenth century we shall find the church, through the Jesuit writings, attempting to wield once more this ancient weapon against her imperial foes; while in the

seventeenth century the whole Puritan revolution may be expressed in terms of these mediæval principles of popular sovereignty, resistance, and tyrannicide.

The mediæval idea of popular sovereignty did not extend so far as to grant participation to the people individually in the administration of the empire or church. In fact, they were pretty generally excluded. It was understood to mean the supremacy of the people collectively; hence it found its expression in a supreme representative council, popularly chosen, and, theoretically, exactly equivalent to the whole sovereign people for which it stood. Nothing exactly like this—a supreme assembly perfectly representative of the entire people—had ever been known, and its developments were destined to be of the utmost consequence. In the direct line of descent are the modern representative parliament, and Milton's supreme 'general Council of ablest men, chosen by the people.' The authority of this mediæval council was limited by nothing except the law of God and the law of nature. To it the senate of cardinals and the pope himself were subject.

But to realize the completeness of this mediæval conception, one must turn to the writings of Marsilius of Padua (d. after 1342), the famous rector of the University of Paris. In the *Defensor Pacis* (c. 1324), which has been called 'the most original political treatise of the middle ages,'<sup>1</sup> he clearly sets forth the principle of a representative council. Chapters 20-1, pp. 256-63, are thus summarized by Poole: 'The supreme power in the church is the church itself, that is, a general council, formed of the clergy and laity alike, and convoked not by any pretended spiritual authority but by the source of all legislation and jurisdiction, the civil state. Thus constituted a general council may not only decide ecclesiastical questions but even proceed to excommunicate the temporal ruler and place his land under an interdict, just because it represents the authority of the universal church and speaks the voice of the entire community, in both its spiritual and its temporal capacities. That it has power over the pope follows necessarily from the principles already laid down.'<sup>2</sup>

But while there was recognition of the worth and rights of the individual, and of the sovereignty of the people as a whole; and although this found its highest expression in a representative council under the nominal leadership of the papal and regal authority, the most remarkable and unique achievement of mediæval policy was the building of these manifold elements of government into a unified whole. The genius of the mediæval mind, in fact, was chiefly its unparalleled capacity to achieve unity out of multiplicity. One God, one authority, one world-wide empire, one human brotherhood, one goal of life—such were the ideals that wrought themselves into unworldly monasticism, into the Holy Roman Empire; into cathedral and *Divina Commedia*; and into a system of federated government which articulated and fused into a whole the successive units of sovereignty from the individual to the papal throne. In order of magnitude, these units were the individual, the family, the village, the city, the province, the nation, the empire. Each part was an individual organism having its end in itself, reflecting in miniature the constitution of the whole, and yet at the same time forming a subordinate element in the successive higher unities. Dante well expresses this conception of world-wide and race-wide unity in discussing 'what is the end of human society as a whole': 'In order to discern the point in question more clearly, observe that as Nature fashions the thumb for one purpose, the whole

hand for another, then the arm for a purpose differing from both, and the entire man for one differing from all, so she creates for one end the individual, for another the family, for another the village, for still another end the city, for another the kingdom, and finally for an ultimate end by means of His art which is nature, the Eternal God brings into being the human race in its totality. <sup>1</sup>

Although this vast system of graduated sovereignties, united in one grand empire under the rulership of God, was soon to disintegrate, still the principle of federation—of preserving the identity and independence of the separate groups, yet binding all together into a unity—was to persist, and to exert a profound influence in modern times. The disintegration of the mediæval scheme of federated groups was largely due to the spread of Greek political ideas. Especially powerful was the influence of the Greek conception of a sovereign, nonuniversal state; indeed, this idea completely shattered the vast mediæval empire, and laid the foundations of modern European states. The state at one end of the mediæval chain, and the individual at the other, became the two antagonistic supremacies, and the intermediate links—village, city, and province—practically disappeared politically.

More and more the state came to mean the king; and, striving against regal absolutism, individualism developed into the rebellions and revolutions of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Throughout this long struggle for political rights, the church, true to mediæval traditions, consistently championed the sovereignty of the people, and wielded the doctrine as a weapon against the pretensions of the temporal power. On the other hand, the supporters of the Reformation movement (itself an expression of individualism on its spiritual side) generally asserted the divine right of kings, in return for royal protection against the power of the pope. This was the alignment during the sixteenth century. Luther and Calvin—although the latter betrays some signs of a democratic, or at least aristocratic, preference—were outspokenly royalist. But the doctrines of disobedience, resistance, and tyrannicide were accepted by the later Calvinists, and were boldly proclaimed by the writers of the Huguenot and Jesuit schools. The sovereignty of the people and government by a representative council were reasserted, and justified historically, by Francis Hotman in the *Franco-Gallia* (1574). A still more powerful Huguenot presentation of liberal mediæval ideas is to be found in the *Vindiciæ contra Tyrannos* (1578). In the *Politica Methodice Digesta* of Althusius, the German jurist who wrote in praise of the United Provinces, we find a most remarkable return to the mediæval idea of federated groups—families uniting to form communities (villages, parishes, towns, etc.), and these combining into provinces, which in turn unite to form the state. <sup>1</sup>

But the most complete revival of mediæval political ideas is to be found in the writings of the Jesuits, a society which originated just before the middle of the sixteenth century. The Catholic principles of unity, of subordination of the temporal to the spiritual power, of popular sovereignty, and of government by a representative council are reaffirmed with admirable clearness and force. The Spanish Jesuits, Molina and Suarez, even revived the theocratic conception of a perfect state, over which should reign the law of God and the law of nature. The dominating tyranny of kings, while it made impossible the realization of this ideal, all the more stirred the



zeal of the Jesuits in its behalf. Not only did they justify disobedience, resistance, and tyrannicide; but when the horror of St. Bartholomew's came to be laid at the door of Henry III, they were ready to assert and justify the right of private individuals to assassinate tyrants and heretic kings. The *De Rege et Regis Institutione* of Mariana, another Spanish Jesuit, is perhaps the boldest and ablest exposition of the radical antimonarchical doctrine ever written. The book produced a tremendous impression, and passed through many editions. Not only did it bear immediate fruit in the assassination of Henry III, but it became the authority and chief support of regicides for two centuries. Jesuit emissaries and Jesuit books crossed over into England in the latter part of the sixteenth century, and exercised no small influence in preparing the way for the extreme measures taken against the Stuarts.

Milton's writings give evidence of his intimate acquaintance with the *Franco-Gallia*, *Vindiciæ*, *De Rege*, and other revolutionary utterances of the preceding century. In a very true sense their championship of popular, as against monarchical, ideas—derived, as we have seen, from the Middle Ages and the heart of the Roman church—they handed across the Channel to Milton, the apologist of the Puritan revolution and republic. Especially is this apparent in the present treatise in regard to its fundamental ideas of popular sovereignty, government by a representative council, and unified confederacy. Milton, in his political ideas, had vastly more in common with Catholic republicans than with Reformation royalists. In fact, as we shall see in the study of sources, Milton surreptitiously incorporates as authority in *The Ready and Easy Way* a generous portion of the *De Republica* of Jean Bodin, whom he elsewhere expressly styles a 'Papist.'

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## II.

### The Rota Club

Among the various contemporary schools of commonwealth-proposers there was none so interesting, so brilliant, and so important in relation to Milton as the little group of enthusiasts who met regularly during the winter evenings of 1659-60 to discuss 'aierie modells' under the hospitable shelter of Miles' Coffee-House, 'at the Turk's head, in the New Pallace-yard.' The founder and animating spirit of this famous debating society was James Harrington, the author of *Oceana*, and, upon the whole, the ablest political philosopher of his time. Toland styles him the 'greatest Commonwealthman in the World,'<sup>1</sup> and his *Oceana* 'the most perfect Form of Popular Government that ever was.' However that may be, it is certain that no contemporary republican possessed an equally intimate acquaintance with all previous political theory, together with constructive imagination and genius for detail, and unflinching enthusiasm in promoting his ideas. The *Oceana* appeared in 1656. It was instantly pounced upon by Cromwell's courtiers, and carried to Whitehall; but, through Harrington's intercession with Lady Claypole, the 'child of his brain' was rescued from Cromwell. Toland tells us that the treatise was 'greedily bought up, and become the subject of all mens discourse.' It proposed a most elaborate model of a commonwealth, based upon rotation in office, equal distribution of land, and the fundamental principle 'that empire follows the balance of property, whether lodg'd in one, in a few, or in many hands'—a principle which, Toland affirms, Harrington 'was the first that ever made out.' Aubrey records that this 'ingeniose tractat, together with his and H. Nevill's smart discourses and inculcations, daily at coffee-houses, made many proselytes.'<sup>1</sup> It provoked spirited controversy, and became the political creed and unifying principle of the Rota Club.

As the militant republicanism of the Harringtonians exercised so large an influence upon both editions of *The Ready and Easy Way*, it may be worth while to become acquainted with the Rota-men and their famous Coffee-Club. The Club began its sessions in September, 1659, at the time when the restored Rump was taking up the great question of settlement. The purpose of the Club, according to Burnet, was 'to consider of a form of government that should secure liberty, and yet preserve the nation.'<sup>2</sup> It continued its animated discussions through the constitution-making army-*régime* and until the downfall of the Rump in February, or almost up to the appearance of *The Ready and Easy Way*. Perhaps the best contemporary mention is the following quaint account by Aubrey, a frequent visitor: 'In so much [did Harrington 'make proselytes'] that, anno 1659, the beginning of Michaelmasterme, he had every night a meeting at the (then) Turke's head, in the New Pallace-yard, where they take water, the house next to the staires, at one Miles', where was made purposely a large ovall-table, with a passage in the middle for Miles to deliver his Coffee. About it sate his disciples, and the virtuosi. The discourses were in this kind the most ingeniose, and smart, that ever I heard, or expect to heare, and band[i]ed with great eagernesse: the arguments in the Parliament howse were but flatt to it. . . .



Here we had (very formally) a *ballotting-box*, and balloted how things should be carried, by way of *tentamens*. The room was every evening full as it could be cramm'd. I cannot now recount the whole number:—Mr. Cyriack Skinner, an ingeniose young gentleman, scholar to John Milton, was chaireman. . . . We many times adjourned to the Rhenish wine howse. One time Mr. Stafford and his gang came in, in drink, from the taverne, and affronted the Junto (Mr. Stafford tore their orders and minutes). The soldiers offerd to kick them downe stayres, but Mr. Harrington's moderation and persuasion hindered it. The doctrine was very taking, and the more because, as to human foresight, there was no possibility of the king's returne. But the greatest part of the Parliament-men perfectly hated this designe of *rotation by ballotting*; for they were cursed tyrants and in love with their power, and 't was death to them, except 8 or 10, to admitt of this way. . . . Now this modell upon rotation was:—that the third part of the Senate should rote out by ballot every yeare, so that every ninth yeare the House would be wholly alterd; no magistrate to continue above 3 yeares, and all to be chosen by ballot, then which manner of choice, nothing can be invented more faire and impartiall. Well: this meeting continued Novemb., Dec., Jan., till Febr. 20 or 21; and then, upon the unexpected turne upon generall Monke's comeing-in, all these aierie modells vanishd.'<sup>1</sup>

Wood's account<sup>2</sup> follows Aubrey's, but adds that the ballot-box with which the 'gang' amused themselves was an absolute novelty, 'not being us'd or known in England before'; and that 'on this account the room was every evening very full.' This ballot-box, with its queer little pellets of divers colors, is one of the exotics at which Milton grumbles; but it was a source of infinite mirth among the Royalist wits. For a specimen of their satire see *The Censure of the Rota* (Appendix B. 3). Other amusing references to the Club may be found in the *Harleian Miscellany* (6. 192, 465; 7. 197).

A frequent and very much interested visitor at the Rota-Club debates was Samuel Pepys, who furnishes us comments under the dates of Jan. 10, Jan. 14, Jan. 17, and Feb. 20, the last of which is as follows: 'In the evening Simons and I to the Coffee Club, where nothing to do only I heard Mr. Harrington, and my Lord of Dorset and another Lord, talking of getting another place as the Cockpit, and they did believe it would come to something. After a small debate upon the question whether learned or unlearned subjects are the best the Clubb broke up very poorly, and I do not think they will meet any more.'

They did not; at least, this is the last account we have of them.

We do not know that Milton ever visited the Rota Club, but it is certain that he was in constant and intimate touch with its proceedings. Cyriack Skinner, its occasional chairman, was one of Milton's closest friends. Besides, this vigorous championship of a commonwealth must have been of very great interest to Milton, who differed from Harrington only as to the best means to this same general end. In the preface to *Hirelings*, he seems to show a keen interest in the Harrington petition recently laid before Parliament (see note on 23. 19). It is probable that his Rota-friend read to him from time to time Harrington's various tracts in support of a commonwealth, such as *The Art of Lawgiving*, *Political Aphorisms*, *7 Models of a Commonwealth*, and *The*

*Rota*. And it would be singular indeed if there were no trace of them to be found in Milton's contemporary model.

We find that the characteristic ideas of the Rota-men did exert an influence upon both editions of *The Ready and Easy Way*. The idea of rotation, so far from Milton's doctrine of perpetuity in office, was still less radical and dangerous than the 'conceit' of successive Parliaments. It is therefore mentioned by Milton in the first edition, by way of compromise with the Harrington school, as the 'best expedient, and with least danger'—but only to be tolerated as a last resort to satisfy such as were 'ambitious to share in the government.' It would seem, however, that Milton's information as to Harrington's proposal was somewhat inexact, or, as is more probable, that he was not willing to follow that design too closely. The rotation-scheme as stated in the first edition is Harrington's, but with a difference; and the difference is characteristically Miltonic. Instead of one third of the senate's rotating annually by suffrage of the people, 'a hundred or some such number may go out by lot or suffrage of the rest'—a much less popular form of rotation than Harrington's, and one less likely to impair the dignity and power of the senate. If possible, the managing of this business should be in the control of the council itself. It is in the second edition, however, that the subject receives earnest attention. Milton finds it expedient 'to enlarge especially that part which argues for a perpetual Senat.' Accordingly, we find that the brief mention of rotation in the first edition has been expanded into whole paragraphs and pages in the second.

But the Rota Club, notwithstanding the fact that Milton grudgingly and tentatively accepts one of its proposals, is not to be thought of as a source of *The Ready and Easy Way*, but rather as a formative influence without the pressure of which large sections of Milton's treatise would not have been written. The ideas of the Rota-men are almost invariably mentioned to be criticized and combated. Such criticism must have seemed all the more imperative, as *The Rota: Or a Modell of a Free State or equal Commonwealth*, Harrington's contribution of advice corresponding to Milton's, was almost exactly contemporary with *The Ready and Easy Way*. Wood naturally associates the two rival models: '*The Rota* . . . published in the beginning of Feb. 1659. About which time John Milton published a pamphlet called, *The ready and easy Way to establish a free commonwealth*.'<sup>1</sup> That Milton considered Harrington a formidable competitor, we may infer from the dimensions of the counter-argument in this treatise, and from Harrington's reputation as a political philosopher. Toland says by way of comparison: 'In this book [Milton's] he delivers the model of a commonwealth, well suited perhaps to the circumstances of that time, but inferior, in all respects, to Harrington's *Oceana*, which for the practicableness, equality, and completeness of it, is the most perfect form of such a government that ever was delineated by any antient or modern pen.'<sup>1</sup>

Finally, the principal proposals of Harrington that come in for criticism in the pamphlet, and Milton's opinions of them, may be briefly stated. (1) Agrarian laws (see note on 28. 30) Milton believes to be dangerous; his own model involves 'no perilous, no injurious alteration or circumscription of mens lands and proprietes.' (2) There were to be a 'Senate of three hundred Knights, and the popular assembly of one thousand and fifty Deputies, each being upon a triennial Rotation, or annual Change

in one third part.' But this 'annual rotation of a Senat to consist of three hundred, as is lately propounded,' replies Milton, and 'another popular assembly upward of a thousand, with an answerable rotation, . . . cannot but be troublesom and chargeable, unweildie with thir own bulk, unable to mature thir consultation as they ought.' He 'could wish this wheel or partial wheel in State, if it be possible, might be avoided, as having too much affinitie with the wheel of fortune.' He does not, however, reject it utterly. If not the 'best,' it is still the 'known expedient,' and much to be preferred to kingship. He will not 'forejudge . . . any probable expedient.' The tone of the argument reveals no sign of animosity toward Harrington himself. (3) The secret ballot receives no support from Milton; he speaks slightly of this Venetian innovation, and of 'exotic models' in general. (4) Harrington's whole elaborate scheme of division and subdivision of territory into shires or tribes, hundreds, and parishes, and of the freemen into youths and elders, horse and foot; their assembling at stated times at the summons of trumpet or drum, or the ringing of bells; the compulsory marching and countermarching, the prescribed robes of divers colors, the intricate process of voting—all seemed to Milton 'new injunctions to manacle the native libertie of mankinde; turning all vertue into prescription, servitude, and necessitie, to the great impairing and frustrating of Christian libertie.' *His* way, so different from Harrington's, was 'plain, easie and open; . . . without intricacies, without the introducement of . . . obsolete forms, or terms, or exotic models.'

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F.

Sources

I.

## Scriptural Authority And Illustration

*The Ready and Easy Way* is not distinctively learned, argumentative, or defensive, but was written rather hastily, as a practical suggestion in an emergency. The Biblical element, therefore, is much less prominent here than it is in such treatises as the *Defensio* and the *Tenure*. However, we find that not fewer than twelve direct appeals to the Bible are made in the present work—for illustration and proof; for vindication and ridicule; for warning and denunciation. Milton's employment of Scripture is extremely bold and effective. Old-Testament blood-guiltiness is the warning held up before backsliders from the 'good old cause'; moreover, those who clamor for kingship may be warned of God's anger from the case of Samuel's sons; and let the Stuarts themselves tremble at the terrible denunciation of Jeremiah against Coniah. Unfortunately, it was not without some grounds that the critics accused Milton of wresting the Scripture to his purpose (see notes on 15. 34 and 15. 35, and p. 177).

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## II.

### Classical Precedent

#### 1.

### Greek Commonwealth-Theory

In his proposed curriculum, as also in his own extensive reading, Milton had given a prominent place to ‘those extolled remains of Grecian lawgivers, Lycurgus and Solon.’ And while we are not to imagine him now, in his anxious haste and infirmity of blindness, as painfully groping among Athenian and Spartan constitutions, it is nevertheless true that he incorporates in his model much of their spirit, and many of their practical expedients. Milton seems to have read of the curb, or ‘bridle’-device, of the *Ephori*, in the charming pages of Plutarch’s *Life of Lycurgus*. There is also an allusion to the peculiar Spartan form of election in his unwillingness to commit all ‘to the noise and shouting of a rude multitude.’ Throughout the treatise there runs an implied commendation of Spartan frugality, simplicity, discipline, and patriotic fervor.

But it was for the Athenian commonwealth, as founded by Solon and further democratized by his successors, that Milton reserved his profoundest admiration. Like Milton, Solon was a poet turned statesman, an unselfish reformer, and an unsuccessful opposer of tyrants. But, unlike Milton’s, his political ideas had the good fortune to become the basis of the constitution of the republic. Milton found these reflected in Plutarch’s *Life of Solon*—itself largely derived<sup>1</sup> from Aristotle’s recently recovered *Constitution of Athens*. Here are set forth the ideas of a supreme and perpetual council of the Areopagus; proportionate eligibility to office; the right of appeal to living judges. Solon himself, as here described, furnishes a splendid example of unselfish public service, and of supreme contempt for royal ostentation. And Milton’s proposed combination of local and national authority—legislative, executive, and judicial—he finds ‘to have been practised in the old Athenian commonwealth.’ We may now turn to the strictly political writings of the Greeks to which our book is indebted. We have seen that Milton professed to hold in some derision the idealistic proposals of Plato—‘a man of high authority indeed, but least of all for his commonwealth.’<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, almost a score of Plato’s social and political ideas reappear in *The Ready and Easy Way*. The nature of the state, the origin of law, the purpose of government, the relation of tyranny to moral progress, magistracy as service, due liberty—these are some of the subjects upon which Milton’s thought accords with Plato’s. Most of these ideas, it is true, Milton met again far down the stream and in other forms, for we are here at the fountainhead of modern commonwealth-theory; but it is also true that he received the initial impression of these conceptions from the pages of the *Republic* and the *Laws*. Finally, Aristotle, a much more practical

philosopher, is acknowledged as 'chief instructor,' and especially cited as authority (31. 5).

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2.

## The Roman Republic And Its Expounders

Hardly less profoundly was Milton influenced by the history of the illustrious republic of Rome. The influence, however, was largely one of national character and political institutions, for in the province of original political philosophy the Roman contribution had been small. It was the history of that liberty-loving people, who, deposing their kings, flourished for five hundred years as a republic; the matchless spirit of the Romans, who were ‘in a manner all fit to be kings’; their august, perpetual senate, their check-device of the tribunes: it was these elements of Roman greatness that appealed most strongly to Milton at this time, as exemplifying the feasibility and superiority of an aristocratic republic.

But the Roman republic, although it imported its politics from Greece, was not quite without expounders. There were Cicero, with his *Republic* and *Laws*, and Polybius, and Justinian; from each of whom Milton seems to have gleaned ideas that were to reappear later in modified form in his own republic. Like Milton, Cicero had striven ‘at all hazard’ to uphold the tottering and already doomed structure of a republic, having voluntarily resigned the ‘diversified sweetness’ of his studies to oppose himself ‘almost alone to the tempests and torrents of sedition, for the sake of preserving the state’<sup>1</sup>—an utterance that seems to have colored Milton’s own declaration of motives. Like Milton again, Cicero professed to be a practical statesman; but he openly modeled his treatises upon Plato’s *Republic* and *Laws*. Naturally, therefore, most of his ideas are of no importance as sources. Yet there is a certain remainder, peculiarly his own, which did exercise a direct influence upon the shaping of *The Ready and Easy Way*. For example, Milton expressly acknowledges the power of Cicero’s beautiful and eloquent statement of the law of nature (see note on 10. 40).

It is probable that Milton’s idea of ‘balance’ was derived from, or confirmed by, the exposition of the Roman system of checks and balances, as found in Polybius. The *Commonplace Book* shows that he took notes from Justinian on natural and civil law. We know that Milton derived from Augustine the opinion that magistrates are really servants. The *De Civitate Dei* left other traces upon *The Ready and Easy Way*. It is certain that this was one source of the idea that kings should not presume to rule over men (see note on 19. 14).

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### III.

## Modern Political Theorists

### 1.

## Machiavelli

It has been the purpose of a preceding section to show that the mediæval contribution to *The Ready and Easy Way*, while very large indeed, descended by way of sixteenth-century democratic thought, and was not recognized as mediæval at all. We may therefore pass from the fifth to the fifteenth century, and next inquire as to the modern sources of Milton's treatise. It is not a little surprising to find the first of these in the writings of Machiavelli (1469-1527), the celebrated Florentine statesman, the first, and one of the greatest, of modern politicians. There are many reasons why Machiavelli particularly interested and influenced Milton. As an embodiment of the Renaissance spirit, he stood for intellectual and religious emancipation; he eagerly welcomed the experience and wisdom of Greece and Rome; he too acknowledged Aristotle as his chief instructor, and professed himself to be—what he really was—a practical statesman and impartial inquirer after truth; his favorite model of government was the republic of Rome; his volumes were rich in information about the minor republics of Italy, such as Venice and Florence; he started from the assumption that the state, of whatever form, is to be preserved and promoted at whatever cost, and discussed with inimitable clearness and penetration the policies best adapted to that end. The fact that his attitude is unmoral and indifferentist, or nearly so, did not deter Milton—as it had innumerable narrow minds that execrated the very name of Machiavelli—from diligently reading and excerpting the *Discorsi* and the *Arte della Guerra*, as the *Commonplace Book* and *The Ready and Easy Way* prove. In spite of their usual impersonal tone, Machiavelli's volumes contained certain bold declarations and eulogies upon freedom which, to Commonwealth-men of the calibre of Milton and Harrington, seemed to betray a republican fervor in the author. Accordingly, Harrington holds him in high repute as the 'learn'd Disciple' of 'the Antients,' and 'the only Politician of later Ages.'<sup>1</sup>

A large part of Machiavelli's work is, of course, a restatement of Aristotelian philosophy, and must be disregarded so far as sources are concerned, except where its connection with Milton's thought is indisputable. Such is the case, as proved by Milton's own citations, in those passages which amplify the thought that hereditary kings are seldom virtuous, and that good men are scarce in monarchies, but abound in commonwealths. Machiavelli also suggested to Milton, or at least confirmed him in the opinion, that God preferred to make commonwealths when given His own way about it (see note on 32. 5).



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2.

## Bodin

We have now arrived at the authority of whom Milton seems to have made most use during the composition of *The Ready and Easy Way*—Jean Bodin (1530-96), the illustrious author of the *De la République*. Like Machiavelli, Bodin was filled with the Renaissance enthusiasm for the wisdom of ancient Greece and Rome. He made eager explorations into various fields of learning, and distinguished himself by contributing to political, educational, and economic theory, and by practically originating the modern historical method of investigation. Moreover, he rendered valuable service as statesman and diplomat under Henry III. With admirable spirit he stood for liberty of conscience, mutual concessions, and peace, in the midst of the raging wars of religion. It is not surprising that his tolerance and poise brought upon him the zealots' charges, at different times, of being a 'Catholic, a Calvinist, a Jew, a Mohammedan, and an atheist.' Milton himself declares that 'Bodin, the famous French writer, though a Papist, yet affirms that the commonwealth which maintains this discipline [Presbyterianism] will certainly flourish in virtue and piety.'<sup>1</sup>

But it was in the field of political philosophy that Bodin made his most admirable contribution to knowledge and progress. The *De la République* appeared in 1576, and at once linked its author's name with that of Aristotle. The treatise was written in French, but was translated into Latin by the author in 1586. It was known and read all over Europe, and was promptly made a textbook in the English universities. It passed through numerous editions, the thick, almost cubical, Latin octavo of 1641 being the 'Editio Septima.'

Milton probably became thoroughly familiar with Bodin's *Republica* during his university days, and later, during the period of strenuous controversy, he did not forget this veritable mine of political wisdom. Page 112 of the *Commonplace Book* has the following note in Milton's own hand: 'Pro divortio vide *Bodin*. repub. l. 1, c. 3.' This note-book also contains a large number of direct quotations from Bodin, but as they are in Lord Preston's hand instead of Milton's, no use will be made of them as sources. Fortunately, the *Republica* itself is sufficiently convincing as to Milton's direct obligation. The most remarkable case of borrowing may be set forth here in some detail, as it possesses both historical and biographical significance.

On page 24 of this edition, Milton covertly refers to Bodin as 'they who write of policie,' and further distinguishes him above all other authorities by quoting a considerable passage in support of a perpetual senate. This conclusion, that Milton is here disingenuously helping himself to Bodin, is based primarily upon the evidence of the following parallels:

<p>Bodin, <i>DeRepublica</i> 3.1., ed. Francofurti, 1641.</p> <p>‘ . . . mea tamen sententia commodius est, senatores perpetuos esse, . . . quin tanta varietate mutabiles efficiunt, . . . non modo <i>senatus splendorem obscurant, ac Reip. dignitatem labefactant, verumetiam Remp. in apertum discrimen coniiciunt, dum arcana promulgantur ac novis Senatoribus rerum praeteritarum ignaris summa Reip. gubernacula committuntur.</i>’</p>	<p>Milton, <i>Commonwealth</i>, 1 ed., 1660.</p> <p>‘They who write of policie, give these reasons; “That to make the whole Senate successive, <i>not only impairs the dignitie and lustre of the Senate, but weakens the whole Commonwealth, and brings it into manifest danger; while by this means the secrets of State are frequently divulgd, and matters of greatest consequence committed to inexpert and novice counselors, utterly to seek in the full and intimate knowledg of affairs past.</i>” ’</p>	<p>Bodin, <i>Commonweale</i>, London, 1606, p. 277.</p> <p>‘Howbeit I am not of opinion so to have the councellours of estate changed and rechanged; but rather to have them perpetuall. . . . For the yearly chaunging . . . doth not onely greatly obscure the glorie of the Senat, which ought to shine as the sunne, but also draweth after it the inevitable daunger of disclosing and publishing or the secrets of the estate: joining hereunto also, That the Senat, all new, cannot bee enformed of affaires passed, neither yet well continue the entertainment of the affaires present.’</p>
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It is apparent that the second and third of these parallel passages are largely equivalent in thought, and very similar in sequence and phraseology; and one might reasonably conclude that the English version was Milton’s source. But a careful comparison of the parallels in English and Latin, and especially of the italicized passages, proves that such was not the case. It is sufficient here to state the conclusions to which one must come after such an examination: (1) Bodin was ‘they who write of policie’; (2) Milton drew from the Latin, rather than from the English, version of the *Republica*; (3) indeed, Milton’s quotation is his own faithful and adequate, though not slavish, rendering of the Latin original; furthermore, (4) Milton’s translation is far more coherent, dignified, and faithful than the English version of 1606.

Two interesting queries are suggested by Milton’s use of Bodin. First, why did Milton, the staunchest of the republicans, appeal at all to Bodin, a royalist, a Frenchman, and a ‘Papist’? Questions of the intrinsic merit of the author aside, the answer seems to be found in the historical situation in England at the time, and in Bodin’s peculiar adaptability to Milton’s political proposals. At the time Milton was writing, the Rump Parliament was again sitting in authority, and the great question of settlement was uppermost in all minds. It was Milton’s central idea that a commonwealth should be established by perpetuating the existing Parliament as a grand council of the nation. He was sorely put to it to fortify with authority this generally odious principle of perpetuity in office. Plato was, upon the whole, for rotation; Aristotle had decided that life-tenure would never do among equals; Cicero had declared for succession; there was certainly nothing to hope for from Machiavelli. Fortunately, Bodin had spoken out loudly and unmistakably for a perpetual council, or senate. Here, then, was the prop for Milton’s doctrine; and not only a prop, but a tower of strength. It must have been with no little joy that Milton bethought him of

this formidable ally in his time of need. One can almost hear him asking amanuensis or friend to read to him the well-remembered chapters, or at least choice extracts stored away in his note-books. Most certain it is that he swallowed for once his disinclination toward Frenchmen, royalists, and Papists, and set Bodin in the place of honor in his treatise.

The other question is: why did Milton withhold the name of his chief authority? Probably for two reasons: the educated among his readers would instantly recognize the familiar passage without such assistance; and, on the other hand, it would be awkward to have the ignorant multitude discover that John Milton, of all men, was citing a Frenchman, a Papist, and a royalist as an authority.

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3.

## Miscellaneous Contributors

Several minor obligations remain to be mentioned briefly. We know from Milton's own citations that he was familiar with Hotman's *Franco-Gallia* (1574), and certain of its bold assertions seem to have left their mark upon *The Ready and Easy Way* (see note on 17. 23). Another and still more famous Huguenot book that Milton read, and made use of here, is the *Vindiciæ contra Tyrannos* (1580), which develops the theory of contract, or covenant, between people and king. Buchanan, whose remarkably bold and able treatise, *De Jure Regni apud Scotos* (1579), contributed so largely to Milton's *Tenure*, exerted a general influence by declaring in vigorous language the sovereignty of the people and the justice of tyrannicide, and possibly suggested to Milton one or two specific ideas (see notes on 15. 6 and 16. 37). To Luther and Calvin are to be referred certain expressions of the treatise concerning liberty of conscience. There is a direct reference to Camden's *History of Elizabeth*. The *Commonplace Book* shows that Milton made use of the following historians also: Holinshed, Stow, and Speed; De Thou, Girard, and Gilles; Sleidan; Costanzo. Many of the ideas here set forth may be found in the author's earlier pamphlets, or in the *Commonplace Book*. There is some obligation to contemporary usage, particularly in the matter of Cromwellian and Puritan phraseology, or cant (see note on 14. 27). And, finally, even Milton's bitter pamphleteering opponents contributed a slight element to *The Ready and Easy Way*.

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G.

## Style

It was the fashion with many pre-Restoration prose-writers of the seventeenth century to affect an impressive, ornate style; to lard their pages with Biblical and classical citations, and antiquarian lore; to make large use of Latin idiom and diction; to string together an interminable array of coördinate units—adjectives, substantives, phrases, or clauses; to elaborate enormous periods; and to suffuse their whole discourse with a tone of melancholy. In all these respects except the last, Milton's prose style in general shows unmistakable kinship with the old-fashioned school. Moreover, his left-handed product lacks the quaintness and kindly humor of Walton and Fuller, the rhythmical melody and exquisite finish of Taylor and Sir Thomas Browne. But if Milton as a prose-writer shared in the defects, and fell short of the graces, of the contemporary school, he nevertheless excelled all the writers of his age in the more fundamental matters of dignity of thought, sincerity, and force.

Nothing that Milton ever wrote is more pronounced in these positive characteristics than *The Ready and Easy Way*. Its theme is the cause of human freedom—'a subject . . . never surpassed in any age, in dignity, or in interest.'<sup>1</sup> It is an assertion of the 'native libertie' and essential worth of the individual, a denunciation of tyrants, and a heroic attempt to rescue the nation from imminent slavery. Disregarding its practical—or unpractical—proposals, we yet find that the treatise in its essential content possesses the dignity which belongs to an expression of almost the highest and most universal of human ideals—something fundamentally different from dilettante speculations about 'what song the Syrens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women.'

In consequence of this loftiness of thought, and the supreme importance of the cause here advocated, not only to the writer but to 'all ages,' the style of the treatise is characterized by deep sincerity. Whether the writer is warmly defending actions of the past, riddling the pretensions of monarchs, pointing out the 'way' to a republic, exhorting the people, or repelling the assaults of his enemies, one feels the presence of a compelling moral earnestness throughout the pamphlet.

The thoughts and emotions of such a dynamic personality as Milton, occasioned by an imperiled cause of such vital importance to himself and to the world, could not fail to be uttered with tremendous force. Standing alone against a torrent, firm in the consciousness of the eternal rightness of his cause, Milton poured forth his bold denunciations, solemn warnings, and passionate appeals, with something of the authority of a prophet. Even his bitterest enemies felt the power of his earnest words, and conceded him a 'formal eloquence,' explaining that 'this man Sollicites for his Head.'

But the forcefulness of *The Ready and Easy Way* is not entirely a matter of striking content—of noble thought and powerful feeling; it derives in no small measure from a more than ordinary simplicity and directness of expression. The occasion is urgent—the very lives of republicans and the life of the republic itself are at stake. It is no time for learned, gorgeous, or elaborate style. In the strongest, simplest native words Milton points out a way of escape, and appeals to the deepest instincts of the people. Three fourths of the treatise is pure Anglo-Saxon; more than half of its words are monosyllabic, and more than four fifths do not exceed two syllables in length. The line, ‘what was otherwise well done was by them who so thought,’ is solidly Anglo-Saxon, and practically monosyllabic. There is little that is fantastic or intricate between us and the author. In no other one of the prose works do we come into more intimate touch with the fervent, liberty-loving soul of Milton.

Another element of strength, in so far as strength depends upon effectiveness of expression, is to be found in the rather extensive use of short, clear sentences. This is especially manifest in those parts of the treatise which delineate or explain the model of government, where the author’s intellectual rather than his emotional faculties are at work. There we find such comparatively simple and modern sentences as these:

‘The whole freedom of man consists either in spiritual or civil libertie.’

‘The day of council cannot be set as the day of a festival; but must be ready alwaies to prevent or answer all occasions.’

But the short sentence by no means predominates. Milton here still shows a preference for ‘well-sized periods’ instead of ‘thumb-ring posies.’ In fact, one sentence offends in this respect to the extent of containing three hundred and twenty-six words. The favorite length, however, is about ten lines. This would not be particularly objectionable if the structure were always faultless, and the meaning clear. But some of the sentences are rambling and obscure, and even defective in grammatical construction. The trouble arises from Milton’s impatient or careless omission of connectives, vague use of the relative, or habit of following the glow of poetic feeling from one suggestion to another, without much regard to sentence-structure or coherence (see 10. 35; 16. 29).

We have here abundant proof that Milton was a master of grim satire and bludgeon-like invective. His friendly rivals, the Rota-men, come in for a few mild strokes; the backsliding Presbyterians receive severer treatment; kings and courts and sycophants are characterized in varied, caustic phrase; but the satire, when turned against reviling foes, descends to the level of coarse invective and vituperation. Here Milton’s style, and Milton himself, suffer most, because of the utter absence of control.

Although Milton’s poetic genius is compelled to trudge along the dusty, noisy way of political controversy, yet we do not, even here, lose consciousness of the fact that it has wings ‘to soar above the Aonian Mount.’ This is evident in the wealth of apt and vigorous words at the writer’s easy command; in the tendency to invest word and phrase with a significance that lies below the superficial meaning; in the facility (here much restrained) of characterization by striking metaphor—as, for example, the

figures of the tower of Babel, Egyptian bondage, contagion, deluge. But most of all is the poet manifest in the idealizing tendency, in the loftiness of thought, and in the fiery glow of generous passion, which is never long concealed, and again and again bursts through all restraints.

The style of *The Ready and Easy Way* is didactic, argumentative, declamatory, satirical, denunciatory, hortative, etc., according to the varied exigencies of the discourse. And we have found that it is characterized throughout by nobility, sincerity, and power. It is everywhere, and above all else, strikingly individual: it effectively reveals the mind and heart of Milton.



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H.

## Significance

As a practical solution of the problem of settlement, we have seen that *The Ready and Easy Way* possesses little significance. There is no record of its ever having received the slightest serious consideration from those in authority, or of its ever having enlisted a single private voice in its support. While it contains much sound political wisdom, it reveals Milton's astounding ignorance of existing conditions in the proposal to perpetuate the very institution from which the whole nation was then crying aloud to be delivered.

Its interest as a literary achievement is much more considerable. Milton has not only made a constitution readable and interesting,—a feat sufficiently remarkable,—but he has so suffused its practical proposals with ideality and passionate humanity as to make this pamphlet one of the noblest that he ever wrote. Discarding ornate and elaborate style, in homely, telling words Milton here pours forth his most earnest thought and feeling upon the lofty theme of human freedom. He asserts the native worth and inherent capacity of the individual and of the nation. He glows with indignation at the presumption of kings. With eloquent appeal he seeks to recall the infatuated people from their servility. With the almost unerring insight of a prophet, he warns of penalties to come. And with all the terrific power at his command, he hurls defiance and anathema at the approaching king. Although the treatise is tinged with a sad consciousness of defeat, it by no means belongs to the literature of despair. Its gloom is pierced by a ray of hope—the eternal hope of the Christian idealist. God, to whom the writer appeals in his sublime peroration, is able to raise up 'children of reviving libertie' from the very stones.

*The Ready and Easy Way* may be considered from the dramatic point of view. It is, indeed, a tragedy; for, although designedly a political pamphlet, it vividly portrays the heroic struggle of an individual against forces which prove irresistible. One has only to look beneath its hurried, fervent lines, to see the forward sweep of the mob, the vain attempt of a few brave men to stay its fury. It is the tragedy, not only of an individual and of a group, but of the cause of freedom.

The treatise possesses peculiar interest as a prophecy. Although sightless eyes were unable to inform him of conditions and needs as they existed immediately around him, Milton seems to have beheld, with all the prevision of a seer, the consequences which were to ensue upon the return of the Stuarts. The dissolute court, the widespread moral degeneracy; dire revenges, oppressive taxes, and confiscation of estates; the standing army, the corruption of the judiciary, the repentance of the people, the appeal to arms—all this followed swiftly upon the Restoration, even as Milton had foretold.

The chief significance of *The Ready and Easy Way*, however, does not consist in its political, literary, or prophetic nature, but in its biographical revelations. After all, the personality of Milton is more interesting, and more important, than his doctrines; and here, in this slender pamphlet, we have a faithful record of the mind and heart and conduct of the greatest of the Puritans, at the supreme crisis of his political career.

It is pleasing to note that amidst almost universal defection Milton shows no sign of compromise, no abandonment of high ideals. He is still the advocate of Puritan simplicity, industry, frugality, stern morality, and true religion. He believes in the need and possibility of righteous public servants. He glows with indignation at the profligacy and insolence of courtiers and cavaliers. He still asserts the native liberty of men, and holds kings in less esteem than at any previous period of his life. He is even no longer a believer in protectors, as is shown by the motto prefixed to the second edition.

For twenty years Milton had given himself unreservedly to the service of the state. He had spread the fame of the 'glorious rising Commonwealth' all over Europe. With grief he now beheld the nation turning again, of its own accord, to servitude. Never did Milton's patriotism burn more brightly than in his earnest endeavor even yet to save the people from their folly, his eloquent warnings and appeals, his eagerness to point out the way of escape. Never did he give a more superb exhibition of courage. He had freely sacrificed his sight in 'liberty's defense'; he now offered life itself, for he could not have doubted that death was likely to be the penalty attached to his *Ready and Easy Way*.

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## THE TEXT

### A REPRODUCTION OF THE FIRST EDITION WITH VARIANTS FROM THE SECOND EDITION

#### EDITOR'S NOTE

The text of the first edition has been reproduced from an original copy in the Public Library of the City of New York. Insertions from the revised edition follow the text of the copy owned by Mr. W. A. White, of New York City. Brackets ([ ]) indicate that the passages enclosed were omitted in revision. Parallel passages in the two editions are included between double bars (? . . . | . . . ?). The first edition may be read by following the large type; the second, by omitting the brackets and choosing the small-type variant.

THE

Readie & Easie

VVAY

TO

ESTABLISH

A

Free Commonwealth,

AND

The Excellence therof

Compar'd with

The inconveniences and dangers of  
readmitting kingship in this nation.

*The author* J. M.

LONDON,

Printed by [T. N.](#) and are to be sold by [Livewell Chapman](#)

at the Crown in Popes-Head Alley. 1660.

The readie and easie way

to establish a

free Commonwealth;

*and the excellence therof, compar'd*

*with the inconveniencies*

*and dangers of readmitting*

*Kingship in*

*this Nation.*

The second edition revis'd and

augmented.

The author J. M.

—*et nos*

*consilium dedimus Syllæ, demus populo nunc.*

LONDON,

Printed for the Author, 1660.

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## THE READY AND EASY WAY TO ESTABLISH A FREE COMMONWEALTH

Although [since the writing](#) of this treatise, [the face of things](#) hath had [some change](#) , [writs for new elections have bin recall'd](#) , and the members at first chosen, [readmitted from exclusion](#) , [to sit again in Parliament,] yet [not a little rejoicing](#) to hear declar'd, the resolution[s] [of \[all\] those who are \[now\] in power](#) , [\[jointly\] tending](#) to the establishment of a free [Commonwealth](#) , and to remove if it be possible, this ? [unsound | noxious ?humour](#) of [returning](#) to [\[old\] bondage](#) , [instill'd of late by some \[cunning\] deceivers](#) , and nourished from bad principles and fals apprehensions [among too many of the people](#) , [I thought best not to suppress what I had written](#) , ? hoping it may perhaps (the Parliament now [sitting more full and frequent](#) ) [be now much more useful then before](#) : yet submitting what hath reference [to the state of things as they then stood](#) , to present constitutions; and so the [same end](#) be persu'd, not insisting on this or that means to obtain it. The treatise was thus written as follows. | hoping that it may now be of much more use and concernment [to be freely](#) publishd, in the midst of our Elections to [a free Parliament](#) , or their sitting to consider freely of the Government; [whom it behoves](#) to have all things represented to them that may direct thir judgment therein; and I never read of any State, scarce of any tyrant grown so incurable as to refuse counsel from any in a time of public deliberation; much less to be offended. If thir [absolute determination](#) be to enthrall us, before so long a [Lent](#) of Servitude, they may permitt us a little [Shroving-time](#) first, wherin [to speak freely](#) , and take our leaves of Libertie. And because in the former edition [through haste](#) , [many faults](#) escap'd, and [many books were suddenly](#) dispersd, ere the note to mend them could be sent, I took the opportunitie from this occasion [to revise and somewhat to enlarge](#) the whole discourse, [especially that part which argues for a perpetual Senat](#) . The treatise thus revis'd and enlarg'd, is as follows. ?

The Parliament of *England* assisted by a [great number of the people](#) who appeard and stuck to them faithfulest in [the] defence of religion and thir civil liberties, judging kingship by long experience a government ? [burdensom, expensive, useless and dangerous](#) , | unnecessarie, burdensom and dangerous, ? justly and magnanimously [abolishd it](#) ; turning regal-bondage into a [free Commonwealth](#) , to the [admiration and terror of our emulous neighbours](#) , [and the stirring up of *France* it self, especially in *Paris* and *Bourdeaux*, to our imitation.] They took themselves [not bound by the light of nature or religion](#) , to any former covnant, from which the King himself by [many forfeitures](#) of a latter date or discoverie, and our own longer consideration theron had more & more unbound us, both to himself and his posteritie; as hath bin ever the justice and the prudence of all wise nations that have ejected tyrannie. [They covnanted](#) *to preserve the Kings person and autoritie, in the preservation of the true religion and our liberties*; not in his endeavoring [to bring in upon our consciences a Popish religion](#) , upon our liberties thraldom, upon our lives destruction, by [his occasioning, if not complotting, as was after discoverd, the Irish massacre](#) , his fomenting and arming the rebellion, his covert leaguings with the rebels against us, [his refusing more then seaven times, propositions](#) most just and necessarie to the true

religion and our liberties, tenderd him by the Parliament both of *England* and *Scotland*. They made not thir covnant concerning him [with no difference between a king and a god](#) , or promisd him as *Job* did to the Almighty, *to trust in him, though he slay us*: they understood that the [solemn ingagemnt](#) , wherin we all forswore kingship, was no more a breach of the covant, then the covnant was of [the protestation before](#) , but a faithful and prudent going on both in the words, well weighd, and in the true sense of the covnant, *without respect of persons*, when we could not [serve two contrary maisters](#) , God and the king, or the king and [that more supreme law](#) , sworn in the first place to maintain, our safetie and our libertie. [They knew the people of England to be a free people, themselves the representers of that freedom](#) ; & although [many were excluded](#) , & [as many fled \(so they pretended\)](#) from tumults to *Oxford*, yet they were left [a sufficient number](#) to act in Parliament; therefor not bound by any statute of preceding Parlamnts, but by the [law of nature](#) only, which is the only law of laws truly and properly to all mankinde fundamental; the beginning and the end of all Government; to which no Parliament or people that will throughly reforme, but may and must have recourse; as they had and must yet have in [church reformation](#) (if they throughly intend it) to [evangelic rules](#) ; not to [ecclesiastical canons](#) , though never so ancient, so ratifi'd and establishd in the land by Statutes, which for the most part are meer [positive laws](#) , neither natural nor moral, & so by any Parliament for just and serious considerations, without scruple to be at any time repeal'd. [If others of thir number, in these things were under force](#) , they were not, but under free conscience; if others were excluded by [a power which they could not resist](#) , [they were not therefore to leave the helm](#) of government in no hands, to discontinue thir care of the public peace and safetie, to desert the people in [anarchie and confusion](#) ; no more then when [so many of thir members left them](#) , as made up in outward formalitie a more legal Parliament of [three estates](#) against them. [The best affected](#) also and best principl'd of the people, stood not numbring or computing on which side were most voices in Parliament, but on which side appeerd to them most reason, most safetie, [when the house divided upon main matters](#) : what was well motiond and advis'd, they examin'd not whether [fear or perswasion](#) carried it in the vote; neither did they measure votes and counsels by the [intentions of them that voted](#) ; knowing that intentions either are but gessd at, or not soon enough known; and although good, can neither make the deed such, nor prevent the consequence from being bad: [suppose bad intentions](#) in things otherwise welldon; what was welldon, was by them who so thought, not the less obey'd or followd in the state; since in the church, who had not rather follow [Iscariot](#) or [Simon the magician](#) , though to covetous ends, preaching, then *Saul*, though in the uprightness of his heart persecuting the gospell? Safer they therefor judgd what they thought [the better counsels](#) , though carried on by some perhaps to [bad ends](#) , then [the wors](#) , by others, though endevord with [best intentions](#) : [and yet they were not to learn](#) that a greater number might be corrupt within the walls of a Parliament as well as of a citie; wherof in matters of nearest concernment all men will be judges; nor easily permitt, that [the odds of voices](#) in thir greatest council, shall more endanger them by corrupt or credulous votes, then the odds of enemies by open assaults; judging that most voices ought not alwaies to prevail where main matters are in question; if [others hence will pretend to disturb all counsels](#) , what is that to them who pretend not, but are in real danger; not they only so judging, but a great though not the greatest, number of thir chosen Patriots, who might be more in weight, then the others in number; there being in number little vertue, but by weight and measure

wisdom working all things: and the dangers on either side they seriously thus waighd: from [the treatie](#) , short fruits of long labours and [seaven years warr](#) ; [securitie for twenty years](#) , if we can hold it; [reformation in the church for three years](#) : then put to shift again with [our vanquishd maister](#) . His justice, his honour, his conscience declar'd quite contrarie to ours; which would have furnishd him with many such evasions, as in a book entitl'd [an inquisition for blood](#) , soon after were not conceald: [bishops not totally remov'd](#) , but left as it were in ambush, a reserve, with ordination in thir sole power; [thir lands already sold](#) , not to be alienated, but rented, and the sale of them [call'd sacrilege](#) ; [delinquents](#) few of many brought to condigne punishment; [accessories punishd](#) ; [the chief author](#) , above pardon, though after utmost resistance, vanquish'd; [not to give, but to receive laws](#) ; yet [besought, treated with, and to be thankd for his gracious concessions](#) , to be honourd, worshipd, glorifi'd. [If this we swore to do](#) , with what righteousness in the sight of God, with what assurance that we [bring not by such an oath the whole sea of blood-guiltiness upon our own heads](#) ? If on the other side we prefer a free government, though for the present not obtaind, yet all those [suggested fears and difficulties](#) , as the event will prove, easily overcome, we remain finally secure from the exasperated regal power, and out of snares; shall retain the best part of our libertie, which is our religion, and the civil part will be from [these who deferr us](#) , much more easily recoverd, being [neither so suttile nor so awefull](#) as a King reinthron'd. Nor were [? our | thir ? actions less both at home and abroad](#) then might become the hopes of a glorious rising Commonwealth; nor were the expressions both of [the] Army and [of the] People, whether in thir publick declarations or [several writings](#) , other then such as testifi'd [a spirit in this nation no less noble and well](#) fitted to the liberty of a Comonwealth, then in the ancient Greeks or Romans. [Nor was the heroic cause](#) unsuccessfully [defended to all Christendom](#) against the tongue of [a famous and thought invincible adversarie](#) ; nor the constancie and fortitude that so nobly vindicated our liberty, our victory at once against two the most prevailing usurpers over mankinde, [superstition and tyrannie](#) unpraisd or uncelebrated in [a written monument, likely to outlive detraction](#) , as it hath hitherto [convinc'd or silenc'd not a few of our detractors](#) , especially in parts abroad. After our liberty and Religion thus ? succesfully | prosperously ? fought for, gaind and [many years possessd](#) , except in [those unhappie interruptions](#) , which God hath remov'd, [and wonderfully [now the third time](#) brought together [our old Patriots, the first Assertours of our religious and civil rights](#) ,] now that nothing remains but in all reason the [certain hopes](#) of a speedy and immediate settlement [to this nation] for ever in a firm and free Commonwealth, for this extoll'd and magnifi'd nation, regardless both of honour wonn or deliverances voutsaf't from heaven, to fall back, or rather [to creep back so poorly as it seems the multitude would](#) , to thir once abjur'd and detested thraldom of kingship, to be our selves the slanderers of our own just and religious deeds, [though don by som to covetous and ambitious ends](#) , yet not therefor to be staind with their infamie, or they to asperse the integritie of others, and yet these now by revolting from the conscience of deeds welldon both in church and state, to throw away and forsake, or rather to betray a just and noble cause for the [mixture of bad men](#) who have ill manag'd and abus'd it (which had our fathers don heretofore, and on the same pretence deserted true religion, what had long ere this become of our gospel and all protestant reformation so much intermixt with the avarice and ambition of som reformers?) and by thus relapsing, to verifie all the bitter predictions of our triumphing enemies, who will now think they wisely discern'd and justly censur'd



both us and all our actions as rash, rebellious, hypocritical and impious, not only argues [a strange degenerate ? corruption](#) | contagion ? suddenly spread among us, fitted and prepar'd for new slaverie, but will render us [a scorn and derision to all our neighbours](#) . And what will they at best say of us, and of the whole *English* name, but scoffingly as of that [foolish builder](#) mentiond by our Saviour, who began to build a Tower, and was not able to finish it: where is this goodly tower of a Common-wealth which the *English* boasted they would build, to overshadow kings and [be another Rome in the west](#) ? The foundation indeed they laid gallantly, but fell into a worse [confusion, not of tongues, but of factions](#) , then those at the tower of *Babel*; and have left no memorial of thir work behinde them remaining, but in the common laughter of *Europ*. Which must needs redound the more to our shame, if we but [look on our neighbours](#) the United Provinces, to us inferiour in all outward advantages: who notwithstanding, in the midst of [greater difficulties](#) , courageously, wisely, constantly went through with the same work, and are settl'd in all the happie enjoiments of a [potent and flourishing](#) Republick to this day.

[Besides this](#) , if we return to kingship, and [soon repent, as undoubtedly we shall](#) , when we begin to finde the old inroachments coming on by little and little upon our consciences, which must necessarily [proceed from king and bishop united](#) inseparably in one interest, we may be [forc'd perhaps to fight over again](#) all that we have fought, [and spend over again all that we have spent](#) , but are never like to attain thus far as we are now advanc'd, to the recoverie of our freedom, never [likely] to have it in possession, as we now have it, never to be voutsaf'd heerafter the like mercies and [signal assistances from heaven](#) in our cause, if by our ingratefull backsliding we make these fruitless [to our selves,] ? all his gracious condescensions and answers |; flying now to [regal concessions](#) from his divine condescensions and gracious answers ? to our once importuning praiers against the tyrannie which we then groand under [to become now of no effect, by returning of our own foolish accord, nay running headlong again with full stream wilfully and obstinately into the same bondage:] making vain and viler then dirt the blood of so many thousand faithfull and valiant English men, who left us in this libertie, bought with thir lives; losing by a strange aftergame of folly, all the battels we have wonne, together with [all Scotland](#) as to our conquest, hereby lost, [which never any of our kings could conquer](#) , all the treasure we have spent, not that corruptible treasure only, but that far more precious of all [our late miraculous deliverances](#) ; treading back again with lost labour all our happie steps in the progress of reformation, and most pittifully depriving our selves the instant fruition of that free government which we have so dearly purchasd, a free Commonwealth, not only held by [wisest men in all ages](#) the noblest, the manliest, the equallest, the justest government, the most agreeable to all [due libertie](#) and [proportiond equalitie](#) , both humane, civil and Christian, [most cherishing to vertue and true religion](#) , but also (I may say it with greatest probabilitie) [planely commended or rather enjoind by our Saviour](#) himself, to all Christians, not without remarkable disallowance and the [brand of Gentilism upon kingship](#) . God in much displeasure gave a king to the *Israelites*, and imputed it a sin to them that they sought one: but [Christ apparently forbids](#) his disciples to admitt of any such heathenish government: *the kings of the gentiles, saith he, exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise autoritie upon them, are call'd benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that serveth.*

The occasion of these his words, was the ambitious desire of *Zebede*'s two sons to be exalted above their brethren in his kingdom, which they thought was to be ere long upon earth. [That he speaks of civil government](#) , is manifest by the former part of the comparison, which infers [the other part to be](#) alwaies in the same kinde. And what government comes neerer to this precept of Christ, then a free Commonwealth; wherin they who are greatest, are [perpetual servants and drudges to](#) the publick [at thir own cost and charges](#) , neglect thir own affairs; yet are not elevated above thir brethren, live soberly in thir families, walk the streets as other men, may be spoken to freely, familiarly, friendly, without adoration. Whereas a king must be [ador'd like a Demigod](#), with a [dissolute and haughtie court](#) about him, of [vast expence](#) and luxurie, [masks and revels](#) , [to the debaushing of our prime gentry both male and female](#) ; not in thir pasetimes only, but in earnest, by the loos imploiments of court service, which will be then thought honorable. There will be [a queen also of no less charge; in most likelihood outlandish and a Papist](#) ; besides [a queen mother such already](#) ; together with both thir courts and numerous train: then [a royal issue](#) , and ere long severally thir sumptuous courts; to the multiplying of a servile crew, not of servants only, but of nobility and gentry, bred up [then to the hopes not of public, but of court offices](#) ; to be [stewards, chamberlains](#) , ushers, grooms, even of the close-stool; and the lower thir mindes debas'd with court opinions, contrarie to all vertue and reformation, the haughtier will be thir pride and profuseness: we may well remember this not long since at home; or need but look at present into the *French court* , where enticements and preferments daily draw away and pervert the Protestant Nobilitie. ? nor at his own cost, but on the publick revenue; and all this to do nothing but bestow | As to [the burden of expence](#) , to our cost we shall soon know it; for any good to us, deserving to be termd no better then the vast and lavish price of our subjection and their debausherie; [which we are now so greedily cheapning](#) , and would so fain be paying most inconsideratly to a single person; who for any thing wherin the public really needs him, will have little els to do, but to bestow ? the eating and drinking of excessive dainties, to set a pompous face upon the superficial actings of State, to [pageant himself up and down](#) in progress among the perpetual bowings and cringings of an abject people, on either side deifying and adoring him ? who for the most part deserves none of this by any good done to the people | for nothing don that can deserve it. ? (for what can he more then another man?) ? but | who ? even in the expression of [a late court-Poet](#) , sits only like a great cypher set to no purpose before a long row of other significant figures. Nay it is well and happy for the people if thir king be but a cypher, being oft times [a mischief, a pest, a scourge](#) of the nation, and which is worse, [not to be remov'd](#) , not to be contrould, much less accus'd or brought to punishment, without the danger of a common ruin, without the shaking and almost subversion of the whole land. Wheras in a free Commonwealth, [any governour or chief counselour](#) offending, may be remov'd and punishd, without the least commotion. Certainly then that people [must needs be mad\[d\] or strangely infatuated](#) , that [build the chief hope of thir common happiness or safetie on a single person](#) ; who [if he happen to be good, can do no more then another man](#) , if to be bad, hath in his hands to do more evil without check, then millions of other men. The happiness of a nation must needs be firmest and certainest in [a full and free Council of their own electing](#) , [where no single person, but reason only sway\[e\]s](#) . And what madness is it, for them who might manage nobly their own affairs themselves, sluggishly and weakly to devolve all on a single person; and more like boy[e]s under age then men,

to committ all to his patronage and disposal, who neither can perform what he undertakes, and yet for undertaking it, though royally paid, will not be thir servant, but thir lord? how unmanly must it needs be, to count such a one the breath of our nostrils, to hang all our felicitie on him, all our safety, our well-being, for which if we were aught els but sluggards or babies, [we need depend on none but God and our own counsels, our own active vertue and industrie](#) . *Go to the Ant* , thou sluggard, saith *Solomon, consider her waies, and be wise; which havingno prince, ruler, or lord, provides her meat in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest.* Which evidently shews us, that [they who think the nation undon without a king](#) , though they ? swell and look haughtie, | look grave or haughtie, ? have not so much true spirit and understanding in them as a Pismire. neither are these diligent creatures hence concluded to live in lawless anarchie, or that commended, but are set the examples to imprudent and ungovernd men, of [a frugal and self-governing democratie](#) or Commonwealth; safer and more thriving in the joint providence and counsel of many industrious equals, then under the single domination of one imperious Lord. It may be well wonderd that any nation, styling themselves free, can suffer any man to [pretend hereditarie right over them as thir lord](#) ; whenas by acknowledging that right, they [conclude](#) themselves his servants and his vassals, and so renounce thir own freedom. Which how a people [and thir leaders especially](#) can do, ? that hath | who have ? fought so gloriously for libertie, how they can change thir noble words and actions heretofore so becoming the majestie of a free people, into the base necessitie of court-flatteries and prostrations, is not only strange and [admirable](#) , but lamentable to think on; that a nation should be so valorous and courageous to winne thir libertie in the field, and when they have wonn it, should be so heartless and [unwise in thir counsels](#) , as not to know how to use it, value it, what to do with it, or with themselves; but after [ten or twelve years prosperous war](#) and contestation with tyrannie, basely and besottedly to run thir necks again into the yoke which they have broken, and prostrate all the fruits of thir victorie for ? nothing | naught ? at the feet of the vanquishd, besides our loss of glorie, and such an example as kings or tyrants never yet had the like to boast of, will be [an ignominie](#) , if it befall us, that never yet befell any nation possessd of thir libertie: worthie indeed themselves, ? whosoever | whatsoever ? they be, to be for ever slaves; but that part [of the nation which consents not with them](#) , as I perswade me of a great number, [far worthier](#) then by their means to be brought into the same bondage, [and reservd, I trust, by Divine providence to a better end; since [God hath yet his remnant](#) , and hath not yet quenched the spirit of libertie among us.] Considering these things, [so plane, so rational](#) , I cannot but yet further admire on the other side, how any man who hath the [true principles of justice and religion](#) in him, can presume or take upon him to be a king and lord over his brethren, whom he cannot but know, whether as men or Christians, to be for the most part [every way equal or superiour](#) to himself: how he can display with such vanitie and ostentation his regal splendour so supereminently above other mortal men; or, being a Christian, can assume such extraordinarie honour and worship to himself, while the [kingdom of Christ, our common King and Lord, is hid to this world](#) , and such *Gentilish* imitation forbid in express words by himself to all his disciples? All ? Protestanus | Protestants ? hold, that Christ in his Church [hath left no vicegerent](#) of his [kingly power,] but himself without deputy, is the only head thereof, governing it from heaven: how then can any Christian man derive his kingship from Christ, but with worse usurpation then the Pope his headship over the Church, since Christ not only hath not left the least

shadow of a command for any such vicegerence from him in the State, [as the Pope pretends](#) for his in the Church, but hath expressly declar'd that such regal dominion is from the gentiles, not from him, and hath strictly charg'd us, not to imitate them therein?

[I doubt not but all ingenuous and knowing men will easily agree with me](#) , that a free Commonwealth [without single person or house of lords](#) , is by far the best government, if it can be had; but [we have all this while, say they, bin expecting it](#) , and cannot yet attain it. Tis true indeed, when monarchie was dissolv'd, the form of a Commonwealth should have forthwith bin fram'd; and the practice therof immediatly begun; that [the people might have soon bin satisfi'd and delighted](#) with the decent order, ease, and benefit therof: we had bin then by this time firmly rooted past fear of commotions or mutations, & now flourishing: this care of timely settling a new government instead of ye old, too [much neglected, hath bin our mischief](#) . ? I answer, that | Yet ? the cause thereof may be ascrib'd with most reason to the [frequent disturbances, interruptions and dissolutions](#) which the Parliament hath had [partly from the impatient or disaffected people](#) , partly from [some ambitious](#) leaders in the armie; [much contrarie, I believe, to the minde and approbation of the Armie it self and thir other Commanders](#) , [[when they were](#)] [once undeceivd](#) , or in thir own power. [Neither ought the [small number of those remaining](#) in Parliament, be made a [by-word of reproach](#) to them, as it is of late by the rable, whenas rather they should be therefor honour'd, as the remainder of those [faithfull worthies](#) , who at first freed us from tyrannie, and have continu'd ever since through all changes [constant to thir trust](#) ; which [they have declar'd](#) , as they may most justly and truly, that no other way they can discharge, no other way secure and confirme the peoples libertie, but by settling them in a free Commonwealth. And doubtless, no Parliament will be ever able under royaltie [to free the people from slavery](#) : and when they go about it, will finde it a laborious task; and when they have don all, they can, be forc'd to leave the [contest endless between prerogative and petition of right](#) , till only dooms-day end it: And] [now is the opportunitie](#) , now the very season wherein we may obtain a free Commonwealth, and establish it forever in the land, without difficulty or much delay. [The Parliament have [voted to fill up their number](#) :] Writs are sent out for elections, and which is worth observing in the name, not of any king, but of the [keepers of our libertie](#) , to [summon a free Parliament](#) : which then only will indeed be free, and deserve the true honor of that supreme title, if they preserve us a free people. Which never Parliament was more free to do; being now call'd, not as heretofore, by the summons of a king, but by the voice of libertie: and if the people, laying aside prejudice and impatience, will seriously and calmly now consider thir own good, both religious and civil, thir own libertie and the only means therof, as shall be heer laid before them, and will elect thir [Knights and Burgesses](#) able men, and according to the [just and necessarie qualifications](#) (which for aught I hear, remain yet in force unrepeald, as they were formerly decreed in Parliament, men not addicted to a single person or house of lords, the work is don; at least the foundation [is] firmly laid of a free Commonwealth, and good part also erected of the main structure. For the ground and basis of every just and free government (since men have smarted so oft for committing all to one person) is a [general Council of ablest men](#) , chosen by the people to consult of publick affairs from time to time for the common good. ? This Grand Council [must have the forces by sea and land](#) in thir power, | In this Grand Council must the sovranitie, [not](#)



[transferrd, but delegated only](#) , and as it were deposited, reside; with this caution they must have the forces by sea and land committed to them for preservation of the common peace and libertie; ? must raise and mannage the Publick revenue, at least with [som inspectors deputed](#) for satisfaction of the people, how it is imploid; ? make lawes, as need requires, | must make [or propose](#) , as more expressly shall be said anon, civil laws; ? treat of commerce, peace, or war with forein nations; and for the carrying on som particular affairs [of State] with more secrecie and expedition, must elect, as they have already out of thir own number and others, a [Council of State](#) . And although it may seem strange at first hearing, by reason that mens mindes are prepossessed with the [? conceit | notion ? of successive Parlaments](#) , I affirm that the Grand or General Council being well chosen, [should ? sit | be ? perpetual](#) : for so their business is, or may be, and oft times urgent; the opportunitie of affairs gaind or lost in a moment. The day of counsel cannot be set as the day of a festival; but must be readie alwaies to [prevent or answer](#) all occasions. ? and they will become thereby | By this continuance they will become everie way ? skilfullest, best provided of intelligence from abroad, best acquainted with the people at home, and the people with them. [The ship of the Commonwealth](#) is alwaies undersail; they sit at the stern; and if they steer well, what need is ther to change them; it being rather dangerous? Adde to this, that the Grand Council is [both foundation and main pillar](#) of the whole State; and to move pillars and foundations, ? unless they be faultie, | not faultie, ? cannot be safe for the building. I see not therefore how we can be advantag'd by successive and transitorie Parlaments; but that they are [much likelier continually to unsettle](#) rather then to settle a free government, to breed commotions, changes, novelties and uncertainties; to bring neglect upon present affairs and opportunities, while [all mindes are suspense](#) with expectation of a new assemblie, and the assemblie for a good space taken up with the new settling of it self. After which, if they finde no great work to do, they will make it, by altering or repealing former acts, or making and multiplying new; that they may seem to see what thir predecessors saw not, and not to have assembl'd for nothing: till all law be lost in the multitude of clashing statutes. ? and serve only to satisfie the ambition of such men, as think themselves injur'd, and cannot stay till they be orderly chosen to have thir part in the government. If the ambition of such be at all to be regarded, | [But if the ambition](#) of such as think themselves injur'd that they also partake not of the government, and are impatient till they be chosen, cannot brook the perpetuitie of others chosen before them, or if it be feard that long continuance of power may corrupt sincerest men, ? the best expedient will be, and with least danger, | the known expedient is, and [by som lately propounded](#) , ? that ? [everie two or three years | annually \(or if the space be longer](#) , so much perhaps the better) ? a hundred or some such number may go out by lot or suffrage of the rest, | the third part of Senators may go out according to the precedence of thir election, ? and the like number be chosen in thir places; to [prevent the setting of too absolute a power](#) , if it should be perpetual: and this they call *partial rotation*. [([which hath bin already thought on heer , and done in other Commonwealths](#) :)] ? but in my opinion better nothing mov'd, unless by death or just accusation: | But I could wish that [this wheel](#) or partial wheel in State, if it be possible, might be avoided; as having too much affinitie with the [wheel of fortune](#) . For it appeers not how this can be don, without danger and mischance of putting out a great number of the best and ablest: in whose stead new elections may bring in as many [raw, unexperienc'd](#) and otherwise affected, to the weakning and much altering for the wors of public transactions.

Neither do I think a perpetual Senat, especially chosen and entrusted by the people, much in this land to be feared, where the well-affected either in a standing armie, or in a settled [militia have thir arms in thir own hands](#) . Safest therefor to me it seems, and of least hazard or interruption to affairs, that none of the Grànd Council be mov'd, unless by death or [just conviction of som crime](#) : for what can be expected firm or stedfast from a floating foundation? however, [I forejudge not](#) any probable expedient, any temperament that can be found in things of this nature so disputable on either side. ? [and I shall make mention of [another way](#) to satisfie such as are reasonable, ere I end this discourse.] ? And | Yet ? least this which I affirme be thought my single opinion, I shall adde sufficient testimonie. Kingship it self is therefore [counted the more safe and durable](#) , because the king and for the most part, his Council, is not changd during life: but a Commonwealth is held immortal; and therein firmest, safest and most above fortune; [for \[that\]](#) the death of a king, causeth oft-times many dangerous alterations; but the death now and then of a Senatour is not felt; the main body of them still continuing ? unchang'd | permanent ? in greatest and noblest Commonwealths, and as it were eternal. Therefore among the Jews, the supream Council of seventie, call'd the *Sanhedrim* , founded by *Moses*, in *Athens* that of [the] [Areopagus](#) , in ? *Lacedæmon* | *Sparta* ? that of [the Ancients](#) , [in Rome the Senat](#) , consisted of members chosen for term of life; and by that means remaind as it were still the same to generations. In *Venice* they change indeed after then everie year som particular council[s] of State, [as that of six](#) , or such others; but [the ? full | true ? Senate](#) , which upholds and sustains the government, ? sits immovable. | is the whole aristocracie immovable. ? So in the [United Provinces](#) , [the States General](#) , which are indeed but a Council of State ? delegated | deputed ? by the whole union, are not usually the same persons for above three or six years; but the ? [Provincial States](#) , | [States of every citie](#) , ? in whom the ? true sovranterie is plac'd, | sovranterie hath bin plac'd time out of minde, ? are a standing Senate, without succession, and accounted chiefly in that regard the main prop of thir libertie. And why they should be so in everie well ordered Commonwealth, [they who write of policie](#) , give [these reasons](#) ; “That to make the [whole] Senate successive, not only impairs the dignitie and lustre of the Senate, but weakens the whole Commonwealth, and brings it into manifest danger; while by this means the secrets of State are frequently divulg'd, and matters of greatest consequence committed to inexpert and novice counselors, utterly to seek in the full and intimate knowledg of affairs past.” I know not therefor what should be peculiar in *England* to make successive Parlements thought safest, or convenient heer more then in [all] other nations, unlesse it be [the fick'lness which is attributed to us](#) as we are Ilanders. But good education [and acquise wisdom](#) ought to correct the fluxible fault, if any such be, of our watrie situation. It will be objected, that in those places where they had perpetual Senats, they had also popular remedies against thir growing too imperious: as in *Athens*, besides *Areopagus*, another [Senat of four or five hundred](#) ; in *Sparta*, [the Ephori](#) ; in *Rome*, [the Tribunes](#) of the people. But [the event](#) tells us, that these remedies either little availd the people, or brought them to such a licentious and unbridl'd democratie, as [in fine](#) ruind themselves with thir own excessive power. So that the main reason urg'd why popular assemblies are to be trusted with the peoples libertie, rather then a Senat of principal men, because great men will be still endeavoring to enlarge thir power, but the common sort will be contented to maintain thir own libertie, is by experience found false; none being more immoderat and ambitious to amplifie thir power, then such popularities; which was

seen in the people of *Rome*; who at first contented to have thir Tribunes, at length contended with the Senat that [one Consul](#) , then both; soon after, that the [Censors and Prætors](#) also should be created Plebeian, and the whole empire put into their hands; adoring lastly those, who most were aduers to the Senat, till [Marius](#) by fulfilling thir inordinat desires, quite lost them all the power for which they had so long bin striving, and left them under the tyrannie of [Sylla](#) : the ballance therefor must be exactly so set, as to preserve and keep up due autoritie on either side, as well in the Senat as in the people. And this annual rotation of a Senat to consist of three hunderd, [as is lately propounded](#) , requires also another popular assembly upward of a thousand, with an answerable rotation. Which besides that it will be liable to all those inconveniencies found in the foresaid remedies, cannot but be troublesom and chargeable, both [in thir motion](#) and thir session, to the whole land; unweildie with thir own bulk, [unable in so great a number](#) to mature thir consultations as they ought, if any be allotted them, and that they meet not from so many parts remote to [sit a whole year lieger in one place](#) , only now and then to [hold up a Forrest of fingers](#) , or to convey each man his [bean or ballot](#) into the box, without reason shewn or common deliberation; incontinent of secrets, if any be imparted to them, emulous and always jarring with the other Senat. The much better way doubtless will be in this wavering condition of our affairs, to deferr the changing or circumscribing of our Senat, more then may be done with ease, till the Commonwealth be throughly setl'd in peace and safetie, and they themselves give us the occasion. Militarie men hold it dangerous to change the form of battel in view of anemie: neither did the people of *Rome* bandie with thir Senat while any of the [Tarquins](#) livd, the enemies of thir libertie, nor sought by creating Tribunes to defend themselves against the fear of thir [Patricians](#) , till sixteen years after the [expulsion of thir kings](#) , and in full securitie of thir state, they had or thought they had just cause given them by the Senat. Another way will be, to [welqualifie and refine elections](#) : not committing all to [the noise and shouting of a rude multitude](#) , but permitting only those of them who are rightly qualifi'd, to nominat as many as they will; and out of that number others of a better breeding, to chuse a less number more judiciously, till after a [third or fourth sifting](#) and refining of exactest choice, they only be left chosen who are the due number, and seem by most voices the worthiest. To make the people fittest to chuse, and the chosen fittest to govern, will be to [mend our corrupt and faulty education](#) , to teach the people faith not without vertue, temperance, modestie, sobrietie, parsimonie, justice; not to admire wealth or honour; to hate turbulence and ambition; to place every one his privat welfare and happiness in the public peace, libertie and safetie. They shall not then need to be much mistrustfull of thir chosen Patriots in the Grand Councel; who will be then rightly call'd the true keepers of our libertie, though the most of thir business will be in forein affairs. But to prevent all mistrust, the people then will have [thir several ordinarie assemblies](#) (which will henceforth quite annihilate the [odious power and name of Committies](#) ) in the chief towns of every countie, without the trouble, charge, or time lost of summoning and assembling from far in so great a number, and so long residing from thir own houses, or removing of thir families, to do as much at home in thir several shires, entire or subdivided, toward the securing of thir libertie, as a numerous assembly of them all formd and conven'd on purpose with the wariest rotation. Wherof I shall speak more ere the end of this discourse: for it may be referrd to time, so we be still [going on by degrees to perfection](#) . ? I suppose therefor that the people well weighing these things, would have no cause to fear or murmur, | The people well weighing and



performing these things, I suppose would have no cause to fear, ? though the Parliament, [abolishing that name](#) , as originally signifying but the *parlie of our Lords and Commons* with thir *Norman* king when he pleasd to call them, should with certain limitations of thir power, ? perpetuate themselves, | sit perpetual ? if thir ends be faithfull and for a free Commonwealth, under the name of a Grand or General Council: [nay] till this be done, I am in doubt whether our State will be ever certainlie and throughly settl'd: [and say again therefor, that if the Parliament do this, [these nations](#) will have so [little cause to fear](#) or suspect them, that they will have cause rather to gratulate and thank them: nay more, if they understand thir own good rightly, will sollicit and [entreat them](#) not to throw off the great burden from thir shoulders which none are abler to bear, and to sit perpetual;] never likely till then to see an end of ? thir | our ? troubles and continual changes, or at least never the true settlement and assurance of ? their | our ? libertie. [And the government being now in [so many faithful and experienc'd hands](#) , next under God, so able, especially filling up their number, as they intend, and abundantly sufficient so happily to govern us, why should the nation so little know thir own interest as to seek change, and deliver themselves up to meer titles and vanities, to [persons untri'd](#) , unknown, necessitous, implacable, and every way to be suspected: to whose power when we are once made subject, not all these our Patriots nor all the wisdom or force of the well affected joind with them can deliver us again from most certain miserie and thraldom. To return then to this [most easie, most present and only cure](#) of our distempers,] the Grand Council being thus firmly constituted to perpetuities, and still, upon the death or default of any member, suppli'd and kept in full number, ther can be no cause alleag'd why peace, justice, plentiful trade and all prosperitie should not therupon ensue throughout the whole land; with as much assurance as can be of human things, that they shall so continue (if God favour us, and our wilfull sins provoke him not) [even to the coming](#) of our true and right full and only to be expected King, [only worthy](#) as he is our only Saviour, the Messiah, the Christ, the only heir of his eternal father, [the only by him anointed](#) and ordaind, since the worke of our redemption finishd, universal Lord of all mankind. The way propounded is plain, easie and open before us; without intricases, without the introducement of new or [obsolete](#) forms, or terms, or [exotic models](#) ; idea's that would effect nothing, but with a number of new injunctions to manacle the [native liberty](#) of mankinde; turning all vertue into prescription, servitude, and necessitie, to the great impairing and frustrating of Christian libertie: [I say again](#) , this way lies free and smooth before us; is not tangl'd with inconveniencies; invents no new incumbrances; requires [no perilous, no injurious alteration or circumscription](#) of mens lands and proprieties; secure, that in this Commonwealth, [temporal and spiritual lords remov'd](#) , no man or number of men can attain to such wealth or vast possession, as will need the hedge of an [Agrarian law](#) (never succesful, but the [cause rather of sedition](#) , save [only where it began seasonably with first possession](#) ) to confine them from endangering our public libertie; ? without the mixture of inconveniencies, or any considerable objection to be made, [as by some friviously](#) ,<sup>1</sup> that it is not practicable: | to conclude, it can have no considerable objection made against it, that it is not practicable: least it be said hereafter, that we gave up our libertie for want of a readie way or distinct form propos'd of a free Commonwealth. ? and this facilitie we shall have above our next neighbouring Commonwealth, (if we can keep us from the fond conceit of [something like a duke of Venice](#) , put lately into many mens heads, by some one or other suttly driving on under that [prettie] notion his own ambitious ends [to](#)

[lurch a crown](#) ) that our liberty shall not be hamperd or hoverd over by any [ingag'ment to such a potent family as the house of Nassaw](#) , of whom to stand in perpetual doubt and suspicion, but we shall live the cleerest and absolutest free nation in the world. On the contrarie, if ther be a king, which the inconsiderate multitude are now so madd upon, marke how far short we are like to com of all those happineses, which in a free State we shall immediately be possessd of. First, the Grand Council, which, as I ? said | shewd ? before, [is both the basis and main pillar in everie government, and] should sit perpetually, (unless thir leisure give them now and then some intermissions or vacations easilie manageable by the [Council of State left sitting](#) ) shall be call'd, by the kings good will and utmost endeavour, [as seldome as may be](#) ; [and then for his own ends: for it will soon return to that, let no man hope otherwise, whatever law or provision be made to the contrarie.] For it is only the kings right, he will say, to call a Parliament; and this he will do most commonly about his own affairs rather than the kingdom's, as will appear planely so soon as they are call'd. For what will thir business then be and the chief expence of thir time, but an [endless tugging](#) between ? right of subject | petition of right ? and royal prerogative, especially about the [negative voice, militia, or subsidies](#) , demanded and oft-times extorted without reasonable cause appearing to the Commons, who are the [only true representatives of the people](#) ; and thir libertie, but will be then [mingl'd with a court-faction](#) ; besides which, within thir own walls, the sincere part of them who stand faithful to the people, will again have ? do | to ? deal with two troublesome counter-working adversaries from without, meer creatures of the king, ? [temporal and spiritual lords](#) , | spiritual, and the greater part, as is likeliest, of temporal lords ? [made up into one house, and] nothing concernd with the peoples libertie. If these prevail not in what they please, though never so much against the peoples interest, the Parliament shall be [soon dissolv'd, or sit and do nothing](#) ; not sufferd to remedie the least greevance, or enact aught advantageous to the people. Next, the [Council of State shall not be chosen by the Parliament](#) , but by the king, still his own creatures, courtiers and favorites; who will be sure in all thir counsels to set thir maister's grandure and absolute power, in what they are able, far above the peoples libertie. [I denie not](#) but that there may be such a king, who may regard the common good before his own, may have no vitious favorite, may hearken only to the wisest and incorruptest of his Parliament; but [this rarely happ'ns](#) in a monarchie not elective; and it behoves not a wise nation to committ the summ of thir well-being, the whole state of thir safetie to fortune. What need they; and how absurd would it be, when as they themselves to whom his chief vertue will be but to hearken, may with much better management and dispatch, with much more commendation of thir own worth and magnanimitie govern without a maister. Can the folly be paralleld, to adore and be the slaves of a single person for doing that which it is ten thousand to one whether he can or will do, and we without him might do more easily, more effectually, more laudably our selves? Shall we never grow old enough to be wise to make seasonable use of gravest authorities, experiences, examples? Is it such an unspeakable [joy to serve](#) , such felicitie to wear a yoke? to clink our shackles, lockt on by [pretended law of subjection](#) , more intolerable and hopeless to be ever shaken off, then those which are knockt on by illegal injurie and violence? [Aristotle, our chief instructor](#) in the Universities, least this doctrine be thought [Sectarian](#) , as the royalist would have it thought, tels us in the [third of his Politics](#) , that certain men at first, for the matchless excellence of thir vertue above others, or som great public benefit, were created kings by the people; in small cities

and territories, and in the scarcitie of others to be found like them: but when they abus'd thir power, and governments grew larger, and the number of prudent men increasd, that then the people soon deposing thir tyrants, betook them, in all civilest places, to the form of a free Commonwealth. And why should we thus disparage and prejudicate our own nation, as to fear a scarcitie of able and worthie men united in counsel to govern us, if we will but use diligence and impartiality to finde them out and chuse them, rather yoking our selves to a single person, the natural adversarie and oppressor of libertie, though good, yet far easier corruptible by the excess of his singular power and exaltation, or at best, [not comparably sufficient](#) to bear the weight of government, nor equally dispos'd to make us happie in the enjoyment of our libertie under him. ? And | But ? [admitt, that monarchy](#) of it self may be convenient to som nations, yet to us who have thrown it out, received back again, it cannot [but prove pernicious](#) . For [the] kings to com, never forgetting thir former ejection, [will be sure to fortifie](#) and arme themselves sufficiently for the future against all such attempts heerafter from the people: who shall be then so [narrowly watch'd and kept so low](#) , [as that besides the loss of all thir blood, and treasure spent to no purpose,] ? though they [would never so fain](#) and at the same rate, | that though they would never so fain and at the same rate of thir blood and treasure, ? they never shall be able to regain what they now have purchasd and may enjoy, or to free themselves from any yoke impos'd upon them. nor will they dare to go about it; utterly disheartn'd for the future, if these thir highest attempts prove unsuccessfull; which will be the triumph of all tyrants heerafter over any people that shall resist oppression; and thir song will then be, to others, how sped the rebellious *English?* to our posteritie, how sped the rebells your fathers? This is not my conjecture, but drawn from [God's known denouncement](#) against the [gentilizing Israelites](#); who though they were governd in a [Commonwealth of God's own ordaining](#) , he only thir king, they [his peculiar people](#) , yet affecting rather to resemble heathen, but pretending the [misgovernment of Samuel's sons](#) , [no more a reason](#) to dislike thir Commonwealth, then the violence of [Eli's sons](#) was imputable to that priesthood or religion, clamour'd for a king. They had thir longing; but with this testim onie of God's wrath; *ye shall cry out in that day because of your king whom ye shall have chosen, and the Lord will not hear you in that day*. Us if he shall hear now, how much less will he hear when we cry heerafter, who once deliverd by him from a king, and not without wondrous acts of his providence, insensible and unworthie of those high mercies, are returning precipitantly, if he withhold us not, back to the captivitie from whence he freed us. Yet neither shall we obtain or buy at an easie rate this [new gilded yoke](#) which thus transports us: [Besides this,] a [new royal-revenue](#) must be found; a new episcopal; [for those are individual](#) : both which being wholly dissipated or bought by private persons, or assing'd for service don, and especially to the Armie, cannot be recovered without a [general detriment and confusion to men's](#) estates, or a heavy imposition on all men's purses. benefit to none, but to the [worst and ignoblest](#) sort of men, whose hope is to be either the [ministers of court riot and excess](#) , or the gainers by it: But not to speak more of losses and extraordinarie levies on our estates, what will then be the [Not to speak of] [revenges](#) and offences [that will be] rememberd and returnd, not only by the chief person, but by all his adherents; accounts and reparations that will be requir'd, suites [and] inditements, inquiries, discoveries, complaints, informations, who knows against whom, or how many, [though perhaps neuters](#) , [if not to utmost infliction, yet to imprisonment, fines, banishment](#) ; or molestation; [or] if not these,

yet [disfavour](#) , discountenance, disregard and contempt on all but the known royalist, or whom he favours, will be plentiful; nor let the [new royaliz'd presbyterians](#) persuade themselves that thir old doings, though now recanted, will be forgotten; whatever conditions be contriv'd or trusted on. Will they not believe this; nor remember [the pacification](#) , how it was kept to the *Scots*; how other solemn promises many a time to us? Let them but now read the [diabolical forerunning libells](#) , [the faces, the gestures](#) that now appear foremost and briskest in all public places; as the harbingers of those that are in expectation to reign over us; let them but hear the insolencies, the menaces, the insultings of our newly animated common enemies crept lately out of thir holes, thir [hell](#) , I might say, by the language of thir [infernal pamphlets](#) , the spue of every drunkard, every ribald; nameless, yet [not for want of licence](#) , but for very shame of thir own vile persons, not daring to name themselves, while they [traduce others by name](#) ; and give us to foresee that they [intend to second thir wicked words](#), if ever they have power, with more wicked deeds. Let our zealous backsliders forethink now with themselves, how thir necks yok'd with these [tigers of Bacchus](#) , these new [fanatics of not the preaching but the sweating-tub](#) , inspir'd with nothing holier then the Venereal pox, can [draw one way](#) under monarchie to the establishing of church discipline with these new-disgorg'd atheismes: yet shall they not have the honor to yoke with these, but shall be yok'd under them; [these shall plow on their backs](#) . And do they among them who are so forward to bring in the single person, think to be by him trusted or long regarded? So trusted they shall be and so regarded, as by kings are wont reconcil'd enemies; neglected and soon after discarded, if not prosecuted for old traytors; [the first inciters](#) , beginners, and [more then to the third part actors](#) of all that followd; it will be found also, that there must be then as necessarily as now (for [the contrarie part](#) will be still feard) a [standing armie](#) ; which for certain shall not be [this](#) , but of the [fiercest Cavaliers](#) , of no less expence, and perhaps again under *Rupert* : but let [this armie](#) be sure they shall be soon disbanded, and likeliest without arrear or pay; and being disbanded, not be sure but they may as soon be questiond for being in arms against thir king: the same let them fear, who have contributed monie; which will amount to no small number that must then take thir turn to be made [delinquents and compounders](#) . They who past reason and recoverie are devoted to kingship, perhaps will answer, that a greater part by far of the Nation will have it so; the rest therefor must yield. Not so much to convince these, which I little hope, as to confirm them who yield not, I reply; that this greatest part have both in reason and the trial of just battel, lost the right of their election what the government shall be: of [them who have not lost that right](#) , whether they for kingship be the greater number, [who can certainly determin?](#) Suppose they be; yet of freedom they partake all alike, one main end of government: which if the greater part value not, but will degeneratly forgoe, is it just or reasonable, that most voices against the main end of government should enslave the less number that would be free? More just it is doubtless, if it com to force, that a less number compell a greater to retain, which can be no wrong to them, thir libertie, then that a greater number for the pleasure of thir baseness, compell a less most injuriously to be thir fellow slaves. They who seek nothing but thir own just libertie, have alwaies [right to winn it and to keep it](#) , when ever they have power, be the voices never so numerous that oppose it. And how much we above others are concernd to defend it from kingship, and from them who in pursuance therof so perniciously would betray us and themselves to most certain miserie and thraldom, will be needless to repeat.

Having thus far shewn with what ease we may now obtain a free Commonwealth, and by it with as much ease all the freedom, peace, justice, plentie that we can desire, on the otherside, the difficulties, troubles, uncertainties nay rather impossibilities to enjoy these things constantly under a monarch, I will now proceed to shew more particularly wherein our freedom and flourishing condition will be [more ample and secure](#) to us under a free Commonwealth then under kinship.

The whole freedom of man consists either in [spiritual or civil libertie](#) . As for spiritual, who can be at rest, who can enjoy any thing in this world with contentment, who hath not [libertie to serve God](#) and to save his own soul, according to the best light which God hath planted in him to that purpose, by the reading of his reveal'd will and the guidance of his holy spirit? That this is best pleasing to God, and that the whole Protestant Church allows [no supream judge or rule in matters of religion, but the scriptures](#) , and these to be interpreted by the scriptures themselves, which necessarily inferrs liberty of conscience, ? hath bin | I have ? heertofore prov'd at large in ? other treatises, | [another treatise](#) ; ? and might yet further by the [publick declarations, confessions](#) , and admonitions of whole Churches and States, obvious in all historie, since [the Reformation](#) . [He who cannot be content with this libertie to himself, but seeks violently to impose what he will have to be the only religion, upon other men's consciences, [let him know](#) , bears a minde not only unchristian and irreligious, but inhuman also and barbarous. And in my judgement civil States would do much better, and remove the cause of much hindrance and disturbance in publick affairs, much ambition, much hypocrisie and contention among the people, if they would not meddle at all with Ecclesiastical matters, which are both of a quite different nature from their cognisance, and have thir proper laws fully and compleatly with such coercive power as belongs to them, [ordaind by Christ](#) himself and his apostles. If ther were no meddling with Church matters in State counsels, ther would not be [such faction in chusing](#) members of Parliament, while every one strives to chuse him whom he takes to be of his religion; and everie faction hath the plea of Gods cause. Ambitious leaders of armies would then have no hypocritical pretences so ready at hand to contest with Parlements, yea to dissolve them and make way to thir own [tyrannical designs](#) : [in summ](#) , I verily suppose ther would be then no more pretending to a [fifth monarchie of the saints](#) : but much peace and tranquillitie would follow; [as the United Netherlands](#) have found by experience: who while they persecuted the [Arminians](#) , were in much disquiet among themselves, and in danger to have broke asunder into a civil war; since they have left off persecuting, they have livd in much more concord and prosperitie. And [I have heard from Polanders](#) themselves, that they never enjoid more peace, then when religion was most at libertie among them; that then first began thir troubles, when [that king by instigation of the Jesuites](#) began to force the [Cossaks](#) in matters of religion.] This libertie of conscience, which above all other things ought to be to all men dearest and most precious, no government more inclinable not ? only to favour | to favor only ? but to protect, then a free Commonwealth; as being most magnanimous, most fearless and confident of its own fair proceedings. Wheras kingship, though looking big, yet indeed most pusillanimous, full of fears, full of jealousies, startl'd at everie umbrage, as it hath bin observd of old to have ever suspected most and mistrusted them who were in most esteem for vertue and generositie of minde, so it is now known to have most in doubt and suspicion them who are most reputed to be religious. [Q. Elizabeth](#) , though her



self accounted [so good a Protestant](#) , so moderate, so [confident of her subjects love](#) , [would never give way](#) so much as to Presbyterian reformation in this land, though once and again besought, as *Cambden* relates, but imprisond and [persecuted the verie proposers therof](#) , alleaging it as her minde and maxim unalterable, that such reformation [would diminish regal authoritie](#) . What libertie of conscience can we then expect ? from | of ? [others far worse principld from the cradle](#) , traind up and governd by [Popish and Spanish counsels](#) , and on such depending hitherto for subsistence? Especially what can this last Parliament expect, who having [reviv'd lately and publishd the covnant](#) , have reingag'd themselves, never to readmitt Episcopacie: which no son of *Charls* returning, but will most certainly bring back with him, if he regard [the last and strictest charge](#) of his father, *to persevere in not the doctrin only, but government of the church of England; not to neglect the speedie and effectual suppressing of errors and schisms;* among which he [accounted Presbyterie one of the chief](#) : or if notwithstanding that charge of his father, he submitt to the covnant, how will he keep faith to us with disobedience to him; or regard that faith given, which must be founded on the breach of that last and solemnest paternal charge, and the reluctance, I may say the antipathie which is in all kings against Presbyterian and Independent discipline? For they [hear the Gospel speaking much of libertie](#) , a word which monarchie and her bishops both fear and hate; but a free Commonwealth both favours and promotes; and not the word only, but the thing it self. But [let our governors beware](#) in time, least thir hard measure to libertie of conscience be found [the rock wheron they shipwrack themselves](#) , [as others have now don](#) before them in the cours wherin God was directing thir stearage to a free Commonwealth, and the abandoning of all those whom they call *sectaries*, for the detected falshood and ambition of som, be [a wilfull rejection](#) of thir own chief strength and interest in the freedom of all Protestant religion, under what abusive name soever calumniated.

The other part of our freedom consists in the civil rights and [advanc'ments of every person according](#) to his merit: the enjoiment of those never more certain, and the access to these never more open, then in a free Commonwealth. ? And both | Both which ? in my opinion may be best and soonest obtaind, if [every county in the land were made a ? little commonwealth](#) , | kinde of subordinate Commonaltie or Commonwealth, ? and ? thir chief town [a city](#) , if it | one chief town or more, according as the shire is in circuit, made cities, if they ? be not so call'd alreadie; where the nobilitie and chief gentry from a proportionable compas of territorie annexd to each citie, may build, houses or palaces, befitting their qualitie, may bear part in the government, make their own [judicial lawes](#) , or use these that are, and execute them by their own elected judicatures, and judges without appeal, in all things of civil government between man and man. So they shall have justice in thir own hands, law executed fully and finally in thir own counties and precincts, long wishd, and spoken of, but never yet obtaind; ? and none | they shall have none then ? to blame but themselves, if it be not well administerd. and [fewer laws](#) to expect or fear from the supreme autoritie; or to those that shall be made, of any great concernment to public libertie, they may without much trouble in these commonalties or in more general assemblies call'd to thir cities from the whole territorie on such occasion, declare and publish thir assent or dissent by [deputies within a time limited sent to the Grand Council](#) : yet so as this thir judgment declar'd shal submitt to the greater number of other counties or commonalties, and not avail them to any exemption of themselves,

or refusal of agreement with the rest, as it may in any of the United Provinces, being sovran within it self, oft times to the great disadvantage of that union. In these employments they may much better then they do now exercise and fit themselves [till their lot fall to be chosen](#) into the Grand Council, according as their worth and merit shall be taken notice of by the people. As for controversies that shall happen between men of several counties, they may repair, as they do now, to the capital citie. or any other more [commodious, indifferent place and equal judges](#). And this I finde to have bin practis'd in the old *Athenian* Commonwealth, reputed the first and ancientest place of civilitie in all *Greece*; that [they had](#) in thir several cities, a peculiar; in *Athens*, a common government; and thir right, as it befell them, to the administration of both. They should have heer also schools and academies at thir own choice, wherin their children may be bred up in thir own sight to all learning and noble education, [not in grammar only](#), but in all liberal arts and exercises. This would soon spread much more knowledge and civilitie, yea religion, through all parts of the land: [by communicating](#) the natural heat of government and culture more distributively to all extreme parts, which now lie numm and neglected, [this] would soon make the whole nation more industrious, more ingenuous at home, more potent, more honourable abroad. To this a free Commonwealth will easily assent; (nay the Parliament hath had already som such thing in designe) for of all governments [a Commonwealth aims](#) most to make the people flourishing, vertuous, noble and high spirited. Monarchs will never permitt: whose aim is to [make the people, wealthy](#) indeed perhaps and [wel-fleec't for thir own shearing](#), and [for] the supply of regal prodigalitie; but otherwise softest, basest, vitioussest, servilest, easiest to be kept under; and not only in fleecce, but in minde also sheepishest; and will have all the [benches of judicature annexd to the throne](#), as a gift of royal grace that we have justice don us; whenas nothing can be more essential to the freedom of a people, then to have the administration of justice and all [publick ornaments](#) in thir own election and within thir own bounds, without long traveling or depending on remote places to obtain thir right or any civil accomplishment; so it be not supream, but subordinate to the general power and union of the whole Republick. In which happie firmness as in the particular above mentioned, we shall also far [exceed the United Provinces](#), by having, not as they (to the retarding and distracting oft times of thir counsels or urgentest occasions), [so] [many sovranities](#) united in one Commonwealth, but many Commonwealths under one united and entrusted sovranitie. [And when we have](#) our forces by sea and land, either of a faithful Armie or a setl'd Militia, in our own hands to the firm establishing of a free Commonwealth, [publick accounts under our own inspection](#), general laws and taxes with thir causes in our own domestic suffrages, judicial laws, offices and ornaments at home in our own ordering and administration, all distinction of lords and commoners, that may any way divide or sever the publick interest, remov'd, what can a perpetual senat have then wherin to grow corrupt, wherin to encroach upon us or usurp; or if they do, wherin to be formidable? Yet [if all this](#) avail not to remove the fear or envie of a perpetual sitting, it may be easilie provided, to change a third part of them yearly, or every two or three years, as was above mentiond; or that it be at those times in the peoples choice, whether they will change them, or renew thir power, as they shall finde cause.

I have no more to say [at present](#): few words will save us, well considerd; few and easie things, now seasonably don. But if the people be so affected, as to prostitute



religion and libertie to the vain and groundless apprehension, that [nothing but kingship can restore trade](#) , not remembering the [frequent plagues](#) and pestilences that then wasted this cite, such as through God's mercie, we never have ? left | felt ? since, and that trade flourishes no where more, then in the free Commonwealths of *Italie*, *Germanie* and the Low Countreys, before thir eyes at this day, yet if trade be grown so craving and importunate through the profuse living of tradsmen that nothing can support it, but the luxurious expences of a nation upon [trifles or superfluities](#) , so as if the people generally should betake themselves to frugalitie, [it might prove a dangerous matter](#) , least tradesmen should mutinie for want of trading, and that therefor we must forgoe and [set to sale religion](#) , libertie, honour, safetie, all concernments divine or human to keep up trading, if lastly, [after all this light](#) among us, the same reason shall pass for current to put our necks again under kingship, as was [made use of by the Jews](#) to return back to Egypt and to the worship of thir [idol queen](#) , because they falsly imagind that they then livd in more plenty and prosperitie, our condition is not sound but rotten, both in religion and all civil prudence; and will bring us soon, the way we are marching, to those calamities which attend alwaies and unavoidably on luxurie, [that is to say] all [national judgments](#) under forein or domestic slaverie: so far we shall be from mending our condition by monarchizing our government; what ever new conceit now possesses us. However [w<sup>th</sup> all hazard](#) I have ventur'd what I thought my dutie, to speak in season, & to forewarn my country in time: wherin I doubt not but there be many wise men in all places and degrees, but am sorrie the effects of wisdom are so little seen among us. Many circumstances and particulars I could have added in those things whereof I have spoken; but a few main matters now put speedily ? into | in ? execution, will suffice to recover us, and set all right: and ther will [want at no time who](#) are [good at circumstances](#) , but men who set thir minds on [main matters](#) and sufficiently urge them, in these most difficult times I finde not many. What I have spoken, is the language of [that which is not call'd amiss](#) the good old cause: if it seem strange to any, it will not seem more strange, I hope, then [convincing to backsliders](#) . Thus much I should perhaps have said, though I were sure I should have [spoken only to trees and stones](#) , and had none to cry to, but with [the Prophet](#) , *O earth, earth, earth*: to tell the verie soil it self ? what her perverse inhabitants are deaf to. Nay though what I have spoke, should happ'n (which [Thou suffer not, who didst create mankinde free](#) ; nor Thou next, [who didst redeem](#) us from being servants of men!) to be the last words of our expiring libertie. | what God hath [determined of Coniah and his seed](#) forever. ? But I trust, I shall have spoken perswasion to abundance of sensible and ingenuous men: to som perhaps, whom God may raise of these stones, to become children of reviving libertie; and ? may enable and unite in thir noble [resolutions | may reclaim, though they seem now chusing them a captain back for Egypt, to bethink themselves a little and consider whether they are rushing ; to exhort this torrent](#) also of the people, not to be so impetuos, but to keep thir due channell; and at length recovering and uniting thir better resolutions, now that they see already how open and unbounded the insolence and rage is of our common enemies ? to [give a] stay [to] these [our] ruinous proceedings justly and timely fearing to what a precipice of destruction the deluge of this epidemic madness would hurrie us ? through the | and to this ? general defection of ? the | a ? misguided and abus'd multitude.

[The End]

## NOTES

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## GLOSSARY

This glossary is designed to include all obsolete, archaic, dialectical, and rare words that occur in the text. For the sake of clearness or convenience, a few current words have been admitted. The principal authorities that have been consulted are the *New English Dictionary* (NED.), the *Century Dictionary*, Skeat's *Etymological Dictionary*, and Lockwood's *Lexicon*.

A dagger (†) before a word or meaning indicates that the word or meaning is obsolete; an interrogation (?), that the interpretation is doubtful.

†Acquisite,*a.* [ad. L. *acquīsīt-us* pa. pple. of *acquīrere*.] Acquired; obtained for oneself. 25. 11.

Addicted,*ppl. a.* †Attached by one's own act; given up, devoted, inclined (*to* a person or party). 21. 22.

Admirable,*a.* †To be wondered at; wonderful, surprising, marvelous. 18. 26.

Admiration,*sb.* Wonder, astonishment, surprise. *Arch.* 10. 8.

Admire,*v.* †*intr.* To wonder, to marvel. 19. 13.

Affected,*ppl. a.* Disposed, inclined. 11. 17.

Aftergame,*sb.* '*Prop.* A second game played in order to reverse or improve the issues of the first; *hence* "The scheme which may be laid or the expedients which are practised after the original game has miscarried; methods taken after the first turn of affairs" Johnson.' NED. 15. 4.

Anough.*Obs.* form of *enough*. 11. 24.

Answerable,*a.* Corresponding; proportional. *Absol. Arch.* 25. 38.

Apprehension,*sb.* Notion; opinion; fixed idea. 40. 1.

Assistances,*sb.* Assistance; succour. *Arch. in pl.* 14. 27.

Bandy,*v. intr.* To contend, to strive. 26. 15.

Briskest,*a.* Most active; liveliest. 33. 7.

Censur'd,*v. trans.* †Judged to be. 13. 29.

Charges,*sb.* 'Expenses: often with sense scarcely or not at all distinguishable from the sing.' NED. *Arch. in pl.* 16. 5.

Cheapning,*v. trans.* †Haggling terms about; ?endeavoring to lower the price of. 16. 32.

Circumstances,*sb.* ‘Subordinate matters or details: strictly, matters “appendant or relative to a fact” (Johnson), viewed as extraneous to its essence, but passing into the sense of “subordinate parts of the fact, details.’ ” NED. *Obs. in pl.*40. 35.

Civilest,*a.* †Having proper public or social order; well-ordered, orderly, well-governed. 31. 13.

Commodious,*a.* Convenient. *Arch.*38. 18.

Conceit,*sb.* Notion, idea. 29. 5.

Concernment,*sb.* †Interest. 9. 20.

Conclude,*v. trans.* †To prove. 18. 19.

Constantly,*adv.* With mental constancy or steadfastness; steadily, resolutely, faithfully. 14. 12.

Constituted,*ppl. a.* †Set up, established, ordained. 28. 5.

Constitutions,*sb.* Existing order or arrangements of government. 9. 17.

Corruption,*sb.* [Replaced by ‘contagion’ in 2d ed.] An infectious moral disease. 13. 31.

Cunning,*a.* In a bad sense: crafty; skilful at underhand methods. 9. 10.

Default,*sb.* †Failure in duty; misdeed. 28. 6.

Deferr,*v. trans.* †To delay, to put off (a person). 12. 27.

Delinquents,*sb.* ‘Those who assisted Charles I or Charles II, by arms, money, or personal service, in levying war, 1642-1660.’ NED. 12. 14.

†Democratie,*sb.* [L. *democratia.*] Democracy. 25. 19.

Disaffected,*a.* Unfriendly to the government. 20. 19.

Disallowance,*sb.* Disapproval. 15. 21.

Discoveries,*sb.* †Investigations. 32. 33.

Dooms-day,*sb.* [OE. *dōmes dæg.*] Judgment day. 21. 3.

Driving,*v. intr.* Moving energetically. 29. 7.

- Effects,*sb.* †Outward signs; evidence. 40. 34.
- Election,*sb.* †choice. 39. 10.
- Endevord,*v. trans.* Attempted. *Obs. exc. arch.* 11. 33.
- Equal,*a.* †Impartial. 38. 19.
- Estates,*sb.* Orders of society. 11. 16.
- Event,*sb.* Final outcome. 25. 17.
- Expecting,*ppl. a.* Awaiting. *Arch.* 20. 7.
- Face,*sb.* Aspect; visible condition. 9. 1.
- Faces,*sb.* Outward shows. 33. 6.
- Facilitie,*sb.* Freedom from difficulty. 29. 3.
- Faction,*sb.* †Party-strife; intrigue. 35. 21.
- Fain,*adv.* Gladly; willingly. 31. 34.
- Fine,*sb.* End. *Obsolete* except in phrase *in fine*. 25. 19.
- Fond,*a.* Idiotic. 29. 5.
- Force,*sb.* †Compulsion. 11. 10.
- Forgoe,*v.* give up; renounce. 40. 14.
- Frequent,*a.* †Of persons, an assembly, etc.: Assembled in great numbers, crowded, full. Often in *full and frequent*. 9. 14.
- Friendly,*adv.* In a friendly manner. 16. 8.
- Fluxible,*a.* Inconstant; ready for change. 25. 12.
- Gentilism,*sb.* †Heathenism. 15. 21.
- Gestures,*sv.* Bodily movements (e. g., in drinking healths). 33. 7.
- Gratulate,*v. trans.* To congratulate. *Arch.* 27. 20.
- Humour,*sb.* Groundless fancy, or inclination. *Obs. with of*. 9. 9.
- Imposition,*sb.* Tax. 32. 25.

Indifferent,*a.* †Neutral; ‘Not more advantageous to one party than to another.’ NED. 38. 19.

Infers,*v.* †Logically necessitates. 15. 35.

Ingenuous,*a.* †Noble in character; highminded. 38. 33; 41. 20.

Judicatures,*sb.* Courts of justice. 37. 34.

Judicial,*adj.* Secular, as opp. to moral or ceremonial. 37. 32.

Judgments,*sb.* Visitions of divine wrath. 40. 26.

Knockt,*v. trans.* Phrase *knocked on* = driven on by a blow. 31. 4.

Least,*conj.* *Obs.* form of *lest*. 24. 1.

Lieger,*a.* *Obs.* form of *ledger*. Resident; stationary. 26. 5.

Light,*sb.* Instruction; advice. 40. 17.

Longing,*sb.* †Object of intense desire. 32. 10.

Low,*a.* Humble; dispirited. 31. 30.

Lurch,*v. trans.* †To get by stealth; to steal. 29. 8.

Magnanimously,*adv.* †Courageously; heroically. 10. 6.

Magnifi’d,*a.* †Lauded. 13. 13.

Masks,*sb.* Originally the same word as *masques*. ‘A form of amateur histrionic entertainment, popular at Court and amongst the nobility in England during the latter part of the 16th c. and the first half of the 17th c.; originally consisting of dancing and acting in dumb show, the performers being masked and habited in character; afterwards including dialogue (usually poetical) and song.’ NED. 16. 11.

Maxim,*sb.* ‘A precept of morality or prudence expressed in sententious form.’ NED. 36. 24.

Minde,*sb.* Opinion. 36. 24.

Mischief,*sb.* †Misfortune, calamity. 20. 15.

Motion,*sb.* Moving; ? †transportation. 26. 1.

Motiond,*v. trans.* pp. of *motion*. †Proposed. 11. 20.

Neuters,*sb.* Those of neither side. 32. 35.

- Novice,*a.* Inexperienced. 25. 4.
- Noxious,*a.* Harmful. 9. 8.
- Offer,*adv.* comp. of *oft.* *Archaic.* Oftener. 24. 19.
- Ordination,*sb.* Induction into the ministry. 12. 12.
- Ornaments,*sb.* [L. *ornamenta.*] Distinctions; public honors. 39. 10.
- Outlandish,*a.* Of foreign birth; un-English. *Archaic.* 16. 15.
- Pageant,*v.* To carry about as a show. 16. 37.
- Parlie,*sb.* [From OF. *parler*, to speak.] Speech; conference. 27. 10.
- Peculiar,*a.* †‘Belonging specially to.’ NED. 32, 6; †Individual. 38. 22.
- Popularities,*sb.* *Obs.* Democracies. 25. 26.
- Policie,*sb.* †Government; political science. 24. 33.
- Precedence,*sb.* Order of occurrence. 23. 16.
- †Prejudicate, *v.* Judge hastily; condemn in advance. 31. 15.
- Prescription,*sb.* †Limitation; conformity to prescribed rules of conduct. 28. 23.
- Prettie,*a.* Perhaps in OE. sense, †*cunning*; but possibly ironical. 29. 7.
- Principld,*ppl. a.* Imbued with principles. *Rare* except in combination. 36. 27.
- Progress,*sb.* †A state procession. 16. 37.
- †Proprieties,*sb.* Properties. 28. 27.
- Prostrations,*sb.* Attitudes expressive of servility or adoration. 18. 26.
- Qualifie,*v. trans.* †Regulate. 26. 21.
- Revels,*sb.* Dances given in connection with masques, but not a part of them. 16. 11.
- Ribald,*sb.* A base person; a profligate. 33. 12.
- Seek, to, †*adj. phrase.* Ignorant. 25. 4.
- Shift, put to, Forced to devise new expedients. 12. 7.
- Stay,*vb. intr.* Wait patiently. 23. 3.



Stay,*sb.* Check; halt. 41. 29.

Stearage,*sb.* The course steered; the path or way. 37. 14.

Suffrages,*sb.* Control by means of popular votes. 39. 25.

Summ, in,*adv. phrase.* In short. 35. 27.

†Suspence,*a.* Suspended; held in doubt. 22. 32.

Swell,*v. intr.* Strut; put on airs. 18. 8.

Temperament,*sb.* Compromise; adjustment of differences. *Arch.*23. 37.

Then.*Obs.* form of *than*.9. 15.

Thir,*pron. pl.* Their. *Obs.* or *dial.*15. 4.

Thoroughly,*adv.* By-form of *thoroughly*. Skeat, *Etym. Dict.*11. 3.

Timely,*adv.* [A. S. *tīmlīce*.] In good time. 41. 30.

Took,*vb.* Deemed; judged. 10. 11.

Umbrage,*sb.* Shadow; slight appearance. 36. 13.

Vassals,*sb.* Subjects; underlings. 18. 20.

Venereal pox,*sb.* Disease due to sexual profligacy. 33. 19.

Vicegerent,*sb.* One exercising delegated power. 19. 27.

Voice, negative,*sb.* Power of veto. 29. 34.

Voices,*sb.* Votes. 11. 18.

Weight,*sb.* Importance; effective influence. 12. 2.

Whenas,*conj.* When. *Arch.*20. 26.

Wonderd, be,*v.* †*impers.* Be a cause for astonishment. 18. 16.

Worthies,*sb.* Persons of superior eminence and worth. 20. 27.

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## APPENDICES

### A.

#### The Process Of Revision

There were other important reasons for Milton's radical revision besides his expressed one that, 'in the former edition through haste, many faults escap'd, and many books were suddenly dispersd, ere the note to mend them could be sent.' The course of events during the two months since the writing of the first edition had rendered whole sections of the treatise null and void; these needed to be eliminated. There had been innumerable criticisms of the book; these were to be met and answered. Along with criticisms of the book, there had been the most bitter and scurrilous attacks upon the author; and these must be repelled in his characteristic manner. There had doubtless been some unfavorable comparisons and frivolous remarks by the Harrington-men—certainly a fresh pamphlet, *The Rota*, after Milton's treatise was practically completed. All this called for further friendly but earnest argument against rotation, and in favor of a perpetual council. And, finally, as it was now apparent to every one that the Restoration was at hand, there should be at least an undaunted reassertion of republican principles, though there were none to cry to but 'trees and stones.' That these, rather than the correcting of minor errors, were the real motives of the reviser, will be apparent from the consideration of the changes in detail.

1. *The Influence of Current Events.* The first edition had been full of glowing tributes to the members of the Rump, and had urged that this body be perpetuated as a grand council. But the readmission of the secluded members, followed by the dissolution of the Long Parliament on the 16th of March, had put an end to all such ideas. Accordingly, large sections devoted to the 'worthy Patriots' and 'first Assertours,' and all allusions to their providential calling, present sitting, being made a byword of reproach, and pet design of 'filling up,' are omitted. General Monk is now virtually dictator; so 'all those who are now in power,' etc., is no longer applicable. The largest single omission is a passage of nearly three hundred words urging liberty of conscience, and no meddling of state in church-affairs. This, of course, is no surrender of principle, but is due to the fact that the Presbyterian Parliament, heedless of Milton's advice, had revived the Covenant, and were zealously endeavoring to reestablish national Presbyterianism. It was useless and impolitic to antagonize further the Presbyterians—especially to brand them as 'unchristian, . . . irreligious, . . . inhuman, . . . and barbarous.' The allusion to Lambert and his 'hypocritical pretences . . . and . . . tyrannical designs' is significantly omitted, as Lambert had since proved to be one of the few uncompromising republicans, having just escaped from the Tower, and rallied about him the last armed guard of the 'good old cause.' Milton even ceases to urge his scheme as 'the most easie, most present, and only cure' of public 'distempers.'

The preface is expanded by the addition of references to the elections then in progress and the Parliament soon to assemble, and by an appeal to the people to be wise in their selection. The impending Restoration calls forth many new protests against the yoke and chains of the old bondage. The ‘hard measure’ likely to be dealt to liberty of conscience causes a fresh warning to present ‘governors’ to beware of ‘shipwrack.’ The real purpose of Monk, to bring in the king, was by this time apparent, and Milton’s phrase, ‘and thir leaders especially,’ was added in direct allusion to Monk’s apostasy. There are many new passages which acknowledge and deplore the mad enthusiasm for the king, which had now become a ‘torrent,’ a ‘deluge.’ Finally, the hopelessness of any human endeavor, in the face of their ‘absolute determination to enthral,’ and the universal eagerness for such thralldom, call forth from Milton the appeal to heaven with which the pamphlet closes.

2. *The Influence of Royalist Criticism.* The appearance of Milton’s model was the signal for a general outburst of Royalist criticism and vituperation. Among these anonymous pamphleteers none was more persistent and abusive than Roger L’Estrange. In his *Seasonable Word*,<sup>1</sup> written when all were ‘in dayly expectation of Writs for another Session,’ that is, about the middle of March,—two weeks after the first appearance of *The Ready and Easy Way*,—there are direct mention of Milton’s pamphlet, and an assertion that the author is attempting to dictate. The old Rumpers, whom Milton defends, are denounced as ‘those Sons of Belial, the perjurd remnant.’ They had regarded ‘Oaths and Covenants’ as ‘Jugglers knots.’ They had thrown out seven eighths of the Parliament. They had ‘murdered him [the king] that they might Rule themselves.’ The question of being ‘under a force’ is gone into at length. So Milton, at the very beginning of the revised edition, adds a long defense of the Independents’ attitude and actions in 1648-9.

L’Estrange loses no opportunity to abuse and revile his great antagonist. He refers to him as the ‘Little Agitatur,’ ‘Half-Tutor,’ ‘Regicidall Babler,’ etc. In his opinion, Needham and Milton are ‘a Couple of Currs of the same *Pack*.’ He suspects *Plain English*, ‘a Bold, Sharp Pamphlet’ that appeared April 4, ‘by the Design, the Subject, Malice, and the Stile, . . . for a Blot of the same Pen that wrote *Iconoclastes*.’ There are numerous glances at Milton’s ‘remedies,’ and much play upon such expressions as ‘and the work is done.’ Milton had affirmed that his scheme was ‘practicable.’ L’Estrange, in his *Sober Answer* of March 27, says: ‘How *practicable*, or how *prudent*, such a proposal may appear to *others*, I cannot say: To me it wears the Face of a *Design*, promoted by a *Factious, guilty Party*, to sacrifice the Nation, to their *private interests*.’<sup>2</sup> Again, he does not ‘presume to direct, as our Imperious Commonwealths-man does.’ The pamphleteer goes still further: he indulges in menaces, and actual recommendations of violence. As early as February 18 he urges people to ‘knock Foxes and Wolves on the head as they can be found.’ But by this time (April 4) there are ‘Ropes twisting’; ‘those that have designed *Us* for *Slavery*,’ says he, ‘it is but reason to mark *them* out for Justice’; and, ‘How does this scandall both of Providence, and Society, scape Thunder, or a Dagger!’

A similar sheet, *The Character of the Rump*, exults in the prospect of seeing ‘John Milton, . . . their goose-quill champion,’ hauled to Tyburn gallows in a cart: ‘Now

John, *you* must stand close [upon the scaffold] and draw in your elbows, that Needham, the Commonwealth didapper, may have room to stand beside you.’<sup>1</sup>

It was not in Milton to let such scurrilous attacks pass unnoticed or unresented. Whole paragraphs of bitter, stinging, coarse invective are added for the benefit of these ‘tigers of Bacchus,’ who, in ‘thir infernal pamphlets, . . . not daring to name themselves, . . . traduce others by name.’

Another and still more important influence of this nature was the *Censure of the Rota upon Mr. Milton’s Book*<sup>2</sup> (see p. 173), an anonymous Royalist satire that appeared at the end of March, and probably helped to set Milton to work immediately upon his revised edition. It attempted to ridicule his arguments and proposals, and indulged in the customary abuse and accusation. But it was, upon the whole, rather happier in its design and execution than the common run of Royalist wit. There is evidence in the revision that some of its thrusts went home. Milton seems to have winced under its ridiculing him for a ‘cunning’ man himself—‘cunning deceivers’ appears in the second edition as ‘deceivers.’ He had boasted that the deeds of the English republic had amazed and startled the royalists in France. The *Censure* seizes upon the inconsistency of this statement with the later intimacy between Mazarin and the commonwealth. Milton gladly drops most of the passage. It relishes Milton’s reference to Fifth-Monarchy men, ‘who would have been admirable’ for Milton’s purpose, ‘if they had but dreamed of a fifth free state.’ The unfortunate Fifth Monarchy is quietly abolished. It makes merry with Milton’s ‘Patriots’ and ‘Assertours,’ and these worthies practically vanish in the revision. It twits Milton with being ‘styled “The Founder of a Sect,” ’ and this is resented in the new edition. Milton replies at length to the pamphlet’s attack on the Rump Parliament—its slight number, and the argument that it was no Parliament, but a tool of the army. The accusations of greed and sacrilege are made by the *Censure*, and answered in the revision. Perhaps the charge, ‘our actions at home . . . savoured much of Goth and Vandal barbarism, . . . pulling down of churches and demolishing the noblest monuments in the land,’ may have suggested to Milton his new assertion that these actions had not been ‘uncelebrated in a written monument, likely to outlive detraction.’

Other evidences of the influence of hostile contemporary criticism are mentioned in the Notes. The general significance of it all is that it had much to do in spurring Milton to the task of thorough revision, and in determining certain eliminations and additions.

3. *The Desire ‘Somewhat to Enlarge.’* Apart from changes made imperative by the drift of events and the pressure of criticism, there was an intense desire to make a final appeal that should be bolder and more emphatic than the former, and somewhat analogous, in its way, to Lambert’s final, desperate appeal to arms. Indeed, the desire ‘to enlarge’ seems to have been the most powerful single motive back of the revision. The addition is so large that it can hardly be more than indicated in general. New arguments are brought forward against the Restoration; as, for example, the loss of all Scotland, the certainty of a Papist queen and queen-mother, and the inevitable retinues of dissolute courtiers. The projects of a perpetual council, local sovereignty, and general education are amplified, and buttressed with new arguments and the authority

of Aristotle. A local judiciary and a higher general court of appeals are advocated, and defended by the aid of ancient precedent. The referendum in legislation, and the inspection or censorship of public service and accounts, are recommended as safeguards against corruption. The nation is solemnly bidden, upon the authority of 1 Sam. 8. 18, to beware of God's displeasure at kingship. Powerful appeals are made to the sense of national pride—what will the world say of 'the whole English name'!—and to the instinct of fear. The common people may look to be ground into the earth, and kept too 'low' ever to rise again. Let the country be terrified at the coming of Rupert and the fierce cavaliers. An attempt is made to reclaim the backsliding Presbyterians, who may look to be called to account for the past. Even the army may well fear, for they are sure to be disbanded, and without arrears—perhaps even punished for rebellion. And, finally, Milton 'exhorts' the mad 'torrent' of the people 'not to be so impetuous, but to keep their due channel.'

The influence of the Harrington-ideas upon both the original edition and the revision is discussed in the section entitled *The Rota Club*.

4. *Improvements in Expression*. The minor alterations introduced prove that Milton gave considerable painstaking attention to improvement in matters of expression. Changes in diction make for greater precision and force:

<i>First Edition</i>	<i>Second Edition</i>
corruption	> contagion (13. 31)
unsound (humour)	> noxious (humour) (9. 8)
succesfully (fought for)	> prosperously (fought for) (13. 4)
conceit	> notion (22. 10)
said	> shewd (29. 18)
gracious (condescension)	> divine (condescension) (14. 31)
'prettie' (29. 7), omitted as too trivial.	

Certain redundancies are eliminated; as:

(readmitted) to sit again in Parlament > readmitted (9. 4).

Brevity is aimed at in such changes as:

When they were once undeceivd > once undeceivd (20. 22)  
unless they be faultie > not faultie (22. 26)

A few possible ambiguities as to meaning are removed, and other vague expressions made definite:

Lacedæmon > Sparta (24. 15)  
just accusation > just conviction (23. 34)  
other treatises > another treatise (35. 2)  
make (laws) > make or propose (laws) [22. 2]  
hath been prov'd > I have prov'd (35. 1)

Greater force is secured by slight omissions or additions; as:

never likely to have > never to have (14. 25)  
what will they say of us > what will they at best say (13. 34)

Grammatical construction, or rather the lack of it, is remedied at a few points; as in the omission of the dangling phrase, 'to become of no effect,' etc. (14. 33). At some points the discourse is made less stiff and formal; as in the omission of such expressions as 'I answer, that' (20. 15), and in the turning of 'I shall make mention of another way' (23. 38) into the simpler, smoother introductory, 'Another way will be' (26. 20). Finally, a few partial inaccuracies are corrected; as:

whole (senate) > Senate (24. 33)  
Commons > Lords and Commons (27. 10).

Thus the revised edition, while it preserves the main outlines of the former treatise, is nevertheless to a remarkable extent the product of contemporary events, of hostile criticism; of the 'courage never to submit or yield,' but rather to reassert more defiantly than ever the principles of a lost cause, even at the hazard of life itself; and, finally, of the dexterous craftsmanship of a literary artist. The changes introduced radically affect every page and paragraph. The omissions vary in length from a single letter to about three hundred words; the interpolations, from a single word to several pages. Yet all is done, not only without prejudice to the sequence of thought, but with the effect of strengthening the production, both in detail and as a whole. The work is enlarged to nearly twice its original volume, and is, indeed, practically a new composition. To realize how remarkable was this achievement, we have only to recall that Milton was at this time totally blind.

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B.

## Contemporary Criticism

*The Ready and Easy Way* fell from the press into a multitude of eager hands. Royalists and Commonwealth-men alike were anxious to hear what Milton, still nominally Latin secretary, had to say about the question of settlement. Naturally, his unretracted championship of the dethroned Rump, his advocacy of a perpetual council, his decided stand against the Royalists, and particularly his terrific denunciation of the Stuarts, brought down instantly upon the author a tremendous storm of criticism, ridicule, and abuse. Royalist pamphlets appearing in March and April are full of allusions to Milton and *The Ready and Easy Way*.

1. *A Seasonable Word*, written by L'Estrange immediately before the dissolution of Parliament (March 16), contains, besides many indirect references to Milton, the following:

'I could only wish his *Excellency* had been a little civiller to Mr. *Milton*; for, just as he had finished his *Modell of a Common-wealth*, directing in these very Terms, the *Choyce*, . . . "men not addicted to a Single Person, or House of Lords, and the Work is done." In *come the Secluded Members and spoyle his Project*. To this *admirable discovery*, he subjoynes a *sutable Proposition* in favour of the *late sitting Members*, and This is it, having premised the *Abilities and Honesty, desirable in Ministers of State*, he recommends the *Rumpers* to us as so *Qualified; advises us to quit that fond Opinion of successive Parliament; and suffer the Persons then in Power, to perpetuate themselves under the name of a Grand or Generall Counsell*, and to rule us, and our *Heirs* for ever. It were great pittie these Gentlemen should lose their longings.'<sup>1</sup>

2. The following passage from *The Character of the Rump* (March 17) is especially vitriolic: 'An ingenious person hath observed that Scott is the Rump's man Thomas; and they might have said to him, when he was so busy with the General,

Peace, for the Lord's sake, Thomas! lest Monk take us,  
And drag us out, as Hercules did Cacus.

But John Milton is their goose-quill champion; who had need of a help-meet to establish anything, for he has a ram's head and is good only at batteries,—an old heretic both in religion and manners, that by his will would shake off his governors as he doth his wives, four in a fortnight. The sunbeams of his scandalous papers against the late King's Book is [*sic*] the parent that begot his late *New Commonwealth*; and, because he, like a parasite as he is, by flattering the then tyrannical power, hath run himself into the briars, the man will be angry if the rest of the nation will not bear him company, and suffer themselves to be decoyed into the same condition. He is so much an enemy to usual practices that I believe, when he is condemned to travel to Tyburn in a cart, he will petition for the favour to be the first man that ever was driven thither



in a wheelbarrow. And now, John, *you* must stand close and draw in your elbows, that Needham, the Commonwealth didapper may have room to stand beside you. . . . He [Needham] was one of the spokes of Harrington's Rota, till he was turned out for cracking. As for Harrington, *he's* but a demi-semi in the Rump's music, and should be good at the cymbal; for he is all for wheeling instruments, and, having a good invention, may in time find out the way to make a concert of grindstones.'<sup>2</sup>

3. A clever Royalist satire which came from the press on March 28 has the following title-page:

*'The Censure of the Rota upon Mr. Milton's Book, intituled, "The ready and easy Way to establish a free Commonwealth," &c.*

*'Die Lunæ, 26 Martii, 1660.*

'Ordered by the Rota, that Mr. Harrington be desired to draw up a Narrative of this Day's Proceeding upon Mr. Milton's Book, called, "The ready and easy Way," &c. And to cause the same to be forthwith printed and published, and a Copy thereof to be sent to Mr. Milton.'

'Trundle Wheeler, Clerk to the Rota.'

'Printed at London by Paul Giddy, Printer to the Rota, at the Sign of the Windmill in Turn-again Lane, 1660.'

The pamphlet purports to be the record of proceedings at a session of the famous Rota Club, upon which occasion *The Ready and Easy Way* was the subject of debate. The design of spitting, as it were, both great commonwealth-champions at one thrust is a rather happy one; the wit is often far from bad; and the literary quality in general gives the *Censure* preëminence over other contemporary scurrilities. As we have already seen, Milton winced under its ridicule. It is, upon the whole, the most interesting and important criticism that appeared upon *The Ready and Easy Way*. And as it exercised so large an influence upon the second edition, it has seemed worth while to present in the following excerpts all that bears direct relation to Milton's book:

'Sir,

'I am commanded, by this ingenious convention of the *Rota*, to give you an account of some reflections that they have lately made upon a treatise of yours; . . . I must first bespeak your pardon for being forced to say something, not only against my own sense, but the interest, which both you and I carry on. . . .

'It is our usual custom to dispute every thing, how plain or obscure soever, by knocking argument against argument, and tilting at one another with our heads, as rams fight, until we are out of breath, and then refer it to our wooden oracle, the box; and seldom anything, how slight soever, hath appeared, without some patron or other to defend it. I must confess, I never saw bowling-stones run so unluckily against any boy, when his hand has been out, as the ballots did against you, when anything was

put to the question, from the beginning of your book to the end; for it was no sooner read over, but a gentleman of your acquaintance [Cyriack Skinner, or Needham?] said, he wished, for your own sake, as well as the cause you contend for, that you had given your book no name, like an Anabaptist's child, until it had come to years of discretion, or else you had got some friend to be gossip, that has a luckier hand at giving titles to books than you have: for it is observed, you have always been very unfortunate that way, as if it were fatal to you, to prefix bulls and nonsense to the very fronts of your learned works. . . . But in this book, he said, you were more insufferable; for you . . . style your declamation, "The ready and easy Way," as if it were the best or only way, to the disparagement of this most ingenious assembly, who are confident, they have proposed others much more considerable. . . .

'To this another added, he wondered you did not give over writing, since you have always done it to little or no purpose. . . .

'After this, a grave gentleman of the long robe said, . . . you had plaid false in the very first word of your treatise: for the parliament of England, as you call the Rump, never consisted of a packed party of one house, that, by fraud and covin, had disseised the major part of their fellows, and forfeited their own right. . . . But this, he said, you stole from patriot Whitlock, who began his declaration for a free state with the same words; and he wondered you would filch and pilfer nonsense and fallacies, that have such plentiful store of your own growth. Yet this was as true as that which follows, That a great number of the faithfulest of the people assisted them in throwing off kingship; for they were a very slight number, in respect of the whole, and none of the faithfulest. . . . This, being put to the ballot, was immediately carried on in the affirmative, without a dissenting pellet. . . .

'Presently a gentleman, that hath been some years beyond-seas, said, he wondered you would say anything so false and ridiculous, as that this commonwealth was the terror and admiration of France itself; for, if that were true, the cardinal and council were very imprudent to become the chief promoters of it, and strive, by all means to uphold that, which they judged to be dangerous to themselves; . . . for, if this free state be so terrible to them, they have been very unwise in assisting it to keep out the King all this while. . . . As for our actions abroad, which you brag of, he said, he never heard of any where he was, until Oliver Cromwell reduced us to an absolute monarchy, under the name of a free state; and then we beat the potent and flourishing republick of the United Provinces. But, for our actions at home, he had heard abroad, that they savoured much of Goth and Vandal barbarism, if pulling down of churches and demolishing the noblest monuments in the land . . . amount to so much. . . .

'After a little pause, a learned gentleman of this society stood up, and said, he could not but take notice of one absurdity in your discourse, and that is, where you speak of liberty gloriously fought for, and kingly thralldom abjured by the people, &c. . . . He wondered you could be so weak, or impudent, to play foul in matters of fact. . . . But he was of opinion, that you did not believe yourself, not those reasons you give, in defence of a commonwealth; but that you are swayed by something else, as either by a stork-like fate (as a modern Protector-poet calls it, because that fowl is observed to live nowhere but in commonwealths), or, because you have inadvisedly scribbled

yourself obnoxious, or else you fear, such admirable eloquence, as yours, would be thrown away under a monarchy, as it would be, though of admirable use in a popular government, where orators carry all the rabble before them: for who knows to how cheap a rate this goodly eloquence of yours, if well managed, might bring the price of sprats; as no wiser orators than yourself have done heretofore, in the petty factions, Greek republicks, whom you chiefly imitate; for all your politicks are derived from the works of declaimers. . . .

‘You have done your feeble endeavours to rob the church, of the little which the rapine of the most sacrilegious persons hath left, in your learned work against Tithes; you have slandered the dead, worse than envy itself, and thrown your dirty outrage, on the memory of a murdered prince, as if the hangman were but your usher. These have been the attempts of your stiff, formal eloquence, which you arm accordingly, with anything that lies in your way, right or wrong, not only begging, but stealing questions, and taking every thing for granted, that will serve your turn; for you are not ashamed to rob Oliver Cromwell himself, and make use of his canting, with signal assistances from heaven, and answering condescensions. . . .

‘If you did not look very like a cunning man, nobody would believe you, nor trust your predictions of the future, that give so ill an account of things past. But he held you very unwise to blab any such thing; for that party you call *we*, have gained so abundantly much more than they have spent, that they desire nothing more, than to fight over the same fight again, at the same rate . . . : for how vile soever you make the blood of faithful Englishmen, they have made such good markets of it, that they would be glad at any time to broach the whole nation at the same price, and afford the treasure of miraculous deliverances, as you call it, into the bargain.

‘This he added was easier to be understood than your brand of Gentilism, upon Kingship, for which you wrest Scripture most unmercifully, to prove, that though Christ said, ‘His kingdom was not of this world’; yet his commonwealth is. For if the text which you quote, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship . . .” &c. be to be understood of civil government, (and to infer commonwealth, as you will have it right or wrong), and not to be meant of his spiritual reign, of which he was then speaking, and expressly calls so; you must prove that he erected a republick of his Apostles, and that, notwithstanding the Scripture everywhere calls his government, The Kingdom of Heaven, it ought to be corrected, and rendered, The Commonwealth of Heaven, or rather, The Commonwealth of this world; and yet the text does as well prove benefactors heathenish as kings; for if our Saviour had meant to brand Kingship with any evil character, he would never have styled himself ‘King of the Jews, King of Heaven, King of Righteousness,’ &c. as he frequently does; but no where a Stateholder or Keeper of the Liberties.

‘To this a young gentleman made answer, That your writings are best interpreted by themselves; and that he remembered in that book, wherein you fight with the King’s picture, you call Sir Philip Sidney’s princess Pamela (who was born and bred out of Christian parents in England) a Heathen woman; and, therefore, he thought that by Heathenish, you meant English; and that in calling kingship Heathenish, you inferred,

it was the only proper and natural government of the English nation, as it hath been proved in all ages.

‘To which another objected, that such a sense was quite contrary to your purpose: to which he immediately replied, That it was no new thing with you to write that, which is as well against as for your purpose. After much debate they agreed to put it to the ballot, and the young gentleman carried it without any contradiction.

‘That done, a gentleman of good credit here, . . . said, you . . . had made as politic provision for spiritual, as civil liberty, in those pious and orthodox (though seemingly absurd and contradictory) grounds you have laid down . . . : That the church of Christ ought to have no head upon earth, but the monster of many heads, the multitude . . . : that all Christian laws and ordinances have a coercive power, to see themselves put in execution, and yet they ought to be subject to every man’s will and humour (which you call his best light), and no man to them but in his own sense. That the Scripture only ought to interpret itself (just as it can read itself) . . . : that every man may do what he pleases in matters of religion. . . . That no man can serve God, nor save his own soul, but in a commonwealth, in this certainty, you go after your own invention, for no man ever heard it before. . . . That any man may turn away his wife, and take another as often as he pleases, as you have most learnedly proved upon the fiddle, and practiced in your life and conversation, for which you have achieved the honour to be styled “The Founder of a Sect.” . . .

‘Certainly, the most ready and easy way to root out religion, is to render it contemptible and ridiculous; which cannot be sooner done, than by giving licence and encouragement to all manner of frenzies, that pretend to new discoveries in matters of faith. . . . And this is the way you go, which will never fail you, as long as there are fools and mad-men to carry on the work. . . . The Fifth-Monarchy men . . . would have been admirable for your purpose, if they had but dreamed of a fifth free state.

‘By this time, they began to grow weary of your perpetual falsehoods and mistakes, and a worthy knight of this assembly stood up and said, that if we meant to examine all the particular fallacies and flaws in your writing, we should never have done; he would therefore, with leave, deliver his judgment upon the whole, which, in brief, was thus: That it is all windy foppery, from the beginning to the end, written to the elevation of that rabble, and meant to cheat the ignorant. That you fight always with the flat of your hand, like a rhetorician, and never contract the logical fist. That you trade altogether in universals, the region of deceits and fallacy, but never come so near particulars, as to let us know which, among divers things of the same kind, you would be at. For you admire commonwealths in general, and cry down kingship as much at large, without any regard to the particular constitutions, which only make either the one or the other good or bad, vainly supposing all slavery to be in the government of a single person, and nothing but liberty in that of many. . . .

‘Besides this, as all your politicks reach but the outside and circumstances of things, and never touch at realities, so you are very solicitous about words, as if they were charms, or had more in them than what they signify. For no conjurer’s devil is more concerned in a spell, than you are in a mere word, but never regard the things which it

serves to express. For you believe liberty is safer under an arbitrary unlimited power, by virtue of the name Commonwealth, than under any other government, how just or restrained soever, if it be but called Kingship.

‘And therefore, you would have the name Parliament abolished. . . . But in this you are too severe a Draco, to punish one word, for holding correspondence with another, when all the liberty, you talk so much of, consists in nothing else but mere words. For though you brag much of the people’s managing their own affairs, you allow them no more share of that in your Utopia, as you have ordered it, than only to set up their throats and bawl, instead of every three years, which they might have done before, once in an age, or oftener, as an old member drops away, and a new is to succeed, not for his merit or knowledge in state-affairs, but because he is able to bring the greatest and most deep-mouthed pack of the rabble into the field. . . .

‘After this said, he moved the assembly that I might be desired to deliver my judgment upon the book, as he and others had done, which being immediately passed, I knew not, though unwilling, how to avoid it; and therefore I told them as briefly as I could, that that which I disliked most in your treatise was, that there is not one word of the balance of propriety, nor the Agrarian, nor Rotation in it, from the beginning to the end; without which together with a Lord Archon, I thought I had sufficiently demonstrated, not only in my writings but public exercises in that coffee-house, that there is no possible foundation of a free commonwealth. To the first and second of these, that is, the Balance and the Agrarian, you made no objection, and therefore, I should not need to make any answer. But for the third, I mean Rotation, which you implicitly reject in your design to perpetuate the present members, I shall only add this to what I have already said and written on this subject, That a commonwealth is like a great top, that must be kept up by being whipped round, and held in perpetual circulation, for if you discontinue the Rotation, and suffer the senate to settle, and stand still, down it falls immediately. And if you had studied the point as carefully as I have done, you could not but know, there is no such way under heaven of disposing the vicissitudes of command and obedience, and of distributing equal right and liberty among all men, as this of wheeling.

‘But I wondered most of all, at what politic crack in any man’s skull, the imagination could enter of securing liberty under an oligarchy, seised of the government for term of life, which was never yet seen in the world. . . .

‘But I could not but laugh, as they all had done, at the pleasantness of your fancy, who suppose our noble patriots, when they are invested for term of life, will serve their country at their own charge: this, I said, was very improbable, unless you meant as they do, that all we have is their own, and that to prey and devour is to serve. . . . For though many may laugh at me for accounting 300,000 pounds in wooden ware, toward the erecting of a free-state, in my Oceana, but a trifle to the whole nation; because I am most certain that these little pills the ballots are the only physick that can keep the body-politick soluble, and not suffer the humour to settle, I will undertake, that if the present members had but a lease of the government during life, notwithstanding whatsoever impeachment of waste, they would raise more out of it to

themselves in one year, than that amounts to; beside the charge we must be at in maintaining of guards to keep the boys off them. . . .

‘To conclude; I told them, you had made good your title in a contrary sense; for you have really proposed the most ready and easy way to establish downright slavery upon the nation that can possibly be contrived, which will clearly appear to any man that does but understand this plain truth, that wheresoever the power of proposing and debating, together with the power of ratifying and enacting laws, is entrusted in the hands of any one person, or any one council, as you would have it, that government is inevitably arbitrary and tyrannical, because they may make whatsoever they please lawful or unlawful. And that tyranny hath the advantage of all others that hath law and liberty among the instruments of servitude.

J. H.’

4. For the reference contained in *Brief Notes upon a late Sermon*, see note on 9. 9c.

5. *No Blinde Guides* appeared on April 20. It was from the pen of Milton’s relentless and now brutally exultant foe, L’Estrange. Although written in reply to the *Brief Notes*, it contains several references to *The Ready and Easy Way*. L’Estrange, now confident of Royalist victory, is in mocking mood:

‘What do you think of “Grand, Arbitrary, & Perpetual Counsel; and no more Parliaments?” (according to your Gracious Proposition, [Page 8] of your *Free and easie way, &c.*) And, in regard that *in a free Commonwealth*, “they who are greatest are Perpetual Servants. . . . [Page 4] What do you think of the Rump-Parliaments “Perpetuating itself” *under the name of that grand Counsil?* [Page 10.] *the Government being in so many “Faithful” and “Experienced” hands, next under God, so Able; especially Filling up their number, as they intend, and abundantly sufficient so happily to govern us:* [P. 11, &c.] . . .

‘Alas . . . for your ready, and easie way to Establish a Free Commonwealth, what will . . . become then of Your Standing Council?’

6. *The Dignity of Kingship Asserted: in answer to Mr. Milton’s ‘Ready and Easie Way to establish a Free Commonwealth.’ . . . By G.S., a Lover of Loyalty*, is the title of the most serious and voluminous reply provoked by Milton’s book. It appeared sometime in April or May. Its author, George Searle (?), acknowledges ‘the ability of Mr. Milton,’ and also the ‘fluent elegant style’ of the *Defense*. He affirms that Milton ‘then did, and doth now, want nothing on his side but truth.’ As for the Greek republics, they were so ancient that nothing could be certainly known about them. The Hollanders were a herd of swine. And, highest argument of all, Christ himself was born under an emperor.<sup>1</sup>

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- *et nos*  
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[1] *Life of Milton* 5. 678.

[1] *Commons Journals*.

[1] *Commons Journals*.

[2] Cobbett, *Parliamentary History* 3. 1580.

[3] Baker, *Chronicle* (cont. by Edward Phillips), p. 601

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 600.

[5] *Commons Journals*.

[1] *Seasonable Word* (*Tracts*, p. 86).

[2] Skinner, *Life of General Monk*, pp. 251—2.

[1] Godwin, *Lives of Edw. and John Phillips*, p. 377.

[1] *Memorials* 4. 405.

[1] *No Blinds Guides* (*Tracts*, p. 1).

[2] Baker, *Chron.*, p. 608.

- [1] Baker, *Chron.*, p. 577.
- [2] *Letter to a Friend* (Bohn 2. 103).
- [3] L'Estrange, *Apology* (*Tracts*, p. 42).
- [4] Baker, *Chron.*, p. 591.
- [5] Whitelock, *Memorials* 4. 380.
- [6] *Ibid.* 4. 380.
- [7] Baker, *Chron.*, p. 592.
- [1] Baker, *Chron.*, p. 592.
- [2] Monk, *Letter to Speaker* (*Corbet, Monk*, p. 121).
- [3] Baker, *Chron.*, p. 594.
- [1] Baker, *Chron.*, p. 575.
- [2] Corbet, *Monk*, p. 150.
- [3] Baker, *Chron.*, p. 586.
- [1] Baker, *Chron.*, p. 588.
- [1] Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* 3. 1575.
- [2] *Verney Memoirs* 3. 458.
- [3] *History of My Own Time*, p. 156.
- [1] Baker, *Chron.*, p. 598.
- [2] *Diary*, Feb. 11, 1660.
- [1] Clement Walker, *History of Independency* 4. 92.
- [1] Walker, *Hist. of Independency* 4. 94.
- [2] Ludlow, *Memoirs* 2. 227.
- [3] *Ibid.* 2. 237.
- [4] Baker, *Chron.*, p. 601.
- [1] *Verney Memoirs* 3. 473.

[2] Baker, *Chron.*, p. 605.

[3] *Verney Memoirs* 3. 465.

[1] *Letter of Advice* (*Harl. Misc.* 8. 625).

[2] Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* 3. 1575.

[3] *Hist. of Rebellion* 16. 88.

[4] *Somers Tracts* 6. 303.

[1] Whitelock, *Memorials* 4. 378.

[2] *Somers Tracts* 6. 533.

[3] *Harl. Misc.* 6. 192.

[1] *Harl. Misc.* 9. 424.

[2] *Ibid.* 8. 625.

[1] Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* 3. 1579.

[2] Bohn 2. 103.

[1] *Areop.* (Bohn 2. 72).

[2] *Ibid.* (Bohn 2. 74).

[1] *Sec. Def.* (Bohn 1. 265).

[1] *De Civ.* 19. 14-5.

[2] *Commonplace Bk.*, p. 181.

[3] Gierke-Maitland's *Political Theories of the Middle Age* has generally been followed in references to mediæval works that were not accessible.

[1] Poole, *Illustrations of the History of Mediæval Thought*, p. 238.

[1] Poole, *Illus. of Hist. of Med. Thought*, p. 265.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 273.

[1] *De Monarchia* tr. Henry, 1. 3.

[1] Dunning, *Political Theories, Ancient and Modern* 2. 62.

[1] Preface to *Life of James Harrington*.

[1] *Brief Lives* 1. 289.

[2] *Hist. of My Own Time* 1. 151.

[1] *Brief Lives* 1. 289.

[2] *Athen. Oxon.*, ed. Bliss, 2. 1119.

[1] *Athen. Oxon.* 3. 1123.

[1] *Life of Milton*, ed. 1761, p. 110.

[1] Sandys, *Aristotle's Constitution of Athens*, Introd., p. xxiv.

[1] *Areop.* (Bohn 2. 71).

[1] *De Republica*, tr. Barham, 1. 148.

[1] *Oceana*, ed. 1737, p. 38.

[1] *Reason of Ch. Gov.* (Bohn 2. 490).

[1] Bohn 1. 219.

[1] Frivolously.

[5. T. N.] This was undoubtedly Thomas Newcome, official printer to the commonwealth for many years under the editorship and censorship of Needham and Milton respectively. Several of Milton's books—*Defensio Prima*, *Defensio Secunda*, *Treatise of Civil Power* (1659), etc.—had issued from Newcome's press, and we may assume that it was still at Milton's service. But the initials perhaps indicate a wavering in this allegiance. At all events, Newcome had no hand in the second edition; and so dexterously was he off with the old and on with the new that we find him on May 5 appointed one of the two official printers to the Parliament.

[5. Livewell Chapman.] A stationer at the sign of the Crown in Pope's-Head Alley. The council of state, being informed that Chapman had lately 'caused several seditious and treasonable books to be printed and published,' issued an order for his arrest on March 28, 1660 (Masson, *Life of Milton* 5. 670).

[7. et nos, etc.] See Introduction, p. viii. Masson translates as follows:

We have advised

Sulla himself, advise we now the People.

The allusion is to General Monk, to whom Milton, about the time of the appearance of *The Ready and Easy Way*, had addressed a brief and convenient summary of its proposals, entitled: *The Present Means and Brief Delineation of a Free Commonwealth, Easy to be put in Practice, and without Delay. In a letter to General Monk*. Milton got no response whatever, and soon lost all confidence in Monk's



professions of republicanism. He now turns from Sylla the tyrant to appeal to the people.

[\[9. 1. since the writing.\]](#) See Introduction B. 1.

[\[9. 1a. the face of things.\]](#) This was a very favorite expression during the Interregnum. Thus Dr. Denton writes to Sir Ralph Verney, Aug. 10, 1659: ‘The face of things may alter in a moment’ (*Verney Memoirs* 3. 450).

[\[9. 2. some change.\]](#) Within the fortnight just past, General Monk, hitherto the defender of the Rump, had become the Rump’s dictator, and boldly restored the secluded members—now rampant Royalists. This opened the way to a certain and speedy restoration of kingship. Milton, conceding merely ‘some change,’ assumes at the outset a calmness of tone, as if determined still to hope, or at least not to communicate to others his own despair.

[\[9. 2a. writs for new elections.\]](#) The little handful of Rump-republicans were extremely reluctant to ‘fill up’ their numbers by new elections. Attributing the wretched state of affairs to this cause, General Monk marched into the city on Feb. 11, and flatly demanded that the House ‘should issue out Writs’ within six days (see Introd., p. xxiv, for the exact ultimatum). That stubborn and tenacious little body retaliated by disabling all sons of sequestered Royalists, but took care to comply, on their last day of grace, with the dictator’s main demand.

[\[9. 3. have bin recall’d.\]](#) See Introduction, pp. x-xi.

[\[9. 4. readmitted from exclusion.\]](#) On Dec. 6, 1648, Colonel Pride had posted his regiment at the doors of the House of Commons, and ‘terrified from sitting, near two Hundred [cf. notes on 10. 38 and 11. 21], . . . being those who had on the fifth of December before, by Vote approved of the late King’s Concessions for a Peace at the Isle of Wight’ (Baker, *Chron.*, p. 542). During the succeeding years of the commonwealth these secluded members never ceased to demand readmission. Finally, they found an effective champion in General Monk, who ‘on the one and twentyeth day of *February* [1660], meeting the secluded members at *Whitehall*, . . . commended to their care 1. Religion, . . . 2. the state,’ and ‘told them the house was open for them to enter, and prayed for their good success. The secluded members being thus admitted, fall immediately to work where they were abruptly forced to break off in December 1648’ (Walker, *Hist. Indep.* 4. 93). The eagerness of the long-debarred members to get back into their seats was not without its ludicrous aspect: ‘As he went into the House W. Prynne’s long sword got between Sir W. Waller’s short legs, and threw him down, which caused laughter’ (Aubrey, *Bodleian Letters* 2. 509). Pepys also has a good account of their triumphal entry.

[\[9. 5. not a little rejoicing.\]](#) The readmission of the secluded members had changed the Parliament in an instant from a staunch republican and Independent body into a Royalist and Presbyterian stronghold. Moreover, the restored members were pledged to a speedy dissolution and the calling of a free Parliament—conditions absolutely fatal to republicanism. Of the dissolution itself Clement Walker (*Hist. Ind.* 4. 95)

exultingly records: ‘And thus we see Independency laid in the dust, and ready to give up the ghost.’ Milton’s favorite scheme of perpetuating the Rump as a national grand council was, of course, no longer possible, if it had ever been so. Whatever rejoicing he was now capable of must have sprung, therefore, from some lingering hope of securing the main end—a commonwealth in some form instead of kingship—and a degree of faith in the vehement declarations of General Monk (see note on 9. 5a).

[\[9. 5a. resolutions of all those who are now in power.\]](#) Whitelock (*Memorials* 4. 397) mentions the engagement entered into by the Rump on Feb. 14 ‘to be true and faithful to the commonwealth of England, . . . without a king, single person or house of lords.’ The restored members, on their part, ‘declared, as to Government they intended no Alteration in it’ (Baker, *Chron.*, p. 600). But most emphatic of all was General Monk. Early in February he declared to General Ludlow that they ‘must live and die together for a Commonwealth’ (Ludlow, *Memorials* 2. 227). His words of Feb. 21, addressed to the secluded members about to be restored, were still stronger (see Introduction, p. xxxiii). Clarendon is of the opinion that he ‘desired nothing but that he might see a Commonwealth established, in such a model as Holland was, where he had been bred’ (*Hist. Rebellion* 16. 134). Being offered ‘the Government in his own Person, he said, The Experience of *Cromwell’s* Fate gave him Reasons to avoid the Rock on which that Family was split’ (Baker, *Chron.*, p. 603). Finally, a committee waited upon him for an explanation of his doings on Feb. 21, and ‘having resolved to try him to the utmost, demanded farther if he would join with them against Charles Stuart and his party: in answer to which he applied himself to Sir Arthur Haslerig, . . . and taking off his glove, and putting his hand within Sir Arthur’s, he added; “I do here protest to you in the presence of all these gentlemen, that I will oppose to the utmost the setting up of Charles Stuart, a single person, or a House of Peers” ’ (Ludlow, *Memoirs* 2. 237).

[\[9. 6. jointly tending.\]](#) The army was still thoroughly republican. The City hastened to send congratulations upon the ‘happy return of the Parliament.’ ‘Whatever mistakes have been formerly,’ said the Londoners, ‘it cannot but be a happy Day, to all but our Enemies, in that all the affections of the City and Parliament are joined together.’ These assurances, however ambiguous, together with the positive declarations (see note on 9. 5a) of Monk and the Parliament, Milton chooses to interpret in the most hopeful light possible, as ‘jointly tending to the establishment of a free Commonwealth.’

[\[9. 7. Commonwealth.\]](#) The term as used in this treatise is practically synonymous with ‘republic’ or ‘representative democracy.’ It had been variously used by earlier English writers—as signifying the whole body politic, any group or fraternity united by a common interest or characteristic, monarchy, absolute democracy, mixed government, etc. The term, however, was specifically applied to the form of government in England during the Interregnum, and, still more narrowly, to the republic that existed before and after the protectorate. It is usually qualified by Milton and other advocates of a republic by such expressions as ‘free and equal,’ ‘without single person or house of lords.’ Among the Royalists the term came in for much ridicule; as, for example, the following: ‘You have made us a commonwealth, that is, (as malignants say) have given us power to put a finger into every man’s purse and

pocket. You have made the people supreme authority, and left them no laws' (*Hosanna: Somers Tracts* 7. 55).

[\[9. 8. ? unsound | noxious. \]](#)Note the gain in precision, force, and intensity of feeling. In these respects the two words adequately represent the quality and relationship of the two editions.

[\[9. 9. humour.\]](#)See Glossary; cf. Burton's *Diary* (1828) 4. 423, for 1659: 'These tymes, and the affairs transacted in them, give motion to all sorts of humours in the nation' (*New Eng. Dict.*).

[\[9. 9a. returning.\]](#)The opening months of 1660 were characterized by an ever-rising and finally irresistible tide of enthusiasm for the king. *A Letter of Advice to his Excellency Lord-General Monk* states that the 'multitudes of people, indeed (like children, who must have a baby to play with, and something to glitter in their eyes) cry for a king' (*Harleian Miscellany* 8. 627). The author of *England's Confusion* (*Somers Tracts* 6. 528) declares that 'the poor people . . . are fain to return home and sit still in amaze' (see notes on 9. 11 and 17. 18). Monk's stand against the Rump on Feb. 11 was the occasion for fresh outbursts of wild joy and demonstration (see *Intro.*, p. xxiv), which were still intensified by his restoration of the old members on Feb. 21. Pepys (*Diary*) observes on the following day 'how abominably Barebone's windows are broke again last night.' Another writer finds it 'difficult to describe the joy and exultation' at the 'prospect of peace, concord, liberty, justice' that 'broke forth at once, from amidst the deepest darkness in which the nation had ever been involved' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* 3. 1578). John Stewkeley, of Hampshire, exultingly declares: 'We may all soon meet if the Wind blow from Flanders: wch I pray for, pro Re: pro Eccl. Ang.: pro. reg: as a Subject; as a member, as an Englishman' (*Verney Mem.* 3. 460). By March 6 Pepys is able to record that 'everybody now drink the King's health without any fear, whereas before it was very private that a man dare do it.' See also note on 9. 11.

[\[9. 9b. old bondage.\]](#)This was the common figure for kingship, not only with Milton, but with extreme Commonwealthmen in general. Thus Colonel Overton exhorted his soldiers 'to be watchful, and guard themselves against the abandoned Interest of Charles Stuart, which was now reviving and would introduce the Bondage they had freed themselves from' (Baker, *Chron.*, p. 602). Speaker Lenthall informs Monk that the people were in danger 'to have been made slaves again.'

[\[9. 9c. instill'd of late by some cunning deceivers.\]](#)Milton's own comment on this passage is as follows: 'I affirmed in the Preface of a late discourse intitl'd, "The ready Way . . .," that the humour of returning to our old bondage was instilled of late by some deceivers; and to make good, that what I then affirmed was not without just ground, one of those deceivers I present here to the people: and if I prove him not such, refuse not to be so accounted in his stead' (*Brief Notes upon a late Sermon titl'd The Fear of God and the King; Preach'd and since publish'd, by Matthew Griffith D. D.*: Bohn 2. 354). Whitelock records under date of Feb. 6 that 'divers of the King's party came from beyond sea into England, and talked very high, and that they were sure that the King would be in England very shortly' (*Memorials* 4. 393). An

anonymous writer concocted the following (see *Somers Tracts* 6. 514):

‘The Lord Chancellor Hyde to Mr. Hancock (Broderick.) Sir,

. . . Methinks it is a very fit conjuncture for you to get some sharp pamphlets to be published and dispersed, to inform the people of their folly and madness in affecting to be governed as a commonwealth, by convincing them how far the people are from enjoying that liberty under that government, which the people of England have always done under their kings; of the tyranny to which republics are subject, . . . vast taxes, . . . standing army. . . . I pray think of this, and in it do right to the worthy persons who are the chief cherishers and supporters of that design, by giving the right characters of them to the people, and making them as odious and ridiculous as they ought to be.’ Such ‘deceivers’ were legion, and the press was pouring forth a torrent of such pamphlets as *A Coffin for the Good Old Cause*, and *That wicked and Blasphemous Petition of Praise-God Barebone and his Sectarian Crew . . . anatomized*. Milton himself was twitted in the *Censure of the Rota* for being a ‘cunning’ man.

[\[9. 11. among too many of the people.\]](#) Lord Ormond, in a letter dated Jan. 1, 1660, informs Lord Jermyn ‘that the general disposition of the people, and particularly of the city of London, seems to promise great advantages to the King; four parts of five of the whole people, besides all the nobility and gentry, being devoted to him, and ready to act as they shall be directed, and not without some difficulty restrained from some present engagement’ (quoted by Harris, *Life of Charles the Second* 1. 266). See also note on 9. 9a.

[\[9. 12. I thought best not to suppress what I had written.\]](#) Milton had written the body of the treatise before the overthrow of the Rump (see *Introd.*, p. xiv). The readmission of the secluded members had rendered futile many of his recommendations; as, for example, perpetuating the Rump as a grand council. Moreover, it had made the restoration of Charles inevitable. Perhaps the knowledge and conviction of all this caused Milton to contemplate suppressing his pamphlet. But his was not the temper that fights only, or even best, under prospects of victory. He was contending, as it seemed to him, for sanity as opposed to madness; for freedom as opposed to absolute thralldom. And however forlorn the republican hope, it was not in Milton to retreat in the face of onrushing Royalism. Besides, he still tries to persuade himself of a hope that he ‘may perhaps . . . be much more useful then before.’

[\[9. 14. sitting more full and frequent.\]](#) This expression refers simply to the increased attendance after the readmission of the secluded members. It has no reference to the frequency of their sittings. See *Glossary*. The *New English Dictionary* exemplifies the usage as follows: ‘1606 Holland *Sueton*. 14 He in a ful and frequent assemblie . . . besought, etc. 1725 Pope *Odyss*. 16. 377 Apart they sate, and full and frequent, form’d a dire debate. 1746 H. Walpole *Lett. to Sir H. Mann* (1857) 2. 38. One hundred and thirty-nine Lords were present, and made a noble sight on their benches *full and frequent*.’ When the Rump resumed its sitting, Dec. 26, 1659, there were but thirty-six members present; and during the rest of its exclusive existence the attendance never exceeded fifty-three. There were seventy-three members restored on

Feb. 21, and others returned later; so that there were about 150 present in the ‘full and frequent’ body to which Milton refers.

[\[9. 14a. be now much more useful then before.\]](#)The grounds for this hope are somewhat differently stated in the two editions. Writing in the last days of February, Milton seems to feel that it would be a noteworthy service to influence—perhaps convert—the restored Parliament of 150 members. A month later, he professes to see the still larger opportunity of influencing public opinion in the midst of a general election, and of helping to shape the policy of a free Parliament met for the express business of settlement.

[\[9. 15. what hath reference to the state of things as they then stood.\]](#)Passages that referred to conditions prior to the readmission of the secluded members; as: ‘Neither ought the small number of those remaining in Parliament, be made a by-word.’

[\[9. 17. same end.\]](#)‘A free Commonwealth without single person or house of lords.’

[\[9. 20. to be freely publishd.\]](#)‘This liberty of writing’ which Milton had ‘used these eighteen years on all occasions to assert the just rights and freedoms both of church and state’ (*Hirelings*: Bohn 3. 2) was now in grave danger of being abridged. Indeed, there was great probability that both author and publisher would be thrown into prison, and the bold pamphlet itself be suppressed. See note on 9. 28a.

[\[9. 21. a free Parliament.\]](#)The one insistent note that fell upon the ears of General Monk as he marched from Scotland was the cry of the people for a free Parliament. The same demand met him in the *Letter of Advice*. ‘And now, sir,’ said the writer, ‘can anything else save us, but an equal commonwealth? Which in truth is no more than a free and full parliament . . . more truly elected and better formed (*Harl. Misc.* 8. 626). Whitelock (*Memorials*) records (Feb. 3) ‘a tumult yesterday in London, which was for a free parliament.’

The Long Parliament, and especially its notorious remnant, through rigid qualifications, processes of exclusion, and long continuance in power, had utterly ceased to be representative of the people at large. General Monk and the restored members responded to the almost universal demand. Disabling acts, abjuration-oath, and engagement were swept aside; and for the first time in many years a Parliament assembled, April 25, 1660, which not only was the free choice of the nation, but also was free from army-intimidation, and free to proceed with the settlement of the government.

[\[9. 22. whom it behoves.\]](#)A similar appeal for a hearing in the Parliament is made in the *Areopagitica* (Bohn 2. 52): ‘I could name him who from his private house wrote that discourse to the parliament of Athens, that persuades them to change the form of democracy which was then establish’d. Such honour was done in those days to men who profest the study of wisdom and eloquence, not only in their own country, but in other lands, that cities and signiories heard them gladly, and with great respect, if they had aught in public to admonish the state.’



[\[9. 26. absolute determination.\]](#) Since the appearance of the first edition, the Solemn League and Covenant had been restored (March 5). Ejected ministers had, in many cases, been reinstated. Lambert, now an unyielding republican, had been sent to the Tower, and Colonel Overton had been discharged from the command of Hull. All disaffected officers had been removed by General Monk. The engagement (see note on 10. 28) had been expunged (March 13). The old qualifications (see note on 21. 20) debarring Royalists from Parliament had been rendered harmless (March 13) by the addition of a saving clause, ‘unless he or they have since manifested his or their good Affection to this Parliament.’ Finally, the council of state had been authorized (March 15) to apprehend ‘such Persons as they shall find dangerous to the Peace and Safety of the Commonwealth’ (*Com. Journ.*). Besides these official measures, so obviously taken to prepare the way for the coming of Charles, there were the almost universal clamor of the people for a king, and the certainty that the Parliament about to meet would be overwhelmingly Royalist. All this Milton interpreted as an ‘absolute determination to enslave.’ ‘Our liberties,’ cried he in utmost anxiety, ‘will be utterly lost in the next parliament, without some powerful course taken, of speediest prevention’ (*Brief Del.*: Bohn 2. 106).

[\[9. 27. Lent.\]](#) ‘The period including 40 weekdays extending from Ash-Wednesday to Easter-eve, observed as a time of fasting and penitence, in commemoration of Our Lord’s fasting in the wilderness’ (*New Eng. Dict.*).

[\[9. 28. Shroving-time.\]](#) Shrove-tide was a period of confession preparatory to Lent. It extended from the Saturday evening before Quinquagesima Sunday to Ash-Wednesday morning. On Shrove-Tuesday Catholics were wont, after confession, to spend the rest of the day in sports, and to feast on pancakes or fritters. It is to this extra indulgence in freedom just before entering upon the forty days’ Lenten fast that Milton alludes.

[\[9. 28a. to speak freely.\]](#) The ‘supreme senate’ under whose ‘protection’ Milton had enjoyed ‘this liberty of writing’ (see note on 9.20) was no longer in being. The council of state had been empowered to suppress seditious pamphlets, and to call their authors to account. A warrant was issued for the arrest of Livewell Chapman, Milton’s publisher, on March 28. On April 9 Whitelock (*Memorials*) records that ‘the council discharged Needham [Milton’s intimate friend and fellow-journalist] from writing the weekly intelligence.’ Milton therefore had good cause in April, 1660, to bespeak a little further indulgence for his bold and contemptuous pen.

[\[9. 30. through haste.\]](#) The auspicious approach of the mysterious General Monk in the first days of February had inspired innumerable politicasters with a feverish desire to proffer advice. Milton, along with the rest, made all possible haste to lay before that grim sphinx the one and only way to effect a settlement. Hence the main body of the first edition was probably composed with great rapidity. The sudden change in Monk’s attitude toward the Rump, however, brought the work to a standstill. But upon Monk’s restoring the secluded members, and calling them and God to witness his intention of settling the government upon commonwealth-foundations, Milton again set busily and anxiously to work upon his pamphlet. There was a chance that it might yet accomplish much good if it could be placed in the hands of Parliament

before adjournment, now only two or three weeks away. It is highly probable, therefore, that the preface was written, and the treatise completed and placed in the hands of the printer, with all possible expedition. Cf. note on 9. 30b.

[\[9. 30a. many faults.\]](#) See Appendix A. 4.

[\[9. 30b. many books were suddenly dispersd.\]](#) According to Anthony Wood, copies of the treatise were in circulation before the end of February (see *Introd.*, p. xii), although the Thomason copy is dated March 3. The haste upon the part of Milton, the publisher, and all concerned was due to the discussion just then going on in Parliament as to the time of adjournment. On Feb. 27 ‘a Bill for dissolving this present Parliament was read the First time’ (*Com. Journ.*); and on March 1 it was resolved that this should occur ‘at or before the Fifteenth Day of this instant March.’

[\[9. 32. to revise and somewhat to enlarge.\]](#) See Appendix A. 3.

[\[9. 33. especially that part which argues for a perpetual Senat.\]](#) It will be observed that Milton took occasion to amplify this argument by the addition of two solid pages of matter. The causes of this extra labor were probably the tireless arguments of the Rota-men (see *Introd.*, p. xlvi), and the appearance (March 26) of a pamphlet entitled *The Censure of the Rota upon Mr. Milton’s Book* (see Appendix B, p. 173).

[\[10. 1. great number of the people.\]](#) London (containing about one tenth of the entire population of England), and the South and East in general, were strong for the Parliament at the beginning of the war. But a far smaller proportion of the people were ready to go the length of abolishing kingship. Cf. note on 9. 11.

[\[10. 5. burdensom, expensive, useless and dangerous.\]](#) This is obviously Milton’s slightly inaccurate recollection of the acts of the House of Commons, Feb. 6 and 7, 1649, which declared the House of Peers ‘useless and dangerous,’ and kingship ‘unnecessary, burdensome, and dangerous.’ The revised edition has it exactly right: ‘unnecessary, burdensome, and dangerous.’ Cf. note on 10. 7.

[\[10. 7. abolishd it.\]](#) ‘Resolved, etc. That it hath been found by Experience, and this House doth declare, that the Office of a King in this Nation, and to have the Power thereof in any Single Person, is unnecessary, burdensome, and dangerous to the Liberty, Safety, and publick Interest of the People of this Nation; and therefore ought to be abolished: And that an Act be brought in to that Purpose’ (*Com. Journ.*, Feb. 7, 1649). The act was finally passed March 17.

[\[10. 7a. free Commonwealth.\]](#) In the government that was set up after the abolishing of monarchy, the executive power was vested in a council of state, consisting of forty-one members, chosen by the House for a term of one year. There was to be no such thing as a lord president in this body, but it was soon found necessary to elevate Bradshaw to that position. All but ten of its members were chosen from the Parliament, which itself now averaged but fifty-six in attendance; so that council of state and Parliament were practically one. The judiciary and all minor offices of state remained about as they had been before.



[10. 8. [admiration and terror of our neighbours.](#)] See Glossary. Contemporaneous with the English contest between Parliament and king was a very similar struggle in France between the people and their Parliament, upon the one hand, and the court-party, as represented by the queen-mother, Anne of Austria, and her prime minister, Mazarin, upon the other. In August, 1648, the royalist side attempted to overawe Parliament by arresting two of its leaders, Broussel and Blancmesnil. But the bold move unchained a popular fury. Men, women, and children flew to arms, shouting: ‘Down with your Mazarin! Broussel! Broussel!’ The queen-regent, although vowing that she would first strangle him with her own hands, was forced to yield, and order the release of Broussel. The tumults continued, and in January, 1649, war was declared. The queen, taking with her the young king, and her court as well, fled from Paris to the castle of St. Germain on the night of Jan. 5, 1649. She absolutely refused to depose Mazarin. ‘“I should be afraid,” she said to Madame de Motteville, “that, if I were to let him fall, the same thing would happen to me that happened to the King of England [Charles I had just been executed], and that, after he had been driven out, my turn would come” ’ (Guizot, *Hist. of France* 5. 361). Peace was declared in April, and the queen returned to Paris. But the rebellion spread to other parts of France. ‘Bordeaux was the focus of the insurrection; . . . riots were frequent in the town; the little king, with the queen and the cardinal, marched in person upon Bordeaux’ (*ibid.* 5. 365).

The rebellion of the Fronde ended in failure; but ‘the attempt had been the same in France as in England. . . . It was the same yearnings of patriotism and freedom, the same desire on the part of the country to take an active part in its own government’ (*ibid.* 5. 382). Mazarin himself ‘compared the Parliament to the House of Commons, and the coadjutor to Cromwell’ (*ibid.* 5. 365).

[10. 11. [not bound . . . to any former covenant.](#)] The Solemn League and Covenant was taken by the House of Commons September 25, 1643. The section here referred to is as follows: ‘III. We shall with the same sincerity, reality and constancy, in our several vocations, endeavour with our estates and lives mutually to preserve the rights and privileges of the Parliaments, and the liberties of the kingdoms, and to preserve and defend the King’s Majesty’s person and authority, in the preservation and defense of the true religion and liberties of the Kingdoms, that the world may bear witness with our consciences of our loyalty, and that we have no thoughts or intentions to diminish His Majesty’s just power and greatness’ (Gardiner, *Const. Documents of Pur. Rev.*, p. 269).

[10. 11a. [light of nature or religion.](#)] The law of nature (see notes on 10. 33a and 10. 40), revealed in human consciousness, and the law of God, or divine law, as found in the revealed Word. In Milton’s opinion, these were identical.

[10. 12. [many forfeitures.](#)] See note on 10. 20.

[10. 16. [They covenanted.](#)] See note on 10. 11. This is a repetition of an argument already used against Salmasius: ‘But you omit upon what terms they promised it; to wit, if it might consist with the safety of their religion and their liberty’ (*Defense*: Bohn 1. 193).

[\[10. 18. to bring in upon our consciences a Popish religion.\]](#) It should be remembered that Charles really desired the preservation of episcopacy. But he desired even more to regain his crown and kingdom, and scrupled not to use the aid of Catholics as a means to this end. Queen Henrietta negotiated with the pope for an army of French troops, to be supported by the clergy; and Glamorgan's treaty with the Catholics of Ireland pledged the king to such concessions as the pope's nuncio should demand in return for 10,000 Irish troops; but this latter treaty was disavowed by the king (*Camb. Hist.* 4. 338). However, Milton probably refers to episcopacy itself; for in an earlier and more complete indictment we read: 'Besides, he bore extreme hard upon the consciences of good men, and compelled them to the use of ceremonies and superstitious worship, borrowed from popery, and by him re-introduced into the church' (*Defense*: Bohn 1. 200). Cf. notes on 10. 20, 16. 15, and 36. 28.

[\[10. 20. his occasioning . . . the Irish massacre.\]](#) Again and again Milton recurs to this charge against the late king. Charles was 'found to have the chief hand in a most detested conspiracy against the parliament and kingdom, as by letters and examinations of Percy, Goring, and other conspirators came to light; that his intention was to rescue the Earl of Strafford, by seizing on the Tower of London; to bring up the English army out of the North, joined with eight thousand Irish papists raised by Strafford, and a French army to be landed at Portsmouth against the parliament and their friends' (*Eikonok.*: Bohn 1. 334). Of the English Protestants in Ireland no fewer than '154,000 by their own computation' were massacred. Charles was 'ever friendly to the Irish papists, . . . and, like a kind of pope, sold them many indulgences for money.' Till the 'very burst of that rebellion,' a committee of Irish Papists were with him and the queen in close conference, and in 'great favour, at Whitehall' (*Eikonok.*: Bohn 1. 409). He 'gave them his peculiar right to more than five Irish counties, for the payment of an inconsiderable Rent.' This gift Milton thinks was to the end that they might come quickly and obliterate Parliament. At all events, these very beneficiaries were soon found to be 'the chief rebels themselves.' From these facts, Milton concludes that 'no understanding man could longer doubt who was "author or instigator" of that rebellion' (*ibid.* 1. 411). 'These projects not succeeding, he sent over one Dillon, a traitor, into Ireland with private instructions to the natives, to fall suddenly upon all the English that inhabited there' (*Defense*: Bohn 1. 201). As to the 'Articles of Peace made by the late king with his Irish rebels,' Milton says: 'He hath sold away that justice so oft demanded . . . for the blood of more than two hundred thousand of his subjects, that never hurt him, never disobeyed him, assassinated and cut in pieces by those Irish barbarians, to give the first promoting, as is more than thought, to his own tyrannical designs in England' (*Observations*: Bohn 2. 183).

Milton, having been in the very centre of the terrific fury of resentment in England over these outrages, naturally exaggerates their horror and the king's complicity. But there is at least some foundation of fact in the charges. Strafford is said to have reported to Charles: 'You have an Army in Ireland you may employ here to reduce this Kingdom.' It is certain that Charles refused to disband these Irish forces, and secretly commissioned the Earls of Ormonde and Antrim to swell their numbers to twenty thousand. Undoubtedly it was his game to call them in against the Parliament.

But quite distinct from all this, a long-planned, independent rebellion of the Irish was

brewing; and this finally broke out over Ulster on Oct. 23, 1641. The Catholics, who longed to put an end to Laud and Strafford's reign of 'Thorough,' joined the rebels, and had part in the tumults that followed. Charles' part in it all seems to have been his attempting to manipulate the Irish forces as a weapon against Parliament (*Camb. Hist.* 4. 522).

[\[10. 23. his refusing more then seaven times, propositions.\]](#) 'Seven times over' is the corresponding expression in *Eikonoklastes*. Such were the Nineteen Propositions (June 1, 1642), the Oxford Propositions (Feb. 1, 1643), the Uxbridge Propositions, presented Nov. 24, 1644, the Newcastle Propositions (July 13, 1646), upon the part of the English Parliament; numerous overtures by the Scotch Presbyterians; and the joint proposals in 1648.

It is hardly surprising that Charles refused such, for example, as the Newcastle Propositions, which demanded, in part, that he take the Covenant and permit its general enforcement; that there be national Presbyterianism; and that Parliament have not only the appointing of all important officers, but also the control of army and navy for twenty years.

[\[10. 26. with no difference between a king and a god.\]](#) The Covenant avoids mention or recognition of the so-called divine right of kings. It is 'the King's Majesty's *person and authority*,' his '*just power and greatness*,' that are, under certain conditions, to be defended (see note on 10. 11).

[\[10. 28. solemn ingagement.\]](#) 'Resolved, &c. That every Member that now doth, or shall at any time hereafter, sit in this House, shall subscribe his Name to this Engagement; *viz.*, "I do declare and promise, That I will be true and faithful to the Commonwealth of England, as the same is now established, without a King or House of Lords" (*Com. Journ.*, Oct. 11, 1649). On Dec. 25, 1649, it was proposed 'that it be referred to a Committee, to consider of a Declaration to be published, to satisfy the People, That the Engagement is not against the former Protestation and Covenant.'

[\[10. 30. the protestation before.\]](#) This was the protest of May 3, 1641, wherein the Parliament, after complaining of recent 'Designs of Priests and Jesuits,' of 'Endeavors to subvert the fundamental Laws of England and Ireland, and to introduce the Exercise of an arbitrary and tyrannical Government,' of a 'Popish Army levied in Ireland, and Two Armies brought into the Bowels of this Kingdom, to the hazard of His Majesty's Royal Person,' declared as follows:

'I A. B. do, in the Presence of Almighty God, promise, vow, and protest, to maintain and defend, as far as lawfully I may, with my Life, Power, and Estate, the true reformed Protestant Religion, expressed in the Doctrine of the Church of England, against all Popish Innovation within this Realm, contrary to said Doctrine, and according to the duty of my Allegiance, I will maintain and defend, His Majesty's royal Person and Estate' (*Com. Journ.*).

[10. 33. [serve two contrary maisters.](#)] From the Middle Ages descended the principle that allegiance to rulers is always subordinate to the higher laws of God and nature. See *Introd.*, p. xlii, and note on 10. 33a.

[10. 33a. [that more supreme law.](#)] Milton elsewhere makes clear his meaning: ‘But if you insist to know, “by what right, by what law”; by that law, I tell you, which God and nature have enacted, viz. that whatever things are for the universal good of the whole state, are for that reason lawful and just’ (*Defense*: Bohn 1. 15). Cf. note on 10. 40.

[10. 35. [They knew the people of England to be a free people, themselves the representers of that freedom.](#)] Cf. *Commons Journals*, Jan. 4, 1649: ‘Resolved, &c. That the Commons of *England*, in Parliament assembled, do *Declare*, That the People are, under God, the Original of all just Power: and do also *Declare*, that the Commons of *England*, in Parliament assembled, being chosen by, and representing the People, have the Supreme Power in this Nation.’ Cf. note on 21. 32.

[10. 37. [many were excluded.](#)] See notes on 9. 4 and 11. 21. Milton saw fit to justify this exclusion, and in very strong language: ‘No question but it is as good and necessary to expel rotten members out of the house, as to banish delinquents out of the land: and the reason holds as well in forty as in five. And if they be yet more, the more dangerous is their number. They had no privilege to sit there, and vote home the author, the impenitent author, of all our miseries, to freedom, honour and royalty, for a few fraudulent, if not destructive, concessions’ (*Observations*: Bohn 2. 195).

[10. 37a. [as many fled.](#)] At the beginning of the Civil War a large part of the commons, and most of the lords, withdrew to form a Royalist Parliament at Oxford. ‘About 175 members followed the King’s flag, while nearly three hundred remained at Westminster. Rather more than thirty peers threw in their lot with the popular party, while about eighty supported the King, and about twenty took no part in the struggle’ (Firth, *Cromwell*, p. 69).

[10. 37b. [so they pretended.](#)] The *Eikon Basilike*, for example, so argues; but Milton and his party interpreted the flight as a desertion.

[10. 38. [a sufficient number.](#)] See note on 10. 37a. Besides the Royalist defection in 1642, and the exclusion of 140 (*Camb. Hist.* 4. 354; but cf. notes on 9. 4 and 11. 21) members by Pride’s Purge in 1648, there was a further falling away upon the execution of the king; so that the average attendance in 1649 was reduced to 56. The Barebone Parliament, which met July 4, 1653, consisted of 140 members. But this body likewise suffered a considerable reduction (Sept. 12, 1654) from Cromwell’s test on fundamentals.

[10. 40. [law of nature.](#)] Milton himself furnishes both interpretation and source: ‘For the law, says Cicero in his *Philippicks*, is no other than a rule of well-grounded reason, derived from God himself, enjoining whatever is just and right, and forbidding the contrary’ (*Defense*: Bohn 1. 71). This ‘true law . . . conformable to nature, universal, unchangeable, eternal,’ whose author is ‘God himself,’ cannot be

contradicted by any other law,' and 'needs no other interpreter than our own conscience' (Cicero, *De Repub.*, tr. Barham, 3. 270). 'I am of opinion,' said Milton to Salmasius, 'that the law of God does exactly agree with the law of nature' (*Def.*: Bohn 1. 108). Plato (*Laws* 4. 713; 6. 767) and Aristotle (*Politics* 3. 16) show the earlier sources of this idea. The thought that God, operating in human consciousness as 'right reason,' is to be obeyed before every other authority, furnished a complete justification for the doctrines of resistance to tyrants, and tyrannicide, especially during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Milton's interpretation agrees with Selden's: 'I cannot fancy to myself what the law of nature means, but the law of God' (*Table Talk*).

[\[11. 4. church reformation.\]](#) Milton had hoped for much from the Presbyterian reformation; but he was disappointed, and was soon saying, 'New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large.' Cf. *Declaration of Parliament*, May 7, 1659: 'They are resolved . . . to . . . vigorously endeavor the carrying on of Reformation so much desired; and so often declared for; to the end there may be a godly and faithful Magistracy and Ministry upheld and maintained in these Nations, to the Glory and Praise of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the reviving and making glad the Hearts of the Upright in the Land' (*Com. Journ.*).

[\[11. 5. evangelic rules.\]](#) Those of the primitive Christian church. Milton was unalterably opposed to a state-church, and its forced maintenance by tithes—ideas which the Presbyterians were very busy in fostering at this time. Just the previous August he had published his *Hirelings*, a pamphlet on this very subject; but for politic reasons he here holds his resentment within bounds. Cf. *Hirelings* (Bohn 3. 40): 'Heretofore in the first evangelic times, (and it were happy for Christendom if it were so again), ministers of the gospel were by nothing else distinguished from other Christians, but by their spiritual knowledge and sanctity of life, for which the church elected them to be her teachers and overseers, though not thereby to separate them from whatever calling she then found them following besides; as the example of St. Paul declares, and the first times of Christianity.'

[\[11. 5a. ecclesiastical canons.\]](#) 'The canon law is a body of Roman ecclesiastical law relative to such matters as that church either has, or pretends to have, the proper jurisdiction over. This is compiled from the opinions of the ancient Latin fathers, the decrees of general councils, the decretal epistles and bulls of the holy see' (Blackstone, *Comm.* 1, Introd. 82). But as here applied to the Church of England, the expression refers to 'the Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical' agreed upon by Convocation, and ratified by King James I under the Great Seal in 1603.

[\[11. 7. positive laws.\]](#) Laws arbitrarily laid down by human authorities, as opposed to the law of nature.

[\[11. 9. if others of thir number, in these things were under force.\]](#) This has particular reference to the Parliament's vote of No-Addresses (Jan. 3, 1648). Milton's argument was called forth by L'Estrange's *Reply to Plain English*, just out in April. In this pamphlet, L'Estrange directly charges that the Parliament (then Presbyterian as well as Independent) was under a force, and explains what it was: 'They were under a



Force.—Upon a Debate in the Commons House, concerning the Answer to the 4. Bills, presented to him Dec. 24, 1647 and debated Jan. 3. Commissary Ireton delivered himself after this manner: “The King hath denied safety, and protection to his People by denying the 4. Bills. . . . That it was now expected, after so long patience, they should shew their Resolution, and not desert those valiant men who had engaged for them, beyond all possibility of retreat, and would never forsake the Parliament, *unless the Parliament forsook them first.*”

‘From hence naturally results the menace of the Army, in case the Parliament should forsake them. . . . After some more debate Cromwell urged,—“that it was now expected, the Parliament should govern and defend the Kingdom, by their Own Power and Resolutions; and not teach the People any longer, to expect safety and Government from an Obstinate man, whose heart God had hardened, . . .—lest Despayr Teach them to seek their safety by some other means than adhearing to you; . . . how destructive such a Resolution in them will be to you all, I tremble to think and leave you to Judge.”

‘This Speech, concluded the debate; and the better to Impress his meaning, he laid his hand upon his sword, at the end of it. If this be not a Force, what is? The Power and Inclination of the Army, being the only moving Arguments to obtain the Vote. The Question was then put, and Carried for no more Addresses’ (*Tracts*, p. 126). See note on 11. 21.

[\[11. 11. a power which they could not resist.\]](#)The army (see notes on 11. 9 and 11. 21).

[\[11. 12. they were not therefore to leave the helm.\]](#)Milton’s fervent and unwavering support of this tenacious ‘fag end’ of a Parliament won for him the distinctive title of ‘The Goose-quill Champion of the Rump.’ He could see nothing in its actions but courage, wisdom, a high sense of duty; whereas to most people the Rump had come to stand for tyranny, love of power, greed, and personal ambition.

[\[11. 14. anarchie and confusion.\]](#)The phrase is a happy one, and remains the aptest description of conditions as they existed in England during the interval between the death of Cromwell and the Restoration.

[\[11. 15. so many of thir members left them.\]](#)See note on 10. 37a.

[\[11. 16. three estates.\]](#)Lords spiritual, lords temporal, and commons.

[\[11. 16a. The best affected.\]](#)Those most favorably disposed toward the commonwealth which the Independents instituted in January, 1649. The core of this ‘best affected’ class of the people was the army.

[\[11. 20. when the house divided upon main matters.\]](#)This refers to the opposite positions taken by the Presbyterians and Independents, particularly in the vote of Dec. 5, 1648, with reference to the king’s Newport concessions (see note on 11. 21) and the question of bringing him to trial.

[11. 21. [fear or perswasion.](#)] Cromwell and the army were on hand in December, 1648, to see that the Parliament brought the king to justice. On its voting (140 to 104) on Dec. 5 that Charles' Newport concessions were satisfactory, the army at once called upon all 'faithfull Members' who were 'innocent of these Votes' to 'acquit themselves . . . by Protestation . . . that they' might 'be distinguished,' and forthwith excluded the Presbyterian majority by force. Walker characterizes the intimidated Parliament as 'a meer Free-Schoole, where *Crommel* is Head-school-master,' and 'Ireton Usher' (*Hist. Ind.* 2. 30). The account continues: 'They seized upon 41 Members of Parliament, . . . secluded above 160, and frighted away at least 40 or 50 more, leaving only . . . 40 or 50 thriving Members sitting to unvote in a thin House under a force, what had been voted in a full and free House. To vote down the Kingly Office and House of Peers, to vote the Supreme Authority to be in the People, and in the House of Commons as their Representative' (see note on 10. 35). These three votes occurred on Jan. 4. 'The *Diurnall* tells you, *there was not a Negative Voice*: this shews under what a terror they sit, when in (things so apparently untrue) no man durst say, *No*' (*ibid.* 2. 57). Cf. note on 11. 9.

[11. 23. [intentions of them that voted.](#)] During the years of the Civil War there was a widespread belief that certain leaders in Parliament were corrupt. Clement Walker, in his *Mystery of the two Juntoes* (1648), openly accuses the grandees of both the Independent and Presbyterian factions of conspiring together to enrich themselves from the public revenues: 'There hath been lately given away to members openly (besides innumerable and inestimable private cheats mutually connived at) at least 300,000 l. in money, besides rich Offices, Employments in money Committees, Sequestrations, and other advantages. . . . Most of these Grandees are reported to have, for their retreat, houses in the Low Countries, richly furnished with Sequestered Plate, Linnen, and Stuff, and great store of money in bank for their shelter. . . . This is called robbing of the Egyptians.' Milton seems to share to some extent in this general mistrust and suspicion. Some acted 'perhaps to bad ends.' But nevertheless, whatever their motives, they accomplished a good work in disposing of Charles, and abolishing kingship.

[11. 26. [suppose bad intentions, etc.](#)] The meaning of this clause and the following is obscured through condensation. They may be expanded as follows: suppose the Independent leaders, in putting Charles to death, had been moved by motives of personal ambition, or desire to enrich themselves; it was a good thing they did, nevertheless; and it was supported everywhere by all people who thought it to be such, regardless of the motives of those who did it.

[11. 29. [Iscariot.](#)] Christ's betrayer. See John 13. 3.

[11. 29a. [Simon the magician.](#)] A magician of Samaria who by his arts had acquired great reputation among the people. He was so impressed by the miracles of Philip that he asked for, and received, baptism. Afterward he offered Peter a sum of money for the power of conferring the Holy Ghost. See Acts 8. 9-24.

[\[11. 32. the better counsels.\]](#) That it was useless to negotiate longer with the king, and that it was not only just but necessary to bring him to trial for his misdeeds—the position of the Independents.

[\[11. 32a. bad ends.\]](#) See notes on 11. 23 and 20. 19.

[\[11. 33. the wors.\]](#) Further temporizing and conceding, with a view to saving the life of Charles and the institution of kingship.

[\[11. 33a. best intentions.\]](#) The Presbyterian party in the Parliament, until forcibly excluded, endeavored to thwart the inexorable determination of the Independents to bring the king to justice. Milton is not quite willing to impugn their motives in their support of kingship; indeed, he is fair enough to admit the base motives of certain leaders on the other side.

[\[11. 34. they were not to learn.\]](#) They knew. Cf. Camden, *Hist. of Eliz.*, p. 377: ‘If she had any other aims, they were levell’d chiefly at these marks, the gaining the Affections of her Subjects, the Dread of her Enemies, and the Esteem of all the World: For she *was not to learn*, that those have a very sure and stable Foundation which are begun with Deliberation, and carry’d on with Industry and Care.’ Cf. note on 36. 22.

[\[11. 34a. and yet they were not to learn, etc.\]](#) The whole passage is rather obscure, and may be interpreted as follows: ‘and yet [= moreover; besides] they [‘the best affected . . . and best principl’d of the people’] were not to learn [= knew; were not ignorant] that a greater number [= the majority] might be corrupt [as were (?) the Presbyterians who were ready to vote the king back into power, and were actually conspiring to bring in a Scotch army to suppress the Independents] within the walls of a Parliament as well as of a citie [as London, whose ‘rabble’ had assaulted Westminster in the days of the Purge and were even now (1660) clamoring for a king]; wherof [= of which state of corruption] in matters of nearest concernment [that is, when it is a matter of being voted back into slavery, and—as in the case of the Independents—of personal safety, or of life itself] all men will be judges [= will have a decided opinion]; etc.

[\[11. 37. the odds of voices.\]](#) Milton believed in the rule of the wisest and best. ‘Nothing is more agreeable to the order of nature,’ he declared, ‘or more for the interest of mankind, than that the less should yield to the greater, not in numbers, but in wisdom and in virtue’ (*Sec. Def.*: Bohn 1. 265). Cf. note on 19. 7. At first a believer in kingship, he could never tolerate the opposite extreme, an ‘unbridled democracy,’ or be willing to ‘submit all to the noise and shouting of a rude multitude’ (cf. note on 26. 21). The thought seems to have been derived directly from Guicciardini, *Aphorismes* (1606), a book of which Milton made diligent use (see note on 15. 16a). Both writers, however, were probably influenced by Cicero’s statement, ‘the greatest number, should not have the greatest weight (*ne plurimum valeant plurimi*)’ (*De Repub.*, tr. Barham, 2. 226), and by Plato’s (see note on 34. 13).

[\[11. 40. if others hence will pretend to disturb all counsels.\]](#) Milton is here attempting to reconcile his defense of Pride’s Purge in 1648 with his denunciation of Lambert’s



similar high-handed exclusion of the Parliament in 1659. He argues that the very lives of the Independents were in danger in 1648. The expression may also contain a veiled censure of Cromwell, although Milton nowhere openly expresses any disloyalty to him.

[\[12. 5. the treatie.\]](#)This was the so-called treaty of Newport, which began Sept. 8, 1648, and was broken off on Oct. 27 by the Parliament's rejection of the king's concessions. See notes on 12. 6a and 12. 7.

[\[12. 6. seaven years warr.\]](#)This takes account of the first Bishops' War (1639), the second Bishops' War (1640), the Civil War from 1642 to 1646, and the second Civil War (1648).

[\[12. 6a. securitie for twenty years.\]](#)One of the king's concessions in the treaty of Newport was that all military control should be given over to Parliament for a period of twenty years.

[\[12. 7. reformation in the church for three years.\]](#)During the Newport negotiations Charles was finally brought to accept Presbyterianism, but with toleration, for a term of three years.

[\[12. 8. our vanquishd maister.\]](#)Charles.

[\[12. 10. an inquisition for blood.\]](#)The full title of this pamphlet, which was published anonymously in July, 1649, is *An Inquisition after Blood, to the Parliament and the Army*. It was written by James Howell, author of the *Epistolæ Hoelianæ*. Clement Walker refers to the High Court of Justice, set up by the House of Commons Jan. 6, 1649, for the trial of the king, as a 'Spanish Inquisition' (*Hist. Ind.* 3. 42), 'an Arbitrary, Extrajudiciall conventicle of Bloud, Cromwell's New Slaughterhouse' (*ibid.* 3. 44).

[\[12. 11. bishops not totally remov'd, etc.\]](#)Milton's position is precisely that taken by Parliament at the time, and expresses the same misgivings. Cf. *Commons Journals*, Oct. 27, 1648: 'Resolved, & . . . That the King's Answer is not satisfactory. . . . 1. The King doth not utterly abolish the Function and Power of Bishops; . . . but only suspendeth the Exercise of their Function as to Ordination, for the Term of three Years, and no more. . . . 2. That, during the Term of Three Years, the King may make Bishops in the old Manner; and, at the End of Three Years, the Exercise of their Function, as to the Point of Ordination in the old Manner, is revived in such of the old Bishops as shall be then living; and in such other new Bishops as the King hath or shall make. 3. Thirdly, That the Form of Church Government, presented to the King by the Houses, is, by his Answer, limited only to the Term of Three Years; and that, at the End thereof, Provision is only made for Ordination in a Way different from what the Houses have proposed; and no certain Way settled for any other Thing concerning Ecclesiastical Discipline and Government, which will be as necessary to be provided as that of Ordination. And this, the Houses do judge, at the End of the Three Years, will expose the Kingdom to new Distractions.' The king's reply even as late as Nov. 23 asserts that 'his Majesty by his former Answer hath totally suspended Episcopal

Government for three years, and after the said time, limited the same in the Power of Ordination and Jurisdiction, and that the primitive Office of a Bishop only is by him endeavoured to be preserved, and that the Bishops Lands are heavily charged with Leases for 99 years, and the Deans and Chapters, and other their Dependents taken away' (Rushworth, *Hist. Coll.* 7. 1334).

[\[12. 13. thir lands alreadie sold.\]](#)The sale of the Bishops' lands to private individuals, especially to army-men, had been one of the chief sources of revenue during the Civil War (see note on 14. 22).

[\[12. 14. call'd sacrilege.\]](#)This is a reference to the king's answer to one of the Newcastle propositions during the negotiations at Newport. It was, in part, as follows: 'As to these particulars, his Majesty doth again clearly profess, that he cannot with a good Conscience consent to the total Abolition of the Function and Power of Bishops, nor to the intire and absolute Alienation of their Lands, as is desired, because he is yet perswaded in his Judgment that the former is of Apostolical Institution, and that to take away the latter is Sacrilege' (Rushworth, *Hist. Coll.* 7. 1334). Cf. also Milton, *Eikonok.* (Bohn 1. 407): 'That other, which he calls sacrilege, of taking from the clergy that superfluous wealth, which antiquity as old as Constantine, from the credit of a divine vision, counted "poison in the church," hath been ever most opposed by men, whose righteousness in other matters hath been least observed.' The section (xi) of the *Eikon Basilike* to which Milton is here replying contains the following: 'If the straitness of my conscience will not give me leave to swallow down such camels as others do of sacrilege and injustice both to God and man, they have no more cause to quarrel with me than for this, that my throat is not so wide as theirs.'

[\[12. 14a. delinquents.\]](#)On March 27, 1643, the House interpreted the term as 'any Person or Persons, Ecclesiastical or Temporal, as have raised, or shall raise, Arms against the Parliament, or have voluntarily contributed or shall contribute' to the support of the Royalist cause. On Dec. 8, 1646, it voted thus: 'That if any Person or Persons whatsoever, shall, from henceforth, raise Arms, or maintain Arms, against both or either of the Houses of Parliament, or their Forces, that every such Person and Persons shall die without Mercy: And that his and their whole Estates shall be confiscated' (*Commons Journals*). The king, of course, was the grand delinquent. Cf. note on 33. 37.

[\[12. 15. accessories punishd.\]](#)The two most notable examples were Archbishop Laud and Strafford, the latter paying the extreme penalty May 12, 1641, the former, Jan. 10, 1644.

[\[12. 15a. the chief author.\]](#)Laud and Strafford had relentlessly and consistently carried out the policy of 'Thorough' in church and state respectively; but they had been merely faithful instruments. The chief member of the triumvirate was, of course, the king. Milton arraigns him, not only as the prime mover in the long series of civil and ecclesiastical oppressions, but particularly as the chief author of the rebellion in Ireland (see note on 10. 20), and of the Civil War at home. His attitude is precisely that of Cromwell's grim three-days' prayer-meeting at Windsor Castle in April, 1648, which adopted the 'joint resolution' that it was their duty, if ever the Lord brought

them back again in peace, ‘to call Charles Stuart, that man of blood, to an account for that blood he had shed, and mischief he had done to his utmost, against the Lord’s cause and people in these poor nations’ (Wm. Allen, *Faithful Memorial: Somers Tracts* 6. 501).

[12. 17. [not to give, but to receive laws.](#)] Charles even during his trial refused to recognize the authority of the tribunal, or to answer its questions. The presiding officer, John Bradshaw, had frequently to remind the prisoner at the bar of his position. Cf. Walker, *Hist. Ind.* 2. 92: ‘Bradsh.—Sir, . . . your way of Answer is to interrogate the Court, which beseems not you in this condition. You have been told of it twice or thrice.’

[12. 17a. [besought, treated with, . . . thankd for his gracious concessions.](#)] This was the attitude of the Presbyterians especially. They had been very zealous in beginning and prosecuting the war, but were unwilling to follow the Independents in abolishing kingship, and executing their royal foe. They were ready at all times to submit propositions looking to the restoration of Charles to his dignities. They were willing to accept Charles’ final concessions at the Isle of Wight, and, on Dec. 6, even voted them to be a satisfactory basis for settlement, only to be thwarted and turned out of the House by the resolute Independents. ‘They had no privilege to sit there, and vote home the author, the impenitent author, of all our miseries, to freedom, honour, and royalty, for a few fraudulent, if not destructive concessions’ (*Observations*: Bohn 2. 195).

[12. 19. [If this we swore to do.](#)] In taking the Covenant. See note on 10. 11.

[12. 20. [bring . . . the whole sea of blood-guiltiness upon our own heads.](#)] Milton goes into the question of blood-guiltiness in the *Eikonoklastes*, and finds that ‘whether purposely or unaware, he [Charles] hath confessed both to God and man the blood-guiltiness of all this war to lie upon his own head’ (Bohn 1. 449). Assuming this to be true, he argues in the present treatise that any leniency, any deviation from the stern course of justice toward such a manifold murderer, would have been at the peril of bringing down upon their own heads all this blood.

[12. 23. [suggested fears and difficulties.](#)] Royalist writers kept the public ear well filled with alarming prophecies as to what could be expected under any form of commonwealth. Complete paralysis of trade, enormous taxes, a corrupt and tyrannical Parliament, perpetual anarchy, illiteracy, and irreligion—these were some of the evils which only monarchy could cure.

[12. 27. [these who deferr us.](#)] See Glossary. An allusion to the dictatorship of Monk.

[12. 28. [neither so subtle nor so awefull.](#)] If only kingship, with its attendant deep-rooted traditions and prestige, could be kept out, the people might be trusted to free themselves from any lesser tyranny; as, for example, the dictatorship of Monk.

[12. 29. [our actions . . . both at home and abroad.](#)] The achievements of the English commonwealth, both in arms and in diplomacy, were indeed noteworthy. The swift

and complete subjugation of Ireland and Scotland; the wresting of naval supremacy from the Dutch; commercial treaties with Sweden, Denmark, and Portugal, and the far-reaching Navigation Act of 1651; persuasion of Mazarin into an alliance against Spain in 1657; and the destruction of the Spanish fleet at Santa Cruz the same year—these were some of the vigorous and splendid accomplishments under Cromwell that raised the new republic, not only in the opinion of Milton, but in the eyes of all Europe, to the very front rank of prestige and power.

[\[12. 33. several writings.\]](#) During the Civil War and commonwealth, ink flowed almost as freely as blood. Thomason records more than 23,000 publications that belong to this brief interval. People in general found relief in innumerable petitions. The army handled sword and pen with equal facility. Its specialty was constitutions; as, for example, the ‘Instrument of Government’ (1653), and the models of 1655, ’57, and ’59. Milton’s pen was seldom idle, his themes being religious, domestic, and civil liberty.

[\[12. 34. a spirit in this nation no less noble and well fitted to the liberty of a Comonwealth, etc.\]](#) Already in the *Commonplace Book* (p. 177) Milton says that some live best under monarchy, others otherwise—‘the form of state’ should ‘be fitted to the peoples disposition’; and that the Romans ‘after thire infancy were ripe for a more free government then monarchy, being in a manner all fit to be Ks.’ And even in the present treatise he reluctantly admits that possibly ‘monarchie of it self may be convenient to som nations.’ A republic, then, is a government for adult nations only—for men who possess the justice and fortitude to rule, and the balance and self-control to obey. Such were the ancient Romans and Greeks, and such Milton believed the English—excepting the ignorant rabble—to be. It was ‘a nation not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit; acute to invent, subtile and sinewy to discourse, not beneath the reach of any point the highest that human capacity can soar to’ (*Areop.*: Bohn 2. 90).

[\[12. 36. Nor was the heroic cause, etc.\]](#) Milton dexterously inserts *his* part in the glorious action, partly because he thought well of his effort (see notes on 12. 37 and 13. 1a), but mainly on account of fresh attacks from the critics (see Appendix A. 2).

[\[12. 37. defended to all Christendom.\]](#) The cause of the Parliament sorely needed a defender during the months succeeding the execution of the king, and no one but Milton was deemed equal to the task. Immediately upon the death of Charles appeared what purported to be the king’s book, the *Eikon Basilike*, which worked powerfully and dangerously upon the sympathies of the people in behalf of the royal martyr. Against this, Milton directed his *Eikonoklastes* (Oct., 1649), which undertook to counteract its pernicious influence and to vindicate the action of the regicides. Salmasius, reputed to be the foremost scholar in Europe, now came forward with a defense of the king. Milton replied in the magnificent *Defense of the People of England*, completely crushing—even mangling—his distinguished antagonist (see note on 12. 38). As to the success of the *Defense*, Toland records that ‘that excellent Critic monsieur Baile,’ and ‘the unanimous suffrage of foreners,’ agree ‘*that he defended the republican Cause with a world of address and wit*’; ‘there could be no dispute about the victory he obtained over his adversary’ (*Life of Milton* 1. 82, 84).

Milton himself says that it ‘sufficed some years . . . to convince and satisfie the unengaged of other nations in the justice’ of their ‘doings’ (*Hirelings*: Bohn 3. 2). ‘And this I can truly say, that, as soon as my Defence appeared, and had begun to excite the public curiosity, there was no public functionary of any prince or state then in the city, who did not congratulate me when we accidentally met, who did not desire my company at his house or visit me at mine’ (*Sec. Def.*: Bohn 1. 278).

[12. 38. [a famous and thought invincible adversarie.](#)] This was Salmasius, or Claude de Saumaise (1588-1653), a celebrated French classical philologist, who succeeded Scaliger in 1632 as professor in the University of Leyden. His reputation rests mainly upon his discovery of the Greek *Anthology* of Kephalas at Heidelberg (1606), and upon such works as *Plinianæ Exercitationes in Solinum* (1629), *De Lingua Hellenistica* (1643), and *De Re Militari Romanorum* (pub. 1657). But the book that drew down upon him Milton’s terrific, annihilating rejoinder was his *Defensio Regia pro Carolo I* (1649). In this same year Salmasius was invited to the court of the learned young Christina of Sweden; and it was precisely here, in the midst of extravagant homage, that Milton’s fierce *Defensio* fell upon him. For Milton’s own exultant account of his ‘complete and glorious victory’ over ‘that fierce advocate of despotism; till then reputed invincible in the opinion of many, and in his own conceit,’ see the *Second Defense*. Milton takes no small pleasure in recording his opponent’s ‘loss to his reputation,’ which began to ‘wither in neglect,’ and even finds a sort of grim satisfaction in the thought, ‘there are some, who impute his death to the penetrating severity of my strictures.’ ‘Il avoit une érudition immense, mais superficielle’ (H. Hauser, *La Grande Encycl.*).

[13. 1. [superstition and tyrannie.](#)] These stand, of course, for episcopacy and kingship respectively.

[13. 1a. [a written monument, likely to outlive detraction.](#)] Milton was not without an adequate opinion of himself and of his works, and his deliberate judgment was that the *Defense of the People of England* would endure. He was ‘handling almost the greatest subject that ever was’; and he was determined ‘not to be at all wanting . . . to this most noble cause, and most worthy to be recorded to all future ages.’ To this end he made use of all his classical learning, all his ability in argumentation, all his fiery patriotism, and all his boundless resources of satire and invective. The result was such a masterpiece of its kind as had never before been written. It not only laid bare to astonished Europe the shallow sophistries of the renowned Salmasius, his poor logic, bad Latin, unsound learning, and domestic troubles; but it so defended and exalted the recent actions of the English republic as to win the profound respect of sovereigns themselves. All this, Milton felt, constituted good grounds for believing that the ‘monument’ would not soon be destroyed.

[13. 2. [convinc’d or silenc’d not a few of our detractors.](#)] Salmasius, although he returned from Sweden breathing slaughter against Milton, seemed reluctant to grapple again with ‘that English mastiff.’ His counter-attack remained unfinished at his death in 1653. Milton’s *Defensio* produced a tremendous impression abroad. In Paris it was publicly burned. In Holland and Sweden it was eagerly read and discussed. Milton seems proudest of all that it won the approval of Christina, the ‘Serene Queen of



Sweden,' who declared that he 'had not written a word against kings, but only against tyrants, the spots and pests of royalty.' This, Milton gratefully acknowledges, 'served to efface the unfavorable impression' against him 'at other courts, and to rescue' him 'from the evil surmises of other sovereigns' (*Sec. Def.*: Bohn 1. 248-9). See also Masson, *Life of Milton* 4. 316-20.

[13. 5. [many years possessd.](#)] Since the pulling down of bishops, lords, and king in 1649.

[13. 6. [those unhappie interruptions.](#)] These were the various interferences of the army with Parliament, and particularly that one of the preceding October, when Lambert placed soldiers at the doors of the House of Commons, and prevented the members from assembling (see *Introd.*, p. xviii). There had been many arbitrary purgings and exclusions under Cromwell, which Milton had defended (see notes on 10. 37 and 20. 17). But, during the few months of Richard's crumbling dictatorship, the army became increasingly meddlesome and domineering. In April, 1659, officers Fleetwood and Desborough completely overawed Richard, and compelled him to dissolve Parliament. On April 22 a council of officers assumed the government, and instituted the reign of the sword. On May 7 the Rump was set up again in a make-believe authority. Finally, when Lambert turned it out once more in October, Milton denounced the 'scandalous' behaviour of the army in the strongest terms (see *Introd.*, p. xviii).

[13. 7. [now the third time.](#)] This was the second restoration, or third assembling, of the original Rump Parliament. On April 20, 1653, Cromwell had almost literally stamped it out of existence. Upon the downfall of Richard this famous remnant had been restored by the army, May 7, 1659, only to be barred out again by Lambert in October. The army-*régime* soon collapsing, the Rump was recalled to supreme authority Dec. 26, 1659. This last deliverance from the rule of the sword seemed to Milton truly providential.

[13. 8. [our old Patriots, the first Assertours of our religious and civil rights.](#)] During the protectorates of Oliver and Richard, many of the original Rumpers, including most of the regicide-members, refrained from having any part in the Oliverian innovation. A considerable number, however, had not scrupled to sit in the protectorate Parliaments; so that the House which came again into power in 1659 was far from being a restoration of uncompromising republicans. However, it did contain many 'old Patriots' and 'first Assertours'—men who had resolutely abolished kingship, episcopacy, and the House of Lords in 1649. Cf. notes on 20. 27 and 20. 29.

[13. 10. [certain hopes.](#)] The reassembling of the old Parliament in December, pledged as it was to immediate action and republican principles, seemed almost to justify 'certain hopes' that a free commonwealth was about to be realized. The overwhelming of this little body in February by the readmission of the secluded members made such hopes quite absurd; but, as if unwilling to acknowledge this, the sentence is allowed to stand unchanged in the second edition.

[\[13. 14. to creep back so poorly as it seems the multitude would.\]](#) It was one of Milton's chief purposes in this treatise to stem the mad infatuation of the people with kingship. Accordingly, he describes the proposed move as an abject and voluntary exchange of freedom for slavery—an action comparable only to the base creeping back of a beaten cur to the feet of its insolent master.

[\[13. 18. though don by som to covetous and ambitious ends.\]](#) See notes on 11. 23, 11. 26, and 13. 22.

[\[13. 22. mixture of bad men.\]](#) The avarice and personal ambition of certain leaders in Parliament and the army are accepted by Milton as deplorable facts. A clique of grandees, of both Presbyterian and Independent factions in Parliament, was accused on all hands of corruption (see note on 11. 23). In handling, through loose and irresponsible committees (see note on 26. 38), the vast revenues collected during the Interregnum, it could hardly be otherwise than that some hands were defiled. As to political ambitions in army-leaders, the Fleetwood-Lambert conspiracy and usurpation in October, 1659, are typical of the almost constant intrigues among the superior officers. Milton, however, never loses faith in the integrity of the rank and file of both bodies, and will therefore not desert their cause.

[\[13. 31. a strange degenerate corruption.\]](#) Nothing short of an infectious disease could account for this abnormal clamor for kingship upon the part of a liberty-loving people—'which low dejection and debasement of mind in the people, I must confess, I cannot willingly ascribe to the natural disposition of an Englishman' (*Eikonok.*: Bohn 1. 313).

[\[13. 33. a scorn and derision to all our neighbours.\]](#) England, in welcoming kingship again, might well expect the scorn of the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the commonwealths of Italy; and still more, the derision of those monarchies—France especially—that had been made to tremble by its summary vengeance upon Charles in 1649. There were many such appeals to national pride and sense of shame. 'How are we become the tail, and not the head, a hissing, yea a scorn to the basest of nations' (Wm. Allen, *Faithful Memorial: Somers Tracts* 6. 502). 'The world admires and derides our causeless confusions. . . . If we look into our neighbour nations, we are the subjects of their mirth, and the song of the scornful' (*Awake O England: Harl. Misc.* 1. 276).

[\[13. 35. that foolish builder.\]](#) See Luke 14. 28—30.

[\[14. 3. be another Rome in the west.\]](#) Rome had once banished its kings (see note on 26. 18a), and had towered aloft as a republic for five hundred years. Just so 'the glorious rising Commonwealth' of England, so auspiciously begun in 1649, had aspired to stand as a tower 'to overshadow kings and be another Rome in the west.'

[\[14. 5. confusion, not of tongues, but of factions.\]](#) The Parliament during the Civil War was composed of two principal factions—Presbyterians and Independents (see Clement Walker's *Mystery of the two Juntoes*, and *History of Independency*). The Independents, at first but a handful, rose to an equality in strength with the

Presbyterians, and were left in control of the House at Pride's Purge; but the Presbyterians regained the ascendancy upon the readmission of the secluded members in 1660. Besides these main factions, there were numerous others—Oliverians, anti-Oliverians, Fifth-Monarchy men, etc. (see note on 20. 19, and *Intro.*, pp. xx-xxii).

[14. 9. [look on our neighbours the United Provinces.](#)] It was natural that Milton should turn often and admiringly toward the Netherlands, which was an exemplification and working model, under the very eyes of England, of all or most of the ideas he was championing. Its government was a confederation of sovereign units; utmost liberty of conscience prevailed; the people were courageous, diligent, and prosperous beyond any other nation of Europe (see note on 14. 14).

[14. 12. [greater difficulties.](#)] When, after the sacking of Antwerp by the Spaniards (Nov. 4, 1576), 'the States of Brabant, Flanders, Artois, Hainault, and other countries on the one hand, and those of Holland and Zeeland with their confederates on the other hand, mutually agreed (Nov. 8, 1576) to unite with each other for expelling the Spaniards and other foreigners out of the country, and afterwards to promote the calling together and assembling of the States General to the end that they might regulate the affairs of the nation' (Bor, *Oorspronck*, 1621, 9. 191; in Barker, *Netherlands*, p. 96), they were undertaking to throw off the yoke of the mightiest nation in the world. The odds were soon made more appalling by the withdrawal of the Spanish-Catholic states, Artois, Hainault, and Douay. Yet the Protestants quickly bound themselves together by the Union of Utrecht (Jan. 23, 1579), and successfully maintained their independence.

[14. 14. [potent and flourishing Republick.](#)] The United Provinces not only threw off the yoke of Spain, but also quickly robbed her of world-wide supremacy. During the first half of the seventeenth century, Holland possessed the largest fleet and the finest army in Europe. Through her fisheries, manufacturing, and commerce she became the richest nation in the world. Cf. Owen Felltham, *Brief Character of the Low Countries* (1652): 'There hardly is upon earth such a school of martial discipline. It is the Christian world's academy for arms, whither all the neighbour-nations resort to be instructed. . . . Their merchants are at this day the greatest of the universe. . . . Want of idleness keeps them from want; and it is their diligence makes them rich. . . . You would think being with them, you were in old Israel, for you find not a beggar among them. . . . As they on the sea, so the women are busy on land in weaving of nets, and helping to add to the heap.' Felltham records that they had 800 fish-boats, 1600 large ships, and an army of 60,000 men. See also Howell, *Familiar Letters* 1. 199 (ed. Bennett).

[14. 16. [Besides this, etc.](#)] Here begins the enormous sentence of the treatise. Masson makes the best of it by saying that its length 'indicates the glow and rapidity of the dictation.' Certainly Milton does here rise to a prophetic mood and vision. Cf. Stern, *Milton und Seine Zeit* 2. 233: 'Er sah indessen ein, dass diese akademischen Gründe im damaligen Augenblick nicht genügen konnten. Er appellierte an das Gefühl und an die Berechnung seiner Landsleute, und dabei steigert sich sein Pathos nicht selten zur Höhe prophetischen Schmerzes.'



[14. 16a. [soon repent, as undoubtedly we shall.](#)] The words were prophetic. Upon the Stuarts' return the flood-gates of every sort of vice were thrown wide open—cause sufficient in itself soon to bring about a repentance. More immediately effective, however, was the fact that Popery began at once to flourish in England. Along with these unpopular innovations, came the attack upon municipal charters. The general dissatisfaction was only deepened by the elevation of James to the throne in 1685; for James was as vicious as Charles and far less popular, and, besides, was a professed Catholic. The rebellions of Argyll and Monmouth followed. And when finally in 1688 an invitation is extended to William of Orange to land in England, it recites 'that the greatest part of the nobility and gentry are as much dissatisfied as themselves [the seven patriots]; that nineteen out of every twenty are desirous of a change; that very many of the common soldiers do daily show such an aversion to the Popish religion that there is the greatest probability they would desert; and amongst the sea-men there is not one in ten who would do James any service' (Hale, *Fall of the Stuarts*, p. 130).

[14. 19. [which must necessarily proceed from king and bishop united.](#)] The pernicious effects of such union had come under Milton's personal observation at the time when Laud and Charles had been at one in putting through their policy of 'Thorough.' The tyranny of king or bishop was galling enough, but of both united, unendurable—the 'forcers of conscience' and the power of the sword constituting a perfect monopoly of oppression. Milton's prose works are strewn with denunciations of this union of church and state. In the first place, it is ruinous to the church: 'For when the church without temporal support is able to do her great works upon the unforced obedience of men, it argues a divinity about her. But when she thinks to credit and better her spiritual efficacy, and to win herself respect and dread by strutting in the false vizard of worldly authority, it is evident that God is not there, but that her apostolic virtue has departed from her' (*Reason of Ch. Gov.*: Bohn 2. 489). 'Neither is it unknown, or by wisest men unobserved, that the church began then most apparently, to degenerate, and go to ruin, when she borrowed of the civil power more than fair encouragement and protection; more than which Christ himself and his apostles never required' (*Observations*: Bohn 2. 185).

It is bad for the state—even for kingship. In the *Reformation* (Bohn 2. 393), Milton scouts the idea, 'no bishop, no king,' and undertakes 'to prove that episcopacy with that authority which it challenges in England is not only not agreeable, but tending, to the destruction of monarchy.'

Moreover, it means oppression for all under their sway. The prelates, those 'illiterate and blind guides' (*Reformation*: Bohn 2. 411), having come from 'a mean and plebeian life on a sudden to be lords of stately palaces' (*ibid.* 2. 382), are certain to be 'Egyptian task-makers of ceremonies' (*ibid.* 2. 377). 'What numbers of faithful and free born Englishmen, and good Christians, have been constrained to forsake their dearest home, their friends and kindred, whom nothing but the wide ocean, and the savage deserts of America, could hide and shelter from the fury of the bishops' (*ibid.* 2. 399). Milton's advice is to leave the state to men 'thoroughly tried,' to 'leave the church to its own government; . . . no longer suffer two powers, so different, . . . to commit fornication together, and by their mutual and delusive aids in appearance to strengthen, but in reality to weaken and finally to subvert, each other' (*Sec. Def.*:

Bohn 1. 293).

The testimony of the *Commonplace Book* proves that Milton's idea of the separation of church and state found confirmation in Dante. A large passage is excerpted from the *Purgatory*, Cant. 16, wherein Dante laments that 'the sword is joined to the crozier,' and declares that 'the two together must perforce go ill, because, being joined one fears not the other.'

[\[14. 21. forc'd perhaps to fight over again.\]](#) See note on 14. 16a.

[\[14. 22. and spend over again all that we have spent.\]](#) The following items are selected from 'A General Abstract of Money raised in England by the Long Parliament, from November 3, 1640, to November, 1659,' which, in its entirety, reaches the sum of £95,303,095 1s. 11½d.:

	l.	s.	d.
Subsidies	600,000		
The armies	32,780,721		13
Tonnage and poundage	5,700,000		
Sale of Irish Lands	1,322,500		
Sequestration of estates	6,044,924		17
Composition for court of wards	1,000,000		
Composition for estates	1,277,226		
Sale of English lands	25,380,687		11½.
Compound with Irish delinquents	1,000,000		
To the house of Commons, 14 years, comes to	745,472		
Free gifts to the saints, viz.			
in money	679,800		
in offices	306,110		
in estates, per an.	189,365		

(*A Letter to a new Member of the House of Commons: Harl. Misc. 6. 319.*)

[\[14. 27. signal assistances from heaven.\]](#) 'You are not ashamed to rob Oliver Cromwell himself,' said the authors of the *Censure*, 'and make use of his canting, with signal assistances from heaven, and answering condescensions' (Appendix B, p. 177). The charge, of course, is absurd, so far as any robbery is concerned; but it is interesting to note the common stock of pious terms employed by the two great Puritans. Cromwell speaks of Dunbar as 'one of the most signal mercies God hath done for England.' He writes Admiral Blake, June 10, 1657, that the 'mercy' in God's 'assisting' him 'is very signal.' Other favorite phrases are: 'gracious Dispensation,' 'remarkable providences,' 'appearances of the Lord,' 'mercy vouchsafed,' 'deliverances.' It is apparent that Milton's terms are Cromwell's, and that both held the same underlying conception of God's working with and for men in the cause of right. 'God himself,' says Milton, 'condescends, and works with his own hands to fulfil the requests of men' (*Apol.*: Bohn 3. 150).

[\[14. 30. regal concessions.\]](#) See note on 16. 31.

[15. 5. all Scotland.] Having completely subdued the rebellious Irish, Cromwell entered Scotland in July, 1650, upon a similar mission. On Sept. 3 he defeated Leslie at Dunbar, and one year from that day completely shattered the Scotch forces under Charles in the battle of Worcester. By the following year the conquest was practically complete, and Scotland, now under the Cromwellian policy of union, free trade, and law-reform, was turned over to the guardianship of General Monk. The Restoration did mean, as Milton predicted, the loss of all that Cromwell had instituted in Scotland, and not until 1707 were the ideas of union and free trade again realized, while the 'abolition of hereditary jurisdictions' was delayed almost a century (1746) (Firth, *Cromwell*, p. 299).

[15. 6. which never any of our kings could conquer.] Cf. *Sec. Defense* (Bohn 1. 287): 'In about the space of one year you entirely subdued, and added to the English dominion, that kingdom which all our monarchs, during a period of 800 years, had in vain struggled to subject.' Buchanan, with whose *De Jure Regni apud Scotos* (1579) Milton was familiar, asserted with pride that Scotland had been free from foreign domination for two thousand years.

[15. 9. our late miraculous deliverances.] A very great number of events that were accounted such by the Puritans might be reckoned up, including the 'deliverances' from kingship, lords, and bishops. But the immediate reference here is to the sudden and complete collapse of the army-rule in December, 1659. The downfall of Fleetwood, Lambert, and other officers followed immediately a succession of events (see *Intro.*, p. xviii) that seemed nothing short of miraculous. Milton's thankfulness is the greater because this put an end to the fears and rumors of a deep conspiracy to set up Lambert as king, or at least as a sort of Duke of Venice (see note on 29. 5).

[15. 14. wisest men in all ages, etc.] Among these were Moses and Samuel, who warned against kingship; Plato, who projected an ideal republic; Aristotle, who in the *Politics* assumed 'that a condition of more independence is preferable to one of less,' and declared that 'it is the principle of reciprocal equality which is the preservation of states'; Lycurgus and Solon, the wise lawgivers of Sparta and Athens; the Romans, who banished their kings; Augustine, who held that men should not have dominion over men, but over beasts (see note on 19. 14), and that they who rule are but servants; Machiavelli, who declared that 'God himself never made but one government for men,' and that this 'was a commonwealth'; Calvin, who 'will not deny that either the government of the chiefest men, or a state tempered of it and common government, far excelleth all other'; Bodin, who placed all sovereignty in the people unless voluntarily surrendered, and professed to fashion his politics after 'the best lawes and rules of the most flourishing common weals'; Sir Thomas More, who in his *Utopia* scorned 'bondage to Kynges'; Sir Thomas Smith, Mariana, Hotman, Guicciardini, Sir Thomas Fortescue, and a multitude of voices that were heard in the century of the Reformation, as also in Milton's, insistently speaking in praise of freedom, and specifically advocating a commonwealth, either wholly popular or under a merely nominal prince.

[15. 16. due libertie.] Sir Walter Raleigh was of the opinion that 'where Liberty aboundeth, there confusion and disorder follow' (*Cabinet Council* 25. 107); and

Milton, who published this treatise in 1658, occupies substantially the same position. His ideal lies midway between absolute monarchy, on the one hand, and a 'licentious and unbridled democracy, on the other. The Greeks and the Romans 'ruined themselves with their own excessive power.' 'The main reason urged why popular assemblies are to be trusted with the people's liberty, rather than a senate of principal men, . . . is by experience found false.' In the *Second Defense* (Bohn 1. 288) he declared that 'nothing in the world is more pleasing to God, more agreeable to reason, more politically just, or more generally useful, than that the supreme power should be vested in the best and wisest of men.' In short, he is for an aristocracy of the wise and good. See notes on 11. 37 and 34. 13.

The reasons for Milton's aristocratic ideas of government are to be found in his unique conception of liberty, and his supreme contempt for the rabble. Of the latter point he says to Salmasius: 'Then you inveigh against the Common People, as being *blind and brutish, ignorant of the art of governing; you say there's nothing more empty, more vain, more inconstant, more uncertain than they.* All of which is very true of yourself, and it's true likewise of the rabble.' In the *Second Defense* he defines freedom: 'To be free is the same thing exactly as to be pious, wise, just, temperate, self-providing, abstinent from the property of other people, and, in fine, magnanimous and brave.' All this the rabble is not, and therefore it is not fit to be free, or to enjoy the right of free suffrage. 'For why should any one then assert for you the right of free suffrage, or the power of electing whom you will to Parliament? . . . Should one entrust the commonwealth to those to whom nobody would entrust a matter of private business? . . . It is a thing ratified by law and nature herself that whosoever cannot manage himself, whosoever through imbecility or phrenzy of mind cannot rightly administer his own affairs, should not be in his own power, but should be given over as a minor to the government of others; and least of all should such an one be preferred to influence in other people's business or in the commonwealth.' Cf. the following note.

[15. 16a. [proportiond equalitie.](#)] There were two conceptions of equality current among political theorists of the seventeenth century: equality in an arithmetical sense, man to man, by right of birth; and an equality proportioned to rank, wealth, and personal merit. Milton was strongly in favor of this latter idea (see note on 19. 7), which is fully set forth by Guicciardini (*Aphorismes* 4. 24), as follows: 'The name of Equality truly understood, is one of the most just and profitable things that is in a State: namely, when it is taken in a Geometricall sense and proportion. For as in a matter of tax or imposition, the best levy is not by the pole, but according to every mans hability; and as in conferring of dignities and offices, the best choise is according to every mans worth and sufficiency for the place: So in the deliberation of State affaires and decision of doubts of greatest consequence the soundest judgement should bear the greatest stroke: and voyces should be considered, not by the number, but by the weight.'

The resemblance between this passage and certain expressions in *The Ready and Easy Way* is most striking; and we know from the *Commonplace Book* that Milton read, and took notes from, Guicciardini.

[\[15. 17. most cherishing to vertue and true religion.\]](#) ‘This Cola,’ says Machiavelli, ‘took occasion in all his Discourse . . . to magnify their Felicity, whose Fortune it was to be borne and brought up in a Commonwealth, affirming, that all famous men had their Education, not under Princes, but Republicks; the latter preferring them as vertuous, the others destroying them as dangerous’ (*Hist. of Florence: Wks.*, p. 155). And, speaking for himself, he says: ‘As for Asia, it has not produced many extraordinary men, because that Province was wholly under a Monarchy. . . . In Africa it was the same, by reason of the Carthaginian Republick: for Commonwealths do furnish the World with more brave men than Kingdoms; because in States, virtue is many times honoured and advanced; in Monarchies and Kingdoms it is suspected; from whence it proceeds that in the one it is encouraged, in the other exploded’ (*Art of War: Wks.*, p. 464).

That Milton’s thought here was derived from Machiavelli’s, or at least was colored by the passage quoted above, is rendered extremely probable by their striking similarity, and by the fact that the *Commonplace Book* (p. 177) contains the following direct quotation: ‘Respub-regno potior:—perche delle repub. escano piu huomini eccellenti, che de regni: per che in quelle il piu delle volte si honora la virtù, ne regni si teme, &—*Macchiavel. arte di guerra. l. 2, p. 63.*’ Cf. note on 30. 24.

[\[15. 19. planely commended or rather enjoind by our Saviour.\]](#) See Mark 10. 42-5; Luke 22. 25-7.

[\[15. 21. brand of Gentilism upon kingship.\]](#) See Appendix B, p. 177.

[\[15. 24. Christ apparently forbids.\]](#) See Appendix B, p. 177.

[\[15. 34. That he speaks of civil government.\]](#) Milton here ‘wrests Scripture most unmercifully,’ as his critics affirmed (see Appendix B, p. 177), or else ignores the fact that the Oriental mind deals in analogy and symbol rather than in strict logic. See the following note.

[\[15. 35. inferrs the other part to be, etc.\]](#) Logically necessitates the other part to be, etc. Christ’s thought seems to be: among the Gentiles, greatness is measured by lordship; among you, it shall be measured by service. Milton’s remarkable inference is that inasmuch as Christ speaks of civil government in the first sentence, he must perforce be speaking of civil government in the second sentence!

[\[16. 4. perpetual servants and drudges to the publick.\]](#) Milton’s whole life exemplifies his theory of the duty and the dignity of service. Conscious of his peculiar powers, he early resolved upon ‘laborious days,’ and dedicated himself to the high service of men in song. But, led by the same ideal, he freely laid aside his art at the beginning of the Civil War, to serve with all his time and energy the more immediate and pressing needs of the commonwealth—as champion of civil and religious liberty, as Latin secretary, and as defender of the whole English nation; and in the present pamphlet he ventured ‘at all hazard’ to speak. Finally, in the closing years of his life, with his ‘singing robes’ once more about him, he rendered the world the noblest service of all.



Milton found this ideal of service at the very heart of the Gospel—the central ideal of Christianity; but its application to governmental obligations he read in Augustine’s *De Civitate Dei* (19. 16): ‘Si in principatu politico aliqua est servitus, magis proprie servus est qui præest quam qui subest.’ See also note on 19. 14.

[16. 5. [at thir own cost and charges.](#)] ‘Sir, know that my hands were never soiled with the guilt of peculation; and that I never was even a shilling the richer by those exertions’ (*Sec. Defense*: Bohn 1. 243). As Latin secretary, however, Milton did receive a fairly good salary (£288 13s. 6½d. a year). This, however, was as nothing compared with the princely salaries of those about him. For example, Major-General Lambert received approximately £6500; Mr. John Thurloe, secretary of state, ‘a vast income’; Major-General Desbrow, approximately £3200; Lieutenant-General Fleetwood (Cromwell’s son-in-law), approximately £6600; Lord Whitelock, commissioner of the treasury, £1000; General Blake, of the navy, £1095; etc. (*A Narrative of the late Parliament: Harl. Misc.* 3. 449).

[16. 9. [ador’d like a Demigod.](#)] Cf. Plato, *Laws* 4. 713: ‘Cronos knew . . . that no human nature invested with supreme power is able to order human affairs and not overflow with insolence and wrong. Which reflection led him to appoint not men but demigods, who are of a higher and more divine race, to be the kings and rulers of our cities.’

Milton has only the utmost scorn for kings who pretend to any sort of divinity peculiar to themselves. The king is always ‘a mortal man.’ The *Commonplace Book* has many notes justifying this view; as: ‘Augustus imperii formatur ne dominum quidem dici se volebat, et hoc enim Dei est cognomen; dicam plane imperatorem dominum, sed quando non cogor ut dominum, dei vice dicam; cæterum liber sum illi, dominus meus deus unus est, & Tertull. apologet. p. 31, edit. rigalt. qui pater patriæ est, quomodo dominus est? ibid.’

[16. 10. [dissolute and haughtie court.](#)] Cf. *Eikonok.* (Bohn 1. 340): ‘Gentlemen indeed! the ragged infantry of stews and brothels; the spawn and shipwreck of taverns and dicing houses.’

[16. 11. [vast expence.](#)] Milton, like all the pamphleteers of the day, makes free use of the argument of expense, for hardly any other was so effective with the common people. Kingship, he affirms, is ‘burdensome,’ ‘expensive,’ ‘chargeable.’ If the people turn again to the king, to their ‘own cost’ they shall find it. ‘A new royal-revenue must be found; a new episcopal.’ There is sure to be a dissolute court ‘of vast expence’ and luxury, and that ‘on the publick revenue.’ They may look for new and ‘heavy impositions on all men’s purses.’ Besides, ‘could the folly be paralleled,’ after the ‘expense of so much blood and treasure’? Cf. note on 16. 29.

While there was undoubtedly in Milton an admiration for economy and thrift, yet he was by no means willing to ‘set to sale religion, libertie, honour, safetie, all concernments divine or human to keep up trading.’ One can not agree with Dr. Johnson that Milton ‘never gave any better reason’ for his being ‘an acrimonious and surly republican than that a popular government was the most frugal.’

[16. 11a. [masks and revels.](#)]The courts of James and Charles had given the utmost encouragement to such diversions. Henrietta Maria herself had taken a part in the rehearsal of *The Shepherd's Pastoral* in 1632, and Charles in like manner dignified Carew's *Cælum Britannicum* in 1634. More than £21,000 was expended upon Shirley's *Triumph of Peace* the same year. All the mechanical genius of Inigo Jones, all the musical talent of Henry Lawes, and all the poetical powers of Jonson, Shirley, and Carew were lavished upon these fantastic and gorgeous productions. Milton himself had written, in *Comus*, the very finest of masques. See Glossary.

[16. 11b. [to the debauching of our prime gentry both male and female.](#)]Milton was thoroughly familiar with the following precedent from Machiavelli's *History of Florence* (*Wks.*, p. 43). 'Many persons of French extraction repair'd to him [the Duke of Athens], and he preferr'd them all, as the most faithful of his friends; so that in a short time Florence was not only subject to the Frenchmen, but to the French customs and garb; all People, Men as well as Women, without respect of indecency or inconvenience, imitating them in all things. It troubled them to see honest conversation corrupted, and civil modesty despised : But that which was incomparably the most displeasing, was the violence he and his Creatures us'd to the Women, without any regret.' It was just such a general imitation of French looseness and gaiety among the gentry of England that Milton feared would result from the coming in of Charles, half French by blood, and wholly so by education and disposition.

[16. 15. [a queen . . . outlandish and a Papist.](#)]See Glossary. Charles, like his father, had some difficulty in selecting a bride. As for Protestant princesses, he would have none of them. Cardinal Mazarin refused him one of his nieces. Personally, he preferred the Spanish Infanta; but he finally decided to take Catherine of Portugal, who brought with her considerable wealth. The marriage occurred May 21, 1662. Milton proved to be correct in both surmises.

[16. 16. [a queen mother such aheadie.](#)]See notes on 10. 18 and 36. 28.

[16. 17. [a royal issue.](#)]Charles died without legitimate offspring, but not without a numerous bastard progeny.

[16. 19. [bred up then to the hopes not of public, but of court offices.](#)]Even so holy a man as George Herbert found in the glitter and fascination of the court his supreme life-struggle. See his poem *Affliction*.

[16. 20. [stewards, chamberlains, etc.](#)]Milton's profound contempt for courts and court-employments urges him here to the verge of coarseness. Cf. note on 16. 10.

[16. 25. [French court.](#)]This was the court of Louis XIV, which, under the influence of that elegant young monarch, was soon to become the most magnificent in Europe. At this time, however, it was still presided over by the queen-regent, Anne of Austria, over whom Cardinal Mazarin, her prime minister, exercised unlimited control. Mazarin was shrewd, unscrupulous, and designing. It is said that his financial agent, Fouquet, 'bought every one who was worth buying.' After the political power of the



Huguenots had been broken by Richelieu, a policy of conciliation was inaugurated, which Mazarin, by every art of blandishment and bribery, consistently continued throughout his ministry.

[[16. 29. the burden of expence.](#)]Milton's fellow-journalist, Marchamont Needham, warned the people of 'the yet unknown taxations which must needs be established to satisfy the forlorn brethren of the sword, and . . . maintain the pomp and pride of a luxurious court.' He continues: 'If ye think ye shall be eased of excise, taxes, &c. by letting him in, ye will be miserably mistaken: for these vast charges will presently ensue: 1. A large expence for maintaining the splendors of a royal court; which must be had by resuming king, queen, and princes lands [which was done]; . . . or else drained perpetually out of the peoples purses. 2. There must be a course taken to find a reward for foreigners, if any come in (as 'tis past question they will . . .); and if they should not come, yet Charles's followers and leaders, the younger brothers, with the sons of fortune, and the brethren of the blade, must all be provided for. . . . 3. Besides the publick debts of the nation, which must be paid, the young man hath innumerable vast debts contracted by himself beyond sea; those must be paid too. . . . The necessities would so increase, by Charles, that they must, upon his coming in, be trebled to what they are now upon you' (*Interest will not Lye: Harris, Life of Charles I*, p. 290). See note on 16. 11.

[[16. 31. which we are now so greedily cheapning.](#)]From the moment that Monk turned against the Rump in favor of a free Parliament, it was a foregone conclusion that the king was to come in. 'The question seemed only to be upon what terms they should admit him' (Clarendon, *Hist.* 16. 160). The cavaliers and Old Royalists generally were for unconditional restoration; the Presbyterians were anxious about their church, their estates, and their personal safety, and were therefore anxious to drive the best possible bargain with the exile. It was Monk's policy to insist upon 'the most rigid propositions' (*ibid.* 16. 160) when in conference with Royalists, and yet secretly to arrange for an unconditional restoration. He was in constant communication with Charles after March 17, but he took good care to keep all dark to his Presbyterian council of state. He submitted his 'humble Advice, that his Majesty should prevent their Fears, by declaring a free and general Pardon to all his Subjects . . . except such as should be exempted by the Parliament. And that he would consent to any Act or Acts of Parliament, that should be presented to him for the Settlement of publick Sales and Dispositions of Lands, to Officers, Soldiers, and others; and the Payment of the Soldiers Arrears: As also for Toleration of Liberty of Conscience to all his Subjects; and that none should be punished for Differences in Matters of Religion who should not disturb the publick Peace' (Baker, *Chron.*, p. 605) Charles adopted, in part, these suggestions in his Declaration of Breda, April 14, and submitted the rest entirely to the discretion of the Parliament. Monk now felt it safe to come out openly for unconditional recall; whereupon a Presbyterian move in Parliament to rejuvenate the Newport propositions and concessions was abandoned.

[[16. 37. pageant himself up and down.](#)]The figure is derived from the pageants, or double-decked, movable vans, which served as dressing-room and stage in the enacting of the old mystery-plays. Machiavelli, describing such a scene of pomp and servility, says: 'They who had never been accustom'd to any Regal pomp . . . could

not without sorrow behold the Duke environ'd with his Guards both on foot and on horseback. But their destruction being in his hands, they were necessitated to dissemble and to court and honour him outwardly whom they hated at their hearts' (*Hist. of Florence: Wks.*, p. 43). Buchanan also—and perhaps first—called to Milton's attention the custom of a king to appear 'at his levee dressed, for idle show, like a girl's doll, in all the colours of the rainbow, and surrounded with vast Parade by an immense crowd' (*De Jure Regni apud Scotos*).

[\[17. 5. a late court-Poet.\]](#) A search through the court-poets has not revealed the lines referred to. Evidently the reference does not go back as far as to Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* 1. 2. 6-9:

and therefore, like a cipher,  
Yet standing in rich place, I multiply  
With one 'We thank you,' many thousands moe  
That go before it.

The figure was a very common one. Cf. Bodin, *Repub.*: 'To whom nothing was left but the bare name of a prince, standing but for a cipher'; Butler, *Characters*: 'A Huffing Courtier is a Cypher, that has no Value himself, but from the Place he stands in.' We know that some of Butler's satire was afloat before the Restoration, but he would hardly be classed as a 'late Court-poet.'

[\[17. 9. a mischief, a pest, a scourge.\]](#) Such Milton had considered the late king, who had 'offered at more cunning fetches to undermine our liberties, and put tyranny into an art, than any British king before him'; and nothing better was to be expected of his son.

[\[17. 10. not to be remov'd.\]](#) Milton is writing from observation and experience, as well as from a knowledge of historical precedent. The long and bitter war by which Charles had been overthrown and brought to justice is freshly before him. He knew that kingship strikes its roots deeply into English life and character, and, strengthened by centuries of tradition, is 'not to be remov'd' without the universal upheaval of society. He is the more anxious, therefore, that this heroic work, already accomplished, shall not have been in vain.

[\[17. 14. any governour or chief counselour.\]](#) In a commonwealth such officers are merely servants, delegated by the people as their temporary representatives. No superstitions of divinity or prerogative hedge them about. At any time they are subject to impeachment, trial, and removal at the hands of those who set them up, in whom sovereignty resides.

[\[17. 17. must needs be madd or strangely infatuated.\]](#) Why a people whose spirit was 'no less noble and well-fitted to the liberty of a commonwealth, then in the ancient Greeks and Romans'; who were normally liberty-loving; and who were already in possession of hard-won freedom, should voluntarily renounce it all, and cry out 'as one man' for a king, Milton could only explain by such terms as 'degenerate contagion,' 'infatuation,' 'epidemic madness.' Ten years before, he had described such a condition as something inconceivable: 'Nay after such a fair deliverance as

this, with so much fortitude and valour shewn against a tyrant, that people that should seek a king claiming what this man claims, would show themselves to be by nature slaves and arrant beasts, not fit for that liberty which they cried out and bellowed for, but fitter to be led back again into their old servitude, like a sort of clamouring and fighting brutes, broke loose from their copyholds, that know not how to use or possess the liberty which they fought for' (*Eikonok.*: Bohn 1. 482).

[\[17. 18. build the chief hope . . . on a single person.\]](#)We learn from Needham (see note on 16. 29) that the people expected by the return of kingship to be 'eased of excess, taxes, &c.,' and thought that 'if Charles Stuart . . . were brought in and settled; then all things would settle too' (*Interest will not Lye*). The author of *England's Confusion* says that they were 'crying to God in secret' that he would 'at length restore unto England . . . kings and nobles as at first, . . . making it a quiet habitation, which . . . hath been so long a howling wilderness full of birds of prey and beasts that do devour.' The writer continues: 'Let me tell you the time is now come; for, having tried all other ways, insomuch that we are going round again where we first turned aside, you see no foundation to build upon but our ancient one. Strive therefore for the restoring of King, lords, and commons, that you may enjoy them and be happy.' Royalists were now exulting, and praying for a good wind from Flanders. Cf. notes on 9. 9a and 18. 7.

[\[17. 19. if he happen to be good, can do no more then another man.\]](#)Milton admits 'there may be a good king.' But, with Hotman, he is always of the opinion that 'a king as well as any private person is a mortal man.' Although a bad king has 'power to do more evil . . . then millions of other men,' he does not concede that the same high station carries with it a corresponding power to do good.

[\[17. 23. a full and free Council of their own electing.\]](#)This seemed expedient to Milton because it required only perpetuating the existing Rump. But it was also in harmony with his aristocratic ideas of government, and seemed the wisest middle course between monarchy and democracy. Moreover, it was supported by 'the wisest men in all ages' (see note on 15. 14), and was even then to be seen in successful operation in the United Provinces, Switzerland, and Italy. 'There must be a body which convenes the supreme power in the polity; viz. the Commons. It is sometimes called a Preliminary Council, but more usually where the government is a popular one, a Council' (Aristotle, *Politics* 7. 8). 'The Florentines new modell'd their City, choosing Twelve principal Magistrates to continue in Authority only for two months (*Buoni Huomini*). Next to them they constituted a Council of 80 Citizens, which they call'd *La Credenza*: after which, 180 were chosen out of the people, which with the *Credenza*, and the 12 *Buoni Huomini*, were call'd the General Council' (Machiavelli, *Hist. of Florence: Wks.*, p. 27). The Venetians, too, 'created a Council of 100 to deliberate and order all publick Matters' (*ibid.*, p. 174). 'At a certain Time of the Year a publick Council of the whole Nation should be held; in which Council, whatever seem'd to relate to the whole Body of the Commonwealth, was appointed and establish'd' (Hotman, *Franco-Gallia*, tr. 1738, p. 2). 'Even so a multitude of men ought not to be ruled and govern'd by one single Person, who perhaps understands and sees less than several others among them; but by many select Persons, who, in the Opinion of all Men, are both very prudent and eminent' (*ibid.*, p. 67). This was

Milton's idea exactly. Finally, Bodin, whom he quotes later as authority, declares: 'There is nothing that giveth greater credit and authoritie unto the lawes and commandements of a prince, a people, or state, or in any manner of Commonweale, than to cause them to passe by the advise of a grave and wise Senat or Councill' (*Repub.*, p. 254).

[\[17. 24. where . . . reason only swayes.\]](#)The law of nature, which was recognized as supreme, was generally defined as 'right reason' (see note on 10. 40); hence the tendency of antiroyalists to exalt the authority of reason. In the council of state instituted in 1649, no official head, such as lord president, was to be allowed. However, it soon became expedient to modify the reign of reason by placing Bradshaw in the chair.

Cicero particularly lauds the rule of reason, in political as well as in private affairs (see note on 10. 40).

[\[18. 1. we need depend on none but God and our own counsels, our own active vertue and industrie.\]](#)'The happiness of a nation consists in true religion, piety, justice, prudence, temperance, fortitude, and the contempt of avarice and ambition. They in whomsoever these vertues dwell eminently, need not kings to make them happy, but are the architects of thir own happiness; and whether to themselves or others are not less than kings' (*Eikonok.*: Bohn 1. 455).

[\[18. 3. Go to the Ant.\]](#)Solomon's injunction was well heeded by commonwealth-writers of the seventeenth century. Milton and Harrington and Felltham thought they had found in the humble pismire the natural justification and perfect model of a commonwealth (see note on 18. 13). Thomas Hobbes concedes that 'certain living creatures, as Bees, and Ants, live sociably one with another' (*Leviathan* 2. 17), but sees no force in the analogy usually insisted upon. The royalists, on the other hand, were rather partial to the bee, as affording a natural illustration of kingship. Even the quails, they said, were 'under a Captain'; and the cock had 'both cocks and hens under him.' Cf. Milton's indignant reply in the *Defense* (Bohn 1. 115).

[\[18. 7. they who think the nation undon without a king.\]](#)These were, of course, the large body of Old Royalists, the royalized Presbyterians, and the majority of the nondescript rabble, whose favorite sports now were rump-roasting and the mobbing of republicans. Meanwhile, the fervor of the mob was kept at white heat by Royalist pamphlets and haranguing demagogues. 'Have you ever seen quiet or settlement since the King was inhumanly murdered at his own gate, and our ancient government by King, lords and commons changed?' (*England's Confusion*). 'My subjects can hardly be happy if I be miserable, or enjoy their peace or liberties while I am oppressed' (*Eikon Basilike* 21. 3).

[\[18. 13. a frugal and self-governing democratie.\]](#)Owen Felltham, in his *Brief Character of the Low Countries*, had likened the frugal and diligent Hollanders to a nation of pismires: 'For providence, they are the pismires of the world, and having nothing but what grass affords them, are yet, for almost all provisions, the storehouse

of whole Christendom. . . . Every one is busy, and carries his grain.’ Cf. note on 14. 14.

[18. 18. [pretend right over them as thir lord.](#)]Milton was a staunch defender of the right of the wise and virtuous to rule; and he had earlier conceded specifically that kings may justly rule by right of superior virtue. The change made in the revision, viz. ‘right’ to ‘hereditarie right,’ removes the inconsistency. See note on 19. 26.

[18. 19. [conclude.](#)]See Glossary.

[18. 21. [and thir leaders especially.](#)]This thought was added as a thrust at Monk.

[18. 26. [admirable.](#)]See Glossary.

[18. 30. [unwise in thir counsels.](#)]It is not courage, but wisdom, in which his countrymen are deficient; and it is this defect that Milton labors to correct. He points out a ‘readie and easie way.’ It shall not be said that the nation fell back upon kingship for want of a definite plan.

[18. 32. [ten or twelve years prosperous war.](#)]See note on 12. 6.

[19. 2. [an ignominie.](#)]The ignominy of backsliding as a nation from high republican professions and principles filled the great idealist with such shame and indignation as perhaps no other Englishman of the day was able to feel; for few indeed could have been capable of such lofty conceptions of freedom, or of such sublime devotion to a hopeless ideal. But of course Milton entertained an exaggerated idea of the slavery of kingship, and was incapable of seeing the utter hopelessness of any republican solution under existing conditions. A very similar contemporary statement is the following: ‘It is very rarely observ’d in the whole course of history, that ever kingly government was suddenly restored in any country, after it had been once cashier’d by the people’ (*Anglia Liberata*: Harris, *Life of Charles II* 1. 107).

[19. 5. [that part of the nation which consents not with them.](#)]This contingent consisted of Milton; the Rump; a scattered and dwindling body of republicans; Lambert and a part of the army; a few Quakers, Fifth-Monarchy men, and miscellaneous sects. ‘I perswade me of a great number,’ says Milton, meaning rather to persuade others; for he himself well knew that they of the good old cause were become a negligible remnant.

[19. 7. [far worthier.](#)]Milton was a firm believer in the theory of geometric proportion (see note on 15. 16a), and in the right of the wise and good to rule. In the *Second Defense* (Bohn 1. 265) he says: ‘You everywhere concede, that “the independents were superior, not in numbers, but in discipline and in courage.” Hence I contend that they well deserved the superiority which they acquired; for nothing is more agreeable to the order of nature, or more for the interest of mankind, than that the less should yield to the greater, not in numbers, but in wisdom and in virtue. Those who excel in prudence, in experience, in industry and courage, however few they may be, will, in my opinion, finally constitute the majority, and everywhere have the ascendant.’ For the sources of this idea, see note on 11. 37. This, then, was the end to which he trusted



the remnant was reserved. In the present instance Milton seems almost to sound a call to arms among the few yet faithful—and, indeed, armed resistance *was* shortly attempted by Lambert and a few Fanatics. The whole passage is suppressed in the second edition. The omission is eloquent: it is almost as if Milton would say, ‘God *hath* . . . quenched the spirit of libertie among us.’

[\[19. 10. God hath yet his remnant.\]](#) This idea of being God’s chosen band was a firm conviction with the Puritan Independents, especially with Cromwell, Milton, the army, and the Rump. It is based, of course, upon Old-Testament conceptions. ‘“This People,” saith God [Isa. 43. 21], “I have formed for Myself, that they may show forth my praise.” I say, it’s a memorable passage; and, I hope, not unfitly applied.’ These were the words of Cromwell, addressing the Barebone Saints assembled in Parliament July 4, 1653. Cromwell says further: ‘You very well know, it pleased God, much about the midst of this War, to winnow (if I may so say) the Forces of this Nation; and to put them into the hands of other men of other principles than those that did engage at the first, . . . that he might raise up a poor contemptible company of men . . . into wonderful success! Simply by their owning a Principle of Godliness and Religion. . . . Truly you [the Parliament, as well as the army] are call’d by God, “as Judah was,” to “rule with Him,” and for Him. . . . I say, own your call; for it is of God’ (Carlyle, *Cromwell’s Letters and Speeches* 3. 256). Such was the astounding assurance of the typical Independent and saint.

But Milton, in giving expression here to the current conception, doubtless has in mind also the following passage: ‘And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. A remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return’ (Is. 10. 20-2). Cf. note on 32. 6.

It is just possible, too, that Milton here defiantly hurls back the Duke of Ormond’s words in 1649 concerning Parliament: ‘There remains only a small number, and they the dregs and scum of the house of commons, picked and awed by the army, a wicked remnant, left for no other end, than yet further if it be possible to delude the people, with the name of a parliament’ (*Ormond to . . . Governor of Dublin*, March 14, 1648: Bohn 2. 171). This hypothesis furnishes an excellent reason for the suppression of the sentence in the second edition; for the remnant, if the Rump, no longer existed.

[\[19. 12. so plane, so rational.\]](#) Milton had so convinced himself of the desirability and absolute justice of freedom that the general defection of the people seemed downright madness. It was all so ‘plane’ and ‘rational’ that kings and bishops meant slavery, and that merely perpetuating the Rump as a grand council was the ‘readie and easie way’ to avoid it! It must be admitted, too, that consistency—if not practicability—was on Milton’s side. But, alas, it was neither ‘plane’ nor ‘rational’ to any one else that an aristocratic tyranny might not be the very worst slavery of all; nor were most men able to see any other practicable expedient than kingship after the utter failure of so many popular experiments.

[19. 14. [true principles of justice and religion.](#)] Those of justice would restrain him from every shade and species of tyranny; those of religion, teach him humility and service. Cf. note on 16. 4, and Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* 19. 14-5: ‘Even those who rule serve those whom they seem to command; for they rule not from a love of power, but from a sense of the duty they owe to others—not because they are proud of authority; but because they love mercy. He did not intend that His rational creature should have dominion over anything but the irrational creation—not man over man, but man over the beasts.’

[19. 18. [every way equal or superiour.](#)] An early fondness for this idea is seen in the following entry in the *Commonplace Book*: ‘ad subditos suos scribens, Constantinus Magnus non alio nomine quam fratres appellat.’ Milton is here reasserting the opinions expressed in the *Franco-Gallia* and the *Vindiciæ contra Tyrannos*. The latter book makes much of the old Aragonian coronation formula: ‘We, who are as good as you and are more powerful than you, choose you as king,’ etc. (Dunning, *Pol. Theories* 2. 54). Cf. Dr. Johnson’s comment: ‘He who told every man that he was equal to his King, could hardly want an audience’ (*Lives*).

[19. 22. [kingdom of Christ . . . is hid to this world.](#)] Milton here retrieves himself from the attempt a little before to force upon Christ’s injunctions a purely temporal significance. Cf. notes on 15. 34 and 15. 35.

[19. 26. [hath left no vicegerent.](#)] The doctrine of vicegerency had its origin in the words of St. Paul, Romans 13. 1: ‘Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God.’ It completely satisfied the mediæval instinct for unity, and was asserted throughout the Middle Ages, either by the emperor, as in the case of Charlemagne, or by the pope, as Gregory VII. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the theory of the divine right of kings rested upon this assumption of vicegerency.

We find that Milton’s attitude toward vicegerency changes from acceptance to positive rejection. In the *Reformation* (Bohn 2. 408) he extols the government of England ‘under the sovereign prince, Christ’s vicegerent, using the sceptre of David.’ But by the time he sets about the *Defense*, he has completely rejected the idea: ‘If it is by God that kings nowadays reign, it is by God too that the People assert their own liberty; since all things are of him and by him. . . . Be this right of kings, therefore, what it may, the right of the people is as much from God as it’ (*Defense*: Bohn 1. 48). Still more emphatic is his quotation from Chrysostom: ‘What? is every prince then appointed by God to be so? I say no such thing’ (*ibid.* 1. 71).

[19. 33. [as the Pope pretends.](#)] An excellent statement of the papal claim of vicegerency is furnished by Thomas Aquinas, *De Regimine Principum* 1. 14: ‘In order, therefore, that the spiritual be kept separate from the earthly, the office of this kingdom is committed not to earthly kings but to the priests, and above all to the chief priest, the successor of Peter, the vicegerent of Christ, the Roman bishop, to whom is due the subjection of all kings of the Christian people, even as to the Lord Jesus Christ himself’ (tr. Poole, *Illus. Hist. Med. Thought*, p. 241).



[\[20. 3. I doubt not but all ingenuous and knowing men will easily agree with me.\]](#) Yet he knew very well that Bodin and many other writers of authority had preferred a mixed government, or modified form of kingship (see note on 24. 3). He himself had expressed the opinion in the *Commonplace Book* that governments should be popular, monarchical, or mixed, according to the nature of the people. And as for single-person rule, that of Cromwell had found no more loyal supporter than Milton.

[\[20. 4. a free Commonwealth without single person or house of lords.\]](#) This is a reaffirmation of the position taken by Parliament in 1649: ‘Be it declared and enacted, . . . that the people of England . . . are, and shall be, and are hereby constituted, made, established, and confirmed to be a Commonwealth and Free State, by the supreme authority of this nation, the representatives of the people in Parliament, . . . and that without any King or House of Lords’ (Gardiner, *Const. Doc.*, p. 388). This was the position taken by the army, too, in its engagement drawn up in celebration of Lambert’s victory of August, 1659.

[\[20. 6. We have all this while, say they, bin expecting it.\]](#) See Glossary for ‘expecting.’ The one unanswerable argument of the Royalists was that the republicans, although given the opportunity, had been unable to institute and maintain a stable government in England (see note on 18. 7). Even a Commonwealth-man was forced to liken the situation to that of a drowning man laying hold of ‘straws and helpless twigs’ (see *Intro.*, p. xxviii). And Milton is admittedly writing amidst ‘anarchy and confusion.’

[\[20. 10. the people might have soon bin satisfi’d and delighted.\]](#) Milton’s sanguine faith in a commonwealth was based, of course, upon many and well-known precedents, and was immensely strengthened by the flourishing condition of the republic of the Netherlands. Such expressions of confidence, however, were common among the republicans. Sir Henry Vane, in his *Healing Question*, points out ‘how suddenly might harmony, righteousness, love, peace, and safety unto the whole body follow hereupon, as the happy fruit of such a settlement’ as he proposes (see *Intro.*, p. xxx). And the writer of *A Letter of Advice to his Excellency Lord General Monk* (*Harl. Misc.* 8. 625) ‘cannot but assign’ ‘those good days . . . to the democratical part of the government.’

[\[20. 13. this care of timely settling a new government, . . . too much neglected, hath bin our mischief.\]](#) This seems to have been the universal feeling among the republicans. ‘Well, but now says the Protectorian Family, O that we had set up the equal Commonwealth! So say broken Parlements and Statesmen; so say the sadly mistaken Sectarys; so say the Cashiered Officers; so says he that would have no nay, but Oligarchy was a good word; and so will more say after these, except they learn to say after another, *aut reges non exigendi fuerunt, aut plebi re, non verbo, danda libertas*; either the Kings ought not to have driven out, or the People to have their Liberty not in word, but in deed: but that is Heathenism, that’s Cicero’ (Harrington, *The Ways and Means Whereby an Equal and Lasting Commonwealth may be suddenly introduced*, Feb. 6, 1659).

[\[20. 17. frequent disturbances, interruptions and dissolutions.\]](#) It is interesting to note Milton’s change of attitude toward these disturbances. Again and again he justifies the

grand exclusion of 1648 (see note on 10. 37). In his panegyric upon Cromwell in the *Second Defense* (Bohn 1. 288), he defends the protector's high-handed dissolution of Parliament in 1653: 'But when you saw that the business was artfully procrastinated, that every one was more intent on his own selfish interest than on the public good, that the people complained of the disappointments which they had experienced, and the fallacious promises by which they had been gulled, that they were the dupes of a few overbearing individuals, you put an end to their domination.' But when in October, 1659, the army again pulls down the Parliament, Milton is horrified (see note on 13. 6). And now, a few months later, he attributes the failure of Parliament to its interruptions by the army. There is in this not only a change of attitude toward the army-leaders, but even an implied censure of Cromwell himself, the prince of disturbers, interrupters, and dissolvers.

[\[20. 18. partly from the impatient or disaffected people.\]](#)Parliament had long been bombarded with petitions from the disaffected people of London and elsewhere, all praying for a full and free Parliament. This, of course, was only one way of asking the existing Parliament to get out, and naturally inclined the members to sit still more tightly in their comfortable seats—at least to put off the evil day as long as possible. Dr. Denton writes to Sir Ralph Verney, even as far back as Aug. 10, 1659: 'The only thing that looks like countenancing Sir George [Booth] is the intended petition of the city for a free parl. as they say'; and on Jan. 26, 1660: 'Young Robert Pye brought a petition yesterday directed to the Speaker. . . . They say 'tis a cutter' (*Verney Memoirs* 3. 457).

But by this time the people were resorting to more effective means of intimidation. Insults, and even assaults, now daily fell upon and disconcerted the members of the Rump, while acts of vandalism were perpetrated upon their property. Barebone's windows were shattered (see note on 9. 9a). Dr. Denton reports, Feb. 13: 'The Speaker (who sat late) in his march homewards affronted, his men beaten, his windows broken. A Rump in a chayre rosted at his gate.' Meanwhile the Royalists kept the Rumpers' ears full of risings and plots to cut throats. It is not at all surprising that a body so distracted and unsettled itself found it impossible to advance the great business of settling the government.

[\[20. 19. some ambitious leaders.\]](#)The army, which, upon the whole, had stood for principles dear to Milton, was vitiated by the personal ambitions of its leaders. The factions that sprang up under the *régime* of Richard were the Commonwealth-men, under the leadership of Colonel Lilburn; the Wallingford-House party, led by Fleetwood and Desborough, whose design it was to retain Richard as their figurehead and tool; and a third smaller group under Ingoldsby, who joined the council in supporting Richard. First came the petition presented to Richard in October, 1658. In November there were further suggestions and presumptions. In the Parliament of 1659 the army-faction, or republicans, finding themselves outnumbered and outvoted (198 to 125) by the court-faction, began to intrigue with army-leaders against the Parliament itself. Richard proved to be but a reed shaken by the wind: at first he defended Parliament; then he suddenly turned and dissolved that body (April 22), and cast in his lot with the army. The army-officers now forced Richard to abdicate, and again set up the Rump. In October, 1659, Lambert executed his famous *coup d'état*

(see *Introd.*, p. xviii). The officers declared in a letter to the people that they had been ‘necessitated to obstruct the sitting of the Parliament for a time,’ and would assume control themselves. There was talk of Lambert’s setting up as protector, or even as king. Milton indignantly called upon the army to ‘find out the Achan amongst them.’ And now, last of all, Monk was acting the tyrant over Parliament. Pepys says (March 3): ‘He [Lord Oliver St. John] told me he feared there was new design hatching, as if Monk had a mind to get into the saddle.’ See the following note.

[\[20. 20. much contrarie . . . to the . . . Armie it self.\]](#)The rank and file of the army were staunchly republican, and, normally, well disposed toward the Parliament. When the Rumpers marched back to their seats on Dec. 26, the soldiers ‘stood in ranks and made Acclamations.’ In his *Letter* (Oct. 20) Milton says: ‘For neither do I speak this in reproach of the army, but as jealous of their honour inciting them to manifest and publish, with all speed, some better cause of these their late actions than hath hitherto appeared; and to find out the Achan amongst them, whose close ambition in all likelihood abuses their honest natures against their meaning to these disorders.’

[\[20. 22. and thir other Commanders.\]](#)Fleetwood alone, of the seven army-commissioners, openly supported Lambert’s bold exclusion of the Rump. In fact, Fleetwood, Haslerig, and Morley were the only ones present in London at the time. Morley attempted to defend the House with soldiers, but his troops deserted at night. Of those absent, Ludlow was neutral, and Monk outspokenly in favor of the Rump; while the inferior officers generally were antagonistic to the ambitious leaders.

[\[20. 22a. when they were once undeceivd.\]](#)After they had seen anarchy prevailing under the tyranny of Fleetwood, Lambert, and others, and had been jeered at and pelted by the citizens of London.

[\[20. 24. small number of those remaining.\]](#)There were thirty-six members present at the reassembling of the Rump on December 26, 1659; and during the remainder of its existence the attendance never exceeded fifty-three.

[\[20. 25. by-word of reproach.\]](#)‘The Rump.’ The *New English Dictionary* furnishes several explanations as to the origin of this term: ‘Now if you ask who nam’d it Rump, Know ’twas so stiled in an honest Sheet (call’d *The Bloody Rump*) written before the Tryall of our late Sovereign of Glorious Memory: but the Word obtain’d not universal notice till it flew from the mouth of Major General Brown at a Publick Assembly in the daies of Richard Cromwell’ (*Rump Songs*); ‘Which word *Rump* had it’s name first from Mr. Clem. Walker in his History of Independency printed in 1648 and was given to those . . . members that strenuously oppos’d the King’ (Hearne, *Collect.*); ‘This fagge end, this Rump of a Parliament with corrupt Maggots in it’ (Walker, *Hist. Ind.*). But see also *Introd.*, pp. xiii and xxiv.

[\[20. 27. faithfull worthies.\]](#)Walker (*Hist. Ind.* 4. 40) enumerates the forty-two Rumpers who reassembled in May, 1659. Among them were ‘William Lenthall, Esq., their tender conscienced Speaker,’ Whitelock, Ludlow, Haslerig, Ingoldsby, Fleetwood, and Sir Henry Vane.

A tribute is paid them (Nov. 1, 1659) in *The Humble Representation*: ‘Is it not to be considered, that this parliament, notwithstanding they could not but see that they must sit again under great difficulties and disadvantages, because the treasure was exhausted, vast debts were contracted, and the soldiers and seamen unpaid; yet, being invited, how did they break through these discouragements, and undertook *difficillimam provinciam*’ (Harris, *Life of Charles II* 1. 241). See notes on 20. 29 and 20. 30.

[\[20. 29. constant to thir trust.\]](#) This whole passage is a reflection of the language uttered in the House of Commons upon the reassembling of the Rump the previous summer—an event in which Milton felt the keenest interest and satisfaction. Upon that occasion ‘the Officers of the Army, . . . calling to mind, that the same Parliament, consisting of the Members which continued to sit until the Twentieth of April 1653, were Assertors of the good Old Cause, and had a special Presence of God with them; and were signally blessed in that Work, did adjudge it their Duty . . . to invite the aforesaid Members to return to the Exercise and Discharge of their Trust’ (*Com. Journ.*).

The Parliament, on its part, ‘being assembled at Westminster the Seventh of May 1659, found it a Duty incumbent upon them not to neglect this Opportunity, which the wonderful, and (as they hope) the gracious Providence of God hath held forth unto them, for the Prosecution of what yet remains of their great Trust’ (*ibid.*). Cf. note on 20. 30.

[\[20. 30. they have declar’d.\]](#) Cf. *Commons Journals*, May 7, 1659: . . . ‘All which the Parliament taking into their Consideration, do declare, That they are resolved (through the gracious Assistance of Almighty God) to apply themselves to the faithful Discharge of the Trust reposed in them; and to endeavour the Settlement of this Commonwealth upon such a Foundation, as may assert, establish, and secure the Property and Liberties of the People, in reference unto all, both as Men and as Christians; and that without a single Person, Kingship, or House of Peers.’ See also note on 20. 29.

[\[20. 35. to free the people from slavery.\]](#) To achieve civil and religious liberty. Kingship will mean episcopacy and intolerance upon the one hand, and the assertion of the royal prerogative upon the other; whereas the nation is now, and may continue, free from both.

[\[21. 2. contest . . . between prerogative and petition of right.\]](#) The Stuarts had always been sticklers for prerogative. It was this insistence that drove the people to the *Petition of Right* in 1628, and the struggle finally culminated in the Civil War. In theory, the king’s prerogatives still include personal irresponsibility for crime, exemption from taxation, right to dissolve Parliament, the veto-power, command of the army and navy, exclusive authority to coin money and grant charters to corporations, headship of the judiciary and of the church, etc. But practically, these powers have long since passed into the hands of the ministers.

[\[21. 3. now is the opportunitie.\]](#)This argument was a general favorite. The army, in May, had promised the Rump its ‘utmost Assistance . . . to sit in Safety, for improving the present Opportunity for settling and securing the Peace and Freedom of the Commonwealth.’ The Royalists also were urging upon the people that ‘the time’ was ‘now come.’ The opportunity that Milton thought he saw at the beginning of February did seem an auspicious one. The Rump was sitting, and Monk was at hand to defend it. They had but to perpetuate themselves as a grand council, and the work would be done—a rare opportunity, if the people at large had only gone in for an aristocracy, and been pleased with Milton’s selection of rulers!

[\[21. 7. voted to fill up their number.\]](#)This was the Rump’s scheme of self-perpetuation—to issue writs, and prescribe such qualifications as would keep out all but kindred spirits. During January they had held to their customary tactics of resolving and procrastinating. It was so much better—for them—as it was! But finally, on February 4, apparently as a pledge of good faith to Monk, who had just arrived, they voted to swell their numbers to four hundred (see *Introd.*, p. xiv). Even then, election-writs were not agreed upon until Feb. 16.

[\[21. 9. keepers of our libertie.\]](#)Prynne had boldly declared that the writs should be issued in the name of ‘King Charles.’ It was decided, however, to send them out in the name of the ‘Keepers of the Liberties of England.’

[\[21. 10. summon a free Parliament.\]](#)The champion of freedom could hardly do less than acquiesce in the calling of a free Parliament, although he had advocated perpetuating the old one. He knew well that ‘free’ would mean ‘Royalist,’ and could not resist a little sarcastic play upon the word.

[\[21. 19. Knights and Burgesses.\]](#)Members of Parliament elected by the people, the former representing counties or shires, the latter, boroughs, towns, and universities.

[\[21. 20. just and necessarie qualifications.\]](#)On Jan. 5, 1660, the restored Parliament reaffirmed the disabling acts of 1648 and 1649, and ‘provided that none should sit but such as should take an Oath of Abjuration of the King, his Family, and Government’ (Baker, *Chron.*, p. 594). During February, as their case grew more desperate, qualification-acts multiplied, and grew more and more rigorous. On Feb. 8, all Papists and abettors of the Irish rebellion were debarred. On Feb. 11, all such as had ‘engaged in any Plot, Conspiracy, or Design, on behalf of Charles Stuart, or any of the Line of the late King James’ were excluded. On Feb. 13, the disabling act was further extended to include all who had ‘advised, promoted, or abetted any Single Person to the Supreme Magistracy.’ It was further decreed that all eligible to election must be ‘Persons fearing God and of good Conversation’; and that none should sit who had married a Papist wife or given a son or daughter to a Papist, or should ‘deny the Scriptures to be the Word of God; . . . no common Profaner of the Lord’s Day; no profane Swearer or Curser, no Drunkard, or common Haunter of Taverns or Alehouses’ (*Commons Journals*). Just as Milton was finishing his treatise, on Feb. 14, the Rump, upon receiving Monk’s peremptory orders, retaliated by disabling all sons of sequestered Royalists except such as had ‘borne Arms for the Parliament and continued faithful to the Parliament.’



[\[21. 28. general Council of ablest men.\]](#) This is the central proposal in Milton's scheme of a republic. While there had been various ancient examples of a partially representative council, it was from the mediæval church, and its conception of popular sovereignty, that the idea of a grand council representative of all the people was handed down to the seventeenth century (see *Introd.*, pp. xliii-xliv). Milton accepted it with fervor, but also with characteristic modifications as to tenure and suffrage. His council, while virtually an aristocratic institution, was still, in theory, representative of all the people, and open to every man whose virtue and abilities were sufficient to enable him to achieve it.

More immediate influences in predisposing Milton to favor government by council, although of course derivative from ancient and mediæval precedent, were the theory and practice of modern politicians and states. Machiavelli had spoken much and favorably of the councils of Venice and Florence (see note on 17. 23). 'Francis Hottoman,' says Milton in the *Defense* (Bohn 1. 107), 'proves out of very ancient chronicles of that nation, that the whole affair was transacted in the great council of the kingdom.' Milton is thinking of the *Franco-Gallia* (see note on 17. 23). Even Bodin thought 'a grave and wise Senat or Councell' indispensable.

This weight of authority, ancient and modern; its partial, but successful, application in the constitutions of Venice, Switzerland, and the Netherlands; and the traditions of the English Parliament itself—all these influences unitedly found expression in England in 1649 when the House of Commons boldly abolished kingship and the House of Lords. From this single-chamber rule it was but a step—or hardly a step—to Milton's perpetual grand council of ablest men.

[\[21. 31. must have the forces by sea and land.\]](#) Cf. Barker, *Hist. Rise and Decline of the Netherlands*, p. 162: 'The French ambassador in the Netherlands, the celebrated President Jeanin, perhaps the ablest diplomat of his age, . . . repeatedly recommended the improvement of the Dutch constitution by the creation of an elected central authority possessed of greater executive power, . . . a national council entitled to decide on peace, war, alliances, financial matters, and taxation.'

[\[21. 32. not transferd, but delegated only.\]](#) See *Introd.*, p. xxxv, and cf. *Tenure* (Bohn 2. 11): 'It being thus manifest, that the power of kings and magistrates is nothing else but what is only derivative, transferred, and committed to them in trust from the people to the common good of them all, in whom the power yet remains fundamentally, and cannot be taken from them, without a violation of their natural birthright.' Cf. notes on 10. 35, 19. 26, and 31. 3.

[\[22. 1. som inspectors deputed.\]](#) Plato (*Laws* 6. 761) furnishes the source of this idea: 'Every judge and magistrate shall be liable to give an account of his conduct in office, except those who, like kings, have the final decision.' But this was a popular slogan in Milton's day. Cf. *The Case of the Army truly stated*, which explicitly demanded 'that faithful persons be chosen to receive accounts in every part of the kingdome, especially considering that former Committees for accounts were constituted in a time when corrupt men overpoured the Parliament,' . . . and . . . that all without distinction,

as well parliament men as others, may be equally accountable to persons chosen for that purpose.’

[\[22. 3. or propose.\]](#)The words are added because of the referendum-idea which was introduced in the second edition. The people were to have the deciding voice.

[\[22. 8. Council of State.\]](#)This was already in operation. A council of state consisting of thirty-one members, only ten of whom were not members of the House, had been elected the preceding May. Another was organized on Dec. 30. This was, of course, supplanted by a third on Feb. 21. The advantage of having a small, select inner council, to act quickly and secretly in a diplomatic or executive capacity, had been very well understood in other republics (see note on 17. 23).

[\[22. 10. conceit of successive Parliaments.\]](#)See Introd., p. xxxii.

[\[22. 12. should sit perpetual.\]](#)Cf. *Defense* (Bohn 1. 144): ‘We do not deny, that “governors are not likely to be changed”; . . . but that, therefore, they ought never to be changed upon no occasion, whatsoever, that does not follow by no means.’

[\[22. 16. prevent or answer.\]](#)Forestall or deal with.

[\[22. 20. The ship of the Commonwealth.\]](#)The figure has been popular with political writers from Aristotle to the present. It probably sprang from the picturesque etymology of the term ‘govern’ itself: Gr. κυβερνῶν, L. *gubernare*—to steer (a vessel). The various derivatives in Greek, Latin, and modern languages—*gubernaculum*, government, etc.—retain the original idea of ‘piloting,’ and, in consequence, the metaphor of the ship. A few of the very many occurrences of this figure are the following: Aristotle, *Politics* 3. 4: ‘Now different citizens have different functions, like sailors on board ship; but they have a common end, which, in the case of the sailors, is the safety of the ship, in the case of the citizens, the salvation of the state’; Plutarch, *Life of Solon*, tr. Langhorne:

Seize, seize the helm, the reeling vessel guide:

With aiding patriots stem the raging tide;

Cicero, *Pro P. Sextio Oratio* 9. 20: ‘Quis enim clavum tanti imperii tenere, et gubernacula reipublicæ tracta rein maximo cursu ac fluctibus posse arbitraretur hominem emersum subito ex diuturnis tenebris lustrorum ac stuprorum, vino, ganeis, lenociniis, adulteriisque confectum?’; Machiavelli, *Hist. Florence (Wks., p. 212)*: ‘When Times are tempestuous, and the Ship of State has need of the help and assistance of the Subject, there are but few will expose themselves’; Bacon, *Advancement of Learning (Essays, ed. 1900, p. 186)*: ‘Never caring in all tempests what becomes of the ship of estates, so that they may save themselves in the cockboat of their own fortune’; Cromwell, Sept. 4, 1654: ‘It’s one of the great ends of calling this Parliament, that the Ship of the Commonwealth may be brought into a safe harbour’; *Clarendon State Papers* 3. 695: ‘the Ship of the Commonwealth being at this ready to sink.’



[22. 24. [both foundation and main pillar.](#)] Cf. Bodin, *Repub.*, p. 492: ‘For as the hookes and hinges whereupon great burdons rest, must of themselves be strong and unmoveable; even so the Senat of the Areopagi, and of other Commonweales also, were as most strong and sure hinges, whereupon as well all the mutable officers as the whole waight of the Estate and Commonweale rested & reposed themselves.’

[22. 29. [much likelier . . . to unsettle.](#)] Milton probably has in mind Bodin’s teaching: ‘The Genowaies use every yeare to change their great Counsell of fowr hundred, and Senat of three score. . . . Whereas the great Counsell of Geneva, the Senate, and privie counsell are once chosen for ever; . . . whereby it commeth to passe, that the Commonweal of Geneva is more firme, and lesse subject unto alteration or seditious innovation than is that of Genua’ (*Repub.*, p. 233).

[22. 32. [all mindes are suspense.](#)] Note the obsolete usage—almost the Latin *suspensus*, pp. of *suspendere*. Milton frequently uses ‘suspense’ as an adjective. Cf. *P. L.* 1. 2. 417-8:

and expectation held  
His look suspense, awaiting who appear’d.

[23. 6. [But if the ambition, etc.](#)] The passage seems clearly to be a reflection of Bodin’s thought: ‘But if the desire of honour bee so great, as that the citisens cannot otherwise be satisfied, except they all by turnes may have place in the Senat, we must then imitat that which Solon did; who in the Popular estate of the Athenians by him framed, appointed a mutable Senat of foure hundred citisens every yeare to be changed’ (*Repub.*, p. 277).

[23. 11. [by som lately propounded.](#)] See note on 23. 19.

[23. 12. [everie two or three years, etc.](#)] See *Introd.*, p. lviii.

[23. 13. [annually \(or if the space be longer\), etc.](#)] Milton partially accedes to the scheme of rotation, although against his judgment. But if he cannot obtain a perpetual senate, he will advocate as long a tenure as possible.

[23. 17. [prevent the setting of too absolute a power.](#)] Milton seems to be replying to the recent *Censure of the Rota* (see Appendix B, p. 181).

[23. 19. [which hath bin already thought on heer.](#)] The chief advocate of rotation was, of course, James Harrington, of the Rota Club. His ideas are elaborately set forth in the *Oceana* (1656). A brief statement of his rotation-scheme is afforded by the petition presented to Parliament by Harrington, Neville, and others, July 6, 1659. Section 3 reads: ‘That the free People of England, in their respective divisions at certain days and places appointed, shall for ever annually choose one third part to each Assembly, to enter into their Authority, at certain days appointed: the same days, the Authority of a third of each of the said Assemblies to cease, only in the laying the first Foundation in this Commonwealth’s Constitution: the whole number of both the Assemblies to be chosen by the People respectively, viz. one third of each Assembly to be chosen for one year, one third for two years, and one third for three years.’

But there had been earlier rotation-schemes than Harrington's. Perhaps the most interesting example is the plan evolved and put into rhyme by George Wither, entitled *The Perpetual Parliament* (1653):

Thus one *moneth* some; and *moneth* by *moneth* for ever,  
Let each *twelfth part*, still orderly persever  
To take a *turn*, till ev'ry share hath had  
A *moneth* in ev'ry year; and having made  
Their *choise*, let them still *enter* and *withdraw*  
Successively, by a *perpetuall Law*,  
No man a *place of trust*, supplying there,  
At one *election*, longer than one year.  
(Wither's *Miscel. Wks.*: Spenser Soc. Pub., 3d Coll., p. 52.)

[\[23. 20. and done in other Commonwealths.\]](#)The principle had been applied to some extent in Athens, Venice, Florence, Genoa, Switzerland, and the United Provinces; but nowhere so thoroughly as Harrington now proposed doing.

[\[23. 22. this wheel.\]](#)Cf. L. *rota*, wheel.

[\[23. 24. wheel of fortune.\]](#)Fortuna was the Roman goddess of good luck. Her emblem was a wheel. Cf. Carew, *Caelum Britannicum* (*Wks.*, ed. Hazlitt, p. 218):

See, where Dame Fortune comes; you may know  
Her by her wheele.

[\[23. 27. raw, unexperienc'd.\]](#)This objection had been strongly urged by Bodin, Milton's main authority on perpetuation. See *Introd.*, p. lxii.

[\[23. 32. militia.\]](#)The body of citizen-soldiery, as opposed to the standing army, or professional soldiers. The militia was, and still is, recruited from the different counties, according to apportionment of Parliament. Enlistment may be made compulsory, but is generally voluntary.

[\[23. 32a. have thir arms in thir own hands.\]](#)A reassurance of those who feared that a perpetual council would grow tyrannical. It is hardly consistent with Milton's previous argument that the grand council 'must have the forces by sea and land committed to them.'

[\[23. 34. just conviction of som crime.\]](#)An improvement in definiteness over the previous wording.

[\[23. 36. I forejudge not.\]](#)It was no time to stand upon trifles. The Restoration was at hand. Any sort of commonwealth would be better than kingship.

[\[23. 39. another way.\]](#)See 37. 24, and note thereon.

[\[24. 3. counted the more safe and durable.\]](#)Cf. Bodin, *Republic*, p. 413: 'But afterwards . . . it was by long experience found out, That Monarchies were more sure, more profitable, and more durable also, than were the Popular estates, or

Aristocracies; and amongst the Monarchies, them also which were founded in the succession of the next heires male.’

[\[24. 7. for that.\]](#)For the reason that.

[\[24. 14. Sanhedrim.\]](#)The supreme legislative and judicial assembly of the Jewish nation. It consisted of seventy-one members, chosen from the different classes of society,—priests, elders, scribes, and other learned men,—and was presided over jointly by the high priest and ruling prince, as at the trials of Jesus and Paul. The Sanhedrim traced its origin to the seventy elders appointed by Moses (see Num. 11. 16-7). The qualifications for election to this body were rigorous. The candidates had to be ‘perfect men: learned, courageous, strong and modest; . . . of tall stature, dignified, of advanced age,’ etc. (Hastings, *Dict. of the Bible*).

[\[24. 14a. Areopagus.\]](#)The Areopagus was the supreme court of Athens. It was founded under the kings, and was further exalted by Solon. It was composed of ex-archons, who were chosen for life. To it was entrusted the safeguarding of the state’s most sacred traditions. It was absolutely irresponsible, and had power to summon before it any individual whatever. From its decisions there was no appeal. At the time of the battle of Salamis it was entrusted with the entire conduct of affairs. Under Pericles it lost much of its ancient dignity and power.

[\[24. 15. Lacedæmon.\]](#)Laconia, the southeasterly district of Peloponnesus. The name was also applied to Sparta, the capital.

[\[24. 15a. the Ancients.\]](#)This assembly, instituted by Lycurgus, consisted of thirty members, not less than sixty years of age, elected by the people for term of life from the three orders of society. It constituted the supreme authority in the state, and rendered decisions as a court in cases of life and death. The two kings sat as members, but had no further distinction in the body than that of presiding.

[\[24. 15b. in Rome the Senat.\]](#)The Roman senate originated in the council of the early kings. After their expulsion it rapidly grew in importance, and by the third century had attained to the position of supremacy in the state. It was composed of ex-magistrates, and its members were appointed by the consuls to serve for life.

[\[24. 20. as that of six.\]](#)There were several councils in the government of Venice. Bodin mentions four ‘beside the Senat and Great Councill.’ The Duke was assisted in his executive function by a council of six, chosen for terms varying, at different times, from a few months to one year. Cf. Bodin, *Repub.*, p. 277: ‘For which selfe same reason, and that moe of the citisens also might be partakers of that honour, they have decreed, That the six councillors of estate, assistants unto the duke, shall not be but two moneths in that so honourable a charge; to the end that the custome to commaund should not breed in them a desire still to continue the same as also to aspire higher.’

[\[24. 20a. the full Senate.\]](#)This cannot refer to the senate, for its members were chosen annually; but rather to the great council, a permanent, self-perpetuating body formed of the whole aristocracy. Cf. Bodin, *Repub.*, p. 158: ‘The great Councill (which is the

assemblée of all the gentlemen of Venice) hath the power of soveraigntie, containing the Senat, and all the rest of the magistrates, within the power of the command thereof.’

[24. 23. [United Provinces.](#)]The original seventeen were as follows: ‘Brabant, Limburg with the land across the Meuse, Luxemburg, Guelders with Zutphen, Flanders, Artois, Hainault, Holland, Zealand, Namur, Lille with Douay and Orchies, Tournay with Tournaisis, Mechlen, Friesland, Utrecht, Overysse with Drenthe, Lingen, and Westerwolde, and Groningen’ (Blok, *Hist. Peop. Neth.* 2. 263). But see note on 14. 12.

[24. 23a. [the States General.](#)]This supreme national assembly of the United Provinces consisted of deputies sent from the estates of the various provinces to deliberate on affairs concerning the nation. It had no power to decide upon any measure without the unanimous concurrence of the towns and provinces. It was therefore unable to meet emergencies by prompt and vigorous action. This defect Milton proposed to avoid in his commonwealth.

[24. 26. [Provincial States.](#)]The supreme provincial assemblies.

[24. 27. [States of every citie.](#)]The chief governing assemblies of every city. These were aristocratic and permanent boards, composed of twenty, twenty-four, twenty-eight, thirty-six, or forty members, chosen for term of life. Cf. C  risier, *L’Histoire G  n  rale des Provinces-Unies* 4. 138: ‘L’administration municipale est entre les mains d’un S  nat,   tabli dans toutes les villes au nombre de 40, 36, 28, 24 ou 20 membres, tous    vie, tous choisis par le S  nat lui-m  me & parmi les plus notables Bourgeois.’

[24. 32. [they who write of policie.](#)]Jean Bodin, author of the *De la R  publique* (1576). See Introd., p. lxii.

[24. 33. [these reasons.](#)]See Introd., p. lxii.

[25. 9. [the fick’lness which is attributed to us.](#)]The idea that islanders and seashore-folk in general are fickle, shrewd, and avaricious seems to have originated with Plato. Cf. *Laws* 4. 704: ‘*Cleinias*. I should imagine, Stranger, that the city of which we are speaking is about eighty stadia distant from the sea. . . .

*Athenian*. Then there is some hope that your citizens may be virtuous: had you been on the sea, and well provided with harbours, and an importing rather than a producing country, some mighty saviour would have been needed, and lawgivers more than mortal, if you were ever to have a chance of preserving your state from degeneracy and discordance of manners. But there is comfort in the eighty stadia; although the sea is too near, especially if, as you say, the harbours are so good. Still we may be content. The sea is pleasant enough as a daily companion, but has indeed also a bitter and brackish quality; filling the streets with merchants and shopkeepers, and begetting in the souls of men uncertain and unfaithful ways—making the state unfriendly and unfaithful both to her own citizens, and also to other nations.’

Bodin, following Plato, affirms (*Repub.*, p. 564): ‘As for the inhabitants of the Sea coast, and of great townes of traffique, all writers have observed, That they are more subtill, politike, and cunning, than those that lie farre from the sea and traffique. . . . For which cause Plato forbids them to build his Commonweale neere unto the sea. . . . And it seemeth that the proverbe which sayeth, *That Islanders are commonly deceitfull*;—should be applied to this that we have spoken.’

Selden glances at the idea in his *Birthday of our Saviour* (5. 1433, fol. 1726): ‘And therefore also he [Cardan] makes that comet which in 1533 appeared in *Aries* under the northern part of the milky way, and was (as he supposes) of martial, jovial, and mercurial quality; to denote the schisms and change of religion which soon fell in this Kingdom under Henry VIII. For to *Aries* (says Ptolemy) is this island subject, as to a tutelar sign.’

Milton may perhaps allude to the following passage, found in *A Seasonable Speech made by a Worthy Member* [Sir Anthony Ashley Cooper] *in the House of Commons* (*Harl. Misc.* 3. 490), March, 1659:

‘Mr. Speaker;

‘This day’s debate is but too clear a proof, that we Englishmen are right Islanders, variable and mutable like the air we live in. For, Sir, if that were not our temper, we should not be now disputing, whether, after all those hazards we have run, that blood we have spilt, that treasure we have exhausted, we should not now sit down, just where we did begin.’

[[25. 10. good education and acquisite wisdom.](#)]Bodin was famous for his masterful consideration of climate and situation in their relation to national character; and Milton is here following him rather than Plato, who also recommended education as a corrective. Having spoken of the fickleness of islanders (see note on 25. 9), Bodin immediately suggests: ‘But he that would see what force education, lawes, and customes, have to chaunge nature, let him looke into the people of Germanie’ (*Repub.*, p. 565). It is apparent that Milton reproduces not only the substance but also the sequence of Bodin’s ideas.

[[25. 16. Senat of four or five hundred.](#)]Draco established a council of 401 members. Solon reduced it to 400, 100 from each tribe. Cleisthenes set up a senate of 500, 50 from each of the ten tribes (Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens*).

[[25. 16a. the Ephori.](#)]Cf. Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*: ‘Though the government was thus tempered by Lycurgus, yet soon after it degenerated into an oligarchy, whose power was exercised with such wantonness and violence, that it wanted indeed a bridle, as Plato expresses it. This curb they found in the authority of the Ephori, about a hundred and thirty years after Lycurgus.’

Plato, in the *Laws* (3. 692), says: ‘But your third saviour, perceiving that your government was still swelling and foaming, and desirous to impose a curb upon it,

instituted the Ephors, whose power he made to resemble that of magistrates elected by lot.’

The Ephori consisted of five men, annually and popularly elected. Aristotle (*Politics* 5. 11) says that ‘royalty is preserved by the limitation of its powers,’ and instances Theopompus and his ‘establishment of the Ephoralty’: ‘He diminished the power of the kings, but established on a more lasting basis the kingly office. There is a story that when his wife once asked him whether he was not ashamed to leave to his sons a royal power which was less than he had inherited from his father, “No indeed,” he replied, “for the power which I leave to them will be more lasting.”’ This story reappears in Buchanan’s *De Jure*, p. 156.

[\[25. 17. the Tribunes.\]](#)After the expulsion of the kings, the tyranny of the aristocracy became unbearable. Accordingly, the plebeians seceded from Rome. By way of compromise they were at this time (495 ) accorded the privilege of choosing annually two tribunes, to whom they might at any time appeal for protection against insolent patricians. This number was later increased to five, and, in 457 , to ten.

[\[25. 17a. the event.\]](#)The final outcome.

[\[25. 19. in fine.\]](#)In the end; at last.

[\[25. 28. one Consul.\]](#)Upon the banishment of the Tarquins in 510 , the regal power was invested in two consuls, who were, of course, patricians. By the Licinio-Sextian laws (367 ), it was provided that at least one consul must be a plebeian.

[\[25. 29. Censors and Prætors.\]](#)It was the functions of the Roman censors to assess property and impose taxes, and to exercise supervision over public morals. The Roman prætor was originally identical with the consul, but after 366 became a consular subordinate. The censorship was first attained by plebeians in 350 , the praetorship in 337.

[\[25. 31. Marius.\]](#)Caius Marius (c. 157-86 ), a famous Roman general, sprang from the humblest of plebeian ranks, but rose, through his military genius and championship of the common people, to be seven times consul of Rome. He completely annihilated the Teutones in the battle of Aquæ Sextiæ (Aix) in the year 102 , and the Cimbri at the battle of Vercellæ the year following, thus saving Rome from the barbarians. During the Social War in 88 he was banished from Rome by his rival, Sulla; but he returned in the year 86, was elected consul for the seventh time, and set on foot a merciless slaughter of all his foes.

[\[25. 33. Sylla.\]](#)L. Cornelius Sulla (138-78 ) was a brilliant Roman general, consul, dictator, and leader of the patricians. He began his military career under Marius, but, quickly equaling the great plebeian general in achievements and in reputation, he became his lifelong and bitter foe. During his prosecution of the Mithridatic Wars, Marius, whom he had driven from Rome, returned, was elected consul (86 ), and put to death many of Sulla’s friends, as well as confiscated his property. But in this year Marius died, and Sulla, when all was ready, returned to Rome, to take ample



vengeance upon his enemies. Conquering the large forces sent against him, he entered Rome (82 ) as absolute master. Long lists of his foes were posted from time to time in the Forum. These persons were then put to death wherever found, two talents per head being the reward paid to any one carrying out the execution. A reign of terror prevailed. In the year 81 Sulla was made absolute dictator of Rome—an office which he resigned in 79, after his thirst for vengeance had been thoroughly satisfied.

[\[25. 36. as is lately propounded.\]](#) See note on 23. 19.

[\[26. 1. in thir motion.\]](#) In their transportation to and from the place of meeting.

[\[26. 3. unable in so great a number, etc.\]](#) Bodin was of the same opinion: ‘As for the number of Senators it cannot be great, considering the perfection requisit in a Counsellour of estate.’ There is danger, also, in large numbers; ‘for beside the manifest daunger, which is for revealing of counsell communicated to so many persons: it giveth also occasion unto the factious for troubling of the state’ (*Repub.*, p. 260).

[\[26. 5. sit a whole year lieger in one place.\]](#) To reside, or remain stationary, a whole year, in one place. See Glossary.

[\[26. 6. hold up a forrest of fingers.\]](#) Cf. Bodin, *Repub.*, p. 308: ‘Election is made either by lively voyce, or by holding up of hands (which the auntient Greekes called Χει?οτονεΐα), a thing yet used among the Swissers.’ Cf. note on 26. 7.

[\[26. 7. bean or ballot.\]](#) Both were used at Athens. Cf. Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens*, tr. Poste, pp. 101-2; *Bodin, Repub.*, p. 308: ‘The manner and forme for the choice . . . of magistrates . . . is of three sorts: For either it is done by election, or lot; or by a mixture of both together. Election is made either by lively voyce, or by holding up of hands . . . or else by tables or billets, by beanes or stones, and that in two sorts, viz. by open, or by secret suffrages.’ Milton’s remarks are reminiscent of this passage, but they are aimed directly at the Rota-men (see *Introd.*, p. 1).

[\[26. 16. Tarquins.\]](#) Tarquinius Priscus, fifth of the legendary kings of Rome, reigned from 616 to 578 , and left the kingdom to Servius Tullius. This latter was murdered by the elder Tarquin’s son, Tarquinius Superbus, in 534 , who, together with kingship, was banished from Rome in the year 510.

[\[26. 18. Patricians.\]](#) Originally these were those families who constituted the Roman state and people, and who alone possessed political rights and authority. Later they were compelled to share these privileges with the plebeians, but they remained the aristocratic class of Roman citizens.

[\[26. 18a. expulsion of thir kings.\]](#) According to the legend, the immediate cause of the expulsion was the outrage committed by Tarquin’s son, Sextus, against the wife of Collatinus. This noble matron, Lucretia, having called her father and husband, pledged them to revenge, and then stabbed herself. Her body was exhibited in the market-place. The people rose and drove out the sons of the king, and barred the gates against Tarquin himself when he hastily returned from the siege of Ardea. Thus ended the tyranny of the kings (510 ).



[\[26. 20. wel-qualifie and refine elections.\]](#) Election-reform was greatly needed (see note on 35. 21). But here Milton seems to be concerned rather with making the exercise of suffrage more intelligent than with correcting flagrant abuses. Since the people must be continually electing and rotating public officials, the only safeguard lay in perfecting the method of choosing. See 26. 25, and note thereon.

[\[26. 21. the noise and shouting of a rude multitude.\]](#) The allusion is to the Spartan manner of election, of which Plutarch, in his *Life of Lycurgus*, furnishes the following description: ‘The manner of the election was this: when the people were assembled, some persons appointed for the purpose were shut up in a room near the place; where they could neither see nor be seen, and only hear the shouts of the constituents: for by them they decided this and most other affairs. Each candidate walked silently through the assembly, one after another according to lot. Those that were shut up had writing tables, in which they set down in different columns the number and loudness of the shouts, without knowing whom they were for; only they marked them as first, second, third, and so on, according to the number of the competitors. He that had the most and loudest acclamations, was declared duly elected. Then he was crowned with a garland, and went round to give thanks to the gods.’

[\[26. 25. third or fourth sifting.\]](#) Milton’s sifting-process is almost precisely Plato’s (see *Laws* 6. 753), which provided for the election of thirty-seven magistrates from a previously selected one hundred, this one hundred to be chosen from a body of three hundred elected by vote of the military class.

[\[26. 28. mend our corrupt and faulty education.\]](#) Milton, in his *Tractate on Education* (1644), declares that educational reform is ‘one of the greatest and noblest designs that can be thought on, . . . for the want whereof this nation perishes’ (Bohn 3. 462). Among the most glaring defects he mentions the waste of time—‘seven or eight years merely in scraping together so much miserable Latin and Greek, as might be learned otherwise easily and delightfully in one year’; and the needlessly long vacations in schools and universities. He declares that the sequence of studies is unnatural, and sketches a curriculum of classics, science, philosophy, modern languages, theology, art, law, economics, and physical training, upon the basis of the ancient schools of Plato, Pythagoras, Aristotle, etc., all to be accomplished between the ages of twelve and twenty-one. ‘Nor shall we then,’ he says, ‘need the monsieurs of Paris to take our hopeful youths into their slight and prodigal custodies, and send them over, back again, transformed into mimics, apes, and kickshaws.’ In the *Hirelings* (Bohn 3. 27), Milton advocates erecting ‘in greater number, all over the land, schools, and competent libraries to those schools.’ He himself essayed the rôle of a schoolmaster, but, according to Dr. Johnson, never turned out any remarkable scholars.

[\[26. 37. thir several ordinarie assemblies.\]](#) Precisely the Dutch idea, except that in the United Provinces municipalities, however small, were absolutely independent. See note on 24. 27.

[\[26. 38. odious power and name of Committies.\]](#) The business of the Long Parliament was transacted largely through committees. Walker, in *The Mystery of the Two Juntoes*, furnishes an excellent description—and arraignment—of the system:

‘Another ambitious aym of those Junto-men is, their devise of referring all businesses of moment to *Committees*. For the active speaking men by mutual agreement naming one another of every Committee . . . do thereby forestall and intercept the businesses of the House, and under colour of examining and preparing matters, they report them to the House with what glosses, additions, detractions, and advantages they please; whereby the House . . . oftentimes misjudgeth, and if it be a businesse they are willing to smother, the Committees have infinite artificial delays to put it off. . . . By this means the remaining part of the House are but Cyphers to value, and Suffragans to ratifie what is forejudged by the said Comittees. . . . These Committee-men are so powerful that they overawe and overpower their fellow Members, contrary to the nature of a free Parliament. . . .

‘How frequently the Countrie Committees act contrary to the Laws of the Land; how they trample *Magna Charta* under their feet; . . . transgress all Orders . . . of Parliament, and break our Solemn League and Covenant; turn well affected men out of their free-holds and goods, imprison and beat their Persons, . . . nay murther them. . . . Nothing is now more Common than an accusation without an accuser, a sentence without a Judg, and a condemnation without a hearing. . . . The people are now generally of opinion, They may as easily find Charity in Hell, as Justice in any Committee, and that the King hath taken down one Star Chamber, and the Parliament hath set up a hundred.’ See also note on 22. 1.

Only a few months before, however, Milton had advocated ‘well-order’d committees of their faithfulest adherents in every country,’ which should ‘give this government the resemblance and effect of a perfect democracy’ (*Letter*, Oct. 20, 1659).

[\[27. 4. going on by degrees to perfection.\]](#) Milton again follows the counsels of Bodin: ‘The wise politician in government of the estate is to imitate the works of God in nature who by litle and litle bringeth great things to perfection’ (*Repub.*, p. 475).

[\[27. 9. abolishing that name.\]](#) The term ‘Parliament,’ which in its original meaning savoured of kingship, might well be abolished in favor of a more democratic word. Also, as Masson suggests, Milton knew that the nation could not be brought to think of a perpetual Parliament, in view of the odium which rested upon the existing body by reason of its long continuance in power.

[\[27. 10. parlie . . . with thir Norman king.\]](#) Since the days of the Witenagemot, English kings have always been assisted by a council of some sort. But not until after the Norman Conquest did the French term *Parlement* begin to be applied in England. William the Conqueror advised with his ‘Wise Men’ at Gloster in 1085. Shortly after, he ‘summoned all the landholders of England . . . to meet him at Sarum’ (Powell, *England to 1509*, p. 68), and made them swear allegiance. Stephen, the last of the Norman kings, held a similar ‘great council’ at Winchester in 1141, at which ‘the Londoners’ were present (*ibid.*, p. 83). In the following century the word ‘Parliament’ began to come into general use, occurring for the first time in English statutes in the preamble to the Statute of Westminster (1272). In 1295 Edward called the Great Parliament, at which were duly present the three estates; this became the model for all Parliaments thereafter.

[\[27. 18. these nations.\]](#)England, Scotland, and Ireland.

[\[27. 18a. little cause to fear.\]](#)It was a firm conviction of many members of the Long Parliament that they were the chosen of God, called to rule in His name, and favored with a special Presence in all their deliberations (see note on 20. 29). With others, the love of power, or even of plunder (as enemies of the Rump declared), operated with equal effect. Certainly no Parliament ever clung to authority more tenaciously than did the Rump in 1660. Abjuration-oaths, engagements, and rigorous qualifications were its means of self-preservation. And even after Monk's edict for its dissolution had gone forth, there were strenuous efforts—notably in a pamphlet entitled *A Perpetual Parliament*—in behalf of perpetuation. It was with 'sad pangs & groanes' that it finally dissolved on March 16. It is evident, therefore, that the nation had good cause to 'fear' and 'suspect' them. Walker says that 'about this time, the whole Nation of England began to grow sick of the abhorred fag end of a Parliament, endeavouring to make head against them in Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Hartford, Hereford, Gloucester, Bristol, Cheshire' (*Hist. Ind.* 4. 55).

[\[27. 22. entreat them.\]](#)See note on 20. 29.

[\[27. 28. so many faithful and experienc'd hands.\]](#)See note on 20. 24. Lenthall was speaker, Haslerig leader, and Scot, the regicide, secretary of state.

[\[27. 33. persons untri'd, etc.\]](#)Charles and his supporters.

[\[28. 3. most easie, most present and only cure.\]](#)This medical conceit was in high favor about 1660. Sir Henry Vane, being moved with a desire 'to apply Balsame to the Wound before it become incurable,' gently proffered *A Healing Question*. Wm. Prynne resorted to more heroic measures in *A short, legal, medicinal, useful, safe, easy Prescription*, etc. Cf. *Brief Notes* (Bohn 2. 354): 'He [Dr. Griffith] . . . moves cunningly for a licence to be admitted physician both to church and state; . . . lays before you his drugs and ingredients: "Strong purgatives in the pulpit, contempered of the myrrh of mortification, the aloes of confession and contrition, the rhubarb of restitution and satisfaction;" a pretty fantastic dose of divinity from a pulpit mountebank . . . undertaking to "describe the rise and progress of our national malady, and to prescribe the only remedy." '

[\[28. 12. even to the coming, etc.\]](#)Until the Judgment Day. See Matt. 24. 30; Mark 13. 26. The idea is that of indefinite duration. Milton did not share the Fifth-Monarchy men's conviction that their generation would behold the institution of the Messianic reign. From Plato to Harrington and Milton, proposers of ideal constitutions were accustomed to exult in the indestructibility of the governments that they projected.

[\[28. 14. only worthy.\]](#)Milton did agree with the Fifth-Monarchy men, however, that Christ was the only rightful king. The present statement contains an implied denial of the right of Charles to rule. Cf. *Defense* (Bohn 1. 54): ' "The Messiah is a King." We acknowledge him so to be and rejoice that he is so; and pray that his kingdom may come, for he is worthy: nor is there any other equal, or next to him.'

[28. 16. [the only by him anointed.](#)] See note on 19. 26. Cf. *Ref.* (Bohn 1. 46): ‘I deny, that there ever were any such kings in the world, that derived their authority from God alone.’

[28. 20. [obsolete.](#)] This is the term in Toland’s edition. The Bohn edition has ‘absolute.’ The former is probably correct, as Milton seems to use antithetically the ideas of newly-coined terms on the one hand, and ‘obsolete’ terms—such as Harrington’s *Phylarchs*, *archons*, etc.—on the other.

[28. 20a. [exotic models.](#)] Such as the Venetian ballot, agrarian laws, etc., which Harrington proposed to introduce.

[28. 22. [native liberty.](#)] Cf. *Tenure* (Bohn 2. 8): ‘All men naturally were born free, being the image and resemblance of God himself.’ The writer goes on to explain that bondage came through Adam’s transgression. This is characteristically mediæval.

[28. 24. [I say again.](#)] Despite the critics. Ever since the appearance of the first edition, they had made merry with Milton’s title (see Appendix B, p. 175).

[28. 26. [no perilous . . . circumscription.](#)] Harrington’s scheme provided for circumscribing individual ownership of property, and for the confiscation of all in excess of the prescribed amount (see note on 28. 30).

[28. 28. [temporal and spiritual lords remov’d.](#)] See note on 11. 16. Milton is a good way removed from his attitude in 1644. Cf. *Ref.* (Bohn 2. 409): ‘Then shall the nobles possess all the dignities and offices of temporal honour to themselves, sole lords without the improper mixture of scholastic and pusillanimous upstarts; the parliament shall void her upper house of the same annoyances,’ etc.

[28. 30. [Agrarian law.](#)] This was one of the three fundamental proposals made by Harrington in his *Oceana*. But it goes back, of course, to the *leges agrariæ* of Rome. The first of these land-laws, proposed by Spurius Cassius in 486, was as follows; all public land was to be surveyed; one half was to be rented; the other half was to be divided among the poor plebeians (Taylor, *Const. Hist. of Rome*, p. 69). Other similar laws were passed from time to time. In 133 Tiberius Gracchus gave up his life in securing an agrarian law whereby the state resumed ownership of land held in excess of 500 jugera, or, in case there were sons, of 1000 jugera. All such reclaimed land was redistributed in allotments of 30 jugera to poor citizens and allies, and made ‘heritable, inalienable, and subject to a small rent’ (*ibid.*, p. 240). Harrington’s agrarian proposal provided that every man who possessed ‘an estate exceeding the revenue of £2000 a year’ should leave the same so divided among his children that no son should have above £2000 a year, and no daughter above £1500 a year; that no one should be permitted to acquire an estate exceeding £2000 a year; and that all holdings in land in excess of that amount should be forfeited to the uses of the state.

[28. 31. [cause . . . of sedition.](#)] Milton has in mind the case of Tiberius Gracchus (see note on 28. 30).

[28. 31a. [only where it began . . . with first possession.](#)] This was true, of course, in the case of the Flaminian laws of 232, which provided for the distribution among the poor of lands recently won from the Gauls.

[28. 35. [as by some frivolously.](#)] The mildness of the expression indicates that Milton is replying to some good-natured sport at his expense among republicans—probably in the Rota Club. At all events, the satirical remarks about his *Ready and Easy Way* were made before the treatise was completed, and evidently by some one in close touch with the writer. Cyriack Skinner may have taken Milton's dictation, and carried a report to the Rota. Or perhaps Marchamont Needham, a somewhat frivolous but intimate friend of Milton's, may have been favored with advance information.

[29. 5. [something like a duke of Venice.](#)] The Dutch republic retained a single person at the head of the state. The English commonwealth had also accepted a protector. There was now, in the spring of 1660, much talk of setting up a single person again. During the previous autumn, Lambert had been suspected of such an ambition. The chief officers, Fleetwood and Desborough, 'would have left the Protector Richard a Duke of Venice for his father's sake.' On March 2 Pepys says: 'Great is the talk of a single person, and that it would now be Charles, George, or Richard again.' But in February suspicion rested mostly upon General Monk, who, as Pepys heard, was supposed to be hatching a design 'to get into the saddle.' It was Clarendon's opinion also that Monk's original ambition was to 'see a commonwealth established, in such a model as Holland was, where he had been bred, and that himself might enjoy the authority and place which the Prince of Aurange possessed in that Government' (*Hist. Reb.* 16. 134).

[29. 8. [to lurch a crown.](#)] Note the strengthening word in the second edition. See Glossary, and cf. note on 29. 5.

[29. 9. [ingag'ment to . . . house of Nassau.](#)] The allusion is to the compact, or union, of Utrecht, proposed by William, Prince of Orange, of the house of Nassau, and agreed to by the Seven Provinces in 1579. Thus was founded the Dutch republic. The engagement provided for a division of power between the States-General, the Provincial States, and the Stadholder (William himself).

[29. 22. [Council of State left sitting.](#)] Cf. Introduction, p. xxxv. At least that much of Milton's plan was followed. From March 16 to April 25 the government was in the hands of Monk and the council of state.

[29. 24. [as seldome as may be.](#)] The very week Milton's pamphlet appeared, Monk expressed similar misgivings (see note on 31. 25).

[29. 32. [endless tugging.](#)] Although Charles II and his Parliament made common cause against Puritanism, and so maintained a degree of harmony, nevertheless Milton's prophecy came true within a generation. James came to the throne with all the exaggerated and arrogant notions of royal prerogative characteristic of the earlier Stuarts, and he was soon intimidating the judiciary, attempting to pack the House through the manipulation of charters to corporations, maintaining an army of 20,000



men in time of peace, levying customs and excise-duties without consent of Parliament, setting up, in 1686, a high court of ecclesiastical commission directly against the act of Parliament in Charles I's reign, expelling the fellows of Magdalen College for refusing to elect his own Catholic nominee, and commanding his Declaration of Indulgence to be read in all the churches.

Against this tyranny the people finally rose in rebellion, and placed William and Mary on the throne. In a Bill of Rights they declared that (1) the suspending power, (2) dispensing power, (3) ecclesiastical courts, (4) maintaining a standing army in time of peace without the consent of Parliament, (5) levying money by pretense of prerogative, were all illegal; (6) that all elections should be free; and (7) that Parliaments should be frequent.

[\[29. 34. negative voice, militia, or subsidies.\]](#)The veto-power, the control of the militia, and the claim to revenues customarily granted by Parliament to the Crown to meet emergencies, had been among the main contentions of the late king. These were all revived by Charles II and James (see note on 29. 32). Even under William the negative voice was used very freely, not less than four bills being vetoed from 1692 to 1696 (Macaulay, *Hist. Eng.* 3. 219-20, 410; 4. 49, 148). But, with the exception of the Scotch Militia Bill in 1707 (Medley, *Const. Hist.*, p. 315), this was the last use ever made in England of the royal prerogative of the negative voice. 'The last of the king's dangerous prerogatives went when the Act of Settlement (1700) took from the Crown the power of dismissing the judges at pleasure' (*ibid.*, p. 80).

[\[30. 2. only true representatives of the people.\]](#)See note on 10. 35.

[\[30. 3. mingl'd with a court-faction.\]](#)The Restoration Parliament did indeed prove to be extremely servile: it gratified the king with huge appropriations, and excelled him in severity against his unpardoned foes.

[\[30. 8. temporal and spiritual lords.\]](#)See note on 11. 16. A few lords assembled of their own accord at the meeting of Parliament, April 25, 1660. At the Restoration they were established upon their old footing. The act disabling all in holy orders from exercising temporal jurisdiction was annulled, and on Nov. 20, 1661, the bishops took their seats again in the House of Lords.

[\[30. 13. soon dissolv'd, or sit and do nothing.\]](#)The prerogative of the king to dissolve Parliament was a favorite weapon of the Stuarts. Cromwell also again and again angrily dissolved do-nothing Parliaments. Perhaps Milton, while writing these words, was thinking of Cromwell's reasons for the dissolution on Jan. 22, 1654: 'You have wholly elapsed your time, and done just nothing.' Cf. note on 20. 17.

[\[30. 15. Council of State shall not be chosen by the Parliament.\]](#)Milton's scheme provided that it should be. Councils of state originated in the advisory privy councils of kings. Their appointment remained, under kingship, a part of the royal prerogative.

[\[30. 20. I denie not, etc.\]](#)Probably some one had urged against Milton Bodin's definition of 'a good and just king'—'such an one as is always readie to bestow his

goods, his blood, and life, for the good of his people' (*Repub.*, p. 211). But Milton's own writings show that he had once admired good kings. Thus in the *Commonplace Book* he refers to 'noble King Alfred,' and 'Rex nobilissimus Alfredus,' and quotes Sir Thomas Smith's definition of a good king — one who 'doth seeke the profit of the people as his owne.' Cf. *Tenure* (Bohn 2. 18): 'Look how great a good and happiness a just king is, so great a mischief is a tyrant'; also see note on 31. 23.

[30. 24. [this rarely happ'ns, etc.](#)]Milton's thought is colored by Bodin's. Cf. *De Repub.* (*Wks.*, p. 414): 'Neither ought it unto any man to seeme straunge, if there have bene but few princes for their vertues famous: for if every where there be such a scarcitie of good and valiant men, and that kings are not chosen out of the number of such: and that they to whome their kingdoms come by succession, commonly have their education polluted with so many vices, as that hard it is to say which of them is the greatest: it is almost a myracle if one of them shall bee able to get out of such a gulfe of all maner of vices.'

But we know that Machiavelli was also a certain source of this idea, for Milton transcribes into the *Commonplace Book* a passage from the *Discorsi* (1. 2) of which the following is a translation: 'But by degrees their Government coming to be Hereditary, and not by Election, according to their former way, those which inherited degenerated from their Ancestors, and neglecting all virtuous actions, began to believe that Princes were exalted for no other end but to discriminate themselves from their subjects, by their pomp, luxurie, and all other effeminate qualities, by which means they fell into a hatred of the people, and by consequence became afraid of them . . . and began to meditate revenge.' See also note on 15. 17.

[31. 1. [joy to serve.](#)]This, of course, is a popular appeal, calculated to arrest the mad rush of the multitude toward kingship. Personally, Milton's highest ideal was service (see note on 16. 4). It is not service, but serving a king, that he abhors.

[31. 3. [pretended law of subjection.](#)]This law, which Milton repudiates, is made very clear by Bodin: 'For the people or the lords of a Commonweale, may purely and simply give the soveraigne and perpetuall power to any one, to dispose of the goods and lives, and of all the state at his pleasure: and so afterward to leave it to whome he list: like as the proprietarie or owner may purely & simply give his owne goods, without any other cause to be expressed, than of his own meere bountie. . . . If such absolute power bee given him purely and simply, . . . it is certain that such a one is, and may call himselfe a Soveraigne Monarch: for so the people hath voluntarily disseised and dispoyled it selfe of the soveraigne power, to sease and invest another therein, . . . in which case such a perfect donation admitteth no conditions' (*Repub.*, p. 88).

[31. 5. [Aristotle, our chief instructor.](#)]Milton is speaking in the last days of the schoolmen's reign in the universities; that is, just before the founding of the Royal Society, and the general scientific awakening. Philosophy and theology, with the seven liberal arts (grammar, logic, and rhetoric—the Trivium; and arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music—the Quadrivium), constituted the regimen of the scholar. In many of these Aristotle was the supreme authority, and instruction in



general much affected the Aristotelian method (see Masson, *Life* 1. 264). Milton himself, in his college oration (*Exercise III*), says: ‘Let your master in all this be that very Aristotle who is so much delighted in, and who has left almost all these things scientifically and exquisitely written for our learning.’

[31. 6. [Sectarian.](#)]Milton was particularly sensitive over this matter, for he himself had been twitted with the title, ‘Founder of a Sect’ (see App. B, p. 178). And such, indeed, he was. In the queer old volume, *Heresiography* (ed. 1654), by Ephraim Pagitt, we find Milton’s sect duly catalogued, and condemned, as follows: ‘*Divorcers*. Those I term Divorcers, that would bee quit of their Wives for slight occasions, and to maintain this opinion, one hath published a Tractate of Divorce, in which the bonds of Marriage are let loose to inordinate Lust, putting away Wives for many other causes besides that which our Saviour only approveth, namely in case of Adultery, who groundeth his errour upon the words of God, *Gen. 2. 18,*’ etc.

[31. 7. [third of his Politics.](#)]Cf. *Politics* 3. 15 (tr. Jowett): ‘The first governments were kingships, probably for this reason, because of old, when cities were small, men of eminent virtue were few. They were made kings because they were benefactors, and benefits can only be bestowed by good men. . . . The ruling class soon deteriorated and enriched themselves out of the public treasury; riches became the path to honour, and so oligarchies naturally grew up. These passed into tyrannies and tyrannies into democracies; for love of gain in the ruling classes was always tending to diminish their number, and so to strengthen the masses, who in the end set upon their masters and established democracies.’

Milton tactfully ignores Aristotle’s foremost reason for the change. The sentence omitted above is as follows: ‘But when many persons equal in merit arose, no longer enduring the preëminence of one, they desired to have a commonwealth, and set up a constitution.’

[31. 21. [not comparably sufficient.](#)]That is, in comparison with the ‘able and worthy men united in Counsel.’ Milton had deemed the Rump ‘abundantly sufficient so happily to govern.’

[31. 23. [admitt, that monarchy, etc.](#)]Milton must needs admit it, for he had once written: ‘The form of state to be fitted to the peoples disposition: some live best under monarchy, others otherwise’ (*Com. Bk.*). But he is probably conceding something to Bodin, who says that ‘it was by long experience found out, That Monarchies were more sure, more profitable, and more durable also, than were the Popular estates, or Aristocracies’ (*De Repub.*, p. 413).

[31. 25. [cannot but prove pernicious.](#)]Milton here pauses in his argument for a commonwealth, to set before his countrymen — especially delinquent republicans—a truly alarming array of evils consequent upon a return to kingship. The passage is greatly enlarged in the second edition. Having failed in his appeal to conscience and reason, he would try what force there is in selfish fear. One is astounded to find that prince of dissemblers, General Monk, even as late as Feb. 21 almost outdoing Milton himself in vehement protests and fearsome predictions (see *Introd.*, p. xxxiii).

[31. 27. [will be sure to fortifie.](#)] So it turned out. Monk's army was left intact, and new forces were added from time to time. By June, 1666, Charles had at his command an army of 20,000 men (*Camb. Hist.* 5. 113). King James, in time of peace, maintained an equally large standing army.

[31. 30. [narrowly watch'd and kept so low.](#)] Milton had long before come across this idea in Guicciardini, and made a note of it: '*Tyranni armorum studium in populo extinguere conantur. I re passati temendo del impeto de popoli havevano atteso a disarmargli et alienargli dagli essercitii militari*' (*Com. Bk.*). He was familiar, also, with Mariana's *De Rege*, which gives the following picture of a restored monarch: 'Ergo ut in principio nihil est humilius adulate, ita postquam opes suas firmavit, nihil est in eo insolentius, . . . in omnia vitiorum genera delabitur. . . . Ardet libidine, æstuat cupiditatibus, sævitiam ostentat, opes publicas & privatas domum avertit, ut solus in omnium fortunis dominati, solusque alieno nomine regnare videtur, omnia denique ad suum commodum refert, nulla cura publicæ salutis' (*De Rege*, ed. 1611, p. 175). The argument was much used by Buchanan and Machiavelli, and by practically all the writers against tyrants.

Cf. Marchamont Needham, *Interest will not Lye*: 'It shall be counted reason of state to keep you poor and low.' See note on 31. 25.

[31. 32. [would never so fain.](#)] Would never so gladly do so.

[32. 4. [God's known denouncement.](#)] See 1 Sam. 8. 18.

[32. 4a. [gentilizing.](#)] Desiring to have a king, and 'be like all the nations.'

[32. 5. [Commonwealth of God's own ordaining.](#)] Cf. Machiavelli, *Works*, p. 534: 'Whosoever reads attentively the Historical part of the Old Testament, shall find that God himself never made but one Government for men, that this Government was a Commonwealth, (wherein the Sanhedrim or Senate, and the Congregation or popular Assembly had their share) and that he manifested his high displeasure when the rebellious would turn it into a Monarchy.'

[32. 6. [his peculiar people.](#)] Cf. Deut. 14. 2: 'For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth.' Cf. note on 19. 10.

[32. 7. [misgovernment of Samuel's sons.](#)] See 1 Sam. 8. 5.

[32. 8. [no more a reason, etc.](#)] An implied rebuke to the deserters of the republican cause.

[32. 9. [Eli's sons.](#)] See 1 Sam. 8. 5.

[32. 19. [new gilded Yoke.](#)] The old yoke newly gilded.

[32. 20. [new royal-revenue.](#)] Many of the ancient and hereditary sources of royal income had, of course, been abolished. Tonnage and poundage, for two hundred years

an unquestioned prerogative of the crown, ship-money, income from the sale of titles, or alternative fines by way of ‘composition,’ fines based upon old forest-laws, income from the sale of patents on soap, salt, spirits, etc., all of which had been resorted to by Charles I, no longer existed. Besides, the large revenues from crown-lands had been cut off by the sale of these lands to supporters of the commonwealth. The same was true of the bishops’ lands and chapter-lands of the church.

[\[32. 20a. for those are individual.\]](#) They were now accruing to private individuals. See note on 32. 20.

[\[32. 24. general confusion to men’s estates.\]](#) Among the first acts of Parliament was the restoration of the crown-lands and the queen’s jointure. A bill providing for the satisfaction of the purchasers of public lands failed to pass. Newcastle, Buckingham, and others were reinstated in all their former possessions by special vote; while estates in general which had been sold by the late government reverted to the original owners, without compensation to present holders. Churchlands to the value of £2,400,000 were also restored.

[\[32. 26. worst and ignoblest.\]](#) Cavaliers and court-followers generally.

[\[32. 27. ministers of court riot and excess.\]](#) This probably should read, ‘ministers of court-riot and excess’; for the following ‘it’ seems to refer to a single antecedent idea, viz., court-extravagance—‘riot and excess.’

[\[32. 30. revenges.\]](#) This only too well-founded argument was much used by Milton and other republicans. The most notable example, perhaps, is the *News from Brussels*, a pamphlet probably instigated by Praise-God Barebone, and written by Milton’s fellow-journalist, Marchamont Needham. It purports to be ‘from a near Attendant on His Majesty’s Person.’ The pamphlet ‘casually became publick’ in London on March 31. ‘This rebellion first began in presbyterian pulpits,’ declares the pseudo-cavalier writer. He continues: ‘T is a romance to think revenge can sleep. . . . Canst fancy that our master can forget he had a father, . . . how he lost his crown and life, and who the cause thereof? . . . Ne’er fear it, there’s fire enough in his father’s ashes . . . to burn up every adversary. . . . The presbyter will give up the fanatick, a handsome bone to pick at first. . . . Thus half the beard they shave themselves, let us alone with t’other: Drown first the kitlings, let the dam that littered them alone a little longer. . . . Fret not, . . . for we resolve the rogues that left the Rump shall feel the scourge that loyal hearts lash rebels with; . . . a roundhead is a roundhead; black and white devils look all alike to us.—Thinkest thou that we can breathe in peace while we see a little finger left alive that hath been dipt in royal blood? or his adherents? No, a thought of mercy is more hateful than hell: But cooks may be conquerors, and a plate [poison] perform equal execution with a pistol, and with less report. . . . Get arms, but buy them not in such suspicious numbers,’ etc. Cf. note on 33. 1.

No wonder that John Evelyn rose from a sick-bed to offset this dangerous appeal, and that the Royalist gentry made haste to publish the following reassurance: ‘We do disclaim and with perfect detestation disown all purpose of revenge, or partial remembrance of things past,’ etc. Charles himself declared from Breda, April 14: ‘We

do grant a free and general pardon . . . to all our subjects . . . who, within forty days after the publishing hereof, shall lay hold upon this our grace and favour, . . . excepting only such persons as shall hereafter be excepted by Parliament' (Gardiner, *Const. Doc.*, p. 465).

Parliament proved to be more implacable than the king. By its order the bodies of Cromwell, Bradshaw, and Ireton were dug up and hung at Tyburn; many of the regicides (see note on 32. 35a) were hung, and some even hacked to pieces. 'The presbyterians,' says Mrs. Hutchinson, 'were now the white boys, and according to their nature fell a thirsting, then hunting after blood, urging that God's blessing could not be upon the land, till justice had cleansed it from the late king's blood' (*Memoirs of Col. Hutchinson* 2. 245). Milton himself went into hiding, but was finally arrested; and it was only through the good offices of Davenant and Marvell that he escaped hanging.

[\[32. 35. though perhaps neuters, etc.\]](#) See Glossary. A very similar foreboding is quoted by Walker, and branded as 'a canting lye.' Cf. *Hist. Ind.* 4. 53: 'Whatever fair pretences may be made use of by the common Enemy, . . . yet should they prevail, no man that hath been of a party against them heretofore, yea no man that hath been a meer Neuter, but must expect that his private Estate, as well as the Publick Liberty, shall become a prey to a desperate crew of ravenous and unreasonable men.'

[\[32. 35a. if not to utmost infliction, yet . . . banishment.\]](#) Thirteen of the regicides were executed—ten of these being hanged, drawn, and quartered; twenty-five were imprisoned for life; and others, like Goffe and Whalley, found refuge in America.

[\[32. 37. disfavour.\]](#) Colonel Hutchinson may be taken as the type of an upright, conscientious consentor to the king's death. Upon his first appearance in the hostile House, being expected to say something in his own defense, he calmly and firmly declared that he had acted according to conscience, and was ready to abide the consequences. Through the utmost endeavors of his wife and friends, his sentence was reduced to this: 'to be discharged from the present parliament, and from all office, military or civil, in the state for ever' (*Memoirs* 2. 251).

[\[33. 1. new royaliz'd presbyterians.\]](#) The Presbyterians had been foremost in instituting and carrying on the Civil War, and had tried to force Charles to take the Covenant and set up national Presbyterianism; but when the Independents, in 1649, went about bringing him to trial, they did all they could to save his life, and to restore him to the throne. Hence Milton's attempt to scare them into repentance met with no success. Cf. Needham's similar warning: 'What can you of the Presbyterian judgment expect, but certain ruin to your way and your persons? . . . Consider the animosity naturally inherent in the royal party, and their head, against you. Be not so weak, as to sooth yourselves, that you shall fare better than others: . . . it is ground sufficient for his hatred, that you bandied against his father, and the prerogative. . . . Again, consider, that he hath a most particular antipathie against your party, as the old enemies of his family. . . . Trust him, then, if you please; and bring him in if you dare' (*Interest will not Lye: Harris, Life of Charles II* 1. 290).

[\[33. 4. the pacification.\]](#) A secret treaty was entered into by Charles with the Scots Dec. 26, 1647, in which he agreed to the following demands: maintenance of the Covenant; establishment of Presbyterianism in England; the disbanding of armies. In turn, the king was to be confirmed in his control of the militia and the power of veto over Parliament.

[\[33. 6. diabolical forerunning libells.\]](#) See Appendices A, p. 167; B.

[\[33. 6a. the faces, the gestures.\]](#) See Glossary. The general feeling of exultation expressed itself in demonstrations of loyalty, especially in taverns. ‘Everybody now drink the king’s health,’ observed Pepys.

[\[33. 11. hell.\]](#) The term is to be taken, primarily, in its ordinary sense. But it doubtless possessed an additional pungency for the Londoners of Milton’s day, inasmuch as there flourished at that time, near Westminster, a rather notorious tavern called ‘Hell.’ Clarendon says that the Presbyterians arrested at Pride’s Purge in 1648 were confined in ‘that place under the Exchequer which is commonly called Hell; where they might eat and drink at their own charge’ (*Hist. Reb.* 11. 207). Noble records that on Jan. 17, 1649, ‘it was observable that it was also ordered, that “all back doors from the House, called Hell, should be shut up during the king’s trial” ’ (*Lives of Eng. Regicides*, Introd.). The existence of this resort, together with the unrestrained health-drinking then going on among Royalists, probably suggested to Milton the comparison.

[\[33. 11. infernal pamphlets.\]](#) The Royalists expressed similar opinions of Milton’s pamphlets. L’Estrange calls him a ‘Pamphlet Merchant,’ and adds: ‘The heart of the Design was almost broken: and yet they would not leave their Pamphleteering. Particularly Milton put forth a bawling piece against Dr. Griffith’ (*Tracts*, p. 157).

[\[33. 13. not for want of licence.\]](#) In the *Areopagitica*, Milton had made ‘a speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing.’ But shortly after his entering the Latin secretaryship in 1649, he himself was induced to undertake the censorship of the newspaper-press. His influence, however, went rather to mitigate the stringency of press-regulations, such as the Bradshaw Press Act of 1649 and 1651, which forbade the writing, publication, or sale of ‘any Book or Pamphlet, Treatise, Sheet or Sheets of news whatsoever, unless licensed.’ Cromwell’s council passed a similar measure in 1655, which lodged the censorship in the hands of the secretary of state. But these acts were not strictly enforced. Especially now, in April, 1660, were Royalist pamphleteers pouring forth their printed vituperations with little hindrance (Dr. Griffith’s case excepted) from Monk and the council. But it was very different with the republican pamphleteers. A warrant had been issued against Milton’s publisher, Livewell Chapman. Needham fled early in April. Milton fully realized what his own pamphlet might bring upon him.

[\[33. 14. traduce others by name.\]](#) See Appendices A, p. 167; B.

[\[33. 15. intend . . . more wicked deeds.\]](#) See note on 32. 30.

[33. 18. [tigers of Bacchus.](#)]The bull, the lion, and the panther were most prominent among the animals sacred to Dionysos (Bacchus), the Greek god of wine. Sometimes he was pictured as riding an ox, and again as driving a team of lions, or a lion and a panther (Roscher, *Lex. Griech. und Rom. Myth.* 1. 1095). In modern art he is sometimes represented as riding in a chariot drawn by tigers, as in Titian's painting, Bacchus and Ariadne. The tiger-feature may have been imported into the myth from the worship of the Phrygian Magna Mater (Pauly, *Real-Encycl. der Class. Alterthumswiss.* 5. 1041).

Cf. Keats, *Ode to a Nightingale*:

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,  
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards.

[33. 18a. [fanatics.](#)]These were the militant religious enthusiasts, such as the Fifth-Monarchy men. But in the spring of 1660 the term came to be applied by Royalists to all, of whatever sect or faction, who steadfastly opposed the return of the king. Milton, Needham, Livewell Chapman, Lambert, and those who rallied about Lambert in April, were among the chief Fanatics. Thus Pepys, *Diary*, April 15, says: 'I hear that since Lambert got out of the Tower, the Fanatiques had held up their heads high.'

[33. 18b. [not the preaching but the sweating-tub.](#)]A preaching-tub was a pulpit, especially that of an ignorant, ranting dissenter. Cf. Pope, *Dunciad* 2. 2:

High on a gorgeous seat, that far outshone  
Henley's gilt tub, or Flecknoe's Irish throne.

The sweating-tub was used in the treatment of venereal diseases. Cf. *Timon of Athens* 4. 3. 85-7:

Season the slaves  
For tubs and baths; bring down rose-cheek'd youth  
To the tub-fast and the diet.

[33. 20. [draw one way.](#)]Pull together, or in the same direction.

[33. 23. [these shall plough on their backs.](#)]Lay open again the old furrows made by the lash of their royal masters. In *Plain English* (April, 1660), a pamphlet in which Milton is thought to have had a hand, we read: [The incoming Royalists] 'will plow up the old Furrows upon our Backs' (L'Estrange, *Tracts*, p. 113). Cf. Ps. 129. 3.

[33. 27. [the first inciters, etc.](#)]Cf. *Tenurs* (Bohn 2. 27): 'The presbyterians, who now so much condemn deposing, were the men themselves that deposed the king, and cannot, with all their shifting and relapsing, wash off the guiltiness from their own hands.' See note on 33. 28.

[33. 28. [more then to the third part actors.](#)]The Presbyterians had indeed been prominent actors in the beginning and in the prosecution of the war. They had had part in the vote of 'No Addresses' in January, 1648. During this year they regained their majority in the House. In August they voted to reopen negotiations. On Oct. 25 they had the largest part in the absolute rejection of Charles' final concession. But,



repenting again, they voted on Dec. 5 that the king's terms were satisfactory. On the following day Colonel Pride 'purged' them out of Parliament. From this point onward, the Presbyterians opposed with all their might the summary measures taken against the king. They were not, therefore, actors in 'all that followd,' nor does Milton elsewhere accuse them of being direct participants in the trial and execution of the king. The worst he can find against them in the *Defense* is that their rebellion practically deposed the king, and that they had prepared the way for the final measures in which they refused to have part.

It is probable, therefore, that in the present instance Milton does not mean to say that the Presbyterians bore their third in all that followed, but rather that they were prominent actors in more than three parts (in five) of all that followed, conceiving the whole as a five-act tragedy. Such a conceit was then in fashion. Cf. *Defense* (Bohn 1. 194): 'You, yourselves, in the opinion of this everlasting talkative advocate of the king your accuser, "went more than half-way towards it; you were seen acting the fourth act and more, in this tragedy."' '

[\[33. 30. the contrarie part.\]](#)The opposite party.

[\[33. 30a. standing armie.\]](#)Needham's thought closely parallels Milton's. Doubtless the two friends went over these subjects frequently in conversation. Cf. Needham's *Interest will not Lye*: 'What can either of these things produce, but the same necessity of keeping forces on foot to secure the tyranny in his own and his bishops' hands, against the rest of the people, as the parliament is constrained now to do for securing liberty of conscience, and all the rights and liberties of the people, against the return of that tyranny' (Harris, *Life of Charles II* 1. 294).

[\[33. 31. this.\]](#)This army (see note on 33. 32a).

[\[33. 31a. fiercest Cavaliers.\]](#)See note on 32. 30.

[\[33. 32. Rupert.\]](#)Prince Rupert (1619-82) was the son of Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, and of Frederick V, Elector Palatine. He visited England in 1636, and became a great favorite with his uncle, the king. At the outbreak of the war, Charles commissioned him general of the horse. As a cavalry-leader, he struck terror into the Parliamentarians through the swiftness and ferocity of his movements. He was beaten by Cromwell at Marston Moor (1644).

[\[33. 32a. this armie.\]](#)The expression refers to the Commonwealth-veterans—the army which had played so large a part in the events of the past twenty years, but which was now daily falling away from republicanism. Milton touches them in their tenderest place in warning them of dissolution, and the loss of arrears.

[\[33. 37. delinquents and compounders.\]](#)See note on 12. 14a. On Sept. 6, 1642, Parliament decreed 'that those great Charges and Damages wherewith all the Commonwealth hath been burthened . . . sithence his Majesty's Departure from the Parliament, may be borne by the Delinquents, and other malignant and disaffected Persons; and that all his Majesty's good and well-affected Subjects who, by the Loan



of monies or otherwise, at their Charge, have assisted the Commonwealth . . . may be repaid all Sums of money by them lent for those Purposes . . . out of the Estates of the malignant and disaffected Party in this Kingdom' (*Com. Journ.*). This policy was continued during the Civil War and the commonwealth. But by act of Parliament, Jan. 30, 1644, Royalists were permitted to retain their estates by compounding—that is, by submitting to Parliament, and making a specified cash-payment.

[\[34. 2. them who have not lost that right.\]](#) Those of the Parliamentary side—Presbyterians, Independents, etc.

[\[34. 3. who can certainly determin?\]](#) An admission that perhaps half of the republicans are now lost to the cause. Cf. notes on 9. 11 and 19. 5.

[\[34. 13. right to win it and to keep it.\]](#) Cf. *Def.* (Bohn 1. 143): 'What if the greater part of the senate should choose to be slaves, or to expose the government to sale, ought not the lesser number to interpose, and endeavour to retain their liberty, if it be in their power?' St. John remarks on this passage: 'No country can be governed by counting heads. It is the majority of intelligence, and energy of resolution, and aptitude for business that really govern mankind. The majority of numbers may be ignorant and slavish. But that can be no reason why the glorious minority of enlightened men should submit if they can avoid it to be slaves along with them.'

This undemocratic doctrine is found in Plato, *Laws* 1. 627: 'The state in which the better citizens win a victory over the mob and over the inferior classes may be truly said to be better than itself, and may be justly praised.' 'The sixth principle, and the greatest of all, is, that the wise should lead and command, and the ignorant follow and obey' (*ibid.* 3. 690). Cf. note on 11. 37.

[\[34. 25. more ample and secure.\]](#) The opposite position, of course, is taken by the Royalists. Thus the author of *England's Confusion* chides the people for 'their folly and madness in affecting to be governed as a commonwealth,' and points out 'how far the people are from enjoying that liberty under that government, which the people of England have always done under their kings.'

[\[34. 27. spiritual or civil libertie.\]](#) Cf. *Sec. Def.* (Bohn 1. 258): 'I had from my youth studied the distinctions between religious and civil rights; . . . I perceived that there were three species of liberty which are essential to the happiness of social life—religious, domestic, and civil.'

[\[34. 30. libertie to serve God, etc.\]](#) Milton's own words prove that Machiavelli's ideas of religious freedom exercised an influence upon his own. In the *Commonplace Book* we read: 'Machiavel. discors. l.1 c.10: Opiniones hominum de Religione, oportere in Repub. vel sub bonis principibus liberas esse; quos dum laudat Machiavellus, inter cætera bona inquit, videbis sub iis tempora aurea, dove ciascuno puo tenere et difendere quella opinione che vuole.' Cf. Cromwell, *Speech*, Jan. 22, 1655: ' . . . that liberty . . . to worship God according to their own light and consciences.'

[34. 35. no supream . . . rule . . . but the scriptures, etc.] This doctrine of the Reformation was first set forth by Luther, as follows: ‘Oportet enim Scriptura iudice hic sententiam ferre, quod fieri non potest, nisi Scripturæ demus principum locum in omnibus, quæ tribuuntur patribus, hoc est, ut sit ipsa per sese certissima, facillissima, opertissima, sui ipsius interpres’ (*Works*, Weimar ed., 7. 97). See notes on 35. 2 and 35. 3.

[35. 2. another treatise.] Milton refers to his *Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes*, a pamphlet written the preceding February by way of admonition to the Parliament soon to assemble. Therein he says: ‘First, it cannot be denied, being the main foundation of our protestant religion, that we of these ages, having no other divine rule or authority from without us . . . but the holy scripture, and no other within us but the illumination of the Holy Spirit, . . . can have no other ground in matters of religion but only from the scriptures. . . . It is the general consent of all sound protestant writers, that neither traditions, councils, nor canons of any visible church, much less edicts of any magistrate or civil session, but the scripture only, can be the final judge or rule in matters of religion, and that only in the conscience of every Christian to himself. Which protestation made by the first public reformers of our religion . . . gave first beginning to the name Protestant; and with that name hath ever been received this doctrine, which . . . acknowledges none but the scripture to be the interpreter of itself to the conscience’ (Bohn 2. 523-4).

The subject is again and even more amply treated in the posthumous *De Doctrina Christiana*; but this work, although probably under way by 1660, belongs as a whole to the closing years of Milton’s life.

[35. 3. publick declarations, confessions, etc.] Thus the *First Helvetic Confession* (1536) says: ‘De Interpretatione Scripturæ. Hujus interpretatio ex ipsa sola petenda est, ut ipsa interpres sit sui’ (Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom* 3. 211). A portion of the *Belgic Confession* (1561) is as follows: ‘We receive all these books as holy and canonical, . . . believing, without any doubt, all things contained in them, . . . because the Holy Ghost witnesseth in our hearts that they are from God’ (*ibid.* 3. 386). Another declaration is found in the *Irish Articles of Religion* (1615): ‘Although there be some hard things in the Scripture; . . . yet all things necessary to be known unto everlasting salvation are clearly delivered therein’ (*ibid.* 3. 527). And, finally, in the *Westminster Confession* (1647) we read: ‘The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself; and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly’ (*ibid.* 3. 605).

[35. 5. the Reformation.] The great religious revolt against Papacy in the sixteenth century was set in motion in 1517 by Luther’s ninety-five theses against indulgences. Two cardinal principles of the Reformation were justification by faith and individual interpretation of the Scriptures. Zwingli in Switzerland, Knox in Scotland, and Henry and Elizabeth in England carried the work to its conclusion in the establishment of Protestant churches.

[\[35. 8. let him know, etc.\]](#)The establishment of a state-church, with its compulsory tithes and uniformity in worship, was a project as dear to the Presbyterians as it was obnoxious to Milton. Even the members of the Rump contemplated something of this sort. Milton, as their champion, and as an Independent, felt it his duty to warn them against such intolerance. But in the second edition the passage is, for the most part, omitted, as certain to do no good, now that the Presbyterians are in power, and likely to ruin the main design of the treatise.

[\[35. 18. ordained by Christ.\]](#)See Matt. 16. 18.

[\[35. 21. such faction in chusing.\]](#)Such strife and unscrupulous intrigue. See Introd., p. xxvii. In this particular election even Sir Ralph Verney himself become excited, and recommended to ‘good Mr. Yates’ the use of rather substantial means: ‘As to any matter of charge, I shall readily disburse it; those things are not to be had Drily: you know there is a time to cast away as well as a time to keepe’ (*Verney Memoirs* 3. 475). The clergy were not idle. ‘The Gallican Ministers,’ writes Dr. Denton, ‘have written to ours assuring them that the Kinge is a very good Protestant and much on his behalf’ (*ibid.* 3. 477). But the Long Parliament itself furnishes the best illustration of faction (see notes on 14. 5 and 20. 19).

[\[35. 27. tyrannical designs.\]](#)See note on 20. 19.

[\[35. 27a. in summ.\]](#)In short.

[\[35. 29. fifth monarchie of the saints.\]](#)The Fifth-Monarchy men were a peculiar seventeenth-century sect who believed that the millennial reign of Christ was at hand, and that it was soon to be their privilege and duty to help establish it by force. Meanwhile, they acknowledged no king but Jesus. Thus Overton, Governor of Hull, vowed to hold that fortress till the coming of King Jesus. More specifically, their ideas were as follows: The Assyrian, Persian, Greek, and Roman monarchies had passed away. The age of the fifth monarchy was just dawning. Christ, who was soon to appear, would utterly destroy all those anti-Christian kings, priests, and lawyers who now sat on his throne and usurped his powers. The saints were soon to possess the earth. Until Christ should appear, it was incumbent upon them ‘to bring things as near as might be . . . to what they shall be when he is come’ (Rogers, *Life and Opinions of a Fifth-Monarchy Man*, p. 40). They believed in using the sword.

Among the more prominent members were Harrison (‘Butcher’ Harrison, of Basinghouse fame), Overton, Venner, and Sir Henry Vane. The sect found a particularly congenial atmosphere in Cromwell’s army.

In 1654 appeared a book by John Rogers, entitled, *Sagrir, or Domes-day drawing nigh, with Thunder and Lightning to Lawyers, in an Alarum for New Laws, and the Peoples Liberties from the Norman and Babylonish Yokes*, etc. This furnishes still more definite information: ‘Mark it, by Anno 1656 the flood begins. . . . By 1660 the work of this monarchy is to get as far as Rome, and by 1666, is to be visible in all the earth. It will come mysteriously, suddenly, and terribly, and will redeem the people—1st, from ecclesiastical bondage, decrees, councils, orders, and ordinances of

the Pope, priest, prelate, or the like; 2, from civil bondage and slavery, or those bloody, base, unjust, accursed, tyrannical laws . . . as now oppress and afflict the people' (*ibid.* p. 95).

The militant zeal of these Fanatics caused no little uneasiness. Thus the *Mercurius Politicus* reports a plot of Fifth-Monarchy men, Anabaptists, and Quakers 'to cut throats that night' (July 21, 1659). On Jan. 6, 1661, a very desperate rising of these men, under the leadership of Thomas Venner, did occur. They invaded London, declaring for King Jesus, fighting as those who believed that one should chase a thousand, slew many, and retired to Caen Wood. On the 9th they returned to the assault in two divisions, and were either cut down, or captured and subsequently hanged.

Cf. Thomas Fuller, *Mixed Contemplations*: 'I know not what Fifth-Monarchy men would have, and wish they knew themselves. If by Christ's reigning they only intend his powerful and effectual ruling by his grace in the hearts of his servants; we all will, not turn, but continue Fifth-Monarchy men.'

Their favorite texts were: Dan. 8. 18, 27; Jer. 48. 10; Ezek, 21. 26, 27.

[\[35. 30. as the United Netherlands have found.\]](#) The great religious controversy in the Netherlands during the first quarter of the seventeenth century began in the University of Leyden, when Gomarus and Arminius, professors of theology, locked horns over Calvinism, the one holding to orthodox, the other to liberal, interpretation. Following their lead, the whole nation split into Calvinist and Arminian factions, headed politically by Prince Maurice, the house of Orange, and the States-General on the one hand, and by Barneveldt and the Provincial States on the other. Much strife and bloodshed followed. The central government strove to subdue the provinces, which in turn stubbornly resisted, and persecuted Calvinists. Other conferences accomplishing nothing, the Synod of Dort (1618), to which were invited delegates from outside nations, ended, after 180 sessions, in a complete Calvinist triumph. Here Hales of England 'for ever bade John Calvin goodnight.' Episcopius was banished as a heretic, Grotius was imprisoned, and Barneveldt was condemned and executed. Only with the death of Maurice in 1625 did persecution cease, and the era of peace and unparalleled prosperity begin. 'In a few years, Holland became, as far as the government was concerned, the most tolerant country in the world, the asylum of those whom bigotry hunted from their native land. Hence it became the favorite abode of those wealthy and enterprising Jews, who greatly increased its wealth by aiding its external and internal commerce' (Rogers, *Story of Holland*, p. 241). Cf. Felltham, *Brief Character of Low Countries* (1652): 'It is a university of all religions. . . . You may here try all, and take at last what you like best.'

[\[35. 32. Arminians.\]](#) The followers of Arminius (see note on 35. 30). Their creed may be summed up thus: men need regeneration; Christ died for all; it is possible to resist, or to fall from, divine grace; the faithful are predestined to eternal life. The Wesleyan movement was virtually an expression of Arminianism.

[36. 1. [I have heard from Polanders.](#)] In all probability Milton here refers particularly to Samuel Hartlib (c. 1600—c. 1670), a Poleander by birth, who settled in England about 1628. Milton dedicated to him his *Tractate on Education*. Hartlib's father, a Polish Protestant, was compelled to flee to Prussia to escape Jesuit persecutions. In their many and intimate conversations, Hartlib, therefore, would naturally have expressed to Milton some such sentiment.

[36. 4. [that king . . . began to force the Cossaks.](#)] This was Sigismund III (1566-1632), whose reign extended from 1587 to 1632. His predecessor, Stephen Batory, although he had married a Catholic princess and turned Catholic himself, had followed a policy of toleration. Jesuit emissaries at that time entered Poland, and began to wield an influence over the throne. Under Sigismund their power became dominant in the policy of Poland. Assisted by zealous Jesuits, he went up and down suppressing Protestant churches, and enforcing conformity to the Catholic worship. Especially did the Greek church suffer persecution (Morfill, *Poland*, p. 129); and to this church belonged the Cossacks. In 1632, at the close of Sigismund's intolerant reign, the Cossacks were even debarred from the general Diet.

[36. 4a. [Jesuites.](#)] The Society of Jesus was founded in 1534 by Ignatius Loyola (1491-1536), who, with Xavier and five others, took vows of chastity, poverty, and a life devoted to the service of Christians and the conversion of infidels. The organization was sanctioned by the pope in 1540. Loyola was made general of the order in 1542. Its numbers rapidly increased, and its influence, political, educational, and religious, was very great in all Catholic countries for a hundred years.

[36. 5. [Cossaks.](#)] The term is derived from a Turkish word, *kazak*, meaning robber. The Cossacks were originally a heterogeneous community of outlaws who occupied certain islands in the river Dnieper. Their government was a sort of military republic, and they were, in general, adherents of the Greek church. They were organized as a frontier military defense by Stephen Batory, and were, to a certain extent, a dependency of Poland. Owing to religious oppression under Sigismund III, they revolted during the reign of his successor, and transferred their allegiance to Russia.

[36. 18. [Q. Elizabeth.](#)] The daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. During her illustrious reign (1558-1603), the Catholic policy of her predecessor and sister, Mary, was reversed, and the Anglican church was firmly established. Elizabeth, like her father, insisted upon the royal prerogative of headship in the church.

[36. 19. [so good a Protestant.](#)] Cf. Camden, *Hist. of Eliz.*, p. 377: 'The Reform'd Religion being now Establish'd by Parliament, the Queen's chief Care and Concern was how to guard and protect it from the several Attacks and Practices of . . . its profess'd Enemies. . . . And as she would admit of no Innovations herein, so she studied to square her own Life and Actions by so even a balance, as to preserve the Character of one not given to change. . . . She chose for her Motto, *Semper Eadem.*'

[36. 20. [confident of her subjects love.](#)] See note on 11. 34.



[\[36. 20a. would never give way, etc.\]](#) Queen Elizabeth, while very zealous in her support of the established church, was equally determined that there should be none other. Camden (*Hist. of Eliz.*, p. 371) says: ‘And as for such of the Reformation, as were for setting up new Schemes and Models of Church-Discipline, they were to be suppressed betimes, and but one Religion to be countenanced and established.’

[\[36. 22. Cambden.\]](#) William Camden (1551-1623), antiquary and historian, head master of Westminster, and founder of a lectureship in history at Oxford. Camden’s most notable historical work was the *Annales Rerum Anglicarum et Hibernicarum, regnanti Elizabetha, ad Annum Salutis MDLXXXIX.*’

[\[36. 23. persecuted the verie proposers therof.\]](#) Cf. Camden, *Hist. Eliz.*, p. 371: ‘In the mean while, some ecclesiasticks there were of a Temper too impatient to wait for the slower Remedies which the Laws might provide, who began to preach Reform’s Doctrine with too unwary a Freedom, . . . and at length proceeded so far as to bandy controversial Topicks among themselves, and to wrangle about ’em with those of the Romish Communion. Insomuch that . . . the Queen put out a very strict Proclamation, forbidding any such Dispute for the future.’

[\[36. 25. would diminish regal authoritie.\]](#) Elizabeth soon secured an ‘Act for Restoring to the Crown its antient Jurisdiction in Matters Ecclesiastical’ (Camden, *Hist. of Eliz.*, p. 373). And this prerogative she defended against the prelates. ‘The Queen being very sensible that their aim was to wound her Prerogative through the sides of Prelacy quash’d all this Violence without any Noise or Tumult, and found a way to assert the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, in spite of all the Enemies’ (*ibid.*, p. 565).

[\[36. 27. others far worse principld from the cradle.\]](#) Cf. *Defense* (Bohn 1. 208): ‘So that no reverence of laws, no sacredness of an oath, will be sufficient to protect your lives and fortunes, either from the exorbitance of a furious, or the revenge of an exasperated prince, who has been so instructed from his cradle, as to think laws, religion, nay, and oaths themselves, ought to be subject to his will and pleasure.’ See note on 36. 28.

[\[36. 28. Popish and Spanish counsels.\]](#) Charles’ mother, Henrietta Maria, was a zealous Catholic. Besides, the prince had spent many years abroad, at the Catholic court of France. In England, it was urged on the one side, and hotly denied on the other, that Charles had actually embraced that faith. It was very well known that he had been intriguing with the pope for an army, and that he had long been a pensioner of the king of Spain. ‘He was under the wing of his mother’s instructions in France, and what a nursery Flanders hath been for him since, which is the most jesuited place in the world’ (Needham, *Int. will not Lye*). Milton was of the opinion that even his father’s influence had been pernicious, and spoke of his ‘retaining, commending, teaching to his son all those putrid and pernicious documents, both of state and of religion’ (*Eikon.*: Bohn 1. 474).

[\[36. 30. reviv’d lately . . . the covnant.\]](#) See App. A, p. 166.

[36. 33. [The last and strictest charge.](#)] In the chapter of the *Eikon Basilike* (see note on 12. 37) addressed to the Prince of Wales, we read: ‘If you never see my face again, . . . I do require and entreat you, as your father and your King, that you never suffer your heart to receive the least check against or disaffection from the true Religion as established in the Church of England. . . . In this I charge you to persevere, as coming nearest to God’s word for Doctrine and the Primitive Examples for government.’ But see also the king’s last letter to his son (Clarendon, *Hist. Reb.*, Bk. 11).

[37. 1. [accounted Presbyterie one of the chief.](#)] See notes on 12. 11, 12. 14, and 36. 33.

[37. 7. [hear the Gospel speaking much of libertie.](#)] The thought was probably suggested by Calvin (*Institutes* 4. 20): ‘They heare that libertie is promised by the Gospell, which acknowledgeth among men no King and no Magistrate, but hath regard to Christ alone.’

[37. 11. [let our governors beware.](#)] A hint to Monk and the Presbyterians. The latter were just then zealously endeavoring to pledge the king to national Presbyterianism, and had already revived the Covenant and the Westminster Confession of Faith. Milton restrains his indignation, however, hoping to get thereby a more favorable consideration for his political proposals.

[37. 13. [as others have . . . don.](#)] For example, Archbishop Laud and Charles.

[37. 12. [the rock wheron they shipwreck themselves.](#)] A favorite metaphor of the day. Cf. Wm. Allen, *Faithful Memorial* (1659): ‘We may discover one, and that a most dangerous rock, which if not heeded, we may split upon.’ And Monk, in declining the crown, made use of the same figure in describing ‘the Experience of Cromwell’s Fate’ (see note on 9. 5a).

[37. 16. [a wilfull rejection, etc.](#)] In forcing conformity with Presbyterianism, the present governors were deserting the very principle of religious freedom for which the Reformation had contended.

[37. 20. [advanc’ments . . . according to his merit.](#)] Advancement in civil office according to merit—the modern civil-service idea—found an early advocate in Milton, but not its earliest. As far back as 1388 popular indignation against the tyranny of the feudal spoils-system gave rise, not only to Wat Tyler’s rebellion, but to the following remarkably modern statute of Parliament: ‘None shall obtain office by suit or for reward, but upon desert.’ It further declares (1) that all officers ‘shall be firmly sworn’; (2) that none shall have office ‘for any gift or brokerage, favor or affection’; (3) ‘that none that pursueth by himself or by others, privately or openly, to be in any manner of office, shall be put in the same office or any other’; (4) ‘that they make all such officers and ministers of the best and most lawful men, and sufficient to their estimation and knowledge’ (Eaton, *Civil Service in Great Britain*, p. 33). But it was not until more than four hundred years of struggle for popular education and liberty had entirely changed the relations of subject, sovereign, and Parliament to each other that such an ideal could be realized. This was accomplished in the practical merit-systems of 1855, 1870, and 1883.



[\[37. 24. every county in the land . . . a little commonwealth.\]](#) This is the second of Milton's two fundamental proposals. It provides for the largest amount of independence in the several political units consistent with national coherence and efficiency. It is taken over, with some modifications, from the practice in the United Provinces and Swiss Confederacy—the English counties corresponding to the Dutch provinces and the Swiss states; but these republics were themselves concrete expressions of mediæval-classical theory (see *Introd.*, p. xlvi).

Milton's scheme of local sovereignty is much less thorough-going than these. 'The Swissers,' says Bodin, 'are all but one Commonweale: and yet it is most certaine that they be thirteene Commonweals, holding nothing one of another, but everie one of them having the soveraignty thereof divided from the rest, . . . everie one of them having their magistrats apart, their state apart, their bursse, their demaine and territorie apart. In brief, their armies, their crie, their name, their money, their seale, their assemblies, their jurisdiction, their ordinances in everie estate divided' (*Repub.* 1. 7). Grotius in 1622 described the United Provinces as 'an agglomeration of independent republics,' of which 'each province contains an individual nation and forms a complete State' (Barker, *Netherlands*, p. 160). Milton favored a more perfect union, a real subordination of provincial to national authority (see note on 39. 16).

[\[37. 27. a city.\]](#) In England, since the time of Henry VIII, the term has meant, specifically, an incorporated town containing a cathedral and a bishop's see. But Milton, who abhorred bishops, could not have intended any ecclesiastical reference. He invests the term with the significance of the Latin *civitas*, as it was anciently used by the Romans to designate the chief towns of the independent states of Gaul.

[\[37. 32. judicial laws.\]](#) Laws subject to the interpretation of purely secular tribunals; opposed to moral or ceremonial laws.

[\[38. 1. fewer laws.\]](#) Milton, in the *Second Defense* (Bohn 1. 293) complains that 'there are often in a republic men who have the same itch for making a multiplicity of laws, as some poetasters have for making many verses,' and declares that 'laws are usually worse in proportion as they are more numerous.' Cf. Bodin, *Repub.*, p. 244: 'Neither ever were there more cruell tirants than were they, which bound their subjects with greatest multitude of edicts and lawes.'

[\[38. 6. deputies . . . to the Grand Council.\]](#) This was also a Dutch idea. The States-General proposed and debated measures. These were then carried back to the provinces and municipalities, to be considered and resolved upon. The deputies then returned to the States-General with the decisions of their respective constituencies. If these were unanimous, the measure became a law.

[\[38. 13. till their lot fall to be chosen.\]](#) This was small hope to hold out to ambitious local magistrates throughout the nation, since death could hardly be expected to favor them with more than one or two vacancies in the grand council annually.

[\[38. 18. commodious, indifferent place and equal judges.\]](#) Convenient, neutral place, and impartial judges.

[38. 21. [they had, etc.](#)] Cf. Aristotle, *Const. of Athens*, tr. Poste, p. 31: ‘Next he formed a Senate of 500, . . . 50 . . . from each tribe. . . . The land as an aggregate of units, called townships, . . . was divided into thirty sections, . . . which were again united in three groups. . . . Municipal privileges were extended to all residents in the deme or municipality.’

[38. 27. [not in grammar only.](#)] The chief business of grammar-schools in Milton’s day was the drilling of youths in the elements of Greek and Latin. The principal textbook in Latin grammar had long been William Lilly’s famous *Short Introduction of Grammar* (1574), which had been issued in different form in 1540, and even as early as 1513. From the pages of this famous book Shakespeare gleaned his ‘small Latin’; and when we recall that Lilly had once been head master of St. Paul’s School, we can understand how Milton, its most illustrious pupil, was early led to feel that undue emphasis was being laid upon this subject.

[38. 30. [by communicating, etc.](#)] In common with the mediævalists, Milton loves to indulge in anthropomorphic conceptions of the state. Cf. *Areopagitica* (Bohn 2. 94): ‘Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep.’

[38. 37. [a Commonwealth aims, etc.](#)] See note on 15. 17. The following entries in the *Commonplace Book* indicate other influences in the shaping of this idea, and show how much Milton admired the Protestant zeal for education:

‘Linguarum peritiam etiam in Ecclesiâ perutilem esse senserunt Waldenses, ut fideles aut pulsi patriâ, aut a suis ecclesiis missi, eo aptiores ad docendum essent.

Gilles, *Hist. Vaud.* c. 2. p. 16.

‘Ordines Hollandiæ in medio etiam bellorum aestu tanquam pacatis rebus ne literarum cultum et liberorum institutionem rebus adhuc vel maxime dubiis negligere viderentur, Academiam Lugduni Batavorum instituerunt amplis ex sacro patrimonio vectigalibus attributis.

Thuan. *hist.* l. 60 p. 81.’

[38. 39. [make the people . . . wealthy.](#)] It had long been a mooted question among political writers whether it was the better policy for a sovereign to make his subjects wealthy, or to keep them poor. The dispute was perhaps initiated by Plato (see note on 39. 1). Already in the fifteenth century Sir John Fortescue applies the question to England, and thus quaintly delivers his opinion: ‘Some Men have said, that it war good for the Kyng, that the Comons of England were made poer, as be the Comons of Fraunce. For than, thay would not rebell as now thay done often tymes; which the Comons of Fraunce do not, nor may do; for they have no Wepon, nor Armor, nor Good to bye it withall. . . . Item, It is the Kyngs Honor, and also his Office, to make his Realme riche; and yt ys Dishonor whan he hath a poer Realme, of which Men woll say, that he reygnyth upon Beggars’ (*De Dominio Regali et Politica: Wks.*, ed. Stubbs, p. 464). Sir Thomas More, perhaps replying to Machiavelli, declares that the king’s

‘honour and sautie is more and rather supported and upholden by the wealth and ryches of his people, then by hys owne treasures’ (*Utopia*, ed. Lupton, p. 92). But, dropping down to Milton’s day, we find the opposite view expressed in *The Grand Concernments of England Secured* (1659): ‘It hath been always a maxim with monarchs, to keep the unruly plebeians from being overpursey, lest their wits should increase with their wealth, and they should begin to contend for their priviledges’ (Harris, *Life of Charles II* 1. 298).

[39. 1. [wel-fleec’t for thir own shearing.](#)]Plato originated the comparison of subjects to sheep for the king’s shearing. Cf. *Repub.* 1. 343: ‘And you further imagine that the rulers of states, if they are true rulers, never think of their subjects as sheep, and that they are not studying their advantage day and night.’ George Buchanan, another of Milton’s favorite political writers, asks whether he is truly a king ‘who considers them [his subjects] as a flock entrusted to him, not for their preservation but for his own emolument’ (*De Jure*, tr. Macfarlan, p. 146).

[39. 6. [benches of judicature annexd to the throne.](#)]The power of appointing and dismissing judges, and also of establishing special courts, such as the Courts of Star Chamber and High Commission under Charles I, will belong to the king.

[39. 10. [publick ornaments.](#)]See Glossary.

[39. 16. [exceed the United Provinces.](#)]The weakness of the Dutch republic consisted in the lack of a supreme national authority. There was constant danger of the nation’s disintegrating into distinct and hostile states. Besides, the States-General had no power to act swiftly and effectively in emergencies. This defect was fully realized by the wisest of the Dutch statesmen. Thus William in 1581 complained: ‘It is true that a central council has been established, but it is without power. Where there is no authority, how can there be discipline? How can finance, justice, and other affairs be regulated?’ (Barker, *Rise and Decline of the Netherlands*, p. 92). Barneveldt declared, in 1607, that ‘when there is no danger of attack from without, this government will fall into absolute anarchy and disorder’ (*ibid.*, p. 163).

[39. 19. [many sovranities.](#)]Many supreme and independent political authorities.

[39. 21. [And when we have, etc.](#)]Milton here gathers up, by way of summary, his arguments in defense of a perpetual council.

[39. 23. [publick accounts under our own inspection.](#)]This was much insisted upon by the opponents of the Long Parliament, explicitly in *The Case of the Army truly stated* (see note on 22. 1).

[39. 30. [if all this.](#)]Milton’s arguments in defense of a perpetual council.

[39. 36. [at present.](#)]About the middle of February. Milton had much more to say a little later—in his answer to Dr. Griffith, and in the revised edition of the present treatise.

[\[40. 1. nothing but kingship can restore trade.\]](#) That trade had dwindled under the rule of Rump and army is apparent from the *Declaration of the Gentry of Devon*, who ‘found diverse of the Inhabitants groaning under high oppressions, and a general defect of trade, to the utter ruine of many, and the fear of the like to others, ‘a state’ so visible in the whole Country’ (Walker, *Hist. Ind.* 4. 88). And in his *Remonstrance* (Dec. 12, 1659) L’Estrange says: ‘Not to insist upon the losse of Trade; how many thousand Families have nothing now to do, but Begg, and Curse these Wretches’ (*Tracts*, p. 43). ‘As to what concerns your trade,’ says Marchamont Needham, ‘it is easy to guess what will become of that, when it shall be counted reason of state to keep you poor and low. . . . And how do you think trade can thrive upon his restitution? When there will be a necessity of trebling taxes, . . . to maintaine another kind of army than we have now, to tame dissenting parties, and to keep the nation in an asinine posture of submission. . . . As trade therefore is the particular interest of your city, so be wary, that the want of it at present do not irritate you to fall out with the publick interest of your country; but remember, that it being once settled, trade and all other concernments will soon flourish again’ (*Interest will not Lye: Harris, Life of Charles II* 1. 295).

[\[40. 2. frequent plagues.\]](#) In the year 1348 London suffered a terrific visitation of the plague. It is said that 50,000 people were then buried in one place alone. Other plague-years were 1349, 1361, 1363, 1569, 1603, and 1665. For an account of this last, see Defoe’s fanciful but vivid description, the *Journal of the Plague Year*. Milton implies that plagues are divine judgments inflicted upon monarchies (see note on 40. 26).

[\[40. 11. trifles or superfluities.\]](#) The general frugality and simplicity of the Netherlanders, then the foremost commercial nation in the world, contrasted sharply, in Milton’s opinion, with the ‘profuse living’ of English tradesmen. We learn from the *Politia of the United Provinces* that the Dutch lived principally upon ‘pickled herrings, turnepps, butter, rinch and a kind of pancake.’ The writer continues: ‘Few or none of the better sort eat roast-meate. . . . Their apparell is plain and decent, and generally black, both for burgers and bores; their women go all covered with a black vayle; . . . there is no difference of habit between a burgomaster and an ordinary man, a private merchant, and one of the States Generall, not that all are gallant, but all are plain.’

That it was not so with English tradesmen in 1659 appears from the following: ‘It was a noble knack [in former times] to encourage trade and tradesmen, that care must be had lest they should be too fine, and be mistaken for gentry; and by all means their wives must be dressed according to court directions, lest they should vye gallantry with the madams of prerogative. By all means they must know themselves; and ’t is pity some course is not taken now, that we may know a tradesman from his betters’ (*Grand Concernments of England Secured: Harris, Life of Charles II* 1. 297).

[\[40. 12. it might prove a dangerous matter.\]](#) Milton, a Christian idealist, always insists that temporal affairs shall be subordinate to spiritual interests—religion, liberty, honor, etc. His sarcasm, however, savors somewhat of the aristocratic contempt for tradesmen. Cf. the contemporary *Grand Concernments*: ‘Trade and tradesmen, all

along, hath been the very scorn and envy of the Court; not fit to keep a gentleman company, but at a distance. . . . A gentleman's son should be bred up for the gallows, rather than be dishonoured by a trade. . . . The time was when these were not fit to be numbered with the dogs of their flock. . . . Men will be content to be anything or nothing, to be base and dishonourable, to get riches in the way of trade.'

[\[40. 15. set to sale religion, etc.\]](#)Plato in the *Laws* (3. 697) ranks values, in their order of importance, as (1) goods of the soul; (2) goods of the body; (3) money, and property in general.

[\[40. 17. after all this light.\]](#)Advice furnished by Milton, Marchamont Needham, Harrington, Wither, Vane, etc.

[\[40. 19. made use of by the Jews.\]](#)See Ex. 16. 3.

[\[40. 20. idol queen.\]](#)Perhaps Milton alludes to Hathor, the ancient Egyptian 'goddess of love and joy.' She was 'the sum and substance of feminine godhead, and all goddesses were considered as forms or attributes of Hathor worshipped under different names. . . . Hathor is generally represented as a woman, sometimes with the ears, the horns, or even the head of a cow, that being the animal sacred to her' (Wiedemann, *Religion of Ancient Egyptians*, pp. 142-3). But she was also represented as a cow; for there is a 'bas relief at Florence, No. 1225 (Petrie, *Photographs*, No. 232),' which 'represents the king Horemheb sucking a cow, the embodiment of the goddess Hathor' (*ibid.*, p. 184). We know that the Jews did worship idols in Egypt (see Joshua 24. 14; Ezek. 20. 7-8; Amos 5. 26). We also read (Ex. 32. 4) of their relapsing into idolatry shortly after leaving Egypt, and that the image which they set up took the form of a golden calf. As Milton had doubtless read of Hathor, the Egyptian Aphrodite, in Greek authors, it would have been only natural for him to associate the bovine symbolism under which she was worshipped with that of the children of Israel.

[\[40. 26. national judgments.\]](#)Visitations of God's wrath. See note on 40. 2.

[\[40. 30. wth all hazard.\]](#)This is doubtless a reference to the tumults raging in London on, and immediately after, Feb. 11 and Feb. 21 (see *Introd.*, p. xiii). As 'champion of the Rump,' Milton might well expect even worse treatment than Barebone got. But as the vehement defender of the regicides, he could look for nothing less than death in case the king was restored.

[\[41. 3. want at no time who, etc.\]](#)Lack at no time men who, etc.

[\[41. 3a. good at circumstances.\]](#)Good at carrying out in detail some fundamental suggestion of another.

[\[41. 4. main matters.\]](#)Fundamental principles.

[\[41. 7. that which is not call'd amiss.\]](#)The good old cause of the commonwealth—that is, of the deceased, but lately resurrected, republic of 1649-53—had come to be a subject of derision, even among the Presbyterians. Prynne had lately written his

*Winding Sheet for the Good Old Cause*. Milton is here reasserting the dignity of the phrase, probably in answer to the still more recent gibes of L'Estrange and *The Censure* (see Appendix B, p. 173).

[41. 9. [convincing to backsliders.](#)] This sentence was written while the Rump was still in authority. By the time Milton reached this point in the revision, it was evident that nothing was to be hoped for from the Presbyterians; so the contemptuous reference to backsliders is allowed to stand.

[41. 11. [spoken only to trees and stones.](#)] The peroration was probably written just after Monk's turn against the Rump (Feb. 11), and the outburst of anti-republican enthusiasm.

[41. 12. [the Prophet.](#)] Jeremiah (see note on 41. 17).

[41. 15. [Thou . . . who didst create mankinde free.](#)] See note on 28. 22.

[41. 15a. [Thou . . . who didst redeem, etc.](#)] See note on 37. 7.

[41. 17. [determined of Coniah and his seed.](#)] Never did Milton launch the Old Testament at his foes with more reckless courage or more terrible force. The parallel seemed too striking to be neglected. And surely nothing could stay the usurper if not the tremendous denunciation of God himself against Jehoiakim and his son Coniah: 'And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die. But to the land whereunto their soul longeth to return thither shall they not return. Is this man Coniah a despised broken vessel? is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord. Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper' (Jer. 22. 26-30).

The reference is omitted in the second edition, as Charles *was* returning, despite Jeremiah and Milton.

[41. 23. [resolutions . . . to give a stay, etc.](#)] This is evidently an appeal for all republicans to come to the support of Lambert and the Fanatics, who were then making the last armed resistance to kingship. See *Intro.*, p. xxviii.

[41. 25. [to exhort this torrent.](#)] 'To exhort a torrent! The very mixture and hurry of the metaphors in Milton's mind are a reflex of the facts around him. Current, torrent, rush, rapid, avalanche, deluge hurrying to a precipice: mix and jumble such figures as we may, we but express more accurately the mad haste which London and all England were making in the end of April 1660 to bring Charles over from the Continent' (Masson, *Life of Milton* 5. 668).

[1] *Tracts*, p. 79.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 110.



[1] Masson, *Life of Milton* 5. 659.

[2] *Harl. Misc.* 4. 188.

[1] *Tracts*, p. 86.

[2] Masson, *Life of Milton* 5. 569.

[1] Stern, *Milton und seine Zeit* 2. 247.