

of England by a Royalist Scottish army, under the command of the duke of Hamilton. It was all over in August 1648, when the crushing defeat of the Scottish army by Cromwell in the three days' battle of Preston, and the simultaneous suppression of the English Royalist insurrection in the south-east counties by Fairfax's siege and capture of Colchester, left Charles at the mercy of the victors.—Milton's *Sonnet to Fairfax* was a congratulation to that general-in-chief of the parliament on his success at Colchester, and attested the exultation of the writer over the triumph of the Parliamentary cause. His exultation continued through what followed. After one more dying effort of the parliament at negotiation with Charles, the army took the whole business on itself. The king was brought from the Isle of Wight; the parliament, manipulated by the army officers, and purged of all members likely to impede the army's purpose, was converted into an instrument for that purpose; a court of high justice was set up for the trial of Charles; and on January 30, 1648-49, he was brought to the scaffold in front of Whitehall. By that act England became a republic, governed, without King or House of Lords, by the persevering residue or "Rump" of the recent House of Commons, in conjunction with an executive council of state, composed of forty-one members appointed annually by that House.

The first Englishman of mark out of parliament to attach himself openly to the new republic was John Milton. This he did by the publication of his pamphlet entitled *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates, proving that it is lawful, and hath been held so in all ages, for any who have the power, to call to account a Tyrant or wicked King, and, after due conviction, to depose and put him to death, if the ordinary Magistrate have neglected to do it*. It was out within a fortnight after the king's death, and was Milton's last performance in the house in High Holborn. The chiefs of the new republic could not but perceive the importance of securing the services of a man who had so opportunely and so powerfully spoken out in favour of their tremendous act, and who was otherwise so distinguished. In March 1648-49, accordingly, Milton was offered, and accepted, the secretaryship for foreign tongues to the council of state of the new Commonwealth. The salary was to be £288 a year, worth about £1000 a year now. To be near his new duties in attendance on the council, which held its daily sittings for the first few weeks in Derby House, close to Whitehall, but afterwards regularly in Whitehall itself, he removed at once to temporary lodgings at Charing Cross. In the very first meetings of council which Milton attended he must have made personal acquaintance with President Bradshaw, Fairfax, Cromwell himself, Sir Henry Vane, Whitlocke, Henry Marten, Hasilrig, Sir Gilbert Pickering, and the other chiefs of the council and the Commonwealth, if indeed he had not known some of them before. After a little while, for his greater convenience, official apartments were assigned him in Whitehall itself.

At the date of Milton's appointment to the secretaryship he was forty years of age. His special duty was the drafting of such letters as were sent by the council of state, or sometimes by the Rump Parliament, to foreign states and princes, with the examination and translation of letters in reply, and with personal conferences, when necessary, with the agents of foreign powers in London, and with envoys and ambassadors. As Latin was the language employed in the written diplomatic documents, his post came to be known indifferently as the secretaryship for foreign tongues or the Latin secretaryship. In that post, however, his duties, more particularly at first, were very light in comparison with those of his official colleague, Mr Walter Frost, the general secretary. Foreign powers held aloof from the English republic as much as they could;

and, while Mr Frost had to be present in every meeting of the council, keeping the minutes, and conducting all the general correspondence, Milton's presence was required only when some piece of foreign business did turn up. Hence, from the first, his employment in very miscellaneous work. Especially, the council looked to him for everything in the nature of literary vigilance and literary help in the interests of the struggling Commonwealth. He was employed in the examination of suspected papers, and in interviews with their authors and printers; and he executed several great literary commissions expressly entrusted to him by the council. The first of these was his pamphlet entitled *Observations on Ormond's Articles of Peace with the Irish Rebels*. It was published in May 1649, and was in defence of the republic against a complication of Royalist intrigues and dangers in Ireland. A passage of remarkable interest in it is one of eloquent eulogy on Cromwell. More important still was the *Eikonoklastes* (which may be translated "Image-Smasher"), published by Milton in October 1649, by way of counterblast to the famous *Eikon Basilike* ("Royal Image"), which had been in circulation in thousands of copies since the king's death, and had become a kind of Bible in all Royalist households, on the supposition that it had been written by the royal martyr himself. A third piece of work was of a more laborious nature. In the end of 1649 there appeared abroad, under the title of *Defensio Regia pro Carolo I.*, a Latin vindication of the memory of Charles, with an attack on the English Commonwealth, intended for circulation on the Continent. As it had been written, at the instance of the exiled royal family, by Salmasius, or Claude de Saumaise, of Leyden, then of enormous celebrity over Europe as the greatest scholar of his age, it was regarded as a serious blow to the infant Commonwealth. To answer it was thought a task worthy of Milton, and he threw his whole strength into the performance through the year 1650, interrupting himself only by a new and enlarged edition of his *Eikonoklastes*. Not till April 1651 did the result appear; but then the success was prodigious. Milton's Latin *Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio*, as it was called, ran at once over the British Islands and the Continent, rousing acclamation everywhere, and received by scholars as an annihilation of the great Salmasius. Through the rest of 1651 the observation was that the two agencies which had co-operated most visibly in raising the reputation of the Commonwealth abroad were Milton's books and Cromwell's battles.—These battles of Cromwell, in the service of the Commonwealth he had founded, had kept him absent from the council of state, of which he was still a member, since shortly after the beginning of Milton's secretaryship. For nearly a year he had been in Ireland, as lord lieutenant, reconquering that country after its long rebellion; and then, for another year, he had been in Scotland, crushing the Royalist commotion there round Charles II., and annexing Scotland to the English republic. The annexation was complete on the 3d of September 1651, when Cromwell, chasing Charles II. and his army out of Scotland, came up with them at Worcester and gained his crowning victory. The Commonwealth then consisted of England, Ireland, and Scotland, and Cromwell was its supreme chief.—Through the eventful year 1651, it has been recently ascertained, Milton had added to the other duties of his secretaryship that of Government journalist. Through the whole of that year, if not from an earlier period, he acted as licenser and superintending editor of the *Mercurius Politicus*, a newspaper issued twice a week, of which Mr Marchamont Needham was the working editor and proprietor. Milton's hand is discernible in some of the leading articles.

About the end of 1651 Milton left his official rooms in

Whitehall for a house he had taken on the edge of St James's Park, in what was then called Petty France, Westminster, but is now York Street. The house existed till the other day, but has been pulled down. In Milton's time it was a villa-looking residence, with a garden, in a neighbourhood of villas and gardens. He had now more to do in the special work of his office, in consequence of the increase of correspondence with foreign powers. But he had for some time been in ailing health; and a dimness of eyesight which had been growing upon him gradually for ten years had been settling rapidly, since his labour over the answer to Salmasius, into total blindness. Actually, before or about May 1652, when he was but in his forty-fourth year, his blindness was total, and he could go about only with some one to lead him. Hence a rearrangement of his secretarial duties. Such of these duties as he could perform at home, or by occasional visits to the Council Office near, he continued to perform; but much of the routine work was done for him by assistants, one of them a well-known German named Weckherlin, under the superintendence of Mr John Thurloe, who had succeeded Mr Walter Frost in the general secretaryship. Precisely to this time of a lull in Milton's secretaryship on account of his ill-health and blindness we have to refer his two great companion sonnets *To the Lord General Cromwell* and *To Sir Henry Vane the Younger*. To about the same time, or more precisely to the interval between May and September 1652, though the exact date is uncertain, we have to refer the death of his only son, who had been born in his official Whitehall apartments in the March of the preceding year, and the death also of his wife, just after she had given birth to his third daughter, Deborah. With the three children thus left him,—Anne, but six years old, Mary, not four, and the infant Deborah,—the blind widower lived on in his house in Petty France in such desolation as can be imagined. He had recovered sufficiently to resume his secretarial duties; and the total number of his dictated state letters for the single year 1652 is equal to that of all the state letters of his preceding term of secretaryship put together. To the same year there belong also three of his Latin *Familiar Epistles*. In December 1652 there was published *Joannis Philippi Angli Responsio ad Apologiam Anonymi Cujusdam Tenebrionis*, being a reply by Milton's younger nephew, John Phillips, but touched up by Milton himself, to one of several pamphlets that had appeared against Milton for his slaughter of Salmasius. The ablest and most scurrilous of these, which had just appeared anonymously at the Hague, with the title *Regii Sanguinis Clamor ad Cælum adversus Parricidas Anglicanos* ("Cry of the Royal Blood to Heaven against the English Parricides"), Milton was reserving for his own attention at his leisure.

On the 20th of April 1653 there was Cromwell's great act of armed interference by which he turned out the small remnant of the Rump Parliament, dismissed their council of state, and assumed the government of England, Ireland, and Scotland into his own hands. For several months, indeed, he acted only as interim dictator, governing by a council of his officers, and waiting for the conclusions of that select body of advisers which he had called together from all parts of the country, and which the Royalists nicknamed "The Barebones Parliament." In December 1653, however, his formal sovereignty began under the name of the Protectorate, passing gradually into more than kingship. This change from government by the Rump and its council to government by a single military Lord Protector and his council was regarded by many as treason to the republican cause, and divided those who had hitherto been the united Commonwealth's men into the "Pure Republicans," represented by such men as Bradshaw and Vane,

and the "Oliverians," adhering to the Protector. Milton, whose boundless admiration of Cromwell had shown itself already in his Irish tract of 1649 and in his recent sonnet, was recognized as one of the Oliverians. He remained in Oliver's service and was his Latin secretary through the whole of the Protectorate. For a while, indeed, his Latin letters to foreign states in Cromwell's name were but few,—Mr Thurloe, as general secretary, officiating as Oliver's right-hand man in everything, with a Mr Philip Meadows under him, at a salary of £200 a year, as deputy for the blind Mr Milton in foreign correspondence and translations. The reason for this temporary exemption of Milton from routine duty may have been that he was then engaged on an answer, by commission from the late Government, to the already-mentioned pamphlet from the Hague entitled *Regii Sanguinis Clamor*. Salmasius was now dead, and the Commonwealth was too stable to suffer from such attacks; but no Royalist pamphlet had appeared so able or so venomous as this in continuation of the Salmasian controversy. All the rather because it was in the main a libel on Milton himself did a reply from his pen seem necessary. It came out in May 1654, with the title *Joannis Miltoni Angli pro Populo Anglicano Defensio Secunda* ("Second Defence of John Milton, Englishman, for the People of England"). It is one of the most interesting of all Milton's writings. The author of the libel to which it replied was Dr Peter du Moulin the younger, a naturalized French Presbyterian minister, then moving about in English society, close to Milton; but, as that was a profound secret, and the work was universally attributed on the Continent to an Alexander Morus, a French minister of Scottish descent, then of much oratorical celebrity in Holland,—who had certainly managed the printing in consultation with the now deceased Salmasius, and had contributed some portion of the matter,—Milton had made this Morus the responsible person and the one object of his castigations. They were frightful enough. If Salmasius had been slaughtered in the former *Defensio*, Morus was murdered and gashed in this. His moral character was blasted by exposure of his antecedents, and he was blazoned abroad in Europe as a detected clerical blackguard. The terrific castigation of Morus, however, is but part of the *Defensio Secunda*. It contains passages of singular autobiographical and historical value, and includes laudatory sketches of such eminent Commonwealth's men as Bradshaw, Fairfax, Fleetwood, Lambert, and Overton, together with a long panegyric on Cromwell himself and his career, which remains to this day unapproached for elaboration and grandeur by any estimate of Cromwell from any later pen. From about the date of the publication of the *Defensio Secunda* to the beginning of 1655 the only specially literary relics of Milton's life are his translations of Psalms i.—viii. in different metres, done in August 1654, his translation of Horace's *Ode* i. 5, done probably about the same time, and two of his Latin *Familiar Epistles*. The most active time of his secretaryship for Oliver was from April 1655 onwards. In that month, in the course of a general revision of official salaries under the Protectorate, Milton's salary of £288 a year hitherto was reduced to £200 a year, with a kind of redefinition of his office, recognizing it, we may say, as a Latin secretaryship extraordinary. Mr Philip Meadows was to continue to do all the ordinary Foreign Office work, under Thurloe's inspection; but Milton was to be called in on special occasions. Hardly was the arrangement made when a signal occasion did occur. In May 1655 all England was horrified by the news of the massacre of the Vaudois Protestants by the troops of Emanuele II., duke of Savoy and prince of Piedmont, in consequence of their disobedience to an edict requiring them either to leave

their native valleys or to conform to the Catholic religion. Cromwell and his council took the matter up with all their energy; and the burst of indignant letters on the subject despatched in that month and the next to the duke of Savoy himself, Louis XIV. of France, Cardinal Mazarin, the Swiss cantons, the States-General of the United Provinces, and the kings of Sweden and Denmark, were all by Milton. His famous sonnet *On the late Massacre in Piedmont* was his more private expression of feeling on the same occasion. This sonnet was in circulation, and the case of the Vaudois Protestants was still occupying Cromwell, when, in August 1655, there appeared the last of Milton's great Latin pamphlets. It was his *Pro Se Defensio*, in answer to an elaborate self-defence which Morus had put forth on the Continent since Milton's attack on his character, and it consisted mainly of a re-exposure of that unfortunate clergyman. Thence, through the rest of Cromwell's Protectorate, Milton's life was of comparatively calm tenor. He was in much better health than usual, bearing his blindness with courage and cheerfulness; he was steadily busy with such more important despatches to foreign powers as the Protector, then in the height of his great foreign policy, and regarded with fear and deference by all European monarchs and states from Gibraltar to the Baltic, chose to confide to him; and his house in Petty France seems to have been, more than at any previous time since the beginning of his blindness, a meeting-place for friends and visitors, and a scene of pleasant hospitalities. The four sonnets now numbered xix.-xxii., one of them to young Mr Lawrence, the son of the president of Cromwell's council, and two of the others to Cyriack Skinner, belong to this time of domestic quiet, as do also no fewer than ten of his Latin *Familiar Epistles*. His second marriage belongs to the same years, and gleams even yet as the too brief consummation of this happiest time in the blind man's life. The name of his second wife was Katharine Woodcock. He married her on the 12th of November 1656; but, after only fifteen months, he was again a widower, by her death in childbirth in February 1657-58. The child dying with her, only the three daughters by the first marriage remained. The touching sonnet which closes the series of Milton's *Sonnets* is his sacred tribute to the memory on his second marriage and to the virtues of the wife he had so soon lost. Even after that loss we find him still busy for Cromwell. Mr Meadows having been sent off on diplomatic missions, Andrew Marvell had, in September 1657, been brought in, much to Milton's satisfaction, as his assistant or colleague in the Latin secretaryship; but this had by no means relieved him from duty. Some of his greatest despatches for Cromwell, including letters, of the highest importance, to Louis XIV., Mazarin, and Charles Gustavus of Sweden, belong to the year 1658.

One would like to know precisely in what personal relations Milton and Cromwell stood to each other. There is, unfortunately, no direct record to show what Cromwell thought of Milton; but there is ample record of what Milton thought of Cromwell. "Our chief of men," he had called Cromwell in his sonnet of May 1652; and the opinion remained unchanged. He thought Cromwell the greatest and best man of his generation, or of many generations; and he regarded Cromwell's assumption of the supreme power, and his retention of that power with a sovereign title, as no real suppression of the republic, but as absolutely necessary for the preservation of the republic, and for the safeguard of the British Islands against a return of the Stuarts. Nevertheless, under this prodigious admiration of Cromwell, there were political doubts and reserves. Milton was so much of a modern radical of the extreme school in his own political views and sympathies that he cannot but have been vexed by the growing con-

servatism of Cromwell's policy through his Protectorate. To his grand panegyric on Oliver in the *Defensio Secunda* of 1654 he had ventured to append cautions against self-will, over-legislation, and over-policing; and he cannot have thought that Oliver had been immaculate in these respects through the four subsequent years. The attempt to revive an aristocracy and a House of Lords, on which Cromwell was latterly bent, cannot have been to Milton's taste. Above all, Milton dissented *in toto* from Cromwell's church policy. It was Milton's fixed idea, almost his deepest idea, that there should be no such thing as an Established Church, or state-paid clergy, of any sort or denomination or mixture of denominations, in any nation, and that, as it had been the connexion between church and state, begun by Constantine, that had vitiated Christianity in the world, and kept it vitiated, so Christianity would never flourish as it ought till there had been universal disestablishment and disendowment of the clergy, and the propagation of the gospel were left to the zeal of voluntary pastors, self-supported, or supported modestly by their flocks. He had at one time looked to Cromwell as the likeliest man to carry this great revolution in England. But Cromwell, after much meditation on the subject in 1652 and 1653, had come to the opposite conclusion. The conservation of the Established Church of England, in the form of a broad union of all evangelical denominations of Christians, whether Presbyterians, or Independents, or Baptists, or moderate Old Anglicans, that would accept state-pay with state-control, had been the fundamental notion of his Protectorate, persevered in to the end. This must have been Milton's deepest disappointment with the Oliverian rule.

Cromwell's death on the 3d of September 1658 left the Protectorship to his son Richard. Milton and Marvell continued in their posts, and a number of the Foreign Office letters of the new Protectorate were of Milton's composition. Thinking the time fit, he also put forth, in October 1658, a new edition of his *Defensio Prima*, and, early in 1659, a new English pamphlet, entitled *Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes*, ventilating those notions of his as to the separation of church and state which he had been obliged of late to keep to himself. To Richard's Protectorate also belongs one of Milton's Latin *Familiar Epistles*. Meanwhile, though all had seemed quiet round Richard at first, the jealousies of the army officers left about him by Oliver, and the conflict of political elements let loose by Oliver's death, were preparing his downfall. In May 1659 Richard's Protectorate was at an end. The country had returned with pleasure to what was called "the good old cause" of pure republicanism; and the government was in the hands of "the Restored Rump," consisting of the reassembled remains of that Rump Parliament which Cromwell had dissolved in 1653. To this change, as inevitable in the circumstances, or even promising, Milton adjusted himself. The last of his known official performances in his Latin secretaryship are two letters in the name of William Lenthall, as the speaker of the restored Rump, one to the king of Sweden and one to the king of Denmark, both dated May 15, 1659. Under the restored Rump, if ever, he seemed to have a chance for his notion of church-disestablishment; and, accordingly, in August 1659, he put forth, with a prefatory address to that body, a large pamphlet entitled *Considerations touching the likeliest means to remove Hirelings out of the Church*. The restored Rump had no time to attend to such matters. They were in struggle for their own existence with the army chiefs; and the British Islands were in that state of hopeless confusion and anarchy which, after passing through a brief phase of attempted military government (October to December 1659), and a second revival of the purely republican or Rump government (December 1659 to

February 1659-60), issued in Monk's march from Scotland, assumption of the dictatorship in London, and recall of all the survivors of the original Long Parliament to enlarge the Rump to due dimensions and assist him in further deliberations. Through all this anarchy the Royalist elements had been mustering themselves, and the drift to the restoration of the Stuart dynasty, as the only possible or feasible conclusion, had become apparent. To prevent that issue, to argue against it and fight against it to the last, was the work to which Milton had then set himself. His disestablishment notion and all his other notions had been thrown aside; the preservation of the republic in any form, and by any compromise of differences within itself, had become his one thought, and the study of practical means to this end his most anxious occupation. In a *Letter to a Friend concerning the Ruptures of the Commonwealth*, written in October 1659, he had propounded a scheme of a kind of dual government for reconciling the army chiefs with the Rump; through the following winter, marked only by two of his Latin *Familiar Epistles*, his anxiety over the signs of the growing enthusiasm throughout the country for the recall of Charles II. had risen to a kind of agony; and early in March 1659-60 his agony found vent in a pamphlet of the most passionate vehemence entitled *The Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth, and the Excellence thereof compared with the Inconveniences and Dangers of readmitting Kingship in this Nation*. An abridgment of the practical substance of this pamphlet was addressed by him to General Monk in a letter entitled *The Present Means and Brief Delineation of a Free Commonwealth*. Milton's proposal was that the central governing apparatus of the British Islands for the future should consist of one indissoluble Grand Council or parliament, which should include all the political chiefs, while there should be a large number of provincial councils or assemblies sitting in the great towns for the management of local and county affairs. The scheme, so far as the public attended to it at all, was received with laughter; the Royalist demonstrations were now fervid and tumultuous; and it remained only for the new and full parliament of two Houses which had been summoned under Monk's auspices, and which is now known as the Convention Parliament, to give effect to Monk's secret determination and the universal popular desire. Not even then would Milton be silent. In *Brief Notes on a late Sermon*, published in April 1660, in reply to a Royalist discourse by a Dr Griffith, he made another protest against the recall of the Stuarts, even hinting that it would be better that Monk should become king himself; and in the same month he sent forth a second edition of his *Ready and Easy Way*, more frantically earnest than even the first, and containing additional passages of the most violent denunciation of the royal family, and of prophecy of the degradation and disaster they would bring back with them. This was the dying effort. On the 25th of April the Convention Parliament met; on the 1st of May they resolved unanimously that the government by King, Lords, and Commons should be restored; and on the 29th of May Charles II. made his triumphal entry into London. The chief republicans had by that time scattered themselves, and Milton was in hiding in an obscure part of the city.

How Milton escaped the scaffold at the Restoration is a mystery now, and was a mystery at the time. Actually, in the terrible course through the two Houses of the Convention Parliament of that Bill of Indemnity by which the fates of the surviving regicides and of so many others of the chief republican culprits were determined, Milton was named for special punishment. It was voted by the Commons that he should be taken into custody by the sergeant-at-arms, for prosecution by the attorney-general on account of his *Eikonoklastes* and *Defensio*

Prima, and that all copies of those books should be called in and burnt by the hangman. There was, however, some powerful combination of friendly influences in his favour, with Monk probably abetting. At all events, on the 29th of August 1660, when the Indemnity Bill did come out complete, with the king's assent, granting full pardon to all for their past offences, with the exception of about a hundred persons named in the bill itself for various degrees of punishment, thirty-four of them for death and twenty-six for the highest penalty short of death, Milton did not appear as one of the exceptions on any ground or in any of the grades. From that moment, therefore, he could emerge from his hiding, and go about as a free man. Not that he was yet absolutely safe. During the next two or three months London was in excitement over the trials of such of the excepted regicides and others as had not succeeded in escaping abroad, and the hangings and quarterings of ten of them; there were several public burnings by the hangman at the same time of Milton's condemned pamphlets; and the appearance of the blind man himself in the streets, though he was legally free, would have caused him to be mobbed and assaulted. Nay, notwithstanding the Indemnity Bill, he was in some legal danger to as late as December 1660. Though the special prosecution ordered against him by the Commons had been quashed by the subsequent Indemnity Bill, the sergeant-at-arms had taken him into custody. Entries in the Commons journals of December 17 and 19 show that Milton complained of the sergeant-at-arms for demanding exorbitant fees for his release, and that the House arranged the matter.

Milton did not return to Petty France. For the first months after he was free he lived as closely as possible in a house near what is now Red Lion Square, Holborn. Thence he removed, apparently early in 1661, to a house in Jewin Street, in his old Aldersgate-Street and Barbican neighbourhood.

In Jewin Street Milton remained for two or three years, or from 1661 to 1664. They were the time of his deepest degradation, that time of which he speaks when he tells us how, by the Divine help, he had been able to persevere undauntedly—

"though fallen on evil days,
On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues,
In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,
And solitude."

The "evil days" were those of the Restoration in its first or Clarendonian stage, with its revenges and reactions, its return to high Episcopacy and suppression of every form of dissent and sectarianism, its new and shameless royal court, its open proclamation and practice of anti-Puritanism in morals and in literature no less than in politics. For the main part of this world of the Restoration Milton was now nothing more than an infamous outcast, the detestable blind republican and regicide who had, by too great clemency, been left unchanged. The friends that adhered to him still, and came to see him in Jewin Street, were few in number, and chiefly from the ranks of those nonconforming denominations, Independents, Baptists, or Quakers, who were themselves under similar obloquy. Besides his two nephews, the faithful Andrew Marvell, Cyriack Skinner, and some others of his former admirers, English or foreign, we hear chiefly of a Dr Nathan Paget, who was a physician in the Jewin-Street neighbourhood, and of several young men who would drop in upon him by turns, partly to act as his amanuenses, and partly for the benefit of lessons from him,—one of them an interesting Quaker youth, named Thomas Ellwood. With all this genuine attachment to him of a select few, Milton could truly enough describe his condition after

the Restoration as one of "solitude." Nor was this the worst. His three daughters, on whom he ought now to have been able principally to depend, were his most serious domestic trouble. The poor motherless girls, the eldest in her seventeenth year in 1662, the second in her fifteenth, and the youngest in her eleventh, had grown up, in their father's blindness and too great self-absorption, ill-looking after and but poorly educated; and the result now appeared. They "made nothing of neglecting him"; they rebelled against the drudgery of reading to him or otherwise attending on him; they "did combine together and counsel his maid-servant to cheat him in her marketings"; they actually "had made away some of his books, and would have sold the rest." It was to remedy this horrible state of things that Milton consented to a third marriage. The wife found for him was Elizabeth Minshull, of a good Cheshire family, and a relative of Dr Paget's. They were married on the 24th of February 1662-63, the wife being then only in her twenty-fifth year, while Milton was in his fifty-fifth. She proved an excellent wife; and the Jewin Street household, though the daughters remained in it, must have been under better management from the time of her entry into it. From that date Milton's circumstances must have been more comfortable, and his thoughts about himself less abject, than they had been through the two preceding years, though his feeling in the main must have been still that of his own Samson:—

"Now blind, disheartened, shamed, dishonoured, quelled,
To what can I be useful? wherein serve
My nation, and the work from heaven imposed?
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
A burdenous drone, to visitants a gaze,
Or pitied object."

That might be the appearance, but it was not the reality. All the while of his seeming degradation he had found some solace in renewed industry of various kinds among his books and tasks of scholarship, and all the while, more particularly, he had been building up his *Paradise Lost*. He had begun the poem in earnest, we are told, in his house in Petty France, in the last year of Cromwell's Protectorate, and then not in the dramatic form contemplated eighteen years before, but deliberately in the epic form. He had made but little way when there came the interruption of the anarchy preceding the Restoration and of the Restoration itself; but the work had been resumed in Jewin Street and prosecuted there steadily, by dictations of twenty or thirty lines at a time to whatever friendly or hired amanuensis chanced to be at hand. Considerable progress had been made in this way before his third marriage; and after that the work proceeded apace, his nephew Edward Phillips, who was then out in the world on his own account, looking in when he could to revise the growing manuscript.

It was not in the house in Jewin Street, however, that *Paradise Lost* was finished. Not very long after the third marriage, probably in 1664, there was a removal to another house, with a garden, not far from Jewin Street, but in a more private portion of the same suburb. This, which was to be the last of all Milton's London residences, was in the part of the present Bunhill Row which faces the houses that conceal the London artillery-ground and was then known as "Artillery Walk, leading to Bunhill Fields." Here the poem was certainly finished before July 1665; for, when, in that month, Milton and his family, to avoid the Great Plague of London, then beginning its fearful ravages, went into temporary country-quarters in a cottage in Chalfont St Giles, Buckinghamshire, about 23 miles from London, the finished manuscript was taken with him, in probably more than one copy. This we learn from his young Quaker friend, Thomas Ellwood, who had taken the cottage for him, and who was shown one of the

manuscript copies, and allowed to take it away with him for perusal, during Milton's stay at Chalfont. Why the poem was not published immediately after his return to his Bunhill house in London, on the cessation of the Great Plague, does not distinctly appear, but may be explained partly by the fact that the official licenser hesitated before granting the necessary *imprimatur* to a book by a man of such notorious republican antecedents, and partly by the paralysis of all business in London by the Great Fire of September 1666. It was not till the 27th of April 1667 that Milton concluded an agreement with a publisher for the printing of his epic. By the agreement of that date, still extant, Milton sold to Samuel Simmons, printer, of Aldersgate Street, London, for £5 down, the promise of another £5 after the sale of a first edition of thirteen hundred copies, and the further promise of two additional sums of £5 each after the sale of two more editions of the same size respectively, all his copyright and commercial interest in *Paradise Lost* for ever. It was as if an author now were to part with all his rights in a volume for £17, 10s. down, and a contingency of £52, 10s. more in three equal instalments. The poem was duly entered by Simmons as ready for publication in the Stationers' Registers on the 20th of the following August; and shortly after that date it was out in London as a neatly printed small quarto, with the title *Paradise Lost: A Poem written in Ten Books: By John Milton*. The publishing price was 3s., equal to about 10s. 6d. now. It is worth noting as an historical coincidence that the poem appeared just at the time of the fall and disgrace of Clarendon.

The effect of the publication of *Paradise Lost* upon Milton's reputation can only be described adequately, as indeed it was consciously described by himself in metaphor, by his own words on Samson's feat of triumph over the Philistines:—

But he, though blind of sight,
Despised, and thought extinguished quite,
With inward eyes illuminated,
His fiery virtue roused
From under ashes into sudden flame,
And as an evening dragon came,
Assailant on the perched roosts
And nests in order ranged
Of tame villatic fowl, but as an eagle
His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads."

As the poem circulated and found readers, whether in the first copies sent forth by Simmons, or in subsequent copies issued between 1667 and 1669, with varied title-pages, and the latest of them with a prefixed prologue "Argument," the astonishment broke out everywhere. "This man cuts us all out, and the ancients too" is the saying attributed to Dryden on the occasion; and it is the more remarkable because the one objection to the poem which at first, we are told, "stumbled many" must have "stumbled" Dryden most of all. Except in the drama, rhyme was then thought essential in anything professing to be a poem; blank verse was hardly regarded as verse at all; Dryden especially had been and was the champion of rhyme, contending for it even in the drama; and yet here was an epic not only written in blank verse, but declaring itself on that account to be "an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem from the troublesome and modern bondage of riming." That, notwithstanding this obvious blow struck by the poem at Dryden's pet literary theory, he should have welcomed the poem so enthusiastically and proclaimed its merits so emphatically, says much at once for his critical perception and for the generosity of his temper. An opinion proclaimed by the very chief of the Restoration literature could not but prevail among the contemporary scholars; and, though execration of the blind and unhandg regicide

had not ceased among the meaner critics, the general vote was that he had nobly redeemed himself. One consequence of his renewed celebrity was that visitors of all ranks again sought him out for the honour of his society and conversation. His obscure house in Artillery Walk, Bunhill, we are told, became an attraction now, "much more than he did desire," for the learned notabilities of his time.

The year 1669, when the first edition of *Paradise Lost* had been completely sold out, and Milton had received his second £5 on account of it, may be taken as the time of the perfect recognition of his pre-eminence among the English poets of his generation. He was then sixty years of age; and it is to about that year that the accounts that have come down to us of his personal appearance and habits in his later life principally refer. They describe him as to be seen every other day led about in the streets in the vicinity of his Bunhill residence, a slender figure, of middle stature or a little less, generally dressed in a grey cloak or overcoat; and wearing sometimes a small silver-hilted sword, evidently in feeble health, but still looking younger than he was, with his lightish hair, and his fair, rather than aged or pale, complexion. He would sit in his garden at the door of his house, in warm weather, in the same kind of grey overcoat, "and so, as well as in his room, received the visits of people of distinguished parts, as well as quality." Within doors he was usually dressed in neat black. He was a very early riser, and very regular in the distribution of his day, spending the first part, to his midday dinner, always in his own room, amid his books, with an amanuensis to read for him and write to his dictation. Music was always a chief part of his afternoon and evening relaxation, whether when he was by himself or when friends were with him. His manner with friends and visitors was extremely courteous and affable, with just a shade of stateliness. In free conversation, either at the midday dinner, when a friend or two happened, by rare accident, to be present, or more habitually in the evening and at the light supper which concluded it, he was the life and soul of the company, from his "flow of subject" and his "unaffected cheerfulness and civility," though with a marked tendency to the satirical and sarcastic in his criticisms of men and things. This tendency to the sarcastic was connected by some of those who observed it with a peculiarity of his voice or pronunciation. "He pronounced the letter *r*, very hard," Aubrey tells us, adding Dryden's note on the subject: "*Vitæ canina*, the dog-letter, a certain sign of a satirical wit." He was extremely temperate in the use of wine or any strong liquors, at meals and at all other times; and when supper was over, about nine o'clock, "he smoked his pipe and drank a glass of water, and went to bed." He suffered much from gout, the effects of which had become apparent in a stiffening of his hands and finger-joints, and the recurring attacks of which in its acute form were very painful. His favourite poets among the Greeks were Homer and the Tragedians, especially Euripides; among the Latins, Virgil and Ovid; among the English, Spenser and Shakespeare. Among his English contemporaries, he thought most highly of Cowley. He had ceased to attend any church, belonged to no religious communion, and had no religious observances in his family. His reasons for this were a matter for curious surmise among his friends, because of the profoundly religious character of his own mind; but he does not seem ever to have furnished the explanation. The matter became of less interest perhaps after 1669, when his three daughters ceased to reside with him, having been sent out, at considerable expense, "to learn some curious and ingenious sorts of manufacture that are proper for women to learn, particularly embroideries

in gold or silver." After that the household in Bunhill consisted only of Milton, his wife, a single maid-servant, and the "man" or amanuensis who came in for the day.

The remaining years of Milton's life, extending through that part of the reign of Charles II. which figures in English history under the name of "The Cabal Administration," were by no means unproductive. In 1669 he published, under the title of *Accidence Commenced Grammar*, a small English compendium of Latin grammar that had been lying among his papers. In 1670 there appeared, in a rather handsome form, and with a prefixed portrait of him by Faithorne, done from the life, and the best and most authentic that now exists, his *History of Britain to the Norman Conquest*, being all that he had been able to accomplish of his intended complete history of England. In 1671 there followed his *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, bound together in one small volume, and giving ample proof that his poetic genius had not exhausted itself in the preceding great epic. His only publication in 1672 was a Latin digest of Ramist logic, entitled *Artis Logicæ Plenior Institutio*, of no great value, and doubtless from an old manuscript of his earlier days. In 1673, at a moment when the growing political discontent with the government of Charles II. and the conduct of his court had burst forth in the special form of a "No-Popery" agitation and outcry, Milton ventured on the dangerous experiment of one more political pamphlet, in which, under the title *Of True Religion, Heresy, Schism, Toleration, and what best means may be used against the growth of Popery*, he put forth, with a view to popular acceptance, as mild a version as possible of his former principles on the topics discussed. In the same year appeared the second edition of his *Minor Poems*. Thus we reach the year 1674, the last of Milton's life. One incident of that year was the publication of the second edition of *Paradise Lost*, with the poem rearranged as now into twelve books, instead of the original ten. Another was the publication of a small volume containing his Latin *Epistolæ Familiæres*, together with the *Profusiones Oratoriæ* of his student-days at Cambridge,—these last thrown in as a substitute for his Latin state letters in his secretaryship for the Commonwealth and the Protectorate, the printing of which was stopped by order from the Foreign Office. A third publication of the same year, and probably the very last thing dictated by Milton, was a translation of a Latin document from Poland relating to the recent election of the heroic John Sobieski to the throne of that kingdom, with the title *A Declaration or Letters Patents of the Election of this present King of Poland, John the Third*. It seems to have been out in London in August or September 1674. On the 8th of the following November, being a Sunday, Milton died, in his house in Bunhill, of "gout struck in," or gout-fever, at the age of sixty-five years and eleven months. He was buried, the next Thursday, in the church of St Giles, Cripplegate, beside his father, a considerable concourse attending the funeral.

Before the Restoration, Milton, what with his inheritance from his father, what with the official income of his Latin secretaryship, must have been a man of very good means indeed. Since then, however, various heavy losses, and the cessation of all official income, had greatly reduced his estate, so that he left but £900 (worth about £2700 now), besides furniture and household goods. By a word-of-mouth will, made in presence of his brother Christopher, he had bequeathed the whole to his widow, on the ground that he had done enough already for his "undutiful" daughters, and that there remained for them his interest in their mother's marriage portion of £1000, which had never been paid, but which their relatives, the Powells of Forest Hill, were legally bound for, and were now in circumstances to make good. The daughters, with the widow the Powells probably abetting them, went to law with the widow to upset the will; and the decision of the court was that they should receive £100 each. With the £600 thus left, the widow, after some further stay in London, retired to Nantwich in her