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English Reprints.

[Vol. 1.]

AREOPAGITICA.

[24 November] 1644.

PRECEDED BY ILLUSTRATIVE DOCUMENTS.

CAREFULLY EDITED BY

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EDWARD ARBER,

Int. Stat. Hall.

1 January 1868.

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AREOPAGITICA.¹

INTRODUCTION.

THAT half-living thing—a book: may be regarded in many ways. It may be considered in connection with the circumstances which led to its conception and creation; and in the midst of which it appeared. It may be studied, as exhibiting the moral intent, the mental power of its author. Its contents may be analysed as to their intrinsic truthfulness or falsity. We may trace and identify its influence upon its own age and on succeeding generations. This is an apprehension of the mind of a book.

More than this. We may examine its style, its power and manner of expressing that mind. The ringing collocation of its words, the harmonious cadence of its sentences, the flashing gem-like beauty of isolated passages, the just mapping out of the general argument, the due subordination of its several parts, their final inweaving into one overpowering conclusion: these are the features, discovering, illuminating, enforcing the mind of a book.

Much of what is in books is false, much only half true, much true. It is impossible to separate the tares from the wheat. Every one, therefore—of necessity—must read discriminatively; often sifting and searching for first principles, often testing the catenation of an argument, often treasuring up incidental truths for future use; enjoying—as delights by the way—whatever felicity of expression, gorgeousness of imagination, vividness of description, or aptness of illustration may glance, like sunshine, athwart the path: the journey's end being Truth.

The purpose through these English Reprints is to bring this modern age face to face with the works of our forefathers. The Editor and his clumsy framework

are unimportant and may be forgotten; if but that the attention may be riveted upon the picture. The thought of these English Writers is not dead. It slumbers. Understand and then subtract from it, the local colouring of time and circumstance, and it is instinct with life: either the noxious life of foul delusive error, or the ethereal life of Truth. We have not, as yet, in all things attained to the height of our Predecessors' far-seeing conception: and even the just measuring of their many mistakes and errors may not be time and effort thrown away.

While there is very much for us to learn from our Ancients, both in what they said and their manner of saying it; there bids fair to be an increasing number of learners among the Moderns. England is on the eve of a great Education, in the which the unlettered will become readers, the readers students, the students scholars. With this wider variety and increased power of the English mind, the diligent study of the national Literature and Language can hardly fail both to spread and to deepen. The number of such learners tends therefore to multiply, until it shall be reputed a disgrace to be ignorant of our mother tongue and of that which it enshrines.

There is also no better or more essential preparative for the outcome of a glorious literature in the Future, than the careful study and accurate appreciation of the treasures of the Past. The present Merchant-Adventurer will esteem the 'English Reprints' to be crowned with a happy success; if—bringing those treasures, as from afar, to every one's home, and there displaying them to a more public gaze—they shall, in however insignificant a degree, tend to that happy End.

The Printing Press, among many advantages, brought to its early possessors one constant perplexity, which, however, assumed different forms to different minds. The power of every man, of every educated man, was by it immensely increased for good or for evil. The

true-hearted grieved over the facility the prefs gave to the spread of error. The high-bred despot chafed at the new power ceaselessly exercised by the low-bred intellect in questioning and adjusting his prerogative, in destroying his would-be almightiness in the mind of the people, in bringing him under Law. The ministers of the religions then extant were alarmed at the ready promulgation of those restless inquiries into the ultimate nature of all things, lest they should undermine the foundations of civil society and ecclesiastical polity, and so reduce the world to chaotic confusion. Thus some from conscientious duty, others with a wicked satisfaction, all unitedly or in turn, joined in clogging the Prefs, in curtailing the new power that God in His Providence had bestowed upon mankind.

Dr. Johnson, in his *Life of Milton*—which, either for wilful misrepresentation or crass incapacity to appreciate his subject, is to his perpetual discredit—fairly represents the views of one side on the Liberty of the Prefs, and through that the boundless liberty of human thought.

“The danger of such unbounded liberty, and the danger of bounding it, have produced a problem in the science of Government which human understanding seems hitherto unable to solve. If nothing may be published but what civil authority shall have previously approved, power must always be the standard of truth; if every dreamer of innovations may propagate his projects, there can be no settlement; if every murmurer at government may diffuse discontent, there can be no peace; and if every sceptick in theology may teach his follies, there can be no religion. The remedy against these evils is to punish the authors; for it is yet allowed that every society may punish, though not prevent, the publication of opinions, which that society shall think pernicious; but this punishment, though it may crush the author, promotes the book; and it seems not more reasonable to leave the right of printing unrestrained, because writers may be afterwards censured, than it would be to sleep with doors unbolted, because by our laws we can hang a thief.”*

Milton’s answer to this had been already written:—

“Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience above all liberties. † . . . Though all

* *Lives of English Poets*, I., 153, 154. London, 1781.

† p. 73.

the windes of doctrine 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 supressing. . . . Who knows not that Truth is strong next to the Almighty; she needs no policies, no stratagems, no licencings to make her victorious, those are the shifts and the defences that error uses against her power.”*

As we learn from his *Second Defence*—written ten years after the present work—the singularly conceptive mind of Milton had grouped into one cycle subjects of no apparent immediate connection. Episcopacy, Divorce, Education, Freedom of the Individual, Freedom of the Press, had, to his mind, one point of identity and contact, one connecting link,—Liberty. This, a cardinal thought of his entire life, seems to have almost overpowered him, as he saw the break-up of the system of the *Thorough*, the nation uprising against the tyranny of a few, and laying—for all coming ages—the foundations of that religious, civil, and domestic Liberty, which it is our happiness to enjoy.

Of that great cycle, the ‘Areopagitica’ occupies but a subordinate part, Milton classifying it under domestic liberty with divorce and education. He there also tells us, his purpose in writing it:—

“I wrote my *Areopagitica*, in order to deliver the press from the restraints with which it was encumbered; that the power of determining what was true and what was false, what ought to be published and what to be suppressed, might no longer be entrusted to a few illiterate and illiberal individuals, who refused their sanction to any work which contained views or sentiments at all above the level of the vulgar superstition.”†

The following Orders, &c., have been reprinted; partly to give the groundwork of fact to Milton’s argument; partly to show the strong hand and the blunt mind of our Ancestors in respect to the Press; and partly to assist to a more perfect realization of the antagonistic ideas and circumstances, in the midst of which, Milton conceived the ‘*Areopagitica*,’ and so to render more apparent its beauty and originality.

* p. 74

† *Prose Works*, I., 259: ST. JOHN’S Ed., 1848.

A

D E C R E E

OF

Starre-Chamber,

C O N C E R N I N G

P R I N T I N G,

*Made the eleventh day of July
last past. 1637.*

¶ Imprinted at London by *Robert Barker*
Printer to the Kings most Excellent
Maieslie : And by the Assignes
of *John Bill*. 1637.

In Camera Stellata coram Con-

cilio ibidem, vndecimo die

Iulij, Anno decimo tertio

CAROLI Regis.



*This day Sir Iohn Bankes Knight, His Ma-
iesties Attourney Generall, produced in Court
a Decree drawn and penned by the aduice of
the Right Honourable the Lord Keeper of the
great Seale of England, the most Reuerend Fa-
ther in God the Lord Arch-Bishop of Canterbury his
Grace, the Right Honorable and Right Reuerend Father
in God the Lord Bishop of London Lord high Treasurer
of England, the Lord chiefe Iustices, and the Lord chiefe
Baron, touching the regulating of Printers and Founders
of letters, whereof the Court hauing consideration, the said
Decree was directed and ordered to be here Recorded, and
to the end the same may be publique, and that euery one
whom it may concerne may take notice thereof, The Court
hath now also ordered, That the said Decree shall speedily
be Printed, and that the same be sent to His Maiesties
Printer for that purpose. Whereas the three and twentieth
day of Iune in the eight and twentieth yere of the reigne
of the late Queene Elizabeth, and before, diuers Decrees
and Ordinances haue bene made for the better gouernment
and regulating of Printers and Printing, which Orders
and Decrees haue bene found by experience to be defectiue
in some particulars; And diuers abuses haue since
arisen, and bene practised by the craft and malice of wicked
and euill disposed persons, to the preiudice of the publike;
And diuers libellous, seditious, and mutinous bookes haue
bene vnduly printed, and other bookes and papers with-
out licence, to the disturbance of the peace of the Church and
State: For preuention whereof in time to come, It is now
Ordered and Decreed, That the said former Decrees and
Ordinances shall stand in force with these Additions, Ex-
planations, and Alterations following, viz.*



In Camera Stellata coram Con-
cilio ibidem, vndecimo die Iulii,
Anno decimo tertio CAROLI
Regis.

I*Mprimis*, That no person or persons what-
soever shall presume to print, or cause to
bee printed, either in the parts beyond
the Seas, or in this Realme, or other his
Maiesties Dominions, any seditious, scisma-
ticall, or offensive Bookes or Pamphlets, to the scandall
of Religion, or the Church, or the Government, or
Governours of the Church or State, or Commonwealth,
or of any Corporation, or particular person or persons
whatsoever, nor shall import any such Booke or Bookes,
nor sell or dispose of them, or any of them, nor cause
any such to be bound, stitiched, or sowed, vpon paine
that he or they so offending, shall loose all such Bookes
and Pamphlets, and also haue, and suffer such correction,
and severe punishment, either by Fine, imprisonment,
or other corporall punishment, or otherwise, as by this
Court, or by His Maiesties Commissioners for causes
Ecclesiasticall in the high Commission Court, respec-
tively, as the severall causes shall require, shall be
thought fit to be inflicted upon him, or them, for such
their offence and contempt.

II. *Item*, That no person or persons whatsoever,
shall at any time print or cause to be imprinted, any
Booke or Pamphlet whatsoever, vnlesse the same Booke

or Pamphlet, and also all and euery the Titles, Epistles, Prefaces, Proems, Preambles, Introductions, Tables, Dedications, and other matters and things whatsoever thereunto annexed, or therewith imprinted, shall be first lawfully licenced and authorized onely by such person and persons as are hereafter expressed, and by no other, and shall be also first entred into the Registers Booke of the Company of Stationers; vpon paine that euery Printer offending therein, shall be for euer hereafter disabled to use or exercise the Art or Myserie of Printing, and receiue such further punishment, as by this Court or the high Commisison Court respectiuey, as the severall causes shall require, shall be thought fitting

III. *Item*, That all Bookes concerning the common Lawes of this Realme shall be printed by the especial allowance of the Lords chiefe Iustices, and the Lord chiefe Baron for the time being, or one or more of them, or by their appointment; And that all Books of History, belonging to this State, and present times, or any other Booke of State affaires, shall be licenced by the principall Secretaries of State, or one of them, or by their appointment; And that all Bookes concerning Heraldry, Titles of Honour and Armes, or otherwise concerning the Office of Earle Marshall, shall be licenced by the Earle Marshall, or by his appointment; And further, that all other Books, whether of Diuinitie, Phisicke, Philosophie, Poetry, or whatsoever, shall be allowed by the Lord Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, or Bishop of *London* for the time being, or by their appointment, or the Chancellours, or Vice Chancellors of either of the Vniuersities of this Realme for the time being.

Alwayes prouided, that the Chancellour or Vice-Chancellour, of either of the Vniuersities, shall Licence onely such Booke or Bookes that are to be Printed within the limits of the Vniuersities respectiuey, but not in *London*, or elsewhere, not meddling either with Bookes of the common Law, or matters of State.

IV. *Item*, That euery person and persons, which by any Decree of this Court are, or shall be appointed or

authorized to Licence Bookes, or giue Warrant for imprinting thereof, as is aforefaid, fhall haue two feuerall written Copies of the fame Booke or Bookes with the Titles, Epiftles, Prefaces, Proems, Preambles, Introductions, Tables, Dedications, and other things whatfoeuer thereunto annexed. One of which faid Copies fhall be kept in the publike Regiftries of the faid Lord Arch-Bifhop, and Bifhop of *London* refpectiuely, or in the Office of the Chancellour, or Vice-Chancellour of either of the Vniuerfities, or with the Earle Marshall, or principall Secretaries of State, or with the Lords chiefe Iuftices, or chiefe Baron. of all fuch Bookes as fhall be licensed by them refpectiuely, to the end that he or they may be feure, that the Copy fo licensed by him or them fhall not bee altered without his or their priuitie, and the other fhall remain with him whose Copy it is, and vpon both the faid Copies, he or they that fhall allow the faid Booke, fhall teftifie vnder his or their hand or hands, that there is nothing in that Booke or Books contained, that is contrary to Chriftian Faith, and the Doctrine and Difcipline of the Church of *England*, nor againft the State or Gouvernement, nor contrary to good life, or good manners, or otherwise, as the nature and fubieft of the work fhall require, which license or approbation fhall be imprinted in the beginning of the fame Booke, with the name, or names of him or them that fhall authorize or license the fame, for a teftimonie of the allowance thereof.

V. *Item*, That every Merchant of bookes, and perfon and perfons whatfoeuer, which doth, or hereafter fhall buy, or import, or bring any booke or bookes into this Realme, from any parts beyond the Seas, fhall before fuch time as the fame book or books, or any of them be deliuered forth, or out of his, or their hand or hands, or expofed to fale, giue, and present a true Catalogue in writing of all and euery fuch booke and bookes vnto the Lord Arch-Bifhop of *Canterbury*, or Lord Bifhop of *London* for the time being, vpon paine to haue and fuffer fuch punishment for offending

herein, as by this Court, or by the said high Commission Court respectiuey, as the feueral causes shall require, shall be thought fitting.

VI. *Item*, That no Merchant, or other person or persons whatsoever, which shall import or bring any book or books into the kingdome, from any parts beyond the Seas, shall presume to open any Dry-fats, Bales, Packs, Maunds, or other Fardals of books, or wherein books are; nor shall any Searcher, Wayter, or other Officer belonging to the Custome-house, vpon pain of loosing his or their place or places, suffer the same to passe, or to be deliuered out of their hands or custody, before such time as the Lord Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, or Lord Bishop of *London*, or one of them for the time being, haue appointed one of their Chaplains, or some other learned man, with the Master and Wardens² of the Company of Stationers, or one of them, and such others as they shall call to their assistance, to be present at the opening thereof, and to view the same: And if there shall happen to be found any seditious, schismaticall or offensive booke or bookes, they shall forthwith be brought vnto the said Lord Arch-bishop of *Canterbury*, Lord Bishop of *London* for the time being, or one of them, or to the High Commission Office, to the end that as well the offender or offenders may be punished by the Court of Star Chamber, or the high Commission Court respectiuey, as the feueral causes shall require, according to his or their demerit; as also that such further course and order may be taken concerning the same booke or bookes, as shall bee thought fitting.

VII. *Item*, That no person or persons shall within this Kingdome, or elsewhere imprint, or cause to be imprinted, nor shall import or bring in, or cause to be imported or brought into this Kingdome, from, or out of any other His Maiesties Dominions, nor from other, or any parts beyond the Seas, any Copy, book or books, or part of any booke or bookes, printed beyond the seas, or elsewhere, which the said Company of

Stationers, or any other person or persons haue, or shall by any Letters Patents, Order, or Entrance in their Register book, or otherwise, haue the right, priuiledge, authoritie, or allowance soly to print, nor shall bind, flitch, or put to sale, any such booke or bookes, vpon paine of losse and forfeiture of all the said bookes, and of such Fine, or other punishment, for euery booke or part of a booke so imprinted or imported, bound, flitched, or put to sale, to be leuyed of the party so offending, as by the power of this Court, or the high Commission Court respectiuey, as the severall causes shall require, shall be thought fit.

VIII. *Item*, Euery person and persons that shall hereafter Print, or cause to be Printed, any Bookes, Ballads, Charts, Portraiture, or any other thing or things whatsoever, shall thereunto or thereon Print and set his and their owne name or names, as also the name or names of the Author or Authors, Maker or Makers of the same, and by, or for whom any such booke, or other thing is, or shall be printed, vpon pain of forfeiture of all such Books, Ballads, Chartes, Portraitsures, and other thing or things, printed contrary to this Article; And the presses, Letters and other instruments for Printing, wherewith such Books, ballads, Chartes, Portraitsures, and other thing or things shall be printed, to be defaced and made vnseruiceable, and the party and parties so offending, to be fined, imprifoned and haue such other corporall punishment, or otherwise, as by this Honourable Court, or the said high Commission respectiuey, as the seuerall causes shall require, shall be thought fit.

IX. *Item*, That no person or persons whatsoever, shall hereafter print, or cause to be printed, or shall forge, put, or counterfeit in, or vpon any booke or books, the name, title, marke or vinnet of the Company or Society of Stationers, or of any particular person or persons, which hath or shall haue lawfull priuiledge, authoritie, or allowance to print the same, without the consent of the said Company, or party or

parties that are or shall be so priuiledged, authorized, or allowed to print the same booke or books, thing or things, first had and obtained, vpon paine that euery person or persons so offending, shall not onely loofe all such books and other things, but shall also haue, and suffer such punishment, by imprisonment of his body, fine, or otherwise, as by this Honourable Court, or high Commission Court respectiuely, as the feuerall causes shall require, it shall be to him or them limited or adiudged.

X. *Item*, that no Haberdasher of small wares, Ironmonger, Chandler, Shop-keeper, or any other person or persons whatsoever, not hauing bene seuen yeeres apprentice to the trade of a Book-seller, Printer, or Book-binder, shall within the citie or suburbs of London, or in any other Corporation, Market-towne, or elsewhere, receive, take or buy, to barter, sell againe, change or do away any Bibles, Testaments, Psalm-books, Primers, Abcees, Almanackes, or other booke or books whatsoever, vpon pain of forfeiture of all such books so receiued, bought or taken as aforesaid, and such other punishment of the parties so offending, as by this Court, or the said high Commission Court respectiuely, as the severall causes shall require, shall be thought meet.

XI. *Item*, for that Printing is, and for many yeeres hath been an Art and manufacture of this kingdome, for the better encouraging of Printers in their honest, and iust endeauours in their profession, and preuention of diuers libels, pamphlets, and seditious books printed beyond the seas in English, and thence transported hither;

It is further Ordered and Decreed, that no Merchant, Bookseller, or other person or persons whatsoever, shall imprint, or cause to be imprinted, in the parts beyond the seas or elsewhere, nor shall import or bring, nor willingly assent or consent to the importation or bringing from beyond the seas into this Realme, any English bookes, or part of bookes, or bookes whatsoever, which are or shall be, or the greater or more part whereof is or shall be English, or of the English

tongue, whether the same book or bookes haue been here formerly printed or not, vpon pain of the forfeiture of all such English bookes so imprinted or imported, and such further censure and punishment, as by this Court, or the said high Commission Court respectiuely, as the seuerall causes shall require, shall be thought meet.

XII. *Item*, That no stranger or forreigner whatsoeuer, be suffered to bring in, or vent here, any booke or bookes printed beyond the seas, in any language whatsoeuer, either by themselves or their secret Factors, except such onely as bee free Stationers of *London*, and such as haue bene brought vp in that profession, and haue their whole meanes of subsistence, and liuelihood depending thereupon, vpon paine of confiscation of all such Books so imported, and such further penalties, as by this Court, or the high Commission Court respectiuely, as the seuerall causes shall require, shall be thought fit to be imposed.

XIII. *Item*, That no person or persons within the Citie of *London*, or the liberties thereof, or elsewhere, shall erect or cause to be erected any Presse or Printing-house, nor shall demise, or let, or suffer to be held or vsed, any house, vault, feller, or other roome whatsoeuer, to, or by any person or persons, for a Printing-house, or place to print in, vnlesse he or they which shall so demise or let the same, or suffer the same to be so vsed, shall first giue notice to the said Master and Wardens of the Company of Stationers for the time being, of such demise, or suffering to worke or print there, vpon paine of imprisonment, and such other punishment as by this Court, or the said high Commission Court respectiuely, as the seuerall Causes shall require, shall bee thought fit.

XIV. *Item*, That no Ioyner, or Carpenter, or other person, shall make any printing-Presse, no Smith shall forge any Iron-worke for a printing-Presse, and no Founder shall cast any Letters for any person or persons whatsoeuer, neither shall any person or persons bring, or cause to be brought in from any parts beyond

the Seas, any Letters Founded or Cast, nor buy any such Letters for Printing, Vnlesse he or they respectiue-ly shall first acquaint the said Master and Wardens, or some of them, for whom the same Presse, Iron-works, or Letters, are to be made, forged, or cast, vpon paine of such fine and punishment, as this Court, or the high Commission Court respectiue-ly, as the feuerall causes shall require, shall thinke fit.

XV. *Item*, The Court doth declare, that as formerly, so now, there shall be but Twentie Master Printers allowed to haue the vse of one Presse or more, as is after specified, and doth hereby nominate, allow, and admit these persons whose names hereafter follow, to the number of Twentie, to haue the vse of a Presse, or Presses and Printing-houise, for the time being, *viz.* *Felix Kingstone, Adam Ifflip, Thomas Purfoot, Miles Flesher, Thomas Harper, John Beale, John Legat, Robert Young, John Haviland, George Miller, Richard Badger, Thomas Cotes, Bernard Alfop, Richard Bishop, Edward Griffin, Thomas Purflowe, Richard Hodgkinsonne, John Dawson, John Raworth, Marmaduke Parsons.* And further, the Court doth order and decree, That it shall be lawfull for the Lord Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, or the Lord Bishop of *London*, for the time being, taking to him or them six other high Commissioners, to supply the place or places of those which are now already Printers by this Court, as they shall fall void by death, or Censure, or otherwise: Prouided that they exceed not the number of Twentie, besides His Maieslies Printers, and the Printers allowed for the Vniuersities.

XVI. *Item*, That euery person or persons, now allowed or admitted to haue the vse of a Presse, and Printing-houise, shall within Ten dayes after the date hereof, become bound with sureties to His Maieslie in the high Commission Court, in the sum of three hundred pounds, not to print or suffer to be printed in his house or Presse, any booke, or bookes whatsoever, but such as shall from time to time be lawfully licensed, and that the like Bond shall be entred into by all, and euery person and persons, that hereafter shall be admit-

ted, or allowed to print, before he or they be suffered to haue the vse of a Presse.

XVII. *Item*, That no allowed Printer shall keep about two Presses, vnlesse he hath been Master or vpper Warden² of his Company, who are thereby allowed to keep three Presses and no more, vnder paine of being disabled for euer after to keepe or vse any Presse at all, vnlesse for some great and special occasion for the publique, he or they haue for a time leaue of the Lord Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, or Lord Bishop of *London* for the time being, to haue or vse one, or more about the foresaid number, as their Lordships, or either of them shall thinke fit. And whereas there are some Master Printers that haue at this present one, or more Presses allowed them by this Decree, the Court doth further order and declare, That the Master and Wardens of the Company of Stationers, doe fourthwith certifie the Lord Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, or the Lord Bishop of *London*, what number of Presses each Master Printer hath, that their Lordships or either of them, taking vnto them six other high Commissioners, may take such present order for the suppressing of the supernumerarie Presses, as to their Lordships, or to either of them shall seem best.

XVIII. *Item*, That no person or persons, do hereafter reprint, or cause to be reprinted, any booke or bookes whatsoeuer (though formerly printed with licence) without being reuiewed, and a new Licence obtained for the reprinting thereof. Alwayes provided, that the Stationer or Printer be put to no other charge hereby, but the bringing and leauing of two printed copies of the book to be printed, as is before expressed of written Copies, with all such additions as the Author hath made.

XIX. *Item*, The Court doth declare, as formerly, so now, That no Apprentices be taken into any printing-houfe, otherwise then according to this proportion following, (*viz.*) euery Master-Printer that is, or hath bene Master or vpper Warden of his Company, may haue three Apprentices at one time and no more, and euery Master-printer that is of the Liuerie of his Company,

may have two Apprentices at one time and no more, and every Master-printer of the Yeomanry of the Company may have one Apprentice at one time and no more, neither by Copartnership, binding at the Scriueners, nor any other way whatfoeuer; neither shall it be lawfull for any Master-Printer when any Apprentice or Apprentices, shall run or be put away, to take another Apprentice, or other Apprentices in his or their place or places, vnllesse the name or names of him or them so gone away, be rased out of the Hall-booke, and never admitted again, vpon paine of being for euer difabled of the vse of a Presse or printing-houfe, and of such further punishment, as by this Court or the high Commission Court respectiuey, as the seuerall causes shall require, shall be thought fit to be imposed.

XX. *Item*, The Court doth likewise declare, that because a great part of the secret printing in corners hath been caused for want of orderly imployment for Iourneymen printers, Therefore the Court doth hereby require the Master and Wardens of the Company of Stationers, to take especiall care that all Iourneymen-printers, who are free of the Company of Stationers, shall be set to worke, and imployed within their owne Company of Stationers; for which purpose the Court doth also order and declare, that if any Iourneymen-Printer, and free of the Company of Stationers, who is of honest, and good behauiour, and able in his trade, do want imployment, he shall repaire to the Master and Wardens of the Companie of Stationers, and they or one of them, taking with him or them one or two of the Master Printers, shall go along with the said Iourneymen-Printer, and shall offer his seruice in the first place to the Master Printer vnder whom he serued his Apprentifhip, if he be liuing, and do continue an allowed Printer, or otherwise to any other Master Printer, whom the Master and Wardens of the said Company shall thinke fit. And every Master Printer shall bee bound to imploy one Iourneymen, being so offered to him, and more, if need shall so require.

and it shall be so adjudged to come to his share, according to the proportion of his Apprentices and employments, by the Master and Wardens of the Company of Stationers, although he the said Master Printer with his Apprentice or Apprentices be able without the helpe of the said Journeyman or Journeymen to discharge his owne worke, vpon paine of such punishment, as by this Court, or the high Commision Court respectiuey, as the seuerall causes shall require, shall be thought fit.

XXI. *Item,* The Court doth declare, That if the Master and Wardens of the Companie of Stationers, or any of them, shall refuse or neglect to go along with any honest and sufficient Journey-man Printer, so desiring their assistance, to finde him employment, vpon complaint and prooffe made thereof, he, or they so offending, shall suffer imprisonment, and such other punishment, as by this court, or the high Commision Court respectiuey, as the seuerall causes shall require, shall be thought fit to be imposed. But in case any Master Printer hath more employment then he is able to discharge with helpe of his Apprentice or Apprentices, it shall be lawful for him to require the helpe of any Journey-man or Journey-men-Printers, who are not employed, and if the said Journeyman, or Journey-men-Printers so required, shall refuse employment, or neglect it when hee or they haue vndertaken it, he, or they shall suffer imprisonment, and vndergo such punishment, as this Court shall thinke fit.

XXII. *Item,* The Court doth hereby declare, that it doth not hereby restraine the Printers of either of the Vniuersities from taking what number of Apprentices for their seruice in printing there, they themselves shall thinke fit. Prouided alwayes, that the said Printers in the Vniuersities shall employ all their owne Journey-men within themselves, and not suffer any of their said Journey-men to go abroad for employment to the Printers of *London* (vnlesse vpon occasion some Printers of *London* desire to employ some extraordinary Workman or Workmen amongst them, without pre-

judice to their owne Iourneymen, who are Freemen) vpon such penalty as the Chancellor of either of the Vniuersities for the time being, shall thinke fit to inflict vpon the delinquents herein.

XXIII. *Item*, That no Master-printer shall employ either to worke at the Case, or the Presse, or otherwise about his printing, any other person or persons, then such onely as are Free-men, or Apprentices to the Trade or mystery of Printing, vnder paine of being disabled for euer after to keep or vse any Presse or Printing house, and such further punishment as by this Court, or the high Commission Court respectiue, as the feuerall causes shall require, shall bee thought fit to be imposed.

XXIV. *Item*, The Court doth hereby declare their firme resolution, that if any person or persons, that is not allowed Printer, shall hereafter presume to set vpon any Presse for printing, or shall worke at any such Presse, or Set, or Compose any Letters to bee wrought by any such Presse; hee, or they so offending, shall from time to time, by the Order of this Court, bee fet in the Pillorie, and Whipt through the Citie of *London*, and suffer such other punishment, as this Court shall Order or thinke fit to inflict vpon them, vpon Complaint or prooue of such offence or offences, or shalbe otherwise punished, as the Court of High Commission shall thinke fit, and is agreeable to their Commission.

XXV. *Item*, That for the better discouery of printing in Corners without licence; The Master and Wardens of the Company of Stationers for the time being, or any two licensed Master-Printers, which shall be appointed by the Lord Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, or Lord B. of *London* for the time being, shall haue power and authority, to take vnto themselues such assistance as they shall think needfull, and to search what houses and shops (and at what time they shall think fit) especially Printing-houses, and to view what is in printing, and to call for the licence to see whether it be licenced or no, and if not, to feize vpon

fo much as is printed, together with the feuerall offenders, and to bring them before the Lord Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, or the Lord Bishop of *London* for the time being, that they or either of them may take fuch further order therein as fhall appertaine to Iuftice.

XXVI. *Item*, The Court doth declare, that it fhall be lawfull alfo for the faid Searchers, if vpon fearch they find any book or bookes, or part of booke or books which they fufpect to containe matter in it or them, contrary to the doctrine and difcipline of the Church of *England*, or againft the State and Government, vpon fuch fufpition to feize vpon fuch book or books, or part of booke or books, and to bring it, or them, to the Lord Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, or the Lord Bishop of *London* for the time being, who fhall take fuch further courfe therein, as to their Lordships, or either of them fhall feeme fit.

XXVII. *Item*, The Court doth order and declare, that there fhall be foure Founders of letters for printing allowed, and no more, and doth hereby nominate, allow, and admit thefe perfons, whose names hereafter follow, to the number of foure, to be letter-Founders for the time being, (viz) *John Grismand*, *Thomas Wright*, *Arthur Nichols*, *Alexander Fifeild*. And further, the Court doth Order and Decree, that it fhall be lawfull for the Lord Arch-bishop of *Canterbury*, or the Lord Bishop of *London* for the time being, taking unto him or them, fix other high Commiffioners, to fupply the place or places of thefe who are now allowed Founders of letters by this Court, as they fhall fall void by death, cenfure, or otherwife.

Prouided, that they exceede not the number of foure, fet downe by this Court. And if any perfon or perfons, not being an allowed Founder, fhall notwithstanding take vpon him, or them, to Found, or caft letters for printing, vpon complaint and prooffe made of fuch offence, or offences, he, or they fo offending, fhall fuffer fuch punishment, as this Court, or the high Commiffion court refpectiuely, as the feuerall

caufes fhall require, fhall think fit to inflit vpon them.

XXVIII. *Item*, That no Mafter-Founder whatfoeuer fhall keepe aboue two Apprentices at one time, neither by Copartnerfhip, binding at the Scriueners, nor any other way whatfoeuer, neither fhall it be lawfull for any Mafter-Founder, when any Apprentice, or Apprentices fhall run, or be put away, to take another Apprentice, or other Apprentices in his, or their place or places, vnleffe the name or names of him, or them fo gone away, be rafed out of the Hall-booke of the Company, where of the Mafter-Founder is free, and never admitted again, vpon pain of fuch punifhment, as by this Court, or the high Commiffion refpectiue, as the feuerall caufes fhall require, fhall be thought fit to bee impofed.

XXIX. *Item*, That all Iourney-men-Founders be imployed by the Mafter-Founders of the faid trade, and that idle Iourney-men be compelled to worke after the fame manner, and vpon the fame penalties, as in cafe of the Iourney men-Printers is before fpecified.

XXX. *Item*, That no Mafter-Founder of letters, fhall imploy any other perfon or perfons in any worke belonging to the cafting or founding of letters, then fuch only as are freemen or apprentices to the trade of founding letters, faue onely in the pulling off the knots of mettle hanging at the ends of the letters when they are firft caft, in which work it fhall be lawfull for euery Mafter-Founder, to imploy one boy only that is not, nor hath bene bound to the trade of Founding letters, but not otherwife, vpon pain of being for euer difabled to vfe or exercife that art, and fuch further punifhment, as by this Court, or the high Commiffion Court refpectiue, as the feuerall caufes fhall require, be thought fit to be impofed.

XXXI. *Item*, That euery perfon or perfons whatfoeuer, which fhall at any time or times hereafter, by his or their confeffion, or otherwife by proof be conuict of any of the offences, by this, or any other Decree of this Court made, fhall before fuch time as he or they

shall be discharged, and ouer and aboute their fine and punishment, as aforesaid, be bound with good sureties, never after to transgresse, or offend in that or the like kinde, for which he, or they shalbe so conuicted and punished, as aforesaid; And that all and euery the forfeitures aforesaid (excepting all seditious schismaticall Bookes, or Pamphlets, which this Court doth hereby Order to bee presently burnt) And except such Bookes, as the forfeitures are already granted by Letters Patents, shall be diuided and disposed of, as the high Commission Court shall find fit. Alwaies prouiding that one moitie be to the King.

XXXII. *Item*, That no Merchant, Master, or Owner of any Ship or Vessell, or any other person or persons whatsoever shall hereafter presume to land, or put on shore any Booke or Bookes, or the part of any Booke or Books, to be imported from beyond the seas, in any Port, Hauen, Creek, or other place whatsoever within the Realme of *England*, but only in the Port of the City of *London*, to the end the said Bookes may there be viewed, as aforesaid: And the seuerall Officers of His Maiesties Ports are hereby required to take notice thereof.

XXXIII. *Item*, That whereas there is an agreement betwixt Sir *Thomas Bodley* Knight, Founder of the Vniuersity Library at *Oxford*, and the Master, Wardens, and Afsistants of the Company of Stationers (*viz.*) That one Booke of euery sort that is new printed, or reprinted with additions, be sent to the Vniuersitie of *Oxford* for the vse of the publique Librarie there; The Court doth hereby Order, and declare, That euery Printer shall reserue one Book new printed, or reprinted by him, with additions, and shall before any publique venting of the said book, bring it to the Common Hall of the Company of Stationers, and deliuer it to the Officer thereof to be sent to the Librarie at *Oxford* accordingly, vpon paine of imprisonment, and such further Order and Direction therein, as to this Court, or the high Commission Court respectiuey, as the seuerall causes shall require, shall be thought fit.

FINIS.

An Order made by the Honourable House of Commons.

Die Sabbati, 29, Januarii. 1641 [1642].

IT is ordered that the Master and Wardens of the Company of Stationers shall be required to take especiall Order, that the Printers doe neither print, nor reprint any thing without the name and consent of the Author: And that if any Printer shall notwithstanding print or reprint any thing without the consent and name of the Author, that he shall then be proceeded against, as both Printer and Author thereof, and their names to be certified to this House. *II. Ellinge Cler. Parl. do. Com.*

Die Iovis 9. Martii 1642 [1643].

An Order of the Commons assembled in Parliament For regulating Printing.

IT is this day Ordered by the Commons House of Parliament, That the Committee for Examinations, or any foure of them, have power to appoint such persons as they thinke fit, to search in any house or place where there is iust cause of suspition, That Presses are kept and employed in the printing of scandalous and lying Pamphlets, and that they do demollish and take away such Presses and their materials, and the Printers Nuts and Spindles which they find so employed, and bring the Master-Printers, and Workmen Printers before the said Committee; and that the Committee or any four of them, have power to commit to prison any of the said Printers, or any other persons that do contrive, or publicly or privately vend sell, or publish any Pamphlet scandalous to his Majesty or the proceedings of both or either Houses of Parliament, or that shall refuse to suffer any Houses or Shops to be searched, where such presses or pamphlets as aforesaid are kept: And that the persons employed by the said Committee shall have power to seize such scandalous and lying pamphlets as they find upon search, to be in any shopp or warhouse, sold, or dispersed by any person whomsoever, and to bring the persons (that so kept published, or sold the same,) before the Committee; And that such persons as the Committee shall commit for any offences aforesaid, shall not be released till the parties employed for the apprehending of the said persons, and seizing their presses and materialls, be satisfied for their paines and charges. And all Iustices of the Peace, Captains, Officers, and Constables, are required to be assisting in the apprehending of any the persons aforesaid, And in searching of their shoppes, Houses, and Warehouses; And likewise all Iustices of peace, Officers, and Constables, are hereby required from time to time to apprehend such persons as shall publish, vend, or sell the said pamphlets. And it is further ordered, That this Order be forthwith printed and published, to the end that notice may be taken thereof, that the contemners of this Order may be left inexcusable for their offence. [*A Collection of all the publicke Orders Ordinances and Declarations, &c. by EDWARD HUSBAND, p 1. London. 1646.*]

AN
O R D E R
OF THE
LORDS and COMMONS

Assembled in Parliament.

For the

Regulating of Printing,

And

For suppressing the great late abuses
and frequent disorders in Printing many false,
Scandalous, Seditious, Libellous, and unlicensed
Pamphlets, to the great defamation of
Religion and Government.

Also, authorizing the Masters & Wardens of
the Company of *Stationers* to make diligent search, feize
and carry away all such Books as they shall finde Printed, or
reprinted by any man having no lawfull interest in
them, being entred into the Hall Book to
any other man as his proper Copies.

Die Mercurii. 14 June. 1643.

Ordered by the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament,
that this Order shall be forthwith printed and published.

J. Brown Cler. Parliamentorum:
Hen. Elsing Cler. D. Com.

Die Mercurii, 14 Junii. 1643.



HEREAS divers good Orders have bin lately made by both Houses of Parliament, for suppressing the great late abuses and frequent disorders in Printing many, false forged, scandalous, seditious, libellous, and unlicensed Papers, Pamphlets, and Books to the great defamation of Religion and government. Which orders (notwithstanding the diligence of the Company of *Stationers*, to put them in full execution) have taken little or no effect: By reason the bill in preparation, for redresse of the said disorders, hath hitherto bin retarded through the present distractions, and very many, aswell *Stationers* and *Printers*, as others of fundry other professions not free of the *Stationers* Company, have taken upon them to set up sundry private Printing Presses in corners, and to print, vend, publish and disperse Books, pamphlets and papers, in such multitudes, that no industry could be sufficient to discover or bring to punishment, all the severall abounding delinquents; And by reason that divers of the *Stationers* Company and others being Delinquents (contrary to former orders and the constant custome used among the said Company) have taken liberty to Print, Vend and publish, the most profitable vendible Copies of Books, belonging to the Company and other *Stationers*, especially of such Agents as are employed in putting the said Orders in Execution, and that by way of revenge for giving information against them to the Houses for their Delinquences in Printing, to the great prejudice of the said Company of *Stationers* and Agents, and to their discouragement in this publik service.

It is therefore Ordered by the Lords and Commons in *Parliament*, That no Order or Declaration of both, or either House of *Parliament* shall be printed by any, but by order of one or both the said Houses: Nor

other Book, Pamphlet, paper, nor part of any such Book, Pamphlet, or paper, shall from henceforth be printed, bound, stitced or put to sale by any person or persons whatsoever, unlesse the same be first approved of and licenced under the hands of such person or persons as both, or either of the said Houses shall appoint for the licensing of the same, and entred in the Register Book of the Company of *Stationers*, according to Ancient custom, and the Printer thereof to put his name thereto. And that no person or persons shall hereafter print, or cause to be reprinted any Book or Books, or part of Book, or Books heretofore allowed of and granted to the said Company of *Stationers* for their relief and maintenance of their poore, without the licence or consent of the Master, Wardens and Assistants of the said Company; Nor any Book or Books lawfully licenced and entred in the Register of the said Company for any particular member thereof, without the licence and consent of the owner or owners thereof. Nor yet import any such Book or Books, or part of Book or Books formerly Printed here, from beyond the Seas, upon paine of forfeiting the same to the Owner, or Owners of the Copies of the said Books, and such further punishment as shall be thought fit.

And the Master and Wardens of the said Company, the Gentleman Usher of the House of *Peers*, the Sergeant of the Commons House and their deputies, together with the persons formerly appointed by the Committee of the House of Commons for Examinations, are hereby Authorized and required, from time to time, to make diligent search in all places, where they shall think meete, for all unlicensed Printing Presses, and all Presses any way employed in the printing of scandalous or unlicensed Papers, Pamphlets, Books, or any Copies of Books belonging to the said Company, or any member thereof, without their approbation and consents, and to seize and carry away such Printing Presses Letters, together with the Nut, Spindle,

and other materialls of every fuch irregular Printer, which they find fo mifemployed, unto the Common Hall of the faid Company, there to be defaced and made unferviceable according to Ancient Custom ; And likewife to make diligent fearch in all fufpected Printing-houfes, Ware-houfes, Shops and other places for fuch fcandalous and unlicensed Books, papers, Pamphlets, and all other Books, not entred, nor figned with the Printers name as aforefaid, being printed, or reprinted by fuch as have no lawfull intereft in them, or any way contrary to this Order, and the fame to feize and carry away to the faid common hall, there to remain till both or either Houfe of *Parliament* fhall difpofe thereof, And likewife to apprehend all Authors, Printers, and other perfons whatfoever employed in compiling, printing, fitching, binding, publishing and difperſing of the faid fcandalous, unlicensed, and unwarrantable papers, books and pamphlets as aforefaid, and all thoſe who fhall reſiſt the faid Parties in ſearching after them, and to bring them afore either of the Houſes or the Committee of Examinations, that fo they may receive fuch further puniſhments, as their Offences fhall demerit, and not to be releaſed untill they have given ſatisfaction to the Parties employed in their apprehenſion for their paines and charges, and given ſufficient caution not to offend in like ſort for the future. And all Juſtices of the Peace, Captaines, Conſtables and other officers, are hereby ordered and required to be aiding, and aſſiſting to the foreſaid perfons in the due execution of all, and ſingular the premiſſes and in the apprehenſion of all Offenders againſt the fame. And in caſe of oppoſition to break open Doores and Locks.

And it is further ordered, that this Order be forthwith Printed and Published, to the end that notice may be taken thereof, and all Contemners of it left inexcufable.

FINIS.

AREOPAGITICA;

A

SPEECH

OF

Mr. JOHN MILTON

For the Liberty of VNLICENC'D

PRINTING,

To the PARLAMENT of ENGLAND.

Τὸ λυθρον δ' ἐλεῖσσι, εἰ τις θέλει πόλει
Χρησόν τι βαλευμ' εἰς μέσον φέρειν, ἔχων.
Καὶ ταῖθ' ὁ χρηζων, λαμπρὸς ἔσθ', ὁ μὴ θέλων,
Σιγά, τι τῶτων ἐσιν ἰσαίτερον πολεῖ;

Euripid. Hicetid.

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

Euripid. Hicetid.

LONDON,

Printed in the Yeare, 1644.



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 accessse 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 feare 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 foremost 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 Discourse propos'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 sleepe disadvantage 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 esteeme the diminution of his glory, 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 vertues, I might be justly reckn'd among the tardiest, and the unwillingest of them that praise yee. Neverthelesse 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 perswasion 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 impaire your merits with a triviall 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 equal Govern-
ment, 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 hautineffe of Prelates and cabin Coun-
sellours that usurpt of late, when as they shall observe
yee in the midd'ft 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 Procla-
mation. 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 gainfay, 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* state-
lines. And out of those ages, to whose polite wisdom
and letters we ow that we are not yet *Gothes* and *Jut-
landers*, 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 profess the study of wisdom and elo-
quence, not only in their own Country, but in other
Lands, that Cities and Siniories heard them gladly, and
with great respect, if they had ought in publick to
admonish the State. Thus did *Dion Pruseus* a stranger
and a privat Orator counsell the *Rhodians* against a
former Edict: and I abound with other like examples,
which to set heer would be superfluous. But if from
the industry of a life wholly dedicated to st. idious 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 who receiv'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 thinke ye were not, I know not what should withhold me from presenting ye with a fit instance wherein to shew both that love of truth which ye eminently professe, and that uprightnesse 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.*³ *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 *quadregesimal* 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 fort the Books be; and that this Order avails nothing to the suppressing of scandalous, seditious, and libellous Books, which were mainly intended to be suppressed. Last, that it will be primely to the discouragement of all learning, and the stop of Truth, not only by the 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, imprifon, and do sharpeft juftice on them as malefactors: For Books are not abfolutely dead things, but doe contain a potencie of life in them to be as active as that foule was whofe progeny they are; nay they do preferve as in a violl the pureft efficacie and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as thofe fabulous Dragons teeth; and being fown up and down, may chance to fpring up armed men. And yet on the other hand unleffe warineffe be us'd, as good almoft kill a Man as kill a good Book; who kills a Man kills a reasonable creature, Gods Image; but hee who deftroyes a good Booke, kills reason it felfe, 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 mafter fpirit, imbalm'd and treafur'd up on purpose to a life beyond life. 'Tis true, no age can reftore a life, whereof perhaps there is no great loffe; and revolutions of ages doe not oft recover the loffe of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole Nations fare the worfe. We fhould be wary therefore what perfecution we raife againft the living labours of publick men, how we fpill that feafon'd life of man preferv'd and ftor'd up in Books; fince we fee a kinde of homicide may be thus committed, fometimes a martyrdom, and if it extend to the whole impreffion, a kinde of maffacre, whereof the execution ends not in the flaying of an elementall life, but ftrikes at that ethereall and fift effence, the breath of reason it felfe, flaiies an immortality rather then a life. But left I fhould be condemn'd of introducing licence, while I oppofe Licencing, I refufe not the paines to be fo much Historicall, as will ferve to fhew what hath been done by ancient and famous Commonwealths, againft this diforder, till the very time that this project of licencing crept out of the *Inquifition*, was caught up by our Prelates, and hath caught fome of our Prefbyters.

In *Athens* where Books and Wits were ever buſier then in any other part of *Greece*, I find 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 Judges 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 Comœdia*, 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 ſuppreſt, 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 ſtill of a rouſing Sermon. That other leading City of *Greece*, *Lacedæmon*, conſidering that *Lycurgus* their Law-giver was ſo addiçted 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 muſeleſs 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 strain than their own souldierly ballads and roundels could reach to: Or if it were for his broad verses, they were not therein so cautious, but they were as 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 roughness, resembling most of the *Lacedæmonian* guise, 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 taste 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 dismiss them speedily, and to banish all such *Attick* babblers out of *Italy*. But *Scipio* and others of the noblest Senators withstood him and his old *Sabin* austerly; 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 makers punish't 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 verifies his Epicurism to *Memmius*, and had the honour to be fet 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 Satyricall ſharpneſſe, or naked plainnes of *Lucilius*, or *Catullus*, or *Flaccus*, by any order prohibited. And for matters of State, the ſtory of *Titius Livius*, though it extoll'd that part which *Pompey* held, was not therefore ſuppreſt by *Oclavius Cæſar* of the other Faction. But that *Vaſo* 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 Emperours 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 generall Councils; and not till then were prohibited, or burnt by authority of the Emperor. As for the writings of Heathen authors, unleſſe they were plain 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 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 the year 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 *Huffe* 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 engendering together brought forth, or perfected 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 slay 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 *S. 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 Rabatta Vicar of *Florence*.

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

Nicolò Cini, Chancellor of *Florence*.

Attending the precedent relation, it is allow'd that this present work of *Davanzati*⁴ may be Printed,

Vincent Rabatta, &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 feare their next designe will be to get into their custody the licencing of that which they say **Claudius* intended, but went not through with. Voutfate to see another of their forms the Roman stamp :

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

* Quo veniam daret ilatum crepitumque ventris in convivio emittendi. Sueton. in Claudio.

Belcastro, Vicegerent.

Imprimatur,

Friar *Nicolò Rodolphi* Master of the holy Palace.

Sometimes 5 *Imprimatures* 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 pretty responseries, these are the deare 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 achievements of liberty, will not easily finde servile letters anow to spell such a dictatorie presumption 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 cross-leg'd over the nativity of any mans intellectual off spring; but if it prov'd a Monster, who denies, but that it was justly burnt, or sunk in the Sea. But that a Book in wors 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 Colleagues, ere it can passe the ferry backward into light, was never heard before, till that mysterious iniquity provokt and troubl'd at the first entrance of Reformation, fought 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 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 forborne 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 beleeve, 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 properties it has. But I have first to finish as was propounded, what is to be

thought in generall of reading Books, what ever fort they be, and whether be more the benefit, or the harm that thence proceeds?

Not to insist upon the examples of *Moses*, *Daniel* and *Paul*, who were skillfull in all the learning of the Egyptians, Caldeans, and Greeks, which could not probably be without reading their Books of all forts, 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 both lawfull and profitable, as was then evidently perceiv'd, when *Julian* the Apostat, and fittest 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 seven liberall 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 faith 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 who devis'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 fantasme 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, and had chatiz'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; infomuch 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 himselfe 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 avers 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 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 unapplicable 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 discrete and judicious Reader serve in many respects to discover, to confute, to forewarn, and to illustrate. Whereof what better witness can ye expect I should produce, then one of your own now sitting in Parliament, the chief of learned men reputed in this Land, Mr. *Selden*, whose volume of naturall and 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 and 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 himselfe tab'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 a perpetuall 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 shew 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 wearifome. As for the burning of those Ephesian books by St. *Pauls* converts, tis reply'd the books were magick, 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 fort usefully. Good and evill 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 in so many cunning resemblances hardly to be discern'd, that those confused feeds which were impos'd on *Psyche* as an incessant labour to cull out, and sort afunder, 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 warfaring Christian. I cannot praise a fugitive and cloister'd vertue, unexercis'd and unbreath'd, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortall 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 whiteneffe is but an excrementall whiteneffe; Which was the reason

why our sage and ferious 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 furvay of vice is in this world so necessary to the constituting of human vertue, and the seanning 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 Talmudest what ails the modesty of his marginall 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 Papiist 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 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'd in merriment his Vicar of hell. By which compendious way all the contagion that foreine books can infuse, will finde a passage to the people farre easier and shorter then 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 presse never so severely. But on the other side that infection which is from books of controverfie 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 Papisticall book 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 Prophefie 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 discours writt'n at *Delf*, which at first he took in hand to confute. Seeing therefore that those books, and those in great abundance which are likeliest to taint both life and doctrine, cannot be suppress'd 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

what ever 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 flopt, 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 enterprife of licencing can be exempted from the number of vain and impossible attempts. And he who were pleafantly 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 and difpredders both of vice and error, how shall the licencers themselves be confided in, unleffe 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 wisdom, 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 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'd we must not expose our selves 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 compote 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 working mineralls, 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, for 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 bin rather 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 *Dionysus*, who had little need of such trash to spend his time on? But that he knew this licencing of Poems had reference and dependence 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 other collaterall injunctions must needs be vain and fruitlesse. For if they fell upon one kind of stricteesse, unlesse their care were equal to regulat all other things of like aptnes 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 delightfull 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 ghittars 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 dangerous Frontispices set to sale; who shall prohibit them, shall twenty licencers? The villages also must have their visitors to enquire what lectures the bagpipe and the rebbock 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 more Nationall corruption, for which England hears ill abroad, then household gluttony; who shall be the reſtors 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 discours'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'ft whereof 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 remiffenes, 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, what grammercy to be sober, just, or continent? many there be that complain of divin Providence for suffering *Adam* to transgresse, foolish

tongues! when God gave him reason, he gave him freedom to choofe, for reason is but choofing; he had bin elfe a meer artificiall *Adam*, fuch an *Adam* as he is in the motions. We our felves eſteem not of that obedience, or love, or gift, which is of force: God therefore left him free, fet before him a provoking object, ever almoſt in his eyes herein conſiſted his merit, herein the right of his reward, the praiſe of his abſtinance. Wherefore did he creat paſſions within us, pleaſures round about us, but that theſe rightly temper'd are 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 diminifhing though ſome part of it may for a time be withdrawn from ſome perſons, it cannot from all, in ſuch a univerſall 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 vertu: 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 rigor 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 vertu, 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 evil. And

were I the choofer, a dram of well-doing should be prefer'd before 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 what ever thing we hear or see, fitting, 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 Courtlibell against the Parliament and City, Printed, as the wet sheets can witness, and dispers't among us for all that licencing can doe? 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 remiss'd or 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 forreign books be deliver'd out of custody, till they have bin read over. This office will require the 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 faine to catalogue all those Printers who are found frequently offending, and forbid 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 honest, the wiser, the chaster, since all the inquisitionall rigor that hath bin 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 be deny'd but that he who is made judge to sit upon the birth, or death of books whether they may be waisted 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 behooves 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 which I cannot beleve 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 doubleffe 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 sollicit

their licence, are testimony enough. Seeing therefore those who now possess 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.

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 Church revennu'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 flood or fell with the Clergy: nor could I ever but hold it for a fordid 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 learning 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 and 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 wherein 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 be inform'd in what he writes, as well as any that writ before him; if in this the most consummat act of his fidelity and ripenessse, 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 unleasur'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 dishonor 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 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, and 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 coits distance 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 my governours, 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 stufte; 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 fearfulneſſe, or the preſumptuous raſhneſſe 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 choiſeſt 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 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 manuall 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 Philifims, not to be allow'd the ſharpening of our own axes and coulter, but we muſt repair from all quarters to twenty licencing forges. Had any one writt'n and divulg'd erroneous things and 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 apprehend 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 as 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 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 despis'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 fuch numbers, and fuch volumes, as have now wellnigh made all other books unfalable, fhould not be armor enough againft one fingle *enchiridion*, without the caſtle of St *Angelo* of an *Imprimatur*.

And left fom fhould perfwade ye, Lords and Commons, that theſe arguments of lerned mens discouragement at this your order, are meer flouriſhes, and not reall, 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 *Philofophic* freedom, as they ſuppos'd England was, while themſelvs did nothing but bemoan the fervil condition 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 otherwiſe then the Franciſcan and Dominican licencers thought. And though I knew that England then was groaning loudeſt under the Prelaticall yoaik, nevertheleſſe I tooke it as a pledge of future happines, that other Nations were ſo perfwaded 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 Parlament againſt an order of licencing; and that ſo generally, that when I 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 persuasions, that I would not despair to lay together that which just reason should bring into my mind, toward the removal of an undeserved thralldom upon learning. That this is not therefore the disburdning of a particular fancie, 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 suspitious 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 be gueft what is intended by som but a second tyranny over learning: and will soon put it out of controverfie 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 Covenants and Protestations that we have made, this is not to put down 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 canonicall flight of *commuting* our penance. To startle thus betimes at a meer unlicenc't

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 people's 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 fought 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 enthrall'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 authority*, saith the Vicount St. Albans, *and a forbid'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 disabling 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 beleeveth 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 putt off to another, then the charge and care of their Religion. There be, who know 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 shoulde he doe? faine he would have the name to be religious, faine he would bear up with his neighbours in that. What does he therefore, but resolveth to give over toyling, 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 become 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 *Bethany* and *Ierusalem*, his Religion walks abroad at eight, and

leavs his kind entertainer in the shop trading all day without his religion.

Another fort there be who when they hear that all things shall be order'd, all things regulated and fet'd; nothing writt'n but what pass'es through the custom-house of certain Publicans that have the tunaging and the poundaging of all free spok'n truth, will strait give themselves up into your hands, mak'em and 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 framework, as any January could freeze together.

Nor much better will be the consequence ev'n among the Clergy themselves; 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 doctrinall heads, 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 disjoyning variously 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'n up 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 forts 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 not impal'd, if his back dore be not secur'd by the rigid licencer, but that a bold book may now and then issue 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 ourselves 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 ought 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 found. Christ urg'd it as wherewith to justify 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 towards the true knowledge of what we seem to know. For how much it hurts and hinders the licensors themselves in the calling of their Min-

istry, more then any fecular employment, if they will discharge that office as they ought, fo that of neceffity they muft neglect either the one duty or the other, I infift not, becaufe it is a particular, but leave it to their own confcience, how they will decide it there.

There is yet behind of what I purpos'd to lay open, the incredible loffe, and detriment that this plot of licencing puts us to, more then if fom enemy at fea fhould flop up all our hav'ns and ports, and creeks, it hinders and retards the importation of our richeft Marchandize, Truth; nay it was firft eftablifht and put in practice by Antichriftian malice and myftery on fet purpose to extinguifh, if it were poffible, the light of Reformation, and to fettle falshood; little differing from that policie wherewith the Turk upholds his *Alcoran*, by the prohibition of Printing. 'Tis not deny'd, but gladly confeft, we are to fend our thanks and vows to heav'n, louder then moft of Nations, for that great meafure of truth which we enjoy, efppecially in thofe 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 utmoft profpect of reformation, that the mortalle glaffe wherein we contemplate, can fhew us, till we come to *beatific* vifion, that man by this very opinion declares, that he is yet farre fhort of Truth.

Truth indeed came once into the world with her divine Mafter, and was a perfect fhape moft glorious to look on: but when he afcended, and his Apoftles after him were laid afleep, then ftrait arofe a wicked race of deceivers, who as that ftory goes of the *Ægyptian Typhon* with his confpirators, how they dealt with the good *Ofiris*, took the virgin Truth, hewd her lovely form into a thoufand peeces, and fcatter'd them to the four winds. From that time ever fince, the fad friends of Truth, fuch as durft appear, imitating the carefull fearch that *Ifis* made for the mangl'd body of *Ofiris*, went up and down gathering up limb by limb ftill 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 immortal feature of loveliness 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 finites 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, was giv'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 dissent 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 suppress 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 *homogeneous*, 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 wherof ye are, and wherof ye are the governours: a Nation not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit, acute to invent, futtle and finewy 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 have bin 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*, prefer'd the naturall wits of Britain, before the labour'd studies of the French. Nor is it for nothing that the grave and frugal *Transilvanian* sends out yearly from as farre as the mountanous borders of *Russia*, and beyond the *Hereynian* wilderness, not their youth, but their slay'd men, to learn our language, and our *theologic* arts. Yet that which is above all this, the favour and 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 founded forth the first tidings and trumpet of Reformation to all *Europ*. And had it not bin the obstinat perversnes of our Prelats against the divine and admirable spirit of *Wicklef*, to suppress him as a schismatic and *innovator*, perhaps neither the *Bohemian Huss* 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 the 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 reform-

ing 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 conviction. 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 soyle, 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 in 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 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 irrationall 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 rejoicing 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 in goodnesse, as *Joshua* then was, envy them. They fret, and out of their own weaknes are in agony, lest those divisions and subdivisions will undoe us. The adverfarie 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 beware untill hee 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 sollicitude honest perhaps though over timorous of them that vex in his behalf, but shall laugh in the end, at those malicious applauders of our differences, I have these reasons to perswade me.

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 rumor'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 discours'd or 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 preface 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 to rationally faculties, and those in the acutest, and the perrest operations of wit and fittlety, it argues in what good plight and constitution the body is, so when 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 solideest and sublimest points of controversie, and new invention, it betok'n us not degenerated, nor drooping to a fatall decay, but casting off the old and wrincl'd skin of corruption to outlive these pangs and wax young again, entring the glorious waies of Truth and prospe-

rous 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 mid-day 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 prognosticat a year of sects and schisms.

What should 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? Beleeve it, Lords and Commons, they who counsell ye to such a suppressing, doe as good as bid ye suppress yourselves; 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 enlightn'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 mercileffe law, that fathers may dispatch at will their own children. And who shall then sticke 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 unfutableness 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'd his life and fortunes to the Church and Commonwealth, we had not now mist and bewayld 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*.⁵ 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 and peacefull. 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 difconformity to our selves. The book it self will tell us more at large being publisht to the world, and dedicated to the Parliament by him who both for his life and for his death deserves, that what advice he left be not laid by without perusal.

And now the time in speciall is, by priviledge to wrie and speak what may help to the furdur discussing of matters in agitation. The Temple of *Janus* with his two *controversal* faces might now not unsignificantly 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 furest 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 hid'n treasures* early and late, that another order shall enjoyn us to know nothing but by statute. When a man hath bin labouring the hardest labour 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 sculk, to lay ambushments, to keep a narrow bridge of licencing where the challenger should passe, though it be valour enough in shouldiership, is but weaknes and cowardise in the wars of Truth. For who knows not that Truth is strong next to the Almighty; she needs no policies, no strategems, no licencings to make her victorious, those are the shifts and the defences that error uses against her power: give her but room, and do not bind her when she sleeps, for then she speaks not true, as the old *Prcteus* did, who spake oracles

only when he was caught and 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 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 chiefstrong 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 enthrall'd 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 more

wholsome, 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 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 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 a generall reforming, '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 enlightn'd steps 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 Chappell 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 bruife 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 erroneous who appear to be the leading ſchismaticks, what withholdſ us but our ſloth, our ſelf-will, and diſtruſt in the right cauſe, that we doe not give them gentle meetings and gentle diſmiſſions, that we debate not and examin the matter throughly with liberall 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 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 Pharifees, and we in the haſt of a precipitant zeal ſhall make no diſtinſtion, but reſolve to ſtop their mouths,

because we fear they come with new and dangerous opinions, as we commonly fore-judge 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 Parliament, 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 Saviour gave 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 evil hath abounded in the Church by this lett of licencing, and what good they themselves have begun by transgressing it, be 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 puft 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 publisht next before this, that no book be Printed, unlesse the Printers and the Authors name, or at least the Printers be register'd.⁶ Those which otherwise come forth, if they be found mischievous and libellous, the fire and the executioner will be the timeliest and the most effectuall remedy, that mans prevention can use. For this *authentic* Spanish policy of licencing books, if I have said ought, will prove the most unlicenc't book it self within a short while; and was the immediat image of a Star-chamber decree⁷ 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 gueffe 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 beleeve 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-felling; 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 vassals. 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.^g

The End.

1. AREOPAGITICA—that which appertains to the Areopagus. There is at Athens a hill, formerly called ὁ Ἄρειος πάγος, 'the hill of Ares,' the 'Mar's Hill' of Acts xvii. 22, whereon used to assemble a Council, called 'The Council of the Areopagus.' Besides supreme judicial authority in cases of wilful murder, this Council possessed very large social influence; having the general undefined superintendence of religion, morals, education, and the like. It was held in veneration by the whole people. It appears to have been strongly conservative in tone, and seems to have occupied a somewhat similar position in the Athenian republic to that of the House of Lords in the British constitution.

2. There were two Wardens in the Stationers' Company.

3. Reprinted at page 25.

4. BERNARDO DAVANZATI BOSTICHI [b. 30 August 1529—d. 20 March 1606]. A Florentine author of considerable repute. He wrote several works. I have not, as yet, been able to identify the particular one referred to by Milton.

5. ROBERT GREVIL, LORD BROOKE—The title of this book is, *A discourse opening the nature of that Episcopacie, which is exercised in England. Wherein, with all Humility, are represented some Considerations tending to the much-desired Peace, and long expected Reformation, of This our Mother Church.* By the Right Honourable ROBERT Lord BROOKE.—London, Printed by R. C. for Samuel Cartwright, and are to be sold at the signe of the Hand and Bible in Ducke-Lane 1641. This Lord Brooke was born in 1607, and was the son of the celebrated Fulk Grevil, Lord Brooke of Beauchamps-court, the friend of Sir Philip Sidney. He was killed on 2 March 1642, while commanding the parliamentary forces attacking the Church-cloze at Litchfield. 'It fell out, that he having planted his great guns against the South-East-gate of the Cloze, he was, tho' harneffed with plate-armour cap-a-pe, shot from the church in the eye by one Diot, a Clergy-man's son, (who could neither hear or speak) as he stood in a door (whither he came to see the occasion of a sudden shout made by the foldiers) of which he instantly died.'—A. à Wood. *Athenæ Oxonienses*, II. 433, Ed: by Blifs, 1815.

6. Reprinted at page 24.

7. Reprinted at page 7.

8. GILBERT MABBOTT, gentleman, was licenfer of pamphlets. He resigned on 22nd May, 1649, giving as his reasons arguments similar to those in the '*Areopagitica.*'





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Milton, John
Areopagitica

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