

went through, he tells us, a systematic course of reading in the Greek and Latin classics, varied by mathematics, music, and the kind of physical science we should now call cosmography.

It is an interesting fact that Milton's very first public appearance in the world of English authorship was in so honourable a place as the second folio edition of *Shakespeare* in 1632. His enthusiastic eulogy on Shakespeare, written in 1630, was one of three anonymous pieces prefixed to that second folio, along with reprints of the commendatory verses that had appeared in the first folio, one of them Ben Jonson's immortal tribute to Shakespeare's memory. Among the poems actually written by Milton at Horton the first, in all probability, after the Latin hexameters *Ad Patrem*, were the exquisite companion pieces *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. There followed, in or about 1633, the fragment called *Arcades*. It was part of a pastoral masque got up by the young people of the noble family of Egerton in honour of their venerable relative the countess-dowager of Derby, and performed before that lady at her mansion of Harefield, near Uxbridge, about 10 miles from Horton. That Milton contributed the words for the entertainment was, almost certainly, owing to his friendship with Henry Lawes, one of the chief court musicians of that time, whose known connexion with the Egerton family points him out as the probable manager of the Harefield masque. Next in order among the compositions at Horton may be mentioned the three short pieces, *At a Solemn Music*, *On Time*, and *Upon the Circumcision*; after which comes *Comus*, the largest and most important of all Milton's minor poems. The name by which that beautiful drama is now universally known was not given to it by Milton himself. He entitled it, more simply and vaguely, "A Masque presented at Ludlow Castle, 1634, before the Earl of Bridgewater, Lord President of Wales." The existence of this poem is certainly due to Milton's intimacy with Lawes. The earl of Bridgewater, the head of the Egerton family, had been appointed to the high office of the presidency or viceroyalty of Wales, the official seat of which was Ludlow in Shropshire; it had been determined that among the festivities on his assumption of the office there should be a great masque in the hall of Ludlow Castle, with Lawes for the stage manager and one of the actors; Milton had been applied to by Lawes for the poetry; and, actually, on Michaelmas night, September 29, 1634, the drama furnished by Milton was performed in Ludlow Castle before a great assemblage of the nobility and gentry of the Welsh principality, Lawes taking the part of "the attendant spirit," while the parts of "first brother," "second brother," and "the lady" were taken by the earl's three youngest children, Viscount Brackley, Mr Thomas Egerton, and Lady Alice Egerton.—From September 1634 to the beginning of 1637 is a comparative blank in our records. Straggling incidents in this blank are a Latin letter of date December 4, 1634, to Alexander Gill the younger, a *Greek Translation of Psalm CXIV.*, a visit to Oxford in 1635 for the purpose of incorporation in the degree of M.A. in that university, and the beginning in May 1636 of a troublesome lawsuit against his now aged and infirm father.—The lawsuit, which was instituted by a certain Sir Thomas Cotton, baronet, nephew and executor of a deceased John Cotton, Esq., accused the elder Milton and his partner Bower, or both, of having, in their capacity as scribes, misappropriated divers large sums of money that had been entrusted to them by the deceased Cotton to be let out at interest. The lawsuit was still in progress when, on the 3d of April 1637, Milton's mother died, at the age of about sixty-five. A flat blue stone, with a brief inscription, visible on the chancel-pavement of Horton church, still marks the place of her burial. Milton's

testimony to her character is that she was a "most excellent mother and particularly known for her charities through the neighbourhood." The year 1637 was otherwise eventful in his biography. It was in that year that his *Comus*, after lying in manuscript for more than two years, was published by itself, in the form of a small quarto of thirty-five pages. The author's name was withheld, and the entire responsibility of the publication was assumed by Henry Lawes. Milton seems to have been in London when the little volume appeared. He was a good deal in London, at all events, during the summer and autumn months immediately following his mother's death. The plague, which had been on one of its periodical visits of ravage through England since early in the preceding year, was then especially severe in the Horton neighbourhood, while London was comparatively free. It was probably in London that Milton heard of the death of young Edward King of Christ's College, whom he had left as one of the most popular of the fellows of the college, and one of the clerical hopes of the university. King had sailed from Chester for a vacation visit to his relatives in Ireland, when, on the 10th of August, the ship, in perfectly calm water, struck on a rock and went down, he and nearly all the other passengers going down with her. There is no mention of the sad accident in two otherwise very interesting Latin *Familiar Epistles* of Milton, of September 1637, both addressed to his medical friend Charles Diodati, and both dated from London; but how deeply the death of King had affected him appears from his occupation shortly afterwards. In November 1637, and probably at Horton, whence the plague had by that time vanished, he wrote his matchless pastoral monody of *Lycidas*. It was his contribution to a collection of obituary verses, Greek, Latin, and English, which King's numerous friends, at Cambridge and elsewhere, were getting up in lamentation for his sad fate. The collection did not appear till early in 1638, when it was published in two parts, with black-bordered title-pages, from the Cambridge University press, one consisting of twenty-three Latin and Greek pieces, the other of thirteen English pieces, the last of which was Milton's monody, signed only with his initials "J. M." It was therefore early in 1638, when Milton was in his thirtieth year, that copies of his *Lycidas* may have been in circulation among those who had already become acquainted with his *Comus*.

Milton was then on the wing for a foreign tour. He had long set his heart on a visit to Italy, and circumstances now favoured his wish. The vexatious Cotton lawsuit, after hanging on for nearly two years, was at an end, as far as the elder Milton was concerned, with the most absolute and honourable vindication of his character for probity, though with some continuation of the case against his partner, Bower. Moreover, Milton's younger brother, Christopher, though but twenty-two years of age, and just about to be called to the bar of the Inner Temple, had married a wife; and the young couple had gone to reside at Horton to keep the old man company. There being nothing then to detain Milton, all was arranged for his journey. Before the end of April 1638 he was on his way across the Channel, taking one English man-servant with him. At the time of his departure the last great news in England was that of the National Scottish Covenant, or solemn oath and band of all ranks and classes of the Scottish people to stand by each other to the death in resisting the ecclesiastical innovations which Laud and Charles had been forcing upon Scotland. To Charles the news of this "damnable Covenant," as he called it, was enraging beyond measure; but to the minds of the English Puritans it was far from unwelcome, promising, as it seemed to do, for England herself, the subversion at last of that system of "Thorough," or despotic

government by the king and his ministers without parliaments, under which the country had been groaning since the contemptuous dissolution of Charles's third parliament ten years before.

Through Paris, where Milton made but a short stay, receiving polite attention from the English ambassador, Lord Scudamore, and having the honour of an introduction to the famous Hugo Grotius, then ambassador for Sweden at the French court, he moved on rapidly to Italy, by way of Nice. After visiting Genoa, Leghorn, and Pisa, he arrived at Florence, August 1638. Enchanted by the city and its society, he remained there two months, frequenting the chief academies or literary clubs, and even taking part in their proceedings. Among the Florentines with whom he became intimate were Jacopo Gaddi, young Carlo Dati, Pietro Frescobaldi, Agostino Coltellini, the grammarian Benedetto Buommattei, Valerio Chimentelli, and Antonio Francini. It was in the neighbourhood of Florence also that he "found and visited" the great Galileo, then old and blind, and still nominally a prisoner to the Inquisition for his astronomical heresy. From Florence, by Siena, Milton went to Rome. He reached the Eternal City some time in October, and spent about another two months there, not only going about among the ruins and antiquities and visiting the galleries, but mixing also, as he had done in Florence, with the learned society of the academies. Among those with whom he formed acquaintance in Rome were the German scholar, Lucas Holstenius, librarian of the Vatican, and three native Italian scholars, named Cherubini, Salzilli, and Selvaggi. There is record of his having dined once, in company with several other Englishmen, at the hospitable table of the English Jesuit College. The most picturesque incident, however, of his stay in Rome was his presence at a great musical entertainment in the palace of Cardinal Francesco Barberini. Here he had not only the honour of a specially kind reception by the cardinal himself, but also, it would appear, the supreme pleasure of listening to the marvellous Leonora Baroni, the most renowned singer of her age. Late in November he left Rome for Naples. Here also he was fortunate. The great man of the place was the now very aged Giovanni Battista Manso, marquis of Villa, the friend and biographer of the great Tasso, and subsequently the friend and patron of the sweet Marini. By a happy accident Milton obtained an introduction to Manso, and nothing could exceed the courtesy of the attentions paid by the aged marquis to the young English stranger. He had hardly been in Naples a month, however, when there came news from England which not only stopped an intention he had formed of extending his tour to Sicily and thence into Greece, but urged his immediate return home. "The sad news of civil war in England," he says, "called me back; for I considered it base that, while my fellow-countrymen were fighting at home for liberty, I should be travelling abroad for intellectual culture." In December 1638, therefore, he set his face northwards again. His return journey, however, probably because he learnt that the news he had first received was exaggerated or premature, was broken into stages. He spent a second two months in Rome, ascertained to have been January and February 1638-39; during which two months, as he tells us, he was in some danger from the papal police, because the English Jesuits in Rome had taken offence at his habit of free speech, wherever he went, on the subject of religion. Though he did not alter his demeanour in the least in this particular, nothing happened; and from Rome he got safely to Florence, welcomed back heartily by his Florentine friends, and renewing his meetings with them privately and in their academies. His second visit to Florence, including an excursion to Lucca, extended over

two months; and not till April 1639 did he take his leave, and proceed, by Bologna and Ferrara, to Venice. About a month was given to Venice; and thence, having shipped for England the books he had collected in Italy, he went on, by Verona and Milan, over the Alps, to Geneva. In this Protestant city he spent a week or two in June, forming interesting acquaintanceships there too, and having daily conversations with the great Protestant theologian Dr Jean Diodati, the uncle of his friend Charles Diodati. From Geneva he returned to Paris, and so to England. He was home again in August 1639, having been absent in all fifteen or sixteen months.

Milton's Continental tour, and especially the Italian portion of it, remained one of the chief pleasures of his memory through all his subsequent life. Nor was it quite without fruits of a literary kind. Besides two of his Latin *Epistolæ Familiæres*, one to the Florentine grammarian Buommattei, and the other to Lucas Holstenius, there have to be assigned to Milton's sixteen months on the Continent his three Latin epigrams *Ad Leonoram Romæ Canentem*, his Latin seasons *Ad Solsillum Poetam Romanum Egrotantem*, his fine and valuable poem in Latin hexameters entitled *Mansus*, and his *Five Italian Sonnets*, with a *Canzone*, celebrating the charms of some Italian lady he had met in his travels.

One sad and marring memory did mingle itself with all that was otherwise so delightful in his Italian reminiscences. His bosom friend and companion from boyhood, the half-Italian Charles Diodati, who had been to him as Jonathan to David, and into whose ear he had hoped to pour the whole narrative of what he had seen and done abroad, had died during his absence. He had died, in Blackfriars, London, in August 1638, not four months after Milton had gone away on his tour. The intelligence had not reached Milton till some months afterwards, probably not till his second stay in Florence; and, though he must have learnt some of the particulars from the youth's uncle in Geneva, he did not know them fully till his return to England. How profoundly they affected him appears from his *Epitaphium Damonis*, then written in memory of his dead friend. The importance of this poem in Milton's biography cannot be overrated. It is perhaps the noblest of all his Latin poems; and, though in the form of a pastoral, and even of a pastoral of the most artificial sort, it is unmistakably an outburst of the most passionate personal grief. In this respect *Lycidas*, artistically perfect though that poem is, cannot be compared with it; and it is only the fact that *Lycidas* is in English, while the *Epitaphium Damonis* is in Latin, that has led to the notion that Edward King of Christ's College was peculiarly and pre-eminently the friend of Milton in his youth and early manhood.

That Milton, now in his thirty-first year, had been girding himself for some greater achievement in poetry than any he had yet attempted, *Comus* not excepted, we should have known otherwise. What we should not have known, but for an incidental passage in the *Epitaphium Damonis*, is that, at the time of his return from Italy, he had chosen a subject for such a high literary effort of a new Miltonic sort. The passage is one in which, after referring to the hopes of Diodati's medical career as so suddenly cut short by his death, Milton speaks of himself as the survivor and of his own projects in his profession of literature. In translation, it may run thus:—

"I have a theme of the Trojans cruising our southern headlands
Shaping to song, and the realm of Imogen, daughter of Pandras,
Brennus and Arvirach, dukes, and Bren's bold brother, Belinus;
Then the Armorican settlers under the laws of the Britons,
Ay, and the womb of Igraine fatally pregnant with Arthur,
Uther's son, whom he got disguised in Gorlois' likeness,
All by Merlin's craft. O then, if life shall be spared me,
Thou shalt be hung, my pipe, far off on some dying old pine-tree,

Much-forgotten of me; or else your Latian music
 Changed for the British war-screoch! What then? For one to
 do all things,
 One to hope all things, fits not! Prize sufficiently ample
 Mine, and distinction great (unheard-of ever thereafter
 Though I should be and inglorious all through the world of the
 stranger),
 If but the yellow-haired Ouse shall read me, the drinker of Alan,
 Humber, which whirls as it flows, and Trent's whole valley of
 orchards,
 Thames, my own Thames, above all, and Tamar's western waters,
 Tawny with ores, and where the white waves swing the far
 Orkneys."

Interpreted prosaically, this means that Milton was meditating an epic of which King Arthur was to be the central figure, but which should include somehow the whole cycle of British and Arthurian legend, and that not only was this epic to be in English, but he had resolved that all his poetry for the future should be in the same tongue.

Not long after Milton's return the house at Horton ceased to be the family home. Christopher Milton and his wife went to reside at Reading, taking the old gentleman with them, while Milton himself preferred London. He had first taken lodgings in St Bride's Churchyard, at the foot of Fleet Street; but, after a while, probably early in 1640, he removed to a "pretty garden house" of his own, at the end of an entry, in the part of Aldersgate Street which lies immediately on the city side of what is now Maidenhead Court. His sister, whose first husband had died in 1631, had married a Mr Thomas Agar, his successor in the Crown Office; and it was arranged that her two sons by her first husband should be educated by their uncle. John Phillips, the younger of them, only nine years old, had boarded with him in the St Bride's Churchyard lodgings; and, after the removal to Aldersgate Street, the other brother, Edward Phillips, only a year older, became his boarder also. Gradually a few other boys, the sons of well-to-do personal friends, joined the two Phillipses, whether as boarders or for daily lessons, so that the house in Aldersgate Street became a small private school. The drudgery of teaching seems always to have been liked by Milton. What meanwhile of the great Arthurian epic? That project, we find, had been given up, and Milton's mind was roving among many other subjects, and balancing their capabilities. How he wavered between Biblical subjects and heroic subjects from British history, and how many of each kind suggested themselves to him, one learns from a list in his own handwriting among the Milton MSS. at Cambridge. It contains jottings of no fewer than fifty-three subjects from the Old Testament, eight from the Gospels, thirty-three from British and English history before the Conquest, and five from Scottish history. It is curious that all or most of them are headed or described as subjects for "tragedies," as if the epic form had now been abandoned for the dramatic. It is more interesting still to observe which of the subjects fascinated Milton most. Though several of them are sketched pretty fully, not one is sketched at such length and so particularly as *Paradise Lost*. It is the first subject on the list, and there are four separate drafts of a possible tragedy under that title, two of them merely enumerating the *dramatis personæ*, but the last two indicating the plot and the division into acts. Thus, in 1640, twenty-seven years before *Paradise Lost* was given to the world, he had put down the name on paper, and had committed himself to the theme.

To these poetic dreamings and schemings there was to be a long interruption. The Scottish National Covenant had led to extraordinary results. Not only were Charles and Laud checkmated in their design of converting the mild Episcopal system which King James had established

in Scotland into a high Laudian prelacy; but, in a General Assembly held at Glasgow in the end of 1638, Episcopacy had been utterly abolished in Scotland, and the old Presbyterian system of Knox and Melville revived. To avenge this, and restore the Scottish bishops, Charles had marched to the Border with an English army; but, met there by the Covenanting army under General Alexander Leslie, he had not deemed it prudent to risk a battle, and had yielded to a negotiation conceding to the Scots all their demands. This "First Bishops' War," as it came to be called, was begun and concluded while Milton was abroad. About the time of his return, however, Charles had again broken with the Scots. Milton had been watching the course of affairs since then with close and eager interest. He had seen and partaken in the sympathetic stir in favour of the Scots which ran through the popular and Puritan mind of England. He had welcomed the practical proof of this sympathy given in that English parliament of April 1640, called "The Short Parliament," which Charles, in his straits for supplies against the Scots, had reluctantly summoned at last, but was obliged to dismiss as unmanageable. Charles had, nevertheless, with money raised somehow, entered on the "Second Bishops' War." This time the result was momentous indeed. The Scots, not waiting to be attacked in their own country, took the aggressive, and invaded England. In August 1640, after one small engagement with a portion of Charles's army, they were in possession of Newcastle and of all the northern English counties. The English then had their opportunity. A treaty with the Scots was begun, which the English Puritans, who regarded their presence in England as the very blessing they had been praying for, were in no haste to finish; and, on the 3d of November 1640, there met that parliament which was to be famous in English history, and in the history of the world, as "The Long Parliament."

Of the first proceedings of this parliament, including the trial and execution of Strafford, the impeachment and imprisonment of Laud and others, and the break-down of the system of Thorough by miscellaneous reforms and by guarantees for parliamentary liberty, Milton was only a spectator. It was when the church question emerged distinctly as the question paramount, and there had arisen divisions on that question among those who had been practically unanimous in matters of civil reform, that he plunged in as an active adviser. There were three parties on the church question. There was a high-church party, contending for Episcopacy by divine right, and for the maintenance of English Episcopacy very much as it was; there was a middle party, defending Episcopacy on grounds of usage and expediency, but desiring to see the powers of bishops greatly curtailed, and a limited Episcopacy, with councils of presbyters round each bishop, substituted for the existing high Episcopacy; and there was the root-and-branch party, as it called itself, desiring the entire abolition of Episcopacy and the reconstruction of the English Church on something like the Scottish Presbyterian model. Since the opening of the parliament there had been a storm of pamphlets crossing one another in the air from these three parties. The chief manifesto of the high-church party was a pamphlet by Joseph Hall, bishop of Exeter, entitled *Humble Remonstrance to the High Court of Parliament*. In answer to Hall, and in representation of the views of the root-and-branch party, there had stepped forth, in March 1640-41, five leading Puritan parish ministers, the initials of whose names, clubbed together on the title-page of their joint production, made the uncouth word "Smectymnuus." These were Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstow. The Thomas Young whose name

comes in the middle was no other than the Scottish Thomas Young who had been Milton's domestic preceptor in Bread Street. Having returned from Hamburg in 1628, he had been appointed to the vicarage of Stowmarket in Suffolk, in which living he had remained ever since, with the reputation of being one of the most solid and learned Puritans among the English parish clergy. The famous Smectymnuan pamphlet in reply to Hall was mainly Young's. What is more interesting is that his old pupil Milton was secretly in partnership with him and his brother-Smectymnuans. Milton's hand is discernible in a portion of the original Smectymnuan pamphlet; and he continued to aid the Smectymnuans in their subsequent rejoinders to Hall's defences of himself. It was more in Milton's way, however, to appear in print independently; and in May 1641, while the controversy between Hall and the Smectymnuans was going on, he put forth a pamphlet of his own. It was entitled *Of Reformation touching Church Discipline in England and the Causes that have hitherto hindered it*, and consisted of a review of English ecclesiastical history, with an appeal to his countrymen to resume that course of reformation which he considered to have been prematurely stopped in the preceding century, and to sweep away the last relics of papacy and prelacy. Among all the root-and-branch pamphlets of the time it stood out, and stands out still, as the most thorough-going and tremendous. It was followed by four others in rapid succession,—to wit, *Of Prelatical Episcopacy and whether it may be deduced from the Apostolical Times* (June 1641), *Animadversions upon the Remonstrant's Defence against Smectymnuus* (July 1641), *The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty* (February 1641-42), *Apology against a Pamphlet called a Modest Confutation of the Animadversions, &c.* (March 1641-42). The first of these was directed chiefly against that middle party which advocated a limited Episcopacy, with especial reply to the arguments of Archbishop Ussher, as the chief exponent of the views of that party. Two of the others, as the titles imply, belong to the Smectymnuan series, and were castigations of Bishop Hall. The greatest of the four, and the most important of all Milton's anti-Episcopal pamphlets after the first, is that entitled *The Reason of Church Government*. It is there that Milton takes his readers into his confidence, speaking at length of himself and his motives in becoming a controversialist. Poetry, he declares, was his real vocation; it was with reluctance that he had resolved to "leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark in a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes"; but duty had left him no option. The great poem or poems he had been meditating could wait; and meanwhile, though in prose-polemics he had the use only of his "left hand," that hand should be used with all its might in the cause of his country and of liberty.

The parliament had advanced in the root-and-branch direction so far as to have passed a bill for the exclusion of bishops from the House of Lords; and compelled the king's assent to that bill, when, in August 1642, the further struggle between Charles and his subjects took the form of civil war. All England was then divided into the Royalists, supporting the king, and the Parliamentarians, adhering to that majority of the Commons, with a minority of the Lords, which sat on as the parliament. While the first battles of the civil war were being fought with varying success, this parliament, less impeded than when it had been full, moved on more and more rapidly in the root-and-branch direction, till, by midsummer 1643, the abolition of Episcopacy had been decreed, and the question of the future non-prelatic constitution of the Church of England referred to a synod of divines, to meet

at Westminster under parliamentary authority. Of Milton's life through those first months of the civil war little is known. He remained in his house in Aldersgate Street, teaching his nephews and other pupils; and the only scrap that came from his pen was the semi-jocose sonnet bearing the title *When the Assault was intended to the City*. In the summer of 1643, however, there was a great change in the Aldersgate Street household. About the end of May, as his nephew Edward Phillips remembered, Milton went away on a country journey, without saying whither or for what purpose; and, when he returned, about a month afterwards, it was with a young wife, and with some of her sisters and other relatives in her company. He had, in fact, been in the very headquarters of the king and the Royalist army in and round Oxford; and the bride he brought back with him was a Mary Powell, the eldest daughter of Richard Powell, Esq., of Forest Hill, near Oxford. She was the third of a family of eleven sons and daughters, of good standing, but in rather embarrassed circumstances, and was seventeen years and four months old, while Milton was in his thirty-fifth year. However the marriage came about, it was a most unfortunate event. The Powell family were strongly Royalist, and the girl herself seems to have been frivolous, unsuitable, and stupid. Hardly were the honeymoon festivities over in Aldersgate Street when, her sisters and other relatives having returned to Forest Hill and left her alone with her husband, she pined for home again and begged to be allowed to go back on a visit. Milton consented, on the understanding that the visit was to be a brief one. This seems to have been in July 1643. Soon, however, the intimation from Forest Hill was that he need not look ever to have his wife in his house again. The resolution seems to have been mainly the girl's own, abetted by her mother; but, as the king's cause was then prospering in the field, it is a fair conjecture that the whole of the Powell family had repented of their sudden connexion with so prominent a Parliamentarian and assailant of the Church of England as Milton. While his wife was away, his old father, who had been residing for three years with his younger and lawyer son at Reading, came to take up his quarters in Aldersgate Street.

Milton's conduct under the insult of his wife's desertion was most characteristic. Always fearless and speculative, he converted his own case into a public protest against the existing law and theory of marriage. *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce Restored, to the good of both Sexes*, was the title of a pamphlet put forth by him in August 1643, without his name, but with no effort at concealment, declaring the notion of a sacramental sanctity in the marriage relation to be a clerically invented superstition, and arguing that inherent incompatibility of character, or contrariety of mind, between two married persons, is a perfectly just reason for divorce. There was no reference to his own case, except by implication; but the boldness of the speculation roused attention and sent a shock through London. It was a time when the authors of heresies of this sort, or of any sort, ran considerable risks. The famous Westminster Assembly of Divines, called by the Long Parliament, had met on the appointed day, July 1, 1643; the Scots, in consenting to send an army into England to assist the parliament in their war with the king, had proposed, as one of the conditions, their Solemn League and Covenant, binding the two nations to endeavour after a uniformity of religion and of ecclesiastical discipline, with the extirpation of all "heresy, schism, and profaneness," as well as popery and prelacy; the Solemn League and Covenant had been enthusiastically accepted in England, and was being sworn to universally by the Parliamentarians; and one immediate effect was that four eminent Scottish

divines and two Scottish lay commissioners were added to the Westminster Assembly and became leaders there. Whether Milton's divorce tract was formally discussed in the Assembly during the first months of its sitting is unknown; but it is certain that the London clergy, including not a few members of the Assembly, were then talking about it privately with anger and execration. That there might be no obstacle to a more public prosecution, Milton threw off the anonymous in a second and much enlarged edition of the tract, in February 1643-44, dedicated openly to the parliament and the Assembly. Then, for a month or two, during which the gossip about him and his monstrous doctrine was spreading more and more, he turned his attention to other subjects. Among the questions in agitation in the general ferment of opinion brought about by the civil war was that of a reform of the national system of education and especially of the universities. To this question Milton made a contribution in June 1644, in a small *Tract on Education*, in the form of a letter to Mr Samuel Hartlib, a German then resident in London and interesting himself busily in all philanthropic projects and schemes of social reform. In the very next month, however, July 1644, he returned to the divorce subject in a pamphlet addressed specially to the clergy and entitled *The Judgment of Martin Bucer concerning Divorce*. The outcry against him then reached its height. He was attacked in pamphlets; he was denounced in pulpits all through London, and more than once in sermons before the two Houses of Parliament by prominent divines of the Westminster Assembly; strenuous efforts were made to bring him within definite parliamentary censure. In the cabal formed against him for this purpose a leading part was played, at the instigation of the clergy, by the Stationers' Company of London. That company, representing the publishers and booksellers of London, had a plea of their own against him, on the ground that his doctrine was not only immoral, but had been put forth in an illegal manner. His first divorce treatise, though published immediately after the "Printing Ordinance" of the parliament of June 14, 1643, requiring all publications to be licensed for press by one of the official censors, and to be registered in the books of the Stationers' Company, had been issued without licence and without registration. Complaint to this effect was made against Milton, with some others liable to the same charge of contempt of the printing ordinance, in a petition of the Stationers to the House of Commons in August 1644; and the matter came before committee both in that House and in the Lords. It is to this circumstance that the world owes the most popular and eloquent, if not the greatest, of all Milton's prose-writings, his famous *Areopagitica*, a *Speech of Mr John Milton for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing to the Parliament of England*. It appeared in the end of November 1644, deliberately unlicensed and unregistered, as was proper on such an occasion, and was a remonstrance addressed to the parliament, as if in an oration to them face to face, against their ordinance of June 1643 and the whole system of licensing and censorship of the press. Nobly auxiliary of the parliament in other respects, it denounced their printing ordinance as utterly unworthy of them, and of the new era of English liberties which they were initiating, and called for its repeal. Though that effect did not follow, the pamphlet virtually accomplished its purpose. The licensing system had received its death-blow; and, though the Stationers returned to the charge in another complaint to the House of Lords, Milton's offence against the press ordinance was condoned. He was still assailed in pamphlets, and found himself "in a world of disesteem"; but he lived on through the winter of 1644-45 undisturbed in his house in Aldersgate Street. To this

period there belong, in the shape of verse, only his sonnets ix. and x., the first to some anonymous lady, and the second "to the Lady Margaret Ley," with perhaps the Greek lines entitled *Philosophus ad Regem Quendam*. His divorce speculation, however, still occupied him; and in March 1644-45 he published simultaneously his *Tetrachordon*, or *Expositions upon the four chief places of Scripture which treat of Marriage*, and his *Colasterion*, a *Reply to a nameless Answer against the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*. In these he replied to his chief recent assailants, lay and clerical, with merciless severity.

It was not merely Milton's intellectual eminence that had saved him from prosecution for his divorce heresy. A new tendency of national opinion on the church question had operated in his favour, and in favour of all forms of free speculation. There had occurred in the Westminster Assembly itself, and more largely throughout the general community, that split of English Puritanism into the two opposed varieties of Presbyterianism on the one hand and Independency or Congregationalism on the other which explains the whole subsequent history of the Puritan revolution. Out of this theoretical discussion as to the constitution of the church there had grown the all-important practical question of toleration. The Presbyterians insisted that the whole population of England should necessarily belong to the one national Presbyterian Church, be compelled to attend its worship, and be subject to its discipline, while the Independents demanded that, if a Presbyterian Church should be set up as the national and state-paid church, there should at least be liberty of dissent from it, and toleration for those that chose to form themselves into separate congregations. Vehement within the Westminster Assembly itself, the controversy had attained wider dimensions out of doors, and had inwrought itself in a most remarkable manner with the conduct of the war. Orthodox Presbyterian Calvinists were still the majority of the Puritan body; but, in the new atmosphere of liberty, there had sprung up, from secret and long-suppressed seeds in the English mind, a wonderful variety of sects and denominations, mingling other elements with their Calvinism, or hardly Calvinistic at all,—most of them, it is true, fervidly Biblical and Christian after their different sorts, but not a few professing the most coolly inquisitive and sceptical spirit, and pushing their speculations to strange extremes of free-thinking. These sects, growing more and more numerous in the large towns, had become especially powerful in the English Parliamentary army. That army had, in fact, become a marching academy of advanced opinionists and theological debaters. Now, as all the new Puritan sects, differing however much among themselves, saw their existence and the perpetuity of their tenets threatened by that system of ecclesiastical uniformity which the Presbyterians proposed to establish, they had, one and all, abjured Presbyterianism, and adopted the opposite principle of Independency, with its appended principle of toleration. Hence an extraordinary conflict of policies among those who seemed to be all Parliamentarians, all united in fighting against the king. The auxiliary Scottish army, which had come into England in January 1643-44, and had helped the English generals to beat the king in the great battle of Marston Moor in July 1644, thought that he had then been almost sufficiently beaten, and that the object of the Solemn League and Covenant would be best attained by bringing him to such terms as should secure an immediate Presbyterian settlement and the suppression of the Independents and sectaries. In this the chief English commanders, such as Essex and Manchester, agreed substantially with the Scots. Cromwell, on the other hand, who was now the recognized head of the army Independents, did not think that the king had

been sufficiently beaten, even for the general purposes of the war, and was resolved that the war should be pushed on to a point at which a Presbyterian settlement should be impossible without guarantees for liberty of conscience and a toleration of non-Presbyterian sects. Through the latter part of 1644, accordingly, Milton had been saved from the penalties which his Presbyterian opponents would have inflicted on him by this general championship of liberty of opinion by Cromwell and the army Independents. Before the middle of 1645 he, with others who were on the black books of the Presbyterians as heretics, was safer still. Though the parliament had voted, in January 1644-45, that the future national church of England should be on the Presbyterian system, Cromwell and the Independents had taken care to have the question of toleration left open; and, within the next month or two, by Cromwell's exertions, a completely new face was put upon the war by the removal of all the chief officers that had been in command hitherto, and the equipment of the New Model army, with Fairfax as its commander-in-chief and Cromwell himself as lieutenant-general. The Scots and the stricter English Presbyterians looked on malignantly while this army took the field, calling it an "Army of Sectaries," and almost hoping it would be beaten. On June 14, 1645, however, there was fought the great battle of Naseby, utterly ruining the king at last, and leaving only relics of his forces here and there. Milton's position then may be easily understood. Though his first tendency on the church question had been to some form of a Presbyterian constitution for the church, he had parted utterly now from the Scots and Presbyterians, and become a partisan of Independency, having no dread of "sects and schisms," but regarding them rather as healthy signs in the English body-politic. He was, indeed, himself one of the most noted sectaries of the time, for in the lists of sects drawn out by contemporary Presbyterian writers special mention is made of one small sect who were known as *Miltonists* or *Divorcees*.

So far as Milton was concerned personally, his interest in the divorce speculation came to an end in July or August 1645, when, by friendly interference, a reconciliation was effected between him and his wife. The ruin of the king's cause at Naseby had suggested to the Powells that it might be as well for their daughter to go back to her husband after their two years of separation. It was not, however, in the house in Aldersgate Street that she rejoined him, but in a larger house, which he had taken in the adjacent street called Barbican, for the accommodation of an increasing number of pupils.

The house in Barbican was tenanted by Milton from about August 1645 to September or October 1647. Among his first occupations there must have been the revision of the proof sheets of the first edition of his collected poems. It appeared as a tiny volume, copies of which are now very rare, with the title *Poems of Mr John Milton, both English and Latin, composed at several times*. The title-page gives the date 1645, but January 1645-46 seems to have been the exact month of the publication. The appearance of the volume indicates that Milton may have been a little tired by this time of his notoriety as a prose-polemic, and desirous of being recognized once more in his original character of literary man and poet. But, whether because his pedagogic duties now engrossed him or for other reasons, very few new pieces were added in the Barbican to those that the little volume had thus made public. In English, there were only the four sonnets now numbered xi.-xiv., the first two entitled "On the Detraction which followed upon my writing certain Treatises," the third "To Mr Henry Lawes on his Airs," and the fourth "To the Religious Memory of Mrs Catherine Thomson," together with the

powerful anti-Presbyterian invective or "tailed sonnet" entitled "On the New Forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament"; and in Latin there were only the ode *Ad Joannem Rousium*, the trifle called *Apologus de Rustico et Hero*, and one interesting *Familiar Epistle* addressed to his Florentine friend Carlo Dati. Some family incidents of importance, however, appertain to this time of residence in Barbican. Oxford having surrendered to Fairfax in June 1646, the whole of the Powell family had to seek refuge in London, and most of them found shelter in Milton's house. His first child, a daughter named Anne, was born there on the 29th of July that year; on the 1st of January 1646-47 his father-in-law Mr Powell died there, leaving his affairs in confusion; and in the following March his own father died there, at the age of eighty-four, and was buried in the adjacent church of St Giles, Cripplegate. For the rest, the two years in Barbican are nearly blank in Milton's biography. The great Revolution was still running its course. For a time Charles's surrender of himself, in May 1646, to the auxiliary Scottish army rather than to Fairfax and Cromwell, and his residence with that Scottish army at Newcastle in negotiation with the Scots, had given the Presbyterians the advantage; but, after the Scots had evacuated England in January 1646-47, leaving Charles a captive with his English subjects, and especially after the English army had seized him at Holmby in June 1647 and undertaken the further management of the treaty with him, the advantage was all the other way. It was a satisfaction to Milton, and perhaps still a protection for him, that the "Army of Independents and Sectaries" had come to be really the masters of England.

From Barbican Milton removed, in September or October 1647, to a smaller house in that part of High Holborn which adjoins Lincoln's Inn Fields. His Powell relatives had now left him, and he had reduced the number of his pupils, or perhaps kept only his two nephews. But, though thus more at leisure, he did not yet resume his projected poem, but occupied himself rather with three works of scholarly labour which he had already for some time had on hand. One was the compilation in English of a complete history of England, or rather of Great Britain, from the earliest times; another was the preparation in Latin of a complete system of divinity, drawn directly from the Bible; and the third was the collection of materials for a new Latin dictionary. Milton had always a fondness for such labours of scholarship and compilation. Of a poetical kind there is nothing to record, during his residence in High Holborn, but an experiment in psalm-translation, in the shape of Psalms lxxx.-lxxxviii. done into service-metre in April 1648, and the *Sonnet to Fairfax*, written in September of the same year.—This last connects him again with the course of public affairs. The king, having escaped from the custody of the army chiefs, and taken refuge in the Isle of Wight, had been committed to closer custody there; all negotiation between him and parliament had been declared at an end; and the result would probably have been his deposition, but for the consequences of a secret treaty he had contrived to make with the Scots. By this treaty the Scots engaged to invade England in the king's behalf, rescue him from the English parliament and army, and restore him to his full royalty, while he engaged in return to ratify the Covenant, the Presbyterian system of church government, and all the other conclusions of the Westminster Assembly, throughout England, and to put down Independency and the sects. Thus, in May 1648, began what is called the Second Civil War, consisting first of new risings of the Royalists in various parts of England, and then of a conjunction of these with a great invasion