

Areopagitica
John Milton (1644)

A
SPEECH
OF

Mr. JOHN MILTON

For the Liberty of UNLICENC'D PRINTING,
To the PARLAMENT of *ENGLAND*.

*This is true Liberty when free born men
Having to advise the public may speak free,
Which he who can, and will, deserv's high praise,
Who neither can nor will, may hold his peace;
What can be juster in a State then this?*

Eurip. Hicetid.

For the Liberty of unlicenc'd Printing.

They who to States and Governours of the Commonwealth direct their Speech, High Court of Parliament, or wanting such accesse in a private condition, write that which they foresee may advance the publick good; I suppose them as at the beginning of no meane endeavour, not a little alter'd and mov'd inwardly in their mindes: Some with doubt of what will be the successe, others with fear of what will be the censure; some with hope, others with confidence of what they have to speake. And me perhaps each of these dispositions, as the subject was whereon I enter'd, may have at other times variously affected; and likely might in these formost expressions now also disclose which of them sway'd most, but that the very attempt of this addresse thus made, and the thought of whom it hath recourse to, hath got the power within me to a passion, farre more welcome then incidentall to a Preface. Which though I stay not to confesse ere any aske, I shall be blamelesse, if it be no other, then the joy and gratulation which it brings to all who wish and promote their Countries liberty; whereof this whole Discoursepropos'd will be a certaine testimony, if not a Trophey. For this is not the liberty which wee can hope, that no grievance ever should arise in the Commonwealth, that let no man in this World expect; but when complaints are freely heard, deeply consider'd and speedily reform'd, then is the utmost bound of civill liberty attain'd, that wise men looke for. To which if I now manifest by the very sound of this which I shall utter, that wee are already in good part arriv'd, and yet from such a steepedisadvantage of tyranny and superstition grounded into our principles as was beyond the manhood of a *Roman* recovery, it will bee attributed first, as is most due, to the strong assistance of God our deliverer, next to your faithfull guidance and undaunted Wisdome, Lords and Commons of *England*. Neither is it in Gods esteemethe diminution of his glory,

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when honourable things are spoken of good men and worthy Magistrates; which if I now first should begin to doe, after so fair a progresse of your laudable deeds, and such a long obligation upon the whole Realme to your indefatigable virtues, I might be justly reckn'd among the tardiest, and the unwillingest of them that praise yee. Nevertheless there being three principall things, without which all praising is but Courtship and flattery, First, when that only is prais'd which is solidly worth praise: next, when greatest likelihoods are brought that such things are truly and really in those persons to whom they are ascrib'd, the other, when he who praises, by shewing that such his actual persuasion is of whom he writes, can demonstrate that he flatters not; the former two of these I have heretofore endeavour'd, rescuing the employment from him who went about to impair your merits with a trivial and malignant *Encomium*; the latter as belonging chiefly to mine owne acquittall, that whom I so extoll'd I did not flatter, hath been reserv'd opportunely to this occasion. For he who freely magnifies what hath been nobly done, and fears not to declare as freely what might be done better, gives ye the best cov'nant of his fidelity; and that his loyalest affection and his hope waits on your proceedings. His highest praising is not flattery, and his plainest advice is a kinde of praising; for though I should affirme and hold by argument, that it would fare better with truth, with learning, and the Commonwealth, if one of your publisht Orders which I should name, were call'd in, yet at the same time it could not but much redound to the lustre of your milde and equall Government, when as private persons are hereby animated to thinke ye better pleas'd with publick advice, then other statists have been delighted heretofore with publicke flattery. And men will then see what difference there is between the magnanimity of a trienniall Parliament, and that jealous hautinesse of Prelates and cabin Counsellours that usurpt of late, when as they shall observe yee in the midd'st of your Victories and successes more gently brooking writt'n exceptions against a voted Order, then other Courts, which had produc't nothing worth memory but the weake ostentation of wealth, would have endur'd the least signifi'd dislike at any sudden Proclamation. If I should thus farre presume upon the meek demeanour of your civill and gentle greatnesse, Lords and Commons, as what your publisht Order hath directly said, that to gainsay, I might defend my selfe with ease, if any should accuse me of being new or insolent, did they but know how much better I find ye esteem it to imitate the old and elegant humanity of Greece, then the barbarick pride of a *Hunnish* and *Norwegian* statelines. And out of those ages, to whose polite wisdom and letters we ow that we are not yet *Goths* and *Jutlanders*, I could name him who from his private house wrote that discourse to the Parliament of *Athens*, that perswades them to change the forme of *Democracy* which was then establisht. Such honour was done in those dayes to men who profest the study of wisdom and eloquence, not only in their own Country, but in other Lands, that Cities and Siniories heard them gladly, and with great respect, if they had aught in publick to admonish the State. Thus did *Dion Prusæus*, a stranger and a privat Orator counsell the *Rhodians* against a former Edict: and I abound with other like examples, which to set heere would be

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superfluous. But if from the industry of a life wholly dedicated to studious labours, and those naturall endowments haply not the worst for two and fifty degrees of northern latitude, so much must be derogated, as to count me not equall to any of those who had this priviledge, I would obtain to be thought not so inferior, as your selves are superior to the most of them whoreceiv'd their counsell: and how farre you excell them, be assur'd, Lords and Commons, there can no greater testimony appear, then when your prudent spirit acknowledges and obeyes the voice of reason from what quarter soever it be heard speaking; and renders ye as willing to repeal any Act of your own setting forth, as any set forth by your Predecessors.

If ye be thus resolv'd, as it were injury to think ye were not; I know not what should withhold me from presenting ye with fit instance wherein to shew both that love of truth which ye eminently professe, and that uprightness of your judgement which is not wont to be partiall to your selves; by judging over again that Order which ye have ordain'd *to regulate Printing, That no Book, pamphlet, or paper shall be henceforth Printed, unlesse the same be first approv'd and licenc't by such*, or at least one of such as shall be thereto appointed. For that part which preserves justly every mans Copy to himselfe, or provides for the poor, I touch not, only wish they be not made pretenses to abuse and persecute honest and painfull Men, who offend not in either of these particulars. But that other clause of Licencing Books, which we thought had dy'd with his brother *quadragesimal* and *matrimonial* when the Prelats expir'd, I shall now attend with such a Homily, as shall lay before ye, first the inventors of it to bee those whom ye will be loath to own; next what is to be thought in generall of reading, what ever sort the Books be; and that this Order avails nothing to the suppressing of scandalous, seditious, and libellous Books, which were mainly intended to be suppress. Last, that it will be primely to the discouragement of all learning, and the stop of Truth, not only by disexercising and blunting our abilities in what we know already, but by hindring and cropping the discovery that might bee yet further made both in religious and civill Wisdome.

I deny not, but that it is of greatest concernment in the Church and Commonwealth, to have a vigilant eye how Bookes demeane themselves as well as men; and thereafter to confine, imprison, and do sharpest justice on them as malefactors: For Books are not absolutely dead things, but doe contain a potencie of life in them to be as active as that soule was whose progeny they are; nay they do preserve as in a violl the purest efficacie and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous Dragons teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet on the other hand, unlesse warinesse be us'd, as good almost kill a Man as kill a good Book; who kills a Man kills a reasonable creature, Gods Image; but hee whodestroyes a good Booke, kills reason it selfe, kills the Image of God, as it were in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the Earth; but a good Booke is the pretious life-blood of a master spirit, imbalm'd and treasur'd up on purpose to a life beyond

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life. 'Tis true, no age can restore a life, whereof perhaps there is no great losse; and revolutions of ages do not oft recover the losse of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole Nations fare the worse. We should be wary therefore what persecution we raise against the living labours of publick men, how we spill that season'd life of man preserv'd and stor'd up in Books; since we see a kinde of homicide may be thus committed, sometimes a martyrdom, and if it extend to the whole impression, a kinde of massacre, whereof the execution ends not in the slaying of an elementall life, but strikes at that ethereall and fift essence, the breath of reason it selfe, slaies an immortality rather than a life. But lest I should becondemn'd of introducing licence, while I oppose Licencing, I refuse not the paines to be so much Historically, as will serve to shew what hath been done by ancient and famous Commonwealths, against this disorder, till the very time that this project of licencing crept out of the *Inquisition*, was caught up by our Prelates, and hath caught some of our Presbyters.

In *Athens* where Books and Wits were ever busier then in any other part of *Greece*, I finde but only two sorts of writings which the Magistrate car'd to take notice of; those either blasphemous and Atheisticall, or Libellous. Thus the Books of *Protagoras* were by the Iudges of *Areopagus* commanded to be burnt, and himselfe banisht the territory for a discourse begun with his confessing not to know *whether there were gods, or whether not*: And against defaming, it was decreed that none should be traduc'd by name, as was the manner of *Vetus Comædia*, whereby we may guesse how they censur'd libelling: And this course was quick enough, as *Cicero* writes, to quell both the desperate wits of other Atheists, and the open way of defaming, as the event shew'd. Of other sects and opinions, though tending to voluptuousnesse, and the denying of divine providence, they tooke no heed. Therefore we do not read that either *Epicurus*, or that libertine school of *Cyrene*, or what the *Cynick* impudence utter'd, was ever question'd by the Laws. Neither is it recorded that the writings of those old Comedians were suppress'd, though the acting of them were forbid; and that *Plato* commended the reading of *Aristophanes*, the loosest of them all, to his royall scholler *Dionysius*, is commonly known, and may be excus'd, if holy *Chrysostome*, as is reported, nightly studied so much the same Author and had the art to cleanse a scurrilous vehemence into the stile of a rousing Sermon. That other leading city of *Greece*, *Lacedæmon*, considering that *Lycurgus* their Law-giver was so addicted to elegant learning, as to have been the first that brought out of *Ionia* the scatter'd workes of *Homer*, and sent the poet *Thales* from *Creet* to prepare and mollifie the *Spartan* surlinesse with his smooth songs and odes, the better to plant among them law and civility, it is to be wonder'd how muselesse and unbookish they were, minding nought but the feats of Warre. There needed no licencing of Books among them for they dislik'd all, but their owne *Laconick Apothegms*, and took a slight occasion to chase *Archilochus* out of their City, perhaps for composing in a higher straine then their own souldierly ballats and roundels could reach to: Or if it were for his broad verses, they were not therein so cautious, but they were as

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dissolute in their promiscuous conversing; whence *Euripides* affirms in *Andromache*, that their women were all unchaste. Thus much may give us light after what sort Bookes were prohibited among the Greeks. The Romans also for many ages train'd up only to a military roughnes, resembling most the *Lacedæmonianguise*, knew of learning little but what their twelve Tables, and the *Pontifick* College with their *Augurs* and *Flamins* taught them in Religion and Law, so unacquainted with other learning, that when *Carneades* and *Critolaus*, with the *Stoick Diogenes* comming Embassadors to *Rome*, tooke thereby occasion to give the City a tast of their Philosophy, they were suspected for seducers by no lesse a man then *Cato* the Censor, who mov'd it in the Senat to dismisse them speedily, and to banish all such *Attick* bablers out of *Italy*. But *Scipio* and others of the noblest Senators withstood him and his old *Sabin* austerity; honour'd and admir'd the men; and the Censor himself at last in his old age fell to the study of that whereof before hee was so scrupulous. And yet at the same time *Nævius* and *Plautus* the first Latine comedians had fill'd the City with all the borrow'd Scenes of *Menander* and *Philemon*. Then began to be consider'd there also what was to be don to libellous books and Authors; for *Nævius* was quickly cast into prison for his unbridl'd pen, and releas'd by the *Tribunes* upon his recantation: We read also that libels were burnt, and the makerspunisht by *Augustus*. The like severity no doubt was us'd if ought were impiously writt'n against their esteemed gods. Except in these two points, how the world went in Books, the Magistrat kept no reckning. And therefore *Lucretius* without impeachment versifies his Epicurism to *Memmius*, and had the honour to be set forth the second time by *Cicero* so great a father of the Commonwealth; although himselfe disputes against that opinion in his own writings. Nor was the Satyricallsharpnesse, or naked plainnes of *Lucilius*, or *Catullus*, or *Flaccus*, by any order prohibited. And for matters of State, the story of *Titus Livius*, though it extoll'd that part which *Pompey* held, was not therefore suppress't by *Octavius Cæsar* of the other Faction. But that *Naso* was by him banisht in his old age, for the wanton Poems of his youth, was but a meer covert of State over some secret cause: and besides, the Books were neither banisht nor call'd in. From hence we shall meet with little else but tyranny in the Roman Empire, that we may not marvell, if not so often bad, as good Books were silenc't. I shall therefore deem to have bin large enough in producing what among the ancients was punishable to write, save only which, all other arguments were free to treat on.

By this time the Emperors were become Christians, whose discipline in this point I doe not finde to have bin more severe then what was formerly in practice. The Books of those whom they took to be grand Hereticks were examin'd, refuted, and condemn'd in the general Councils; and not till then were prohibited, or burnt by authority of the Emperor. As for the writings of Heathen authors, unlesse they were plaine invectives against Christianity, as those of *Porphyrius* and *Proclus*, they met with no interdict that can be cited, till about the year 400. in a *Carthaginian* Council, wherein Bishops themselves were

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forbid to read the Books of Gentiles, but Heresies they might read: while others long before them on the contrary scrupl'd more the Books of Hereticks, then of Gentiles. And that the primitive Councils and Bishops were wont only to declare what Books were not commendable, passing no further, but leaving it to each ones conscience to read or to lay by, till after theyeare 800. is observ'd already by *Padre Paolo* the great unmasker of the *Trentine* Council. After which time the Popes of *Rome*, engrossing what they pleas'd of Politicall rule into their owne hands, extended their dominion over mens eyes, as they had before over their judgements, burning and prohibiting to be read, what they fancied not; yet sparing in their censures, and the Books not many which they so dealt with: till *Martin* the 5. by his Bull not only prohibited, but was the first that excommunicated the reading of hereticall Books; for about that time *Wicklef* and *Husse* growing terrible, were they who first drove the Papall Court to a stricter policy of prohibiting. Which cours *Leo* the 10, and his successors follow'd, untill the Councell of Trent, and the Spanish Inquisition engendring together brought forth, or perfetted those Catalogues, and expurging Indexes that rake through the entralls of many an old good Author, with a violation wors then any could be offer'd to his tomb. Nor did they stay in matters Hereticall, but any subject that was not to their palat, they either condemn'd in a prohibition, or had it strait into the new Purgatory of an Index. To fill up the measure of encroachment, their last invention was to ordain that no Book, pamphlet, or paper should be Printed (as if St. *Peter* had bequeath'd them the keys of the Presse also out of Paradise) unlesse it were approv'd and licenc't under the hands of 2 or 3 glutton Friers. For example:

Let the Chancellor *Cini* be pleas'd to see if in this present work be contain'd ought that may withstand the Printing.

Vincent Rabbatta, Vicar of *Florence*.

I have seen this present work, and finde nothing athwart the Catholick faith and good manners: in witness whereof I have given, &c.

Nicolò Cini, Chancellor of *Florence*.

Attending the precedent relation, it is allow'd that this present work of *Davanzati* may be printed.

Vincent Rabbatta, &c.

It may be printed, *July* 15.

Friar *Simon Mompei d'Amelia*, Chancellor of the holy office in *Florence*.

Sure they have a conceit, if he of the bottomlesse pit had not long since broke prison, that this quadruple exorcism would barre him down. I fear their next designe will be to get into their custody the licensing of that which they say *Claudius* intended, but went not through with. Voutsafe to see another of their forms the Roman stamp:

Imprimatur, If it seem good to the reverend Master of the holy Palace.

Belcastro Vicegerent.

Imprimatur

Friar *Nicolò Rodolphi*, Master of the holy Palace.

Sometimes 5 *Imprimaturs* are seen together dialogue-wise in the Piazza of one Title page, complementing and ducking each to other with their shav'n reverences, whether the Author, who stands by in perplexity at the foot of his Epistle, shall to the Presse or to the sponge. These are the prety responsories, these are the dear Antiphonies, that so bewicht of late our Prelats, and their Chaplaines with the goodly Eccho they made; and besotted us to the gay imitation of a lordly *Imprimatur*, one from Lambeth house, another from the West end of *Pauls*; so apishly Romanizing, that the word of command still was set downe in Latine; as if the learned Grammaticall pen that wrote it, would cast no ink without Latine: or perhaps, as they thought, because no vulgar tongue was worthy to expresse the pure conceit of an *Imprimatur*, but rather, as I hope, for that our English, the language of men ever famous, and formost in the atchievements of liberty, will not easily finde servile letters anow to spell such a dictatorie presumption in English. And thus ye have the Inventors and the originall of Book-licencing ript up and drawn as lineally as any pedigree. We have it not, that can be heard of, from any ancient State, or politie, or Church, nor by any Statute left us by our Ancestors elder or later; nor from the moderne custom of any reformed City, or Church abroad; but from the most Antichristian Councel and the most tyrannous Inquisition that ever inquir'd. Till then Books were ever as freely admitted into the World as any other birth; the issue of the brain was no more stifl'd then the issue of the womb: no envious *Juno* sate cros-leg'd over the nativity of any mans intellectuall off spring; but if it prov'd a Monster, who denies, but that it was justly burnt, or sunk into the Sea. But that a Book inwors condition then a peccant soul, should be to stand before a Jury ere it be borne to the World, and undergo yet in darknesse the judgement of *Radamanth* and his Collegues, ere it can pass the ferry backward into light, was never heard before, till that mysterious iniquity, provokt and troubl'd at the first entrance of Reformation, sought out new limbo's and new hells wherein they might include our Books also within the number of their damned. And this was the rare morsell so officiously snatcht up, and so ilfavouredly imitated by our inquisiturient Bishops, and the attendant minorites their Chaplains. That ye like not now these most certain Authors of this licencing order, and that all sinister intention was farre distant from your thoughts, when ye were importun'd the passing it, all men who know the integrity of your actions, and how ye honour Truth, will clear yee readily.

But some will say, What though the inventors were bad, the thing for all that may be good? It may be so; yet if that thing be no such deep invention, but obvious, and easie for any man to light on, and yet best and wisest Commonwealths through all ages, and occasions have foreborne to use it, and falsest seducers, and oppressors of men were the first who tooke it up, and to no other purpose but to obstruct and hinder the first approach of Reformation; I am of those who beleve, it will be a harder alchymy then *Lullius* ever knew, to sublimat any good use out of such an invention. Yet this only is what I request to gain from this reason, that it may be held a dangerous and suspicious fruit, as certainly it deserves, for the tree that bore it, untill I can dissect one by one the

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properties it has. But I have first to finish, as was propounded, what is to be thought in generall of reading Books, what ever sort they be, and whether be more the benefit, or the harm that thence proceeds?

Not to insist upon the examples of *Moses*, *Daniel*, & *Paul*, who were skilfull in all the learning of the *Ægyptians*, *Caldeans*, and *Greeks*, which could not probably be without reading their Books of all sorts; in *Paul* especially, who thought it no defilement to insert into holy Scripture the sentences of three Greek Poets, and one of them a Tragedian, the question was, notwithstanding sometimes controverted among the Primitive Doctors, but with great odds on that side which affirm'd it bothlawfull and profitable, as was then evidently perceiv'd, when *Julian* the Apostat, and sottlest enemy to our faith, made a decree forbidding Christians the study of heathen learning: for, said he, they wound us with our own weapons, and with our owne arts and sciences they overcome us. And indeed the Christians were put so to their shifts by this crafty means, and so much in danger to decline into all ignorance, that the two *Apollinarii* were fain as a man may say, to coin all the sevenliberall Sciences out of the Bible, reducing it into divers forms of Orations, Poems, Dialogues, ev'n to the calculating of a new Christian grammar. But, saith the Historian *Socrates*, The providence of God provided better then the industry of *Apollinarius* and his son, by taking away that illiterat law with the life of him whodevis'd it. So great an injury they then held it to be depriv'd of *Hellenick* learning; and thought it a persecution more undermining, and secretly decaying the Church, then the open cruelty of *Decius* or *Dioclesian*. And perhaps it was the same politick drift that the Divell whipt St. *Jerom* in a lenten dream, for reading *Cicero*; or else it was a fantasm bred by the feaver which had then seis'd him. For had an Angel bin his discipliner, unlesse it were for dwelling too much upon Ciceronianisms, & hadchastiz'd the reading, not the vanity, it had bin plainly partiall; first to correct him for grave *Cicero*, and not for scurrill *Plautus*, whom he confesses to have bin reading not long before; next to correct him only, and let so many more ancient Fathers wax old in those pleasant and florid studies without the lash of such a tutoring apparition; insomuch that *Basil* teaches how some good use may be made of *Margites*, a sportfull Poem, not now extant, writ by *Homer*; and why not then of *Morgante*, an Italian Romanze much to the same purpose. But if it be agreed we shall be try'd by visions, there is a vision recorded by *Eusebius* far ancienter then this tale of *Jerom* to the Nun *Eustochium*, and besides has nothing of a feavor in it. *Dionysius Alexandrinus* was about the year 240, a person of great name in the Church for piety and learning, who had wont to avail himself much against hereticks by being conversant in their Books; untill a certain Presbyter laid it scrupulously to his conscience, how he durst venture himself among those defiling volumes. The worthy man loath to give offence fell into a new debate with himselfe what was to be thought; when suddenly a vision sent from God, it is his own Epistle that so averrs it, confirm'd him in these words: Read any books what ever come to thy hands, for thou art sufficient both to judge aright, and to examine each matter. To this revelation he assented the sooner, as

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he confesses, because it was answerable to that of the Apostle to the Thessalonians, Prove all things, hold fast that which is good. And he might have added another remarkable saying of the same Author; To the pure, all things are pure, not only meats and drinks, but all kinde of knowledge whether of good or evill; the knowledge cannot defile, nor consequently the books, if the will and conscience be not defil'd. For books are as meats and viands are; some of good, some of evill substance; and yet God in that unapocryphall vision, said without exception, Rise *Peter*, kill and eat, leaving the choice to each mans discretion. Wholesome meats to a vitiated stomack differ little or nothing from unwholesome; and best books to a naughty mind are not unappliable to occasions of evill. Bad meats will scarce breed good nourishment in the healthiest concoction; but herein the difference is of bad books, that they to a discreet and judicious Reader serve in many respects to discover, to confute, to forewarn, and to illustrate. Wherof what better witnes can ye expect I should produce, then one of your own now sitting in Parlament, the chief of learned men reputed in this land, Mr. *Selden*, whose volume of naturall & national laws proves, not only by great authorities brought together, but by exquisite reasons and theorems almost mathematically demonstrative, that all opinions, yea errors, known, read, and collated, are of main service & assistance toward the speedy attainment of what is truest. I conceive therefore, that when God did enlarge the universall diet of mans body, saving ever the rules of temperance, he then also, as before, left arbitrary the dyeting and repasting of our minds; as wherein every mature man might have to exercise his owne leading capacity. How great a vertue is temperance, how much of moment through the whole life of man? yet God committs the managing so great a trust, without particular Law or prescription, wholly to the demeanour of every grown man. And therefore when he himself tabl'd the Jews from heaven, that Omer which was every mans daily portion of Manna, is computed to have bin more then might have well suffic'd the heartiest feeder thrice as many meals. For those actions which enter into a man, rather then issue out of him, and therefore defile not, God uses not to captivat under aperpetuall childhood of prescription, but trusts him with the gift of reason to be his own chooser; there were but little work left for preaching, if law and compulsion should grow so fast upon those things which hertofore were govern'd only by exhortation. *Salomon* informs us that much reading is a wearines to the flesh; but neither he, nor other inspir'd author tells us that such, or such reading is unlawfull: yet certainly had God thought good to limit us herein, it had bin much more expedient to have told us what was unlawfull, then what was wearisome. As for the burning of those Ephesian books by St. *Pauls* converts, tis reply'd the books weremagick, the Syriack so renders them. It was a privat act, a voluntary act, and leaves us to a voluntary imitation: the men in remorse burnt those books which were their own; the Magistrat by this example is not appointed; these men practiz'd the books, another might perhaps have read them in some sort usefully. Good andevill we know in the field of this World grow up together almost inseparably; and the knowledge of good is so involv'd and interwoven with the knowledge of evill, and

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in so many cunning resemblances hardly to be discern'd, that those confused seeds which were impos'd on *Psyche* as an incessant labour to cull out, and sort asunder, were not more intermixt. It was from out the rinde of one apple tasted, that the knowledge of good and evill as two twins cleaving together leapt forth into the World. And perhaps this is that doom which *Adam* fell into of knowing good and evill, that is to say of knowing good by evill. As therefore the state of man now is; what wisdom can there be to choose, what continence to forbear without the knowledge of evill? He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true wayfaring Christian. I cannot praise a fugitive and cloister'd vertue, unexercis'd & unbreath'd, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat. Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world, we bring impurity much rather: that which purifies us is triall, and triall is by what is contrary. That vertue therefore which is but a youngling in the contemplation of evill, and knows not the utmost that vice promises to her followers, and rejects it, is but a blank vertue, not a pure; her whitenesse is but an excrementall whitenesse; Which was the reason why our sage and serious Poet *Spencer*, whom I dare be known to think a better teacher then *Scotus* or *Aquinas*, describing true temperance under the person of *Guion*, brings him in with his palmer through the cave of Mammon, and the bowr of earthly blisse that he might see and know, and yet abstain. Since therefore the knowledge and survey of vice is in this world so necessary to the constituting of human vertue, and the scanning of error to the confirmation of truth, how can we more safely, and with lesse danger scout into the regions of sin and falsity then by reading all manner of tractats, and hearing all manner of reason? And this is the benefit which may be had of books promiscuously read. But of the harm that may result hence three kinds are usually reckn'd. First, is fear'd the infection that may spread; but then all human learning and controversie in religious points must remove out of the world, yea the Bible it selfe; for that oftimes relates blasphemy not nicely, it describes the carnall sense of wicked men not unelegantly, it brings in holiest men passionately murmuring against providence through all the arguments of *Epicurus*: in other great disputes it answers dubiously and darkly to the common reader: And ask a Talmudist what ails the modesty of his marginal Keri, that *Moses* and all the Prophets cannot perswade him to pronounce the textuall Chetiv. For these causes we all know the Bible it selfe put by the Papist into the first rank of prohibited books. The ancientest Fathers must be next remov'd, as *Clement* of *Alexandria*, and that *Eusebian* book of Evangelick preparation, transmitting our ears through a hoard of heathenish obscenities to receive the Gospel. Who finds not that *Irenæus*, *Epiphanius*, *Jerom*, and others discover more heresies then they well confute, and that oft for heresie which is the truer opinion. Nor boots it to say for these, and all the heathen Writers of greatest infection, if it must be thought so, with

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whom is bound up the life of human learning, that they writ in an unknown tongue, so long as we are sure those languages are known as well to the worst of men, who are both most able, and most diligent to instill the poison they suck, first into the Courts of Princes, acquainting them with the choicest delights, and criticisms of sin. As perhaps did that *Petronius* whom *Nero* call'd his *Arbiter*, the Master of his revels; and that notorious ribald of *Arezzo*, dreaded, and yet dear to the Italian Courtiers. I name not him for posterities sake, whom *Harry* the 8. nam'din merriment his Vicar of hell. By which compendious way all the contagion that foreine books can infuse, will find a passage to the people farre easier and shorterthen an Indian voyage, though it could be sail'd either by the North of *Cataio* Eastward, or of *Canada* Westward, while our Spanish licencing gags the English Pressenever so severely. But on the other side that infection which is from books of controversie in Religion, is more doubtfull and dangerous to the learned, then to the ignorant; and yet those books must be permitted untoucht by the licencer. It will be hard to instance where any ignorant man hath bin ever seduc't by Papisticallbook in English, unlesse it were commended and expounded to him by some of that Clergy: and indeed all such tractats whether false or true are as the Prophesie of *Isaiah* was to the *Eunuch*, not to be *understood without a guide*. But of our Priests and Doctors how many have bin corrupted by studying the comments of Jesuits and *Sorbonists*, and how fast they could transfuse that corruption into the people, our experience is both late and sad. It is not forgot, since the acute and distinct *Arminius* was perverted meerly by the perusing of a namelesse discourse writt'n at *Delf*, which at first he took in hand to confute. Seeing therefore that those books, & those in great abundance which are likeliest to taint both life and doctrine, cannot be suppresst without the fall of learning, and of all ability in disputation, and that these books of either sort are most and soonest catching to the learned, from whom to the common people whatever is hereticall or dissolute may quickly be convey'd, and that evill manners are as perfectly learnt without books a thousand other ways which cannot be stopt, and evill doctrine not with books can propagate, except a teacher guide, which he might also doe without writing, and so beyond prohibiting, I am not able to unfold, how this cautelous enterprise of licencing can be exempted from the number of vain and impossible attempts. And he who were pleasantly dispos'd could not well avoid to lik'n it to the exploit of that gallant man who thought to pound up the crows by shutting his Parkgate. Besides another inconvenience, if learned men be the first receivers out of books & dispredders both of vice and error, how shall the licensors themselves be confided in, unlesse we can conferr upon them, or they assume to themselves above all others in the Land, the grace of infallibility, and uncorruptednesse? And again if it be true, that a wise man like a good refiner can gather gold out of the drossiest volume, and that a fool will be a fool with the best book, yea or without book, there is no reason that we should deprive a wise man of any advantage to his wisdome, while we seek to restrain from a fool, that which being restrain'd will be no hindrance to his folly. For if there should be so

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much exactnesse always us'd to keep that from him which is unfit for his reading, we should in the judgement of *Aristotle* not only, but of *Salomon*, and of our Saviour, not voutsafe him good precepts, and by consequence not willingly admit him to good books; as being certain that a wise man will make better use of an idle pamphlet, then a fool will do of sacred Scripture. 'Tis next alleg'dwe must not expose ourselves to temptations without necessity, and next to that, not imploy our time in vain things. To both these objections one answer will serve, out of the grounds already laid, that to all men such books are not temptations, nor vanities; but usefull drugs and materialls wherewith to temper and compose effective and strong med'cins, which mans life cannot want. The rest, as children and childish men, who have not the art to qualifie and prepare these workingmineralls, well may be exhorted to forbear, but hinder'd forcibly they cannot be by all the licencing that Sainted Inquisition could ever yet contrive; which is what I promis'd to deliver next, That this order of licencing conduces nothing to the end for which it was fram'd; and hath almost prevented me by being clear already while thus much hath bin explaining. See the ingenuity of Truth, who when she gets a free and willing hand, opens herself faster then the pace of method and discours can overtake her. It was the task which I began with, To shew that no Nation, or well instituted State, if they valu'd books at all, did ever use this way of licencing; and it might be answer'd, that this is a piece of prudence lately discover'd. To which I return, that as it was a thing slight and obvious to think on, so if it had bin difficult to finde out, there wanted not among them long since, who suggested such a cours; which they not following, leave us a pattern of their judgement, that it was not the not knowing, but the not approving, which was the cause of their not using it. *Plato*, a man of high authority, indeed, but least of all for his Commonwealth, in the book of his laws, which no City ever yet receiv'd, fed his fancie with making many edicts to his ayrie Burgomasters, which they who otherwise admire him, wish had binrather buried and excus'd in the *genial* cups of an *Academick* night-sitting. By which laws he seems to tolerat no kind of learning, but by unalterable decree, consisting most of practicall traditions, to the attainment whereof a Library of smaller bulk then his own dialogues would be abundant. And there also enacts that no Poet should so much as read to any privat man, what he had writt'n, untill the Judges and Law-keepers had seen it, and allow'd it: But that *Plato* meant this Law peculiarly to that Commonwealth which he had imagin'd, and to no other, is evident. Why was he not else a Law-giver to himself, but a transgressor, and to be expell'd by his own Magistrats; both for the wanton epigrams and dialogues which he made, and his perpetuall reading of *Sophron Mimus* and *Aristophanes*, books of grossest infamy, and also for commending the latter of them, though he were the malicious libeller of his chief friends, to be read by the Tyrant *Dionysius*, who had little need of such trash to spend his time on? But that he knew this licencing of Poems had reference and dependance to many other proviso's there set down in his fancied republic, which in this world could have no place: and so neither he himself, nor any Magistrat, or City ever imitated that cours, which tak'n apart from those

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othercollaterall injunctions, must needs be vain and fruitlesse. For if they fell upon one kind of strictnesse, unlesse their care were equall to regulat all other things of likeaptnes to corrupt the mind, that single endeavour they knew would be but a fond labour; to shut and fortifie one gate against corruption, and be necessitated to leave others round about wide open. If we think to regulat Printing, thereby to rectifie manners, we must regulat all recreations and pastimes, all that is delightful to man. No musick must be heard, no song be set or sung, but what is grave and *Dorick*. There must be licencing dancers, that no gesture, motion, or deportment be taught our youth but what by their allowance shall be thought honest; for such *Plato* was provided of; It will ask more then the work of twenty licencers to examin all the lutes, the violins, and the ghittarrs in every house; they must not be suffer'd to prattle as they doe, but must be licenc'd what they may say. And who shall silence all the airs and madrigalls, that whisper softnes in chambers? The Windows also, and the *Balcone's* must be thought on, there are shrewd books, with dangerousFrontispices set to sale; who shall prohibit them, shall twenty licencers? The villages also must have their visitors to enquire what lectures the bagpipe and therebbeck reads ev'n to the ballatry, and the gammuth of every *municipal* fidler, for these are the Countrymans *Arcadia's* and his *Monte Mayors*. Next, what moreNationall corruption, for which England hears ill abroad, then houshold gluttony; who shall be the rectors of our daily rioting? and what shall be done to inhibit the multitudes that frequent those houses where drunk'nes is sold and harbour'd? Our garments also should be referr'd to the licencing of some more sober work-masters to see them cut into a lesse wanton garb. Who shall regulat all the mixt conversation of our youth, male and female together, as is the fashion of this Country, who shall still appoint what shall be discour's'd, what presum'd, and no furdur? Lastly, who shall forbid and separat all idle resort, all evill company? These things will be, and must be; but how they shall be lest hurtfull, how lest enticing, herein consists the grave and governing wisdom of a State. To sequester out of the world into *Atlantick* and *Eutopian* polities which never can be drawn into use, will not mend our condition; but to ordain wisely as in this world of evill, in the midd'stwhereof God hath plac't us unavoidably. Nor is it *Plato's* licencing of books will doe this, which necessarily pulls along with it so many other kinds of licencing, as will make us all both ridiculous and weary, and yet frustrat; but those unwritt'n, or at least unconstraining laws of vertuous education, religious and civill nurture, which *Plato* there mentions, as the bonds and ligaments of the Commonwealth, the pillars and the sustainers of every writt'n Statute; these they be which will bear chief sway in such matters as these, when all licencing will be easily eluded. Impunity and remissenes, for certain are the bane of a Commonwealth, but here the great art lyes to discern in what the law is to bid restraint and punishment, and in what things perswasion only is to work. If every action which is good, or evill in man at ripe years, were to be under pittance, and prescription, and compulsion, what were vertue but a name, what praise could be then due to well-doing, whatgramercy to be sober, just or continent? many there

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be that complain of divin Providence for suffering *Adam* to transgresse, foolish tongues! when God gave him reason, he gave him freedom to choose, for reason is but choosing; he had bin else a meer artificiall *Adam*, such an *Adam* as he is in the motions. We our selves esteem not of that obedience, or love, or gift, which is of force: God therefore left him free, set before him a provoking object, ever almost in his eyes herein consisted his merit, herein the right of his reward, the praise of his abstinence. Wherefore did he creat passions within us, pleasures round about us, but that these rightly temper'dare the very ingredients of vertu? They are not skilfull considerers of human things, who imagin to remove sin by removing the matter of sin; for, besides that it is a huge heap increasing under the very act of diminishing, though some part of it may for a time be withdrawn from some persons, it cannot from all, in such auniversall thing as books are; and when this is done, yet the sin remains entire. Though ye take from a covetous man all his treasure, he has yet one jewell left, ye cannot bereave him of his covetousnesse. Banish all objects of lust, shut up all youth into the severest discipline that can be exercis'd in any hermitage, ye cannot make them chaste, that came not thither so: such great care and wisdom is requir'd to the right managing of this point. Suppose we could expell sin by this means; look how much we thus expell of sin, so much we expell of vertue: for the matter of them both is the same; remove that, and ye remove them both alike. This justifies the high providence of God, who though he command us temperance, justice, continence, yet powrs out before us ev'n to a profusenes all desirable things, and gives us minds that can wander beyond all limit and satiety. Why should we then affect a rigour contrary to the manner of God and of nature, by abridging or scanting those means, which books freely permitted are, both to the triall of vertue and the exercise of truth. It would be better done to learn that the law must needs be frivolous which goes to restrain things, uncertainly and yet equally working to good, and to evill. And were I the chooser, a dram of well-doing should be preferr'dbefore many times as much the forcible hindrance of evill-doing. For God sure esteems the growth and compleating of one vertuous person, more then the restraint of ten vitious. And albeit whatever thing we hear or see, sitting, walking, travelling, or conversing may be fitly call'd our book, and is of the same effect that writings are, yet grant the thing to be prohibited were only books, it appears that this order hitherto is far insufficient to the end which it intends. Do we not see, not once or oftner, but weekly that continu'd Court-libell against the Parliament and City, Printed, as the wet sheets can witnes, and dispers't among us, for all that licencing candoe. yet this is the prime service a man would think, wherein this order should give proof of it self. If it were executed, you'll say. But certain, if execution be remisseeor blindfold now, and in this particular, what will it be hereafter and in other books? If then the order shall not be vain and frustrat, behold a new labour, Lords and Commons, ye must repeal and proscribe all scandalous and unlicenc't books already printed and divulg'd; after ye have drawn them up into a list, that all may know which are condemn'd, and which not; and ordain that no forrein books be deliver'd out of custody, till they have bin read over. This office will require the

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whole time of not a few overseers, and those no vulgar men. There be also books which are partly usefull and excellent, partly culpable and pernicious; this work will ask as many more officials, to make expurgations, and expunctions, that the Commonwealth of Learning be not damnify'd. In fine, when the multitude of books encrease upon their hands, ye must be fain to catalogue all those Printers who are found frequently offending, and forbidd the importation of their whole suspected *typography*. In a word, that this your order may be exact, and not deficient, ye must reform it perfectly according to the model of *Trent* and *Sevil*, which I know ye abhorre to doe. Yet though ye should condescend to this, which God forbid, the order still would be but fruitlesse and defective to that end whereto ye meant it. If to prevent sects and schisms, who is so unread or so uncatechis'd in story, that hath not heard of many sects refusing books as a hindrance, and preserving their doctrine unmixt for many ages, only by unwritt'n traditions. The Christian faith, for that was once a schism, is not unknown to have spread all over *Asia*, ere any Gospel or Epistle was seen in writing. If the amendment of manners be aym'd at, look into Italy and Spain, whether those places be one scruple the better, the honester, the wiser, the chaster, since all the inquisitionall rigor that hath been executed upon books.

Another reason, whereby to make it plain that this order will misse the end it seeks, consider by the quality which ought to be in every licencer. It cannot deny'd but that he who is made judge to sit upon the birth, or death of books whether they may be wafted into this world, or not, had need to be a man above the common measure, both studious, learned, and judicious; there may be else no mean mistakes in the censure of what is passable or not; which is also no mean injury. If he be of such worth as behoovs him, there cannot be a more tedious and displeasing Journey-work, a greater losse of time levied upon his head, then to be made the perpetuall reader of unchosen books and pamphlets, oftentimes huge volumes. There is no book that is acceptable unlesse at certain seasons; but to be enjoyn'd the reading of that at all times, and in a hand scars legible, whereof three pages would not down at any time in the fairest Print, is an imposition I cannot beleieve how he that values time, and his own studies, or is but of a sensible nostrill should be able to endure. In this one thing I crave leave of the present licensors to be pardon'd for so thinking: who doubtlesse took this office up, looking on it through their obedience to the Parliament, whose command perhaps made all things seem easie and unlaborious to them; but that this short triall hath wearied them out already, their own expressions and excuses to them who make so many journeys to sollicite their licence, are testimony anough. Seeing therefore those who now possesse the employment, by all evident signs wish themselves well ridd of it, and that no man of worth, none that is not a plain unthrift of his own hours is ever likely to succeed them, except he mean to put himself to the salary of a Presse-corrector, we may easily foresee what kind of licensors we are to expect hereafter, either ignorant, imperious, and remisse, or basely pecuniary. This is what I had to shew, wherein this order cannot conduce to that end, whereof it bears the intention.

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I lastly proceed from the no good it can do, to the manifest hurt it causes, in being first the greatest discouragement and affront, that can be offer'd to learning and to learned men. It was the complaint and lamentation of Prelats, upon every least breath of a motion to remove pluralities, and distribute more equally Churchrevenu's, that then all learning would be for ever dasht and discourag'd. But as for that opinion, I never found cause to think that the tenth part of learning stood or fell with the Clergy: nor could I ever but hold it for a sordid and unworthy speech of any Churchman who had a competency left him. If therefore ye be loath to dishearten utterly and discontent, not the mercenary crew of false pretenders to learning, but the free and ingenuous sort of such as evidently were born to study, and love lerning for it self, not for lucre, or any other end, but the service of God and of truth, and perhaps that lasting fame and perpetuity of praise which God and good men have consented shall be the reward of those whose publisht labours advance the good of mankind, then know, that so far to distrust the judgement & the honesty of one who hath but a common repute in learning, and never yet offended, as not to count him fit to print his mind without a tutor and examiner, lest he should drop a scism, or something of corruption, is the greatest displeasure and indignity to a free and knowing spirit that can be put upon him. What advantage is it to be a man over it is to be a boy at school, if we have only scapt the ferular, to come under the fescu of an *Imprimatur*? if serious and elaborat writings, as if they were no more then the theam of a Grammar lad under his Pedagogue must not be utter'd without the cursory eyes of a temporizing and extemporizing licencer. He who is not trusted with his own actions, his drift not being known to be evill, and standing to the hazard of law and penalty, has no great argument to think himself reputed in the Commonwealth wherin he was born, for other then a fool or a foreiner. When a man writes to the world, he summons up all his reason and deliberation to assist him; he searches, meditats, is industrious, and likely consults and conferrs with his judicious friends; after all which done he takes himself to beinform'd in what he writes, as well as any that writ before him; if in this the most consummat act of his fidelity and ripenesse, no years, no industry, no former proof of his abilities can bring him to that state of maturity, as not to be still mistrusted and suspected, unlesse he carry all his considerat diligence, all his midnight watchings, and expence of *Palladian* oyl, to the hasty view of an unlesur'd licencer, perhaps much his younger, perhaps far his inferiour in judgement, perhaps one who never knew the labour of book-writing, and if he be not repulst, or slighted, must appear in Print like a punie with his guardian, and his censors hand on the back of his title to be his bayl and surety, that he is no idiot, or seducer, it cannot be but a dishonour and derogation to the author, to the book, to the priviledge and dignity of Learning. And what if the author shall be one so copious of fancie, as to have many things well worth the adding, come into his mind after licencing, while the book is yet under the Presse, which not seldom happ'ns to the best and diligentest writers; and that perhaps a dozen times in one book. The Printer dares not go beyond his licenc't copy; so often then must the author trudge to his leav-giver, that those

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his new insertions may be viewd; and many a jaunt will be made, ere that licencer, for it must be the same man, can either be found, or found at leisure; mean while either the Presse must stand still, which is no small damage, or the author loose his accuratest thoughts, & send the book forth wors then he had made it, which to a diligent writer is the greatest melancholy and vexation that can befall. And how can a man teach with authority, which is the life of teaching, how can he be a Doctor in his book as he ought to be, or else had better be silent, whenas all he teaches, all he delivers, is but under the tuition, under the correction of his patriarchal licencer to blot or alter what precisely accords not with the hidebound humor which he calls his judgement. When every acute reader upon the first sight of a pedantick licence, will be ready with these like words to ding the book a coitsdistance from him, I hate a pupil teacher, I endure not an instructor that comes to me under the wardship of an overseeing fist. I know nothing of the licencer, but that I have his own hand here for his arrogance; who shall warrant me his judgement? The State Sir, replies the Stationer, but has a quick return, The State shall be mygovernours, but not my criticks; they may be mistak'n in the choice of a licencer, as easily as this licencer may be mistak'n in an author: This is some common stuffe: and he might adde from *Sir Francis Bacon*, That *such authoriz'd books are but the language of the times*. For though a licencer should happ'n to be judicious more then ordinary, which will be a great jeopardy of the next succession, yet his very office and his commission enjoyns him to let passe nothing but what is vulgarly receiv'd already. Nay, which is more lamentable, if the work of any deceased author, though never so famous in his life time, and even to this day, come to their hands for licence to be Printed, or Reprinted, if there be found in his book one sentence of a ventrous edge, utter'd in the height of zeal, and who knows whether it might not be the dictat of a divine Spirit, yet not suiting with every low decrepit humor of their own, though it were *Knox* himself, the Reformer of a Kingdom that spake it, they will not pardon him their dash: the sense of that great man shall to all posterity be lost, for the fearfulness or the presumptuous rashness of a perfunctory licencer. And to what an author this violence hath bin lately done, and in what book of greatest consequence to be faithfully publisht, I could now instance, but shall forbear till a more convenient season. Yet if these things be not resented seriously and timely by them who have the remedy in their power, but that such iron moulds as these shall have authority to know out the choicest periods of exquisitest books, and to commit such a treacherous fraud against the orphan remainders of worthiest men after death, the more sorrow will belong to that haples race of men, whose misfortune it is to have understanding. Henceforth let no man care to learn, or care to be more then worldly wise; for certainly in higher matters to be ignorant and slothfull, to be a common stedfast dunce will be the only pleasant life, and only in request.

And as it is a particular disesteem of every knowing person alive, and most injurious to the writt'n labours and monuments of the dead, so to me it seems an undervaluing and vilifying of the whole Nation. I cannot set so light by all the invention, the art, the wit, the grave and solid judgement which is in England, as

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that it can be comprehended in any twenty capacities how good soever, much lesse that it should not passe except their superintendence be over it, except it be sifted and strain'd with their strainers, that it should be uncurrant without their manuell stamp. Truth and understanding are not such wares as to be monopoliz'd and traded in by tickets and statutes, and standards. We must not think to make a staple commodity of all the knowledge in the Land, to mark and licence it like our broad cloath, and our wooll packs. What is it but a servitude like that impos'd by the Philistims, not to be allow'd the sharpening of our own axes and coulthers, but we must repair from all quarters to twenty licencing forges. Had any one writt'n and divulg'd erroneous things & scandalous to honest life, misusing and forfeiting the esteem had of his reason among men, if after conviction this only censure were adjudg'd him, that he should never henceforth write, but what were first examin'd by an appointed officer, whose hand should be annext to passe his credit for him, that now he might be safely read, it could not be apprehended lesse then a disgracefull punishment. Whence to include the whole Nation, and those that never yet thus offended, under such a diffident and suspectfull prohibition, may plainly be understood what a disparagement it is. So much the more, when dettors and delinquents may walk abroad without a keeper, but unoffensive books must not stirre forth without a visible jaylor in thir title. Nor is it to the common people lesse then a reproach; for if we be so jealous over them, as that we dare not trust them with an English pamphlet, what doe we but censure them for a giddy, vitious, and ungrounded people; in such a sick and weak estate of faith and discretion, as to be able to take nothing down but through the pipe of a licencer. That this is care or love of them, we cannot pretend, whenas in those Popish places where the Laity are most hated and dispis'd the same strictnes is us'd over them. Wisdom we cannot call it, because it stops but one breach of licence, nor that neither; whenas those corruptions which it seeks to prevent, break in faster at other dores which cannot be shut.

And in conclusion it reflects to the disrepute of our Ministers also, of whose labours we should hope better, and of the proficiencie which thir flock reaps by them, then that after all this light of the Gospel which is, and is to be, and all this continuall preaching, they should be still frequented with such an unprincip'l'd, unedify'd, and laick rabble, as that the whiffe of every new pamphlet should stagger them out of their catechism, and Christian walking. This may have much reason to discourage the Ministers when such a low conceit is had of all their exhortations, and the benefiting of their hearers, as that they are not thought fit to be turn'd loose to three sheets of paper without a licencer, that all the Sermons, all the Lectures preacht, printed, vented in such numbers, and such volumes, as have now wellnigh made all other books unsalable, should not be armor enough against one single *enchiridion*, without the castle of St. Angelo of an *Imprimatur*.

And lest som should perswade ye, Lords and Commons, that these arguments of lerned mens discouragement at this your order, are meer flourishes, and notreall, I could recount what I have seen and heard in

other Countries, where this kind of inquisition tyrannizes; when I have sat among their lerned men, for that honor I had, and bin counted happy to be born in such a place of *Philosophic* freedom, as they suppos'd England was, while themselvs did nothing but bemoan the servilcondition into which lerning amongst them was brought; that this was it which had damp't the glory of Italian wits; that nothing had bin there writt'n now these many years but flattery and fustian. There it was that I found and visited the famous *Galileo* grown old, a prisner to the Inquisition, for thinking in Astronomy otherwisethen the Franciscan and Dominican licencers thought. And though I knew that England then was groaning loudest under the Prelaticall yোক, neverthesse I took it as a pledge of future happines, that other Nations were so perswaded of her liberty. Yet was it beyond my hope that those Worthies were then breathing in her air, who should be her leaders to such a deliverance, as shall never be forgott'n by any revolution of time that this world hath to finish. When that was once begun, it was as little in my fear, that what words of complaint I heard among lerned men of other parts utter'd against the Inquisition, the same I should hear by as lerned men at home utterd in time of Parliament against an order of licencing; and that so generally, that when I had disclos'd my self a companion of their discontent, I might say, if without envy, that he whom an honest *quæstorship* had indear'd to the *Sicilians*, was not more by them importun'd against *Verres*, then the favourable opinion which I had among many who honour ye, and are known and respected by ye, loaded me with entreaties and perswasions, that I would not despair to lay together that which just reason should bring into my mind, toward the removal of an undeserved thraldom upon lerning. That this is not therefore the disburnding of a particularfancie, but the common grievance of all those who had prepar'd their minds and studies above the vulgar pitch to advance truth in others, and from others to entertain it, thus much may satisfie. And in their name I shall for neither friend nor foe conceal what the generall murmur is; that if it come to inquisitioning again, and licencing, and that we are so timorous of our selvs, and so suspicious of all men, as to fear each book, and the shaking of every leaf, before we know what the contents are, if some who but of late were little better then silenc't from preaching, shall come now to silence us from reading, except what they please, it cannot beguest what is intended by som but a second tyranny over learning: and will soon put it out of controversie that Bishops and Presbyters are the same to us both name and thing. That those evils of Prelaty which before from five or six and twenty Sees were distributivly charg'd upon the whole people, will now light wholly upon learning, is not obscure to us: whenas now the Pastor of a small unlearned Parish, on the sudden shall be exalted Archbishop over a large dioces of books, and yet not remove, but keep his other cure too, a mysticall pluralist. He who but of late cry'd down the sole ordination of every novice Batchelor of Art, and deny'd sole jurisdiction over the simplest Parishioner, shall now at home in his privat chair assume both these over worthiest and excellentest books and ablest authors that write them. This is not, Yee Covnants and Protestations that we have made, this is not to put down

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Prelaty, this is but to chop an Episcopacy; this is but to translate the Palace *Metropolitan* from one kind of dominion into another, this is but an old canonically sleight of *commuting* our penance. To startle thus betimes at a meer unlicenc'd pamphlet will after a while be afraid of every conventicle, and a while after will make a conventicle of every Christian meeting. But I am certain that a State govern'd by the rules of justice and fortitude, or a Church built and founded upon the rock of faith and true knowledge, cannot be so pusillanimous. While things are yet not constituted in Religion, that freedom of writing should be restrain'd by a discipline imitated from the Prelats, and learnt by them from the Inquisition to shut us up all again into the brest of a licencer, must needs give cause of doubt and discouragement to all learned and religious men. Who cannot but discern the finenes of this politic drift, and who are the contrivers; that while Bishops were to be baited down, then all Presses might be open; it was the peoples birthright and priviledge in time of Parliament, it was the breaking forth of light. But now the Bishops abrogated and voided out of the Church, as if our Reformation sought no more, but to make room for others into their seats under another name, the Episcopall arts begin to bud again, the cruse of truth must run no more oyle, liberty of Printing must be enthral'd again under a Prelaticall commission of twenty, the privilege of the people nullify'd, and which is wors, the freedom of learning must groan again, and to her old fetters; all this the Parliament yet sitting. Although their own late arguments and defences against the Prelats might remember them that this obstructing violence meets for the most part with an event utterly opposite to the end which it drives at: instead of suppressing sects and schisms, it raises them and invests them with a reputation: *The punishing of wits enhaunces their auctority*, saith the Vicount St. Albans, *and a forbidd'n writing is thought to be a certain spark of truth that flies up in the faces of them who seeke to tread it out*. This order therefore may prove a nursing mother to sects, but I shall easily shew how it will be a step-dame to Truth: and first by disabbling us to the maintenance of what is known already.

Well knows he who uses to consider, that our faith and knowledge thrives by exercise, as well as our limbs and complexion. Truth is compar'd in Scripture to a streaming fountain; if her waters flow not in a perpetuall progression, they sick'n into a muddy pool of conformity and tradition. A man may be a heretick in the truth; and if he beleve things only because his Pastor sayes so, or the Assembly so determines, without knowing other reason, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds, becomes his heresie. There is not any burden that som would gladlier post off to another, then the charge and care of their Religion. There be, who knows not that there be of Protestants and professors who live and dye in as arrant an implicit faith, as any lay Papist of Loretto. A wealthy man addicted to his pleasure and to his profits, finds Religion to be a traffick so entangl'd, and of so many piddling accounts, that of all mysteries he cannot skill to keep a stock going upon that trade. What should he doe? fain he would have the name to be religious, fain he would bear up with his neighbours in that. What does he therefore, but resolves to give over toying,

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and to find himself out som factor, to whose care and credit he may commit the whole managing of his religious affairs; som Divine of note and estimation that must be. To him he adheres, resigns the whole ware-house of his religion, with all the locks and keyes into his custody; and indeed makes the very person of that man his religion; esteems his associating with him a sufficient evidence and commendatory of his own piety. So that a man may say his religion is now no more within himself, but is becom a dividuall movable, and goes and comes neer him, according as that good man frequents the house. He entertains him, gives him gifts, feasts him, lodges him; his religion comes home at night, praies, is liberally supt, and sumptuously laid to sleep, rises, is saluted, and after the malmsey, or some well spic't bruage, and better breakfasted then he whose morning appetite would have gladly fed on green figs between *Betheny* and *Ierusalem*, his Religion walks abroad at eight, and leavs his kind entertainer in the shop trading all day without his religion.

Another sort there be who when they hear that all things shall be order'd, all things regulated and setl'd, nothing writt'n but what passes through the custom-house of certain Publicans that have the tunaging and the poundaging of all free spok'n truth, will strait give themselvs up into your hands, mak'em & cut'em out what religion ye please; there be delights, there be recreations and jolly pastimes that will fetch the day about from sun to sun, and rock the tedious year as in a delightfull dream. What need they torture their heads with that which others have tak'n so strictly, and so unalterably into their own pourveying. These are the fruits which a dull ease and cessation of our knowledge will bring forth among the people. How goodly, and how to be wisht were such an obedient unanimity as this, what a fine conformity would it starch us all into? doubtles a stanch and solid peece of frame-work, as any January could freeze together.

Nor much better will be the consequence ev'n among the clergy themselvs; it is no new thing never heard of before, for a *parochiall* Minister, who has his reward, and is at his *Hercules* pillars in a warm benefice, to be easily inclinable, if he have nothing else that may rouse up his studies, to finish his circuit in an English concordance and a *topic folio*, the gatherings and savings of a sober graduatship, a *Harmony* and a *Catena*, treading the constant round of certain common doctrinallheads, attended with their uses, motives, marks and means, out of which as out of an alphabet or sol fa by forming and transforming, joyning and dis-joyningvariously a little book-craft, and two hours meditation might furnish him unspeakably to the performance of more then a weekly charge of sermoning: not to reck'nup the infinit helps of interlinearies, breviaries, *synopses*, and other loitering gear. But as for the multitude of Sermons ready printed and pil'd up, on every text that is not difficult, our London trading St. *Thomas* in his vestry, and adde to boot St. *Martin*, and St. *Hugh*, have not within their hallow'd limits more vendible ware of all sorts ready made: so that penury he never need fear of Pulpit provision, having where so plenteously to refresh his magazin. But if his rear and flanks be notimpal'd, if his back dore be not secur'd by the rigid licencer, but that a bold book may now and then issue

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forth, and give the assault to some of his old collections in their trenches, it will concern him then to keep waking, to stand in watch, to set good guards and sentinells about his receiv'd opinions, to walk the round and counter-round with his fellow inspectors, fearing lest any of his flock be seduc't, who also then would be better instructed, better exercis'd and disciplin'd. And God send that the fear of this diligence which must then be us'd, doe not make us affect the lazines of a licencing Church.

For if we be sure we are in the right, and doe not hold the truth guiltily, which becomes not, if we our selves condemn not our own weak and frivolous teaching, and the people for an untaught and irreligious gadding rout, what can be more fair, then when a man judicious, learned, and of a conscience, for aught we know, as good as theirs that taught us what we know, shall not privily from house to house, which is more dangerous, but openly by writing publish to the world what his opinion is, what his reasons, and wherefore that which is now thought cannot be sound. Christ urg'd it as wherewith to justifie himself, that he preacht in publick; yet writing is more publick then preaching; and more easie to refutation, if need be, there being so many whose businesse and profession meerly it is, to be the champions of Truth; which if they neglect, what can be imputed but their sloth, or inability?

Thus much we are hinder'd and dis-inur'd by this cours of licencing toward the true knowledge of what we seem to know. For how much it hurts and hinders the licencers themselves in the calling of their Ministry, more then any secular employment, if they will discharge that office as they ought, so that of necessity they must neglect either the one duty or the other, I insist not, because it is a particular, but leave it to their own conscience, how they will decide it there.

There is yet behind of what I purpos'd to lay open, the incredible losse, and detriment that this plot of licencing puts us to, more then if som enemy at sea should stop up all our hav'ns and ports, and creeks, it hinders and retards the importation of our richest Marchandize, Truth: nay it was first establishd and put in practice by Antichristian malice and mystery on set purpose to extinguish, if it were possible, the light of Reformation, and to settle falshood; little differing from that policiewherewith the Turk upholds his *Alcoran*, by the prohibition of Printing. 'Tis not deny'd, but gladly confest, we are to send our thanks and vows to heav'n louder thenmost of Nations, for that great measure of truth which we enjoy, especially in those main points between us and the Pope, with his appertinences the Prelats: but he who thinks we are to pitch our tent here, and have attain'd the utmost prospect of reformation, that the mortall glasse wherein we contemplate, can shew us, till we come to *beatific* vision, that man by this very opinion declares, that he is yet farre short of Truth.

Truth indeed came once into the world with her divine Master, and was a perfect shape most glorious to look on: but when he ascended, and his Apostles after Him were laid asleep, then strait arose a wicked race of deceivers, who as that story goes of the *Ægyptian Typhon* with his conspirators, how they dealt with the good *Osiris*, took the virgin Truth, hewd her lovely form into a

thousand peeces, and scatter'd them to the four winds. From that time ever since, the sad friends of Truth, such as durst appear, imitating the carefull search that *Isis* made for the mangl'd body of *Osiris*, went up and down gathering up limb by limb still as they could find them. We have not yet found them all, Lords and Commons, nor ever shall doe, till her Masters second comming; he shall bring together every joynt and member, and shall mould them into an immortall feature of lovelines and perfection. Suffer not these licencing prohibitions to stand at every place of opportunity forbidding and disturbing them that continue seeking, that continue to do our obsequies to the torn body of our martyr'd Saint. We boast our light; but if we look not wisely on the Sun it self, it smites us into darknes. Who can discern those planets that are oft *Combust*, and those stars of brightest magnitude that rise and set with the Sun, untill the opposite motion of their orbs bring them to such a place in the firmament, where they may be seen evning or morning. The light which we have gain'd, wasgiv'n us, not to be ever staring on, but by it to discover onward things more remote from our knowledge. It is not the unfrocking of a Priest, the unmitring of a Bishop, and the removing him from off the *Presbyterian* shoulders that will make us a happy Nation, no, if other things as great in the Church, and in the rule of life both economicall and politicall be not lookt into and reform'd, we have lookt so long upon the blaze that *Zuinglius* and *Calvin* hath beacon'd up to us, that we are stark blind. There be who perpetually complain of schisms and sects, and make it such a calamity that any man dissents from their maxims. 'Tis their own pride and ignorance which causes the disturbing, who neither will hear with meeknes, nor can convince, yet all must be suppresst which is not found in their *Syntagma*. They are the troublers, they are the dividers of unity, who neglect and permit not others to unite those dissever'd peeces which are yet wanting to the body of Truth. To be still searching what we know not, by what we know, still closing up truth to truth as we find it (for all her body is *homogeneal*, and proportionall), this is the golden rule in *Theology* as well as in *Arithmetick*, and makes up the best harmony in a Church; not the forc't and outward union of cold, and neutrall, and inwardly divided minds.

Lords and Commons of England, consider what Nation it is whereof ye are, and whereof ye are the governours: a Nation not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit, acute to invent, subtle and sinewy to discours, not beneath the reach of any point the highest that human capacity can soar to. Therefore the studies of learning in her deepest Sciences have bin so ancient, and so eminent among us, that Writers of good antiquity, and ablest judgement havebin perswaded that ev'n the school of *Pythagoras*, and the *Persian* wisdom took beginning from the old Philosophy of this Iland. And that wise and civill Roman, *Julius Agricola*, who govern'd once here for *Cæsar*, preferr'd the naturall wits of Britain, before the labour'd studies of the French. Nor is it for nothing that the grave and frugal *Transylvanian* sends out yearly from as farre as the mountanous borders of *Russia*, and beyond the *Hercynian* wildernes, not their youth, but their stay'd men, to learn our language, and our *theologic* arts. Yet that which is above all this, the favour and

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the love of heav'n we have great argument to think in a peculiar manner propitious and propending towards us. Why else was this Nation chos'n before any other, that out of her as out of *Sion* should be proclam'd and sounded forth the first tidings and trumpet of Reformation to all *Europ*. And had it not bin the obstinat perversenes of our Prelats against the divine and admirable spirit of *Wicklef*, to suppress him as a schismatic and *innovator*, perhaps neither the *Bohemian Husse* and *Jerom*, no nor the name of *Luther*, or of *Calvin* had bin ever known: the glory of reforming all our neighbours had bin compleatly ours. But now, as our obdurat Clergy have with violence demean'd the matter, we are become hitherto the latest and backwardest Schollers, of whom God offer'd to have made us the teachers. Now once again by all concurrence of signs, and by the generall instinct of holy and devout men, as they daily and solemnly expresse their thoughts, God is decreeing to begin some new and great period in his Church, ev'n to the reforming of Reformation it self: what does he then but reveal Himself to his servants, and as his manner is, first to his English-men; I say as his manner is, first to us, though we mark not the method of his counsels, and are unworthy. Behold now this vast City: a City of refuge, the mansion house of liberty, encompassed and surrounded with his protection; the shop of warre hath not there more anvils and hammers waking, to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed Justice in defence of beleaguer'd Truth, then there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present, as with their homage and their fealty the approaching Reformation: others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the force of reason and convincement. What could a man require more from a Nation so pliant and so prone to seek after knowledge. What wants there to such a towardly and pregnant soile, but wise and faithfull labourers, to make a knowing people, a Nation of Prophets, of Sages, and of Worthies. We reck'n more then five months yet to harvest; there need not be five weeks, had we but eyes to lift up, the fields are white already. Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making. Under these fantastic terrors of sect and schism, we wrong the earnest and zealous thirst after knowledge and understanding which God hath stirr'd up in this city. What some lament of, we rather should rejoyce at, should rather praise this pious forwardnes among men, to reassume the ill deputed care of their Religion into their own hands again. A little generous prudence, a little forbearance of one another, and some grain of charity might win all these diligences to joyn, and unite into one generall and brotherly search after Truth; could we but forgoe this Prelaticall tradition of crowding free consciences and Christian liberties into canons and precepts of men. I doubt not, if some great and worthy stranger should come among us, wise to discern the mould and temper of a people, and how to govern it, observing the high hopes and aims, the diligent alacrity of our extended thoughts and reasonings in the pursuance of truth and freedom, but that he would cry out as *Pirrhus* did, admiring the Roman docility

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and courage, if such were my *Epirots*, I would not despair the greatest design that could be attempted to make a Church or Kingdom happy. Yet these are the men cry'd out against for schismatics and sectaries; as if, while the Temple of the Lord was building, some cutting, some squaring the marble, others hewing the cedars, there should be a sort of irrational men who could not consider there must be many schisms and many dissections made in the quarry and in the timber, ere the house of God can be built. And when every stone is laid artfully together, it cannot be united into a continuity, it can but be contiguous in this world; neither can every peece of the building be of one form; nay rather the perfection consists in this, that out of many moderat varieties and brotherly dissimilitudes that are not vastly disproportionall arises the goodly and the gracefull symmetry that commends the whole pile and structure. Let us therefore be more considerat builders, more wise in spirituall architecture, when great reformation is expected. For now the time seems come, wherein *Moses* the great Prophet may sit in heav'n rejoycing to see that memorable and glorious wish of his fulfill'd, when not only our sev'nty Elders, but all the Lords people are become Prophets. No marvell then though some men, and some good men too perhaps, but young ingoodnesse, as *Joshua* then was, envy them. They fret, and out of their own weaknes are in agony, lest these divisions and subdivisions will undoe us. The adversarie again applauds, and waits the hour, when they have brancht themselves out, saith he, small enough into parties and partitions, then will be our time. Fool! he sees not the firm root, out of which we all grow, though into branches: nor will be ware untill he see our small divided maniples cutting through at every angle of his ill united and unweildy brigade. And that we are to hope better of all these supposed sects and schisms, and that we shall not need that solicitude honest perhaps though over timorous of them that vex in this behalf, but shall laugh in the end, at those malicious applauders of our differences, I have these reasons to perswademe.

First, when a City shall be as it were besieg'd and blockt about, her navigable river infested, inrodes and incursions round, defiance and battell oft rumour'd to be marching up ev'n to her walls, and suburb trenches, that then the people, or the greater part, more then at other times, wholly tak'n up with the study of highest and most important matters to be reform'd, should be disputing, reasoning, reading, inventing, discoursing, ev'n to a rarity, and admiration, things not before discourstor writt'n of, argues first a singular good will, contentednesse and confidence in your prudent foresight, and safe government, Lords and Commons; and from thence derives it self to a gallant bravery and well grounded contempt of their enemies, as if there were no small number of as great spirits among us, as his was, who when Rome was nigh besieg'd by *Hanibal*, being in the City, bought that peece of ground at no cheap rate, whereon *Hanibal* himself encampt his own regiment. Next it is a lively and cherfull presage of our happy successe and victory. For as in a body, when the blood is fresh, the spirits pure and vigorous, not only to vital, but torationall faculties, and those in the acutest, and the pertest operations of wit and subtlety, it argues in what good plight and constitution the body is, so when

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the cheerfulness of the people is so sprightly up, as that it has not only wherewith to guard well its own freedom and safety, but to spare, and to bestow upon the solidest and sublimest points of controversie, and new invention, it betok'ns us not degenerated, nor drooping to a fatal decay, but casting off the old and wrinkl'd skin of corruption to outlive these pangs and wax young again, entering the glorious waies of Truth and prosperous vertue destin'd to become great and honourable in these latter ages. Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant Nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: Methinks I see her as an Eagle muing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazl'd eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unscaling her long abused sight at the fountain it self of heav'nly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amaz'd at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms.

What would ye doe then, should ye suppress all this flowry crop of knowledge and new light sprung up and yet springing daily in this City, should ye set an *Oligarchy* of twenty ingrossers over it, to bring a famine upon our minds again, when we shall know nothing but what is measur'd to us by their bushel? Believe it, Lords and Commons, they who counsel ye to such a suppressing, doe as good as bid ye suppress your selves; and I will soon shew how. If it be desir'd to know the immediat cause of all this free writing and free speaking, there cannot be assign'd a truer then your own mild, and free, and human government; it is the liberty, Lords and Commons, which your own valorous and happy counsels have purchast us, liberty which is the nurse of all great wits; this is that which hath rarify'd and enlighten'd our spirits like the influence of heav'n; this is that which hath enfranchis'd, enlarg'd and lifted up our apprehensions degrees above themselves. Ye cannot make us now lesse capable, lesse knowing, lesse eagarly pursuing of the truth, unlesse ye first make your selves, that made us so, lesse the lovers, lesse the founders of our true liberty. We can grow ignorant again, brutish, formall, and slavish, as ye found us; but you then must first become that which ye cannot be, oppressive, arbitrary, and tyrannous, as they were from whom ye have free'd us. That our hearts are now more capacious, our thoughts more erected to the search and expectation of greatest and exactest things, is the issue of your owne vertu propagated in us; ye cannot suppress that unlesse ye reinforce an abrogated and mercilesse law, that fathers may dispatch at will their own children. And who shall then stick closest to ye, and excite others? not he who takes up armes for cote and conduct, and his four nobles of Danegelt. Although I dispraise not the defence of just immunities, yet love my peace better, if that were all. Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.

What would be best advis'd then, if it be found so hurtfull and so unequall to suppress opinions for the newnes, or the unsutableness to a customary acceptance, will not be my task to say; I only shall repeat what I have learnt from one of your own honourable number, a right noble and pious

Lord, who had he not sacrific'dhis life and fortunes to the Church and Commonwealth, we had not now mist and bewayl'd a worthy and undoubted patron of this argument. Ye know him I am sure; yet I for honours sake, and may it be eternall to him, shall name him, the Lord *Brook*. He writing of Episcopacy, and by the way treating of sects and schisms, left Ye his vote, or rather now the last words of his dying charge, which I know will ever be of dear and honour'd regard with Ye, so full of meeknes and breathing charity, that next to his last testament, who bequeath'd love and peace to his Disciples, I cannot call to mind where I have read or heard words more mild andpeacefull. He there exhorts us to hear with patience and humility those, however they be miscall'd, that desire to live purely, in such a use of Gods Ordinances, as the best guidance of their conscience gives them, and to tolerat them, though in some disconformity to our selves. The book itself will tell us more at large beingpublisht to the world, and dedicated to the Parlament by him who both for his life and for his death deserves, that what advice he left be not laid by without perusall.

And now the time in speciall is, by priviledge to write and speak what may help to the furder discussing of matters in agitation. The temple of *Janus* with his two*controversal* faces might now not insignificantly be set open. And though all the windes of doctrin were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously, by licencing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falshood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the wors, in a free and open encounter. Her confuting is the best and surest suppressing. He who hears what praying there is for light and clearer knowledge to be sent down among us, would think of other matters to be constituted beyond the discipline of *Geneva*, fram'd and fabric't already to our hands. Yet when the new light which we beg for shines in upon us, there be who envy, and oppose, if it come not first in at their casements. What a collusion is this, whenas we are exhorted by the wise man to use diligence,*to seek for wisdom as for hidd'n treasures* early and late, that another order shall enjoyn us to know nothing but by statute. When a man hath bin labouring the hardestlabour in the deep mines of knowledge, hath furnisht out his findings in all their equipage, drawn forth his reasons as it were a battell raung'd, scatter'd and defeated all objections in his way, calls out his adversary into the plain, offers him the advantage of wind and sun, if he please; only that he may try the matter by dint of argument, for his opponents then to skulk, to lay ambushments, to keep a narrow bridge of licencing where the challenger should passe, though it be valour anoughin souldiership, is but weaknes and cowardice in the wars of Truth. For who knows not that Truth is strong next to the Almighty; she needs no policies, nor stratagemes, nor licencings to make her victorious, those are the shifts and the defences that error uses against her power: give her but room, & do not bind her when she sleeps, for then she speaks not true, as the old *Proteus* did, who spake oracles only when he was caught & bound, but then rather she turns herself into all shapes, except her own, and perhaps tunes her voice according to the time, as *Micaiah* did before *Ahab*, untill she be adjur'd into her own likenes. Yet is it not impossible that she may have more shapes then one. What else is all that rank of things

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indifferent, wherein Truth may be on this side, or on the other, without being unlike her self. What but a vain shadow else is the abolition of *those ordinances, that hand writing nay'd to the crosse*, what great purchase is this Christian liberty which *Paul* so often boasts of. His doctrine is, that he who eats or eats not, regards a day, or regards it not, may doe either to the Lord. How many other things might be tolerated in peace, and left to conscience, had we but charity, and were it not the chief strong hold of our hypocrisie to be ever judging one another. I fear yet this iron yoke of outward conformity hath left a slavish print upon our necks; the ghost of a linnen decency yet haunts us. We stumble and are impatient at the least dividing of one visible congregation from another, though it be not in fundamentalls; and through our forwardnes to suppress, and our backwardnes to recover any enthralld peece of truth out of the gripe of custom, we care not to keep truth separated from truth, which is the fiercest rent and disunion of all. We doe not see that while we still affect by all means a rigid externall formality, we may as soon fall again into a grosse conforming stupidity, a stark and dead congealment of *wood and hay and stubble* forc't and frozen together, which is more to the sudden degenerating of a Church then many *subdichotomies* of petty schisms. Not that I can think well of every light separation, or that all in a Church is to be expected *gold and silver and pretious stones*: it is not possible for man to sever the wheat from the tares, the good fish from the other frie; that must be the Angels Ministry at the end of mortall things. Yet if all cannot be of one mind, as who looks they should be? this doubtles is morewholsome, more prudent, and more Christian that many be tolerated, rather then all compell'd. I mean not tolerated Popery, and open superstition, which as it extirpats all religions and civill supremacies, so it self should be extirpat, provided first that all charitable and compassionat means be us'd to win and regain the weak and the misled: that also which is impious or evil absolutely either against faith or maners no law can possibly permit, that intends not to unlaw it self: but those neighboring differences, or rather indifferences, are what I speak of, whether in some point of doctrine or of discipline, which though they may be many, yet need not interrupt *the unity of Spirit*, if we could but find among us *the bond of peace*. In the mean while if any one would write, and bring his helpfull hand to the slow-moving Reformation which we labour under, if Truth have spok'n to him before others, or but seem'd at least to speak, who hath so bejesuited us that we should trouble that man with asking licence to doe so worthy a deed? and not consider this, that if it come to prohibiting, there is not ought more likely to be prohibited then truth it self; whose first appearance to our eyes blear'd and dimm'd with prejudice and custom, is more unsightly and unplaussible then many errors, ev'n as the person is of many a great man slight and contemptible to see to. And what doe they tell us vainly of new opinions, when this very opinion of theirs, that none must be heard, but whom they like, is the worst and newest opinion of all others; and is the chief cause why sects and schisms doe so much abound, and true knowledge is kept at distance from us; besides yet a greater danger which is in it. For when God shakes a Kingdome with strong and healthfull commotions to

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a generallreforming, 'tis not untrue that many sectaries and false teachers are then busiest in seducing; but yet more true it is, that God then raises to his own work men of rare abilities, and more then common industry not only to look back and revise what hath bin taught heretofore, but to gain further and goe on, some new enlighten'dsteps in the discovery of truth. For such is the order of Gods enlightning his Church, to dispense and deal out by degrees his beam, so as our earthly eyes may best sustain it. Neither is God appointed and confin'd, where and out of what place these his chosen shall be first heard to speak; for he sees not as man sees, chooses not as man chooses, lest we should devote our selves again to set places, and assemblies, and outward callings of men; planting our faith one while in the old Convocation house, and another while in the Chapell at Westminster; when all the faith and religion that shall be there canoniz'd, is not sufficient without plain convincement, and the charity of patient instruction to supple the least bruise of conscience, to edifie the meanest Christian, who desires to walk in the Spirit, and not in the letter of human trust, for all the number of voices that can be there made; no though *Harry the 7.* himself there, with all his leige tombs about him, should lend them voices from the dead, to swell their number. And if the men be erroneus who appear to be the leading schismatics, what witholds us but our sloth, our self-will, and distrust in the right cause, that we doe not give them gentle meeting and gentle dismissions, that we debate not and examin the matter throughly withliberall and frequent audience; if not for their sakes, yet for our own? seeing no man who hath tasted learning, but will confesse the many waies of profiting by those who not contented with stale receipts are able to manage, and set forth new positions to the world. And were they but as the dust and cinders of our feet, so long as in that notion they may yet serve to polish and brighten the armoury of Truth, ev'n for that respect they were not utterly to be cast away. But if they be of those whom God hath fitted for the speciall use of these times with eminent and ample gifts, and those perhaps neither among the Priests, nor among the Pharisees, and we in the hast of a precipitant zeal shall make no distinction, but resolve to stop their mouths, because we fear they come with new and dangerous opinions, as we commonly forejudge them ere we understand them, no lesse then woe to us, while thinking thus to defend the Gospel, we are found the persecutors.

There have bin not a few since the beginning of this Parlament, both of the Presbytery and others who by their unlicen't books to the contempt of an *Imprimatur* first broke that triple ice clung about our hearts, and taught the people to see day: I hope that none of those were the perswaders to renew upon us this bondage which they themselves have wrought so much good by contemning. But if neither the check that *Moses* gave to young *Joshua*, nor the countermand which our Saviourgave to young *John*, who was so ready to prohibit those whom he thought unlicenc't, be not enough to admonish our Elders how unacceptable to God their testy mood of prohibiting is, if neither their own remembrance what evill hath abounded in the Church by this lett of licencing, and what good they themselves have begun by transgressing it, be

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not enough, but that they will perswade, and execute the most *Dominican* part of the Inquisition over us, and are already with one foot in the stirrup so active at suppressing, it would be no unequall distribution in the first place to suppress the suppressors themselves; whom the change of their condition hath puffed up, more then their late experience of harder times hath made wise.

And as for regulating the Presse, let no man think to have the honour of advising ye better then your selves have done in that Order published next before this, that no book be Printed, unlesse the Printers and the Authors name, or at least the Printers be register'd. Those which otherwise come forth, if they be found mischievous and libellous, the fire and the executioner will be the timeliest and the most effectually remedy, that mans prevention can use. For this *authentic* Spanish policy of licencing books, if I have said aught, will prove the most unlicenc'd book it self within a short while; and was the immediat image of a Star-chamber decree to that purpose made in those very times when that Court did the rest of those her pious works, for which she is now fall'n from the Starres with *Lucifer*. Whereby ye may guess what kinde of State prudence, what love of the people, what care of Religion, or good manners there was at the contriving, although with singular hypocrisie it pretended to bind books to their good behaviour. And how it got the upper hand of your precedent Order so well constituted before, if we may beleieve those men whose profession gives them cause to enquire most, it may be doubted there was in it the fraud of some old *patentees* and *monopolizers* in the trade of book-selling; who under pretence of the poor in their Company not to be defrauded, and the just retaining of each man his severall copy, which God forbid should be gainsaid, brought divers glosing colours to the House, which were indeed but colours, and serving to no end except it be to exercise a superiority over their neighbours, men who doe not therefore labour in an honest profession to which learning is indetted, that they should be made other mens vassalls. Another end is thought was aym'd at by some of them in procuring by petition this Order, that having power in their hands, malignant books might the easier scape abroad, as the event shews. But of these *Sophisms* and *Elenchs* of marchandize I skill not: This I know, that errors in a good government and in a bad are equally almost incident; for what Magistrate may not be mis-inform'd, and much the sooner, if liberty of Printing be reduc't into the power of a few; but to redresse willingly and speedily what hath bin err'd, and in highest authority to esteem a plain advertisement more then others have done a sumptuous bribe, is a vertue (honour'd Lords and Commons) answerable to Your highest actions, and whereof none can participat but greatest and wisest men.

The End.

Notes

Introduction. The title of Milton's *Areopagitica* alludes to both the *Areopagiticus* of Isocrates and the story of the apostle Paul in Athens from Acts 17: 18-34. Isocrates's tract, which outlines a program for political reform, specifically mentions the degradation of the judges of the Court of the Areopagus, the highest court in Greece. Milton may fancy himself a man similar in virtue and sagacity to the old judges of the Areopagus whom Isocrates praises; following this allusion, the morally weakened judges of the Areopagus are symbolic of England's sitting Parliament. Milton doubly identifies with the voice of reform and the sober-minded leaders of a previous generation. The allusion to Paul in the book of Acts contains a similar parallel: Paul preaches to the pagan Athenians at the Areopagus (the hill where the judges once sat). In his appeal to the Athenians, Paul uses a stock phrase from a poem by Aratus, with whom the Greeks would certainly have been familiar. Paul uses a pagan idea to instruct the Athenians about Christianity.

As always, Milton divides his scholarly affections between the classical and the biblical in *Areopagitica*. Notice, though, that in this speech classical allusions outweigh biblical, particularly in the first half of the tract. Milton seems to be making an attempt, by way of copious example, to demonstrate just how Greek and Roman learning can reside within the boundaries of Christian morality. At first, one might be inclined to dismiss this as merely Milton's attempt to reconcile the differences between his two intellectual loves. But a closer examination of *Areopagitica* will reveal Milton's more cagey purpose for allowing classical references to dominate. It is a subtle attempt to flatter members of Parliament, by comparing their commonwealth to the enlightened societies of Athens and Rome. By playing off of the vanity of English politicians, who would of course like to think of themselves as the senators of a latter-day Troy, Milton hopes to reverse the opinion of the legislative body. Only an ignorant man would criticize the policies of Athens, and that city, as Milton argues, did not support licensing of books. Milton seems to express a faith that England's enlightened leaders would never embark on a policy that would demonstrate their country's inferiority to those ancient societies.

Milton's tract is a direct response to the the Licensing Order of 1643 which reinstated much the same sort of pre-publication censorship once exercised by the Star Chamber and other earlier censors, royal and ecclesiastical. Milton does not argue here for free and unregulated speech or printing, but simply that books should not be suppressed *before* publication. Treasonous, slanderous and blasphemous books, he allows, should be tried according to law, then suppressed and their authors punished.

The counter-examples Milton offers to those enlightened societies of Greece and Rome are the tyrannical societies of Catholic Spain and the Papacy. Milton offers the members of Lords and Commons a clear choice: either imitate Popery or institute freedom. By making the counter-example to enlightened policy Catholicism, Milton once again demonstrates an acute understanding of his

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audience. Parliament during Milton's time, especially the House of Commons, was largely Puritan. The thought that any of their orders might have an odor of unreformed Catholicism about it was distasteful, especially during the particularly tumultuous days surrounding the civil wars, when accusations of Catholic sympathy flew as regularly as the pigeons of Hyde Park. *Areopagitica* demonstrates Milton to be not only a great wordsmith and scholar, but also a brilliant political orator.

Milton's *Areopagitica* had virtually no political impact in its day: Parliament ignored it. However, as the first major treatise on freedom of the press, it influenced the arguments of many later advocates for the abolition of censorship. Even the United States Bill of Rights can be viewed as a direct descendent of Milton's *Areopagitica*. Part of the reason that it was ignored in its day may be that Milton had already challenged Parliament and popular opinion with other unorthodox arguments, such as the one presented in the *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* and its defenses (*Tetrachordon*, *Colasterion*). Though he attempted to cultivate an image as a gentleman poet, Milton held radical opinions which challenged societal norms and was even accused of heresy by some of his rivals and targets. In *Areopagitica* we have a prime example of the nature of Milton's genius: heavily inflected with biblical and classical knowledge, but too unorthodox for mainstream acceptance, at least in his day.

Nathan Chaney and Casey Noga.

Areopagitica. Milton's title alludes to Isocrates's seventh oration, often called the *Areopagitic Discourse* or *Areopagiticus* (about 355 BCE).

There, Isocrates (436-338 BCE) addresses the General Assembly of Athens on a topic of civic safety. See also the Introduction above.

Eurip. Hicetid. Euripides, *The Suppliants* 437-440.

States. Heads of state, either rulers or assemblies.

wanting. Lacking, not having.

succeste. Outcome, result.

at other times. Milton may have experienced each of these dispositions in his seven prior works of prose, but he is most likely referring to the revised edition of *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1644) and *The Judgement of Martin Bucer* (1644); in both he directly addresses Parliament.

it. "which of them sway'd most." If the passion Milton feels most in the moment of writing this speech is "the joy and gratulation" of those who "wish and promote their Countries liberty," then he is in an appropriate mood.

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it. The antecedent of this "it" appears to be "the very attempt" of making an address to a governing body like Parliament.

beyond the manhood of a Roman recovery. A complicated locution that might be paraphrased as, "we are so far sunk in superstition and tyranny that we may be now beyond the capacity of those manly virtues inculcated by Roman ethics (courage, magnanimity, honesty, prudence, frugality) to restore us to our proper manly liberties." Milton implies that some discipline of virtue more manly even than that typical of Roman heroes must be put into practice in order to restore manly liberty to the reformed churchmen and citizens of England.

first. That is, this is the first time Milton praises Parliament in this discourse. Elsewhere he offers compliments in *An Apology* and, more mildly, in *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*.

rescuing the employment from him. That is, taking the business of praising Parliament out of the hands of a flatterer and into Milton's hands. The flatterer he refers to is Joseph Hall, Bishop of Norwich (1574-1656), whose *Humble Remonstrance to the High Court of Parliament* (1641) gave rise to the Smectymnuan controversy. Milton's contributions to this pamphlet controversy were *Animadversions* (1641) and *Apology Against a Pamphlet* (1642). Smectymnuus was a pseudonym assumed by that group of writers who answered Bishop Hall in pamphlets so signed: SM stands for Stephen Marshall; EC for Edmund Calamy; TY for Thomas Young; MN for Matthew Newcomen; and W (UU) S for William Spurstowe.

Encomium. A formal or high-flown expression of praise; a eulogy, panegyric (*OED2*). Malignant was a term used by Parliamentarians to describe anything opposed to them during Milton's time. It carried with it the connotation of being a Royalist. Milton alleges that Bishop Hall's praise of Parliament, probably in his *Modest Confutation of a Slandrous and Scurrilous Libel* (1642) is nothing but flattery.

one of your publisht Orders. The specific Order Milton refers to is named below; it is the Parliamentary Order restoring the powers of press licensing to the State. See the full text of the Order.

equall. Fair, equitable, just, impartial (*OED2*).

trienniall Parliament. The Triennial Parliaments Act (February 16, 1641) stipulated the automatic issue of writs for a new Parliament if the king failed to summon one within three years of the closing of the previous.

cabin Counsellours. Milton refers to the period of "personal rule" when Charles I ruled without Parliaments between 1629 and 1640, relying only upon his personally chosen counselors.

Huns, Norwegians, Goths and Jutlanders. Milton often expressed the fear that northern people in general might be, because of climate, less civilized than southern Europeans. See "northern latitude" below and *Paradise Lost* 9. 44-46. See also the Preface to Book 2 of *Reason of Church Government*) where Milton may allude to Aristotle's claim that northern races lacked intelligence (*Politics* 1327b).

him. Isocrates was praised by Cicero for founding the art of political oratory in Athens. His Seventh Oration, *Areopagiticus*, advocated that the Court of the Areopagus should extend its jurisdiction from the merely criminal to become a censor of public morality. Milton argues for the removal of what he regards as excessive interference with the publishing processes.

Parlament of Athens. Milton chooses to flatter the British Parliament by comparing it to the governing body of the culture for which he has the greatest admiration, that of ancient Athens.

Siniories. A body of 'seigniors' or lords. Often with reference to Italy (*OED2*).
Dion Prusæus. Also known as Dion of Prusa in Bithynia and Dion Chrysostom (died about 112 CE). A rhetorician and philosopher, his "Rhodian Discourse" advises the repeal of an edict allowing the removal of original names from public monuments and the substitution of new ones. He was expelled from Rome for political reasons by Domitian.

northern latitude. In the suppressed digression of his *History of Britain* book 3, Milton mentions the disadvantage England's northern climate presents to intellectualism: "For the sunn, which wee want, ripens witts as well as fruits." Both there, and here, he seems to be referring to a theory put forward in Aristotle's *Politics* 1327b, that cold climates make men slow-witted. See also "Manso" line 28 and the note above about northern peoples.
Copy. Copyright.

Order. The Licencing Order provided for other measures besides censorship. See the full text of the Order.

painfull. painstaking.

quadragesimal. Of or relating to a period of forty days. In this case Milton refers sneeringly to the Roman Catholic rules for observing Lent. See Lent in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*.

Prelats expir'd. The reference is to dietary, matrimonial, and other social restrictions imposed by bishops before the abolition of bishops (episcopacy) in England in the 1640s. The control of marriage, fasting, and certain aspects of printing (including the publication of banns and marriage rites) was thought to have ended with the exclusion of bishops from the House of Lords in 1642, with the establishment of Presbyterianism (1645), and, finally, with the abolition of episcopacy.

Homily. Sermon.

violl. vial.

armed men. Milton alludes to the story of Cadmus sowing dragon's teeth in *Metamorphoses* 3. 101-30.

in the eye. Philo Judaeus, in his *On the Creation*, speaks of the image of God in man--the mind--as "like the pupil in the eye": "he made man, and bestowed on him mind *par excellence*, life principle of the life principle itself, like the pupil in the eye" (translated by F. H. Colson and G.H. Whitaker. 10 volumes [London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1929] 1.51).

whole impression. An entire edition or press run.

fift essence. Also known as quintessence. This is how Hamlet uses the word in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* 2.2.324.

Inquisition. See the article on the Inquisition in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*.

Protagoras. According to Cicero in his *On the Nature of the Gods* (1. 23), the sophist Protagoras was banished from Athens (411 BCE) for the beginning lines of his treatise on the gods: "I am unable to to know whether the Gods exist or not."

Vetus Comœdia. The "Old Comedy" of Athens, as written by Cratinus, Eupolis, and Aristophanes, was characterized by the vitriolic lampooning of public figures. It had been traditional to suppose in Milton's time, due mostly to the accounts of Horace in his *Ars Poetica*, that Middle and New Comedy was largely free of such personal attacks due to legislation against them.

Epicurus. Epicurus (341-270 BCE) taught that all matter is composed of irreducible atoms, which are eternal, and hence were not made by a divine creator. He held that gods exist, but are indifferent to human affairs, and that pleasure (or the absence of pain) is the only good. He emphasized virtue and simple living, gaining pleasure from easily fulfilled desires, with the highest pleasure coming from freedom from painful need. His philosophy was distorted into mere hedonism by those who noted only his goal of pleasure, and not the

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means by which it was attained. Milton harbors this interpretation, and thus his references to Epicurus are usually derogatory.

school of Cyrene. Milton refers to the followers of Aristippus (435-366 BCE) who advocated something much more like what we would call hedonism than did Epicurus.

the Cynick. Milton refers to the school of Antisthenes (455-365 BCE), called Cynosarges, and hence the name Cynics. One of his students, Diogenes the Cynic (died 320 BCE), developed such a reputation for impudent and insolent rhetoric that the whole school came to be characterized by his practice.

Chrysostome. John Chrysostom (died 407), a father of the Eastern Orthodox Church and a patriarch of Constantinople. He was believed to have read Aristophanes's plays even though they were thought to be pagan and scurrilous.
Lycurgus. Lycurgus was generally believed to have been the founder of and law-giver to Sparta in the ninth century BCE.

Thales. Thales probably was a poet and musician of ancient Sparta.

Laconick Apothegms. The apothegms, or short maxims, favored by those of Laconia (Sparta). Laconic has become a synonym for terse.

Archilochus. Archilochus of Paros (seventh century BCE) was a lyric and satiric poet, notable for having invented the iambic trimeter and trochaic tetrameter.

Andromache. See Euripides's *Andromache* 590-93.

twelve Tables. A code of Roman law made in 451-450 BCE.

Pontifick College. The council of high priests which supervised the religious life of Rome, including the management of public engineering projects and the calendar and various other endeavors which required technical knowledge. Augurs were priests who determined from various omens the gods' attitude toward public activities. A flamen was a priest devoted to a particular god for whom he performed sacrifices on a daily basis.

Italy. In 155 BCE, Athens sent an embassy composed of three philosophers to Rome in order to ask for remission of a fine imposed on the city for having sacked Oropus. Among the group were Carneades, a moderate Skeptic; Critolaus, a follower of Aristotle; and Diogenes the Babylonian, whom Milton refers to as a Stoic in order to differentiate him from the Diogenes of Sinope, who was a Cynic. Their introduction of Athenian philosophy to Rome drew the opposition of Marcus Portius Cato (234-149 BCE), the public censor charged with regulating public morals, for he feared an alteration of the manners and customs of the state. Also known as Cato the Censor, He was noted for his

conservative and anti-Hellenic policies, in opposition to the phil-Hellenic ideals of the Scipio family.

Sabin. Cato was raised in the Sabine territory. Milton refers to Cato's denunciation of Lucius Scipio, father of Scipio Africanus.

Nævius. Gnaeus Naevius (about 270 - about 200 BCE) wrote tragedies, comedies, and an epic. He was fond of satirizing Scipio and the patrician family of Metelli, for which he was thrown in prison until he recanted.

Plautus. Plautus (about 254 - 184 BCE) wrote many plays that were largely adaptations from Athenian comedies and had a major effect on English dramatists.

Menander and Philemon. Menander (342-292 BCE) was one of the leading Athenian "New Comedy" playwrights, and Philemon (368-264 BCE) was another. *Augustus.* See Tacitus *Annals* 1. 72.

Lucretius. Milton refers to Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura* which expounds the doctrine of Epicurus and is addressed to Memmius in the opening lines. Despite Cicero's attacks on Epicurus in *The Tusculan Disputations* (*Against Piso* 69), Milton and many others believed Cicero acted as editor for the second edition of *De Rerum Natura*.

Lucilius, or Catullus, or Flaccus. Lucilius (about 180- about 102 or 103 BCE) and Catullus (85-54 BCE) were known for their satirical wit, so also was Horace (65-8 BCE), whose full name was Quintus Horatius Flaccus.

Titus Livius. Milton refers to a section of Livy's *History* which does not survive. Milton refers Tacitus's *Annals* 4. 35, an account of the defence of Cremutius Cordus against the charge of libelling Tiberius by praising his enemies.

Naso. Ovid's full name was Publius Ovidius Naso. He was banished by Augustus allegedly for the immorality of his *Ars amatoria* (*Art of Love*).

Proclus. Porphyry's (234 - about 305) *Against the Christians* was ordered burned by Constantine, the first Christian emperor. Proclus (410- 485) was a neoplatonist and anti-Christian. Proclus's writings did not come under attack until forty-four years after his death, when Justinian suppressed the Athenian philosophical schools.

Carthaginian Council. There appears to have been no council in North Africa in 400; see the *Catholic Encyclopedia*. Milton quotes from Paolo Sarpi's *Historie of the Council of Trent* (translated by Nathaniel Brent 1620).

Gentiles. Heathens.

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Padre Paolo. Paolo Servita was Pietro Sarpi's religious name. One of the leaders of the Venetian movement to abolish papal secular supremacy, his most important written works were the *Historie of the Council of Trent* and the *History of the Inquisition*. Milton calls him in *Of Reformation*: "the great Venetian antagonist of the Pope."

Martin the 5. Martin V (Oddone Colonna) was pope from 1417 until 1431. His bull (papal proclamation) of 1418, *Inter Cunctas*, was designed to suppress heretical writings, including those of pre-Reformation reformers John Wyclif and John Huss.

Wicklief. Milton bestowed much praise upon John Wyclif in his *Tetrachordon*: "that Englishman honor'd of God to be the first preacher of a general reformation to all *Europe*."

Husse. John Huss was Czech proto-reformer excommunicated in 1411 and burned at the stake as a heretic in 1415.

Leo the 10. Leo X ((Giovanni de Medici) was pope from 1513 until 1521. His Bull of May 3, 1515 broadened censorship to cover all writings.

Council of Trent. Held at Trent from December 13, 1545 until December 4, 1563, the Council of Trent was convened to discuss and respond to the Reformation's challenge to Catholic orthodoxy, unity and ecclesiastical hegemony.

Spanish Inquisition. See the Catholic Encyclopedia article on the Inquisition and on the Catholic Church's Censorship of Books.

Author. In 1542 Pope Paul III reformed the Inquisition, this time to have jurisdiction over books. He forbade publication unless a license had been obtained from inquisitors in advance. In 1559, following the advice of the Council of Trent, Pope Paul IV issued the first *Index of Prohibited Books*, as well as an *Index of Expurgations*, which indicated prohibited passages from books otherwise allowed to be read. In 1562 and 1563 the Council of Trent added two decrees on the cataloguing of forbidden books.

Claudius intended. 1644 has the following marginal annotation at this point: "Quo veniam daret statum crepitumque ventris in convivio emittendi. Sueton. in Claudio." In English (from the Loeb translation of J.C. Rolfe 1914): "[He {Claudius} is even said to have thought of an edict] allowing the privilege of breaking wind quietly or noisily at table [having learned of a man who ran some risk by restraining himself through modesty" (*Lives of the Caesars* 5.32).
shav'n reverences. Milton refers sneeringly to the tonsure worn by monks, friars and some other ecclesiastical officials in the Roman Catholic Church.

spunge. Eraser.

Antiphonies. Responsories and antiphonies are parts of church service in which speakers or singers respond to one another in alternating speech or song.

Lambeth house. Lambeth House (now Lambeth Palace) is the residence in London of the Archbishop of Canterbury, primate of England. The Bishop of London used to keep a residence in the precincts of St. Paul's Cathedral.

in. This word is missing in 1644; I have supplied it in order to complete the sentence.

cross-leg'd. When Jove's son Hercules was about to be born, his jealous wife Juno dispatched the goddess of childbirth to interfere with the delivery by sitting in front of the mother's door with legs and fingers crossed. See Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 9. 281-323.

Radamanth and his Colleagues. Rhadamanthus, Minos, and Aeacus were in classical legend, the judges of Hades.

damned. Milton compares prohibited books to damned souls. Yet, while the damned are judged after they have come into existence and lived, books prohibited by the Licensing Order are condemned without even being born into the world. Because books are not subject to a fair trial, as are souls, Milton argues that those who have wished to issue such licensing orders in the past -- that is, the Catholic Church -- have had to imagine new realms of hell that could accommodate books of Protestant countries as well the draconian methods of judgement necessary to damn them.

minorites. Followers of St. Francis called themselves Friars Minor or minorites, for short.

Lullius. Ramon Lully was a medieval mystic, logician, philosopher, poet, and martyred missionary. Though he died as a missionary, he is best remembered as an alchemist.

Moses, Daniel, and Paul. Milton appears to refer his readers to Acts 7:22, Daniel 1:17, and Acts 17:28. These are all passages where holy men were said to be familiar with pagan or gentile wisdom.

a Tragedian. The sentences Milton refers to are found in three places. In Acts 17:28, Paul quotes from Aratus; in Titus 1:12, he quotes Epimenides; and in 1 Corinthians 15:33 he quotes from Euripides, a tragedian; see *Heracles* 270.

Julian. Julian the Apostate (Flavius Claudius Julianus 331-63) was emperor of Rome from 361-363. The nephew of Constantine, he was originally a Christian, but eventually turned back to the worship of Roman gods. The decree Milton

refers to forbade Christians to teach, or to become teachers, thus indirectly forbidding them to study the pagan learning Julian otherwise sought to promote.

Apollinarii. Apollinaris of Alexandria and his son wrote a grammar for Christians and translated books of the Bible into poetic and dramatic form.

seven liberall Sciences. Sometimes called the "seven liberal arts" and the grandfather of what we know call a liberal arts education, the seven included the medieval *trivium* of grammar, logic, and rhetoric and the *quadrivium* of arithmetic, geometry, atronomy, and music.

Socrates. Socrates Scholasticus (about 385 - about 440), a church historian.

Decius or Diocletian. The emperors Decius (249-51) and Diocletian (284-305) pursued severely anti-Christian policies.

St. Jerom. Jerome is most famous as a Bible translator, having translated the entire Bible into Latin, a Bible that later came to be known as The Vulgate and served as the authoritative scripture of the Roman Catholic Church for ages. In his Letter 22, "To Eustochium" (paragraph 30), Jerome recounts that during Lent he fell into a fever and began having visions in which he was questioned by God about the state of his soul. He replied that he was a Christian, but was told: "Thou liest; thou art a Ciceronian, for the works of that author possess thy heart." He was subsequently severely flogged by an angel and when he awoke from his dream he found lash marks all over his body.

Basil. Basil the Great, Bishop of Caesarea (370-79) who advised Christians to accept what was wise in pagan writers and also to recognize what was best to ignore.

Margites. Margites was the name of a caricature of Achilles in a mock heroic poem that passed under the name of Homer. Aristotle wrote that this work was to comedy what the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were to tragedy (*Poetics* 1449a). Nothing but a few lines quoted by Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics* (1141a) appear to survive.

Morgante. *Il Morgante Maggiore* by Luigi Pulci was a mock-heroic predecessor to Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*; it was published in Venice in 1481.

Eusebius. Eusebius Pamphilius was Bishop of Caesarea until about 340. Known as the father of Church history, he wrote an account of Dionysius Alexandrinus's experience of a vision from God regarding books. Eusebius's account in is his *Church History* 7.7.

answerable. In accordance with, or similar to Paul's teaching in 1 Thessalonians 5:21.

pure. Milton quotes Titus 1:15. But see also Raphael's teaching about knowledge by analogy to food in *Paradise Lost* 7.126-30.

unapocryphal vision. Milton refers to Peter's vision in Acts 10: 9-16.

Selden. John Selden (1584-1654) was a parliamentarian who was imprisoned several times by Charles I for his opposition to the extreme interpretation of the royal prerogative, which Charles held. The preface of his *De Jure Naturali et Gentium juxta Disciplinam Ebraeorum* (1640) contains the argument that it is better to review not only opinions which support one's own ideas, but also opinions which oppose them.

repasting of our minds. Milton's Raphael also compares alimentary and mental diets in *Paradise Lost* 7. 126-130.

Manna. See Exodus 16.

defile not. Milton quotes from Matthew 15: 17-20 and/ or Mark 7: 14-23.

perpetuall childhood. Milton echoes Paul's description of Jewish Christians who kept the law as children or immature heirs and so no better than slaves; see Galatians 4.

Salomon. Solomon; see Ecclesiastes 7:12.

Syriack. See Acts 19:19.

practiz'd. Practised the magic described in them.

Psyche. The story of Cupid and Psyche is found in Apuleius's *The Golden Ass* book 5. Also a 1596 English edition from Early English Books Online. Venus, Psyche's mother-in-law, expressed her jealousy by pouring wheat, oats, lentils, and other seeds in a great pile and assigned the girl the seemingly impossible task of sorting them by sundown. Compassionate ants do the work for her.

knowledge. See Genesis 3:5 and 22.

wayfaring. The Thomason copy of 1644 (British Library; Wing M2092) used as copytext for this edition has the "y" in *wayfaring* lined through and supplies an "r" above the line to spell *warfaring* instead

immortal garland. Milton seems to be combining the classical with the biblical. Winners of Olympic races were presented with wreaths of wild olive. For enduring temptation, the righteous Christian receives an immortal according to James 1:12 and 2 Timothy 4: 7-8.

excrementall. Of the nature of an outgrowth or excrescence; see *OED2 Spencer*. See *The Faerie Queene* 2. 7-8 and 12.

Scotus. John Duns Scotus was a medieval philosopher and theologian. See also the article on Thomas Aquinas.

Chetiv. The Talmud is composed of both the primary (Mishnah) and secondary (Gemara) Hebraic commentaries upon Hebrew scripture, or Torah. It lays claim to an authority second only to Torah itself. Keri and Chetiv are technical terms of Masorah, the textual criticism of Hebrew Scripture. When a textual reading (Chetiv) is suspected of corruption, or makes for unseemly reading, or, like the tetragrammaton YHWH is forbidden to be pronounced aloud, the margin provides a euphemism to be read aloud, called a Keri.

Evangelick preparation. Church fathers Clement (in his *Hortatory Address to the Greeks*) and Eusebius (in his *Evangelical Preparation*) described lewd pagan rituals in order to convince Christians not to participate in them.

Irenæus, Epiphanius, Jerom. Irenaeus in *Against Heresies*, Epiphanius in *Panarion*, and Jerome in his various attacks on Origen, Pelagius, Jovinian, and Vigilantus, uncovered or exposed numerous heresies to their readers.

Petronius. According to Tacitus, Nero called his friend Petronius *elegantiae arbiter*, chief judge of taste and etiquette; See *Annals* 16.18.

Arezzo. Pietro Aretino (1492-1556) was Italian satirist born in the town of Arezzo. He led a life of adventure and wrote abusive works for hire. His derisive wit was so feared that the gifts of those who sought either to buy him or buy him off made him very wealthy. He was a friend of Titian, who painted his portrait. His comedies, such as *La cortigiana* and *La talenta*, are singular, if exaggerated, portraits of his time. His letters, in spite of their impudent coarseness, are full of verve. Ariosto called him the "scourge of princes." See his illustrated *Sixteen Postures*.

Vicar of hell. Anne Boleyn's cousin, Sir Francis Brian, the notoriously wicked courtier of Henry VIII.

Cataio. Cathay or China.

guide. See Acts 7: 27-31.

Sorbonists. Scholars of the Sorbonne, a center of Roman Catholic theology in Paris.

Arminius. Jacob Hermansz (1560-1609), known as Arminius, was a protestant theologian who taught (contrary to strict Calvinism) general as opposed to particular predestination, conditional election, free will, and religious toleration. Milton later adopted a version of arminianism himself.

Aristotle. See *Nicomachean Ethics* 1095a.

Salomon. See Proverbs 23: 9.

Saviour. See Matthew 7: 6.

want. Lack, or do without.

prevented. Come ahead of, anticipated.

Commonwealth. Milton seems to refer, perhaps with a slight sneer, to Plato's *Republic* here, but the rest of the sentence cites also Plato's *Laws*, as if Milton considered both dialogues as pretty much of a piece in imagining a well-governed state, not meaning to describe one or prescribe how one might be organized.

there also enacts. See Plato's *Laws* 801d.

wanton epigrams and dialogues. Perhaps Milton refers, at least in part, to Plato's famous dialogues on love and friendship that praise homoerotic relations above all others, the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*.

friends. Aristophanes lampooned Socrates in *The Clouds*.

Dorick. See Plato's *Republic* 398e where Socrates proposed suppressing soft, effeminate music (Lydian airs), but allowed the Dorian and Phrygian styles as more martial and manly.

Frontispieces. Pictures put before the title of a book.

rebbeck. A three-stringed lute.

Monte Mayors. That is, these are the lower class equivalents to the more posh romances, such as Sidney's *Arcadia* and Montemayor's *Diana*.

Atlantick and Eutopian polities. Political systems with no grounding in reality, like that of Plato's Atlantis (*Critias* 113c and *Timaeus* 25a) or More's *Utopia*. *there mentions.* That is, in the *Laws* 643-44.

gramercy. Merit or worth.

in the motions. That is, in a puppet show.

reason is but choosing. See much the same dictum in *Paradise Lost* 3. 108.

powrs. Pours.

that continu'd Court-libell. Milton refers to the anti-Parliament newspaper, the *Mercurius Aulicus* or "Court Mercury," published from 1642-1645.

Sevil. Seville was the headquarters of the Spanish Inquisition.

pluralities. The practice of simultaneously holding more than one (normally full-time) church appointment to increase one's income and power. Milton attacks plurality in his poem *On the new Forcers of Conscience* as a practice typical of the old days of prelacy, now persisting in the new Presbyterian system.

competency. An appointment with an income suitable for a living. See the listing for "competency" in the *OED2*.

ferular. A ferular, or ferula, is a teacher's whipping rod made from the fennel plant. See definition 2 for "ferula" in the *OED2*.

fescu. A teacher's pointer.

Palladian oyl. Pallas Athene was the goddess of wisdom. Olives were sacred to her because she taught men how to extract oil from them to burn in their lamps while studying.

punie. A freshman or junior student.

patriarchal. Milton puns here on two senses of the word, the first denoting a protracted fatherliness, and the second glancing at the Roman Catholic office of patriarch. Patriarch was the second-highest office in the Roman Church, underneath only the pope. At the time Milton was writing *Areopagitica*, Archbishop Laud, religious adviser to King Charles I, was tried for treason for conspiring to have himself installed as patriarch of Great Britain.

a coits distance. A coit, or quoit, was a metal ring thrown like a discus in athletic contests. See definition 1 for "quoit" in *OED2*.

Stationer. Printer or bookseller.

return. Reply.

such authoriz'd books are but the language of the times. A paraphrase of a line from Francis Bacon's 1589 work *An Advertisement Touching the Controversies of the Church of England*, which was published in the 1640s under the title *A Wise and Moderate Discourse Concerning Church-Affaires*.

ventrous. Adventurous or daring.

Knox. John Knox was the founder of Presbyterianism who reformed the Church of Scotland.

their dash. The crossing out of words by a licensing agent, that is censorship.
what book of greatest consequence. If not a reference to Knox's *History of the Reformation* (1644), probably a reference to Edward Coke's *Institutes of Laws of England* (1641). Both works were heavily censored before they were published.
iron moulds. Spots of rust on paper caused by such things as ink stains, which could eat a hole through the paper itself.

periods. Sentences.

monopoliz'd. Monopolies to trade in particular wares were traditionally granted by the king. Resentment of the monarchical power over monopolies was one of the catalysts for the Puritan Revolution. Though officially abolished in 1624, Charles used monopoly-granting powers to raise the money necessary to rule without Parliament from 1629 until 1640.

tickets and statutes. Both of these, by preventing the imports of certain goods, could be used effectively to guarantee a monopoly.

Philistims. In 1 Samuel 13: 19-21, we read that the Israelites are forced to go to the Philistines in order to have their tools sharpened, because their conquerors do not want them to have smiths and thus the capacity to make weapons.

staple commodity. An item which is under the jurisdiction of a corporate entity with the power to regulate trade in the item.

debtors and delinquents. Debtors in 17th century England could be thrown in prison until they paid their debts. However, until the right was abolished by Parliament in 1648, members of both houses of Parliament and their servants and relations were shielded from prosecution for debt. Debtors could also seek

refuge in the precincts of defunct monasteries, where they could not be arrested. In 1643 Parliament declared all those who had fought for the king against Parliament "delinquents," and their property was confiscated. They were later pardoned, contingent on a confession of guilt, and allowed to recover their property for a small assessment.

pipe. That is, a pipe for feeding one who cannot feed him- or herself.

laick rabble. Sarcastically refers to the Laudian sentiment that the lay members of the church should not have an active role in it.

conceit. Idea or opinion.

enchiridion. A handbook or manual, a reference guide. See definition in the *OED2*. Milton is probably punning on the Greek word *encheiridion*, which means dagger.

the castle of St. Angelo. A papal prison on the Tiber River in Rome.

fustian. Bombastic, pompous, overblown speech. See definition 2 in the *OED2*. *Galileo*. The Inquisition forced Galileo to recant the heliocentric theory he proposed in his Dialogue on the *Two Principal Systems of the World*. Milton claims to have visited Galileo on his Western European journey in 1638.

Franciscan and Dominican licencers. The officers and inquisitors of the Inquisition frequently were Franciscan and Dominican friars.

in time of Parlament. A contrast with the years 1629-40, when Charles I and his appointed councillors ruled without a Parliament.

Verres. Verres was a cruel and unjust praetor in Sicily from 73-71 B.C. Cicero, former quaestor of Sicily, was recalled to the island to oust Verres. Before he had finished the second of his Verrine Orations, Cicero had forced Verres into exile.

the disburdning of a particular fancie. Milton denies any peculiarly personal motivation to his argument. His critics had claimed that *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1642) was motivated by his apparently failed marriage to Mary Powell. *Areopagitica* also could be construed as an attempt to disburden "a particular fancie," since he fears that works like the ill-received *DDD* might be censored or banned.

Bishops and Presbyters. Presbyterians and other reformers claimed there was no biblical authority for any church officers other than deacons and presbyters, both parish or congregational offices. Bishop Joseph Hall warned reformers that the Presbyterian system would make each office-holder a tyrant in his own

parish, regardless of what he was called. Milton gives a defense of the Presbyterian position in his *Of Prelatical Episcopacy*.

five or six and twenty Sees. A see is a diocese or region of episcopal authority. *mysticall*. That is, of an obscure origin or authority. See definition 2 in the *OED2*. *who but of late cry'd down*. That is, one who recently (and successfully) protested the bishops' claim to sole authority in ordinations and over parishioners in their dioceses, and that only university graduates could be ordained (in other words, a Presbyterian leader), will now assume similar tyrannical powers over books and pamphlets.

Covenants. In 1638 the Scottish National Covenant opposed the forced imposition of episcopacy on Scotland by Charles I. When the English signed the Solemn League and Covenant in 1643, they pledged to reform the Church of England to eliminate episcopacy and to establish a presbyterian church organization in England.

Protestations. In 1641 Parliament tried the Earl of Strafford for treason. He had led an English army against Scotland to impose episcopacy there. King Charles tried every means, including the threat of force against Parliament, to protect his minister. In response, Parliament devised the Protestation, which was a pledge to defend the liberty of the people.

chop. To exchange one for the other.

Palace Metropolitan. Referring to Lambeth Palace, the London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

conventicle. A religious meeting or assembly of a clandestine, irregular, or illegal character, especially a religious meeting outside the proper jurisdiction or oversight of the established church.

the cruse of truth must run no more oyle. Echoes Kings 17:9-16.

Vicount St. Albans. Sir Francis Bacon. Milton quotes the first half of the sentence he quoted above.

a streaming fountain. See Proverbs 18:4 and Psalm 85:11, or possibly an allusion to the Song of Solomon 4:15.

Assembly. Westminster Assembly of Divines, which was at the time advising Parliament in their on the new structure of an established English Church.

arrant. Unmitigated, thorough-paced. See definition 3 in the *OED2*.

implicit faith. In contrast to explicit faith, or faith grounded in diligent study and understanding of Church doctrine (required of the clergy in medieval times), implicit faith was based upon the acceptance of Church authority (expected of the laity).

Loretto. According to popular medieval piety, angels had transported the house in which Mary was born and Jesus conceived to Loretto from Nazareth in 1291. As such, Loretto was a popular pilgrimage destination.

all mysteries. Occupations, crafts, and trades.

factor. Agent; see definition 1 in the *OED2*.

dividuall movable. A commodity capable of being divided and moved or transferred.

malmsey. A fine, sweet Spanish wine. Also, the wine in which Clarence is drowned in Shakespeare's *Richard III* 1.4. 161.

green figs. See Matthew 21:18-21 and Mark 11:12-14, where Jesus demonstrates the power of faith to his disciples.

Publicans. Custom officials who collect duties, such as tannage and poundage taxes.

tunaging and the poundaging. English Parliaments traditionally granted the right to collect tannage and poundage revenues to each incoming king. Tannage was a tax on barrels (tuns) of wine, and poundage was a tax levied on the value of imports calculated in pounds sterling. Charles I's first Parliament refused to grant him this privilege.

parochiall. Referring to a minister and his parish.

Hercules pillars. Hercules is a symbol of power and moral rectitude. The pillars of Hercules were erected at the limits of his wandering, and as such serve as a symbol for the limits of human ambition.

topic folio. A folio-sized commonplace book in which a preacher would gather notes and quotations around which to build his sermons.

Harmony. A collection of similar passages from different sources, arranged so as to exhibit their agreement and account for their discrepancies; now chiefly used of a work showing the correspondences between the four Gospels and the chronological succession of the events recorded in them. See definition 4 in the *OED2*.

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Catena. A string or series of extracts from the writings of the fathers, forming a commentary on some portion of Scripture. See entry in the *OED2*.
sol fa. A musical scale.

interlinearies, breviaries, synopses, and other loitering gear. Texts with translations on alternating lines, abridged versions, compendia, and other cribs or time-saving devices for the lazy student.

St. Thomas in his vestry Milton alludes to various market locations in London, named for their propinquity to certain churches, as if they traded in religious doctrines. Near the Church of St. Thomas Acon was a clothes market; the precincts of St. Martin le Grand served as a sort of grey-market center; and St. Hugh was often identified with the shoe trade.

magazin. A warehouse for merchandise or a building for military supplies. See the entry for "magazine," definitions 1 and 2 in the *OED2*.

impal'd. Enclosed within a palisade of stakes, or pales.

Christ urg'd it. Compare to John 18:20: "Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing."

dis-inur'd. Dis-acquainted or unaccustomed with a practice or action of some sort.

Alcoran. Al-quran, the Koran.

pitch our tent here. A reference to the Moses's final view of the Promised Land, which occurs when the Israelites he has led there camp for the night near the river Jordan: Deuteronomy 34:1.

mortall glasse. See 1 Corinthians 13:12.

her divine Master. That is, truth and grace came with Jesus Christ; see John 1:17.

Ægyptian Typhon. Plutarch relates this allegorical myth in the story "Of Isis and Osiris" from *Moralia*.

Combust. Burned, scorched. See definition 1 in the *OED2*.

Zuinglius. Ulrich Zwingli started the Swiss Protestant Reformation in Zurich.

Calvin. John Calvin followed Zwingli as the leading proponent of the Protestant Reformation, in Geneva.

Syntagma. A collection of statements, propositions, doctrines, treatises. See definition 1 in the *OED2*.

golden rule. The mathematical Rule of Proportion: the first quantity is to the second quantity as the third quantity is to an unknown fourth quantity which can be calculated.

school of Pythagoras. Milton refers to the doctrine of metempsychosis, or the translation of souls from one body to another. The doctrine was thought by some to have originated among the Druids from whom Pythagoras adopted it. Gratiano refers sarcastically to the doctrine in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* 4.1.133

Persian wisdom. Magic arts and practices were commonly thought to have originated among the Persians.

Julius Agricola. Julius Agricola was the proconsul of Britain from 78-85. He governed under three Caesars: Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian.

Transylvanian. Transylvania, now part of Romania, was ardently Protestant during its brief existence as a sovereign territory.

the Hercynian wilderness. The wooded and mountainous region of central and south Germany.

propending. Inclining. See entry for "propend" in the *OED2*.

Wicklief. John Wycliffe was an English theologian and a forerunner of the Protestant Reformation; he was branded a heretic for his anti-papal views. Jan Hus was Czech reformer and follower of Wycliffe. Jerome of Prague was a later Czech reformer and a disciple of both.

City of refuge. Referring to the cities of refuge established by the Jews to harbor those who have committed unintentional manslaughter. See Numbers 35 and Joshua 20.

plates. Plates of armor.

the fields are white already. Quoted from Joshua 4:35.

a little forbearance of one another. Echoes Ephesians 4:1-3.

Pirrhus. Pyrrhus was the king of Epirus, who defeated the Romans at Hereclea and remarked that he would conquer the world if he had Roman soldiers or if he were king of Rome.

house of God. An oblique reference to 1 Kings: 5-6, specifically 1 Kings 6:7.

but all the Lords people are become Prophets. See Numbers 11:27-29.

the firm root. See Romans 11:16.

maniples. Literally a "handfull," also the branches carried by soldiers as a standard, and a tactical unit in the Roman infantry. See definitions 1 and 2 for "maniple" in the *OED2*.

besieg'd and blockt about. Referring to November 1642 when the royalist army threatened to attack London. After the royalists were driven off, Londoners built a twelve-mile system of fortifications to put an end to any further advances. Milton's Sonnet VIII alludes to that period of threatened attack.

besieg'd by Hanibal. See Livy's *History of Rome* 26 for the story of Hannibal's seige of Rome.

invincible locks. A reference to Samson's initial triumphs over Delilah, who seeks the secret of his strength; see Judges 16:6-20.

muing. As a falcon moulting, see entry 4, definition 1 for "mew" in the *OED2*. It has also been suggested that "muing" is a misprint for "nuing" or "renuing."

purging and unscaling her long abused sight. Alludes to the conversion of persecuting Saul, who became the Apostle Paul; see Acts 9:3-22.

ingrossers. Monopolizers: see definition 1 for "engrosser" in the *OED2*.

abrogated and mercillesse law. Milton refers to the Roman law (abolished in 318) which gave fathers supreme power over the lives of their children.

cote and conduct. "Cote and conduct" is a tax on counties to pay for the outfitting of their military recruits. A noble is a small coin worth about 33 pence. Danegelt was the tax raised to placate the Danes, through negotiation or war, when they harassed and occupied England in the middle ages; during Charles I's reign, it was known as ship money.

the Lord Brook. Robert Greville, the second Lord Brooke, who was killed in battle defending the parliamentary cause. He wrote *A Discourse Opening the Nature of that Episcopacie, which is Exercised in England* (1641).

The temple of Janus. Janus was the God with two faces in opposite directions. The doors to the temple of Janus in Rome were kept open during times of war and closed when peace reigned.

windes of doctrin. A paraphrase of Ephesians 4:14-15.

the discipline of Geneva. Presbyterianism.

to seek for wisdom as for hidd'n treasures. See Proverbs 2:4-6.

a battell raung'd. Like an army arranged for battle.

souldiership. The Thomason copy (1644) has *shouldiership* here; I have omitted the "h" as a misprint.

Proteus. Shape-changing sea god.

spake oracles. See Homer's *Odyssey* 4.385 and Virgil's *Georgics* 4.387-452.
as Micaiah did before Ahab. See 1 Kings 22:1-37.

adjur'd into her own likenes. Bound to an oath under penalty, as in 2 Chronicles 18:15, when Ahab is speaking to Micaiah.

those ordinances. See Colossians 2:8-17 for the full context of this passage.
this Christian liberty. Paul boasts of Christian liberty in Galatians 5:1 and Romans 8:21.

may doe either. See Romans 14:3-20.

a linnen decency. The formalistic vestments of the clergy, attacked by Milton also in his *Of Reformation*.

wood and hay and stubble. This echoes 1 Corinthians 3:10-13.

subdichotomies. A word Milton coined, comparable to "sub-divisions."

sever the wheat from the tares. This passage and the next few lines allude to the parables in Matthew 13:13-43.

the bond of peace. This and the preceding lines quote from Ephesians 4:3.
shakes a Kingdome. See Haggai 2:6-7.

chooses not as man chooses. Milton alludes to 1 Corinthians 1:26-28.

Chapell at Westminster. Convocation, the governing body of bishops in England, met in the Chapter house in Westminster until it was abolished and its powers assigned to the Westminster Assembly of Divines which met in Henry VIII's chapel at Westminster.

Harry the 7. Henry VII was buried in the Chapel at Westminster with some of his feudal allies.

Pharisees. Echoes a passage in Matthew 23:13.

first broke that triple ice. An image taken from Horace's *Carmina* 1.3.9.
our Saviour gave to young John. For the Joshua story see Numbers 11: 27-29; for the story of Jesus and John, see Luke 9:49-50.

Elders. The Greek word translated as "elder" in the Authorized Version (1611) of the Bible, is *presbuteros*, and may also be translated as "prebyter;" hence the term *presbyterian* as one who believes that the Bible offers no authority for the offices of priest and bishop.

lett. Obstruction. See definition for "lett" in the *OED2*.

Dominican. In other words, the Spanish Inquisition, dominated largely by members of the Dominican order of friars.

Star-chamber decree. A decree from July 11, 1637 by the Court of the Star Chamber which called for the suppression of undesired publications. The Court of the Star Chamber was abolished on July 5, 1641.

she is now fall'n from the Starres. The Court of the Star Chamber was abolished on July 5, 1641.

copy. Copyright.

divers glosing colours. Coloring or misrepresenting the truth in several ways.
procuring by petition this Order. The Stationers Company petitioned Parliament in April 1643 to re-establish the control over the press the Court of the Star Chamber had held.

Sophisms and Elenchs. Using false, sophistical arguments and false refutations for purposes of deceit.

advertisement. A warning or notification of facts. See definition 4 in the *OED2*.