









FOR THE LIBERTY OF  
UNLICENC'D PRINTING.

**H** EY WHO TO STATES  
& GOVERNOURS  
OF THE COMMONWEALTH

WANTING TO KNOW  
IN A PRIVATE CONDITION,  
WRITE THAT WHICH THEY

THEM AS AT THE BEGGIN-  
NING OF NO MEANE ENDEA-  
VOUR, NOT A LITTLE AL-  
TERD AND MOV'D INWARD-  
LY IN THEIR MINDES: SOME  
WITH DOUBT & WHAT WILL  
BE THE

WITH FEARE OF WHAT WILL  
WITH HOPE, OTHERS WITH  
HAVE TO SPEAKE, AND PERHAPS EACH OF THESE  
DISPOSITIONS, AS THE SUBJECT WAS WHEREON I EN-  
TER'D, MAY HAVE BEEN TIMES VARIOUSLY AFFECT-  
ED: & LIKELY MIGHT THESE FOREMOST EXPRESSIONS  
NOW ALSO DISSEMINATE WHICH OF THEM SWAY'D MOST  
BUT THAT THE ANY ATTEMPT OF THIS ADDRESSE THUS  
MADE, AND THE THOUGHT OF WHOM IT HATH  
COURTESY HATH GOT THE POWER WITHIN  
TO BE MORE WELCOME THEN INCIDENT TO  
TO BE ASKE, I SHALL BE MELESSE, TO BE NO  
OTHER, THEN THE JOY OF CONGRATULATION, WHICH IT  
BRINGS TO ALL WHO WISH THEIR COUNTRY  
LIBERTY: WHEREOF THE WHOLE COURSE PRO-  
VIDED WILL BE A CERTAIN TESTIMONY, I HAVE A TROPHEY FOR  
THIS IS NOT THE FIRST WHICH I CAN HOPE, THAT



AN  
ORDER  
OF THE  
LORDS and COMMONS  
Asssembled in Parliament.

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

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

---

Die Mercurii. 14 June. 1643.

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

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

---

LONDON, Printed for J. Wright in the Old-baily, June 16, 1643.



AREOPAGITICA

A

SPEECH,

OF

Mr. JOHN MILTON

for the Liberty of UNIVERSAL  
PRINTING,

To the PARLAMENT of ENGLAND.

Τὸν δὲ λαὸν δ' ἐκείνους, εἰ περὶ τῆς πόλεως  
Χρὴσθαι τὴν βέλτερον, οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν  
Καὶ λαὸν δ' ἄλλων, λαμπερὸς εἶναι, ὃ μὴ θέλων,  
Ζεῦ, τί τότ' ἔστιν ἰσχυρὸν πόλιν;  
Euripid. Hecyd.

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

LONDON,  
Printed in the Yeare, 1644.





























# Areopagitica

*A Speech for the Liberty of Unlicenc'd Printing*

---

John Milton

Boreas Classics



# FOR THE LIBERTY OF UNLICENC'D PRINTING.



**THEY** WHO TO STATES  
& GOVERNOURS  
OF THE COMMONWEALTH  
DIRECT THEIR SPEECH, HIGH  
COURT OF PARLAMENT, OR  
WANTING SUCH ACESSE  
IN A PRIVATE CONDITION,  
WRITE THAT WHICH THEY  
FORESEE MAY ADVANCE THE  
PUBLICK GOOD; I SUPPOSE  
THEM AS AT THE BEGIN-  
NING OF NO MEANE ENDEA-  
VOUR, NOT A LITTLE AL-  
TER'D AND MOV'D INWARD,  
LY IN THEIR MINDES: SOME  
WITH DOUBT, WHAT WILL  
BE THE SUCCESSE, OTHERS

WITH FEARE OF WHAT WILL BE THE CENSURE; SOME  
WITH HOPE, OTHERS WITH CONFIDENCE OF WHAT THEY  
HAVE TO SPEAKE, AND ME PERHAPS EACH OF THESE  
DISPOSITIONS, AS THE SUBJECT WAS WHEREON I EN-  
TER'D, MAY HAVE AT OTHER TIMES VARIOUSLY AFFECT-  
ED; & LIKELY MIGHT IN THESE FOREMOST EXPRESSIONS  
NOW ALSO DISCLOSE WHICH OF THEM SWAY'D MOST,  
BUT THAT THE VERY ATTEMPT OF THIS ADDRESSE THUS  
MADE, AND THE THOUGHT OF WHOM IT HATH RE-  
CORSE TO, HATH GOT THE POWER WITHIN ME TO A  
PASSION, FARRE MORE WELCOME THEN INCIDENTALL TO  
A PREFACE, WHICH THOUGH I STAY NOT TO CONFESSE  
ERE ANY ASKE, I SHALL BE BLAMELESSE, IF IT BE NO  
OTHER, THEN THE JOY AND GRATULATION WHICH IT  
BRINGS TO ALL WHO WISH & PROMOTE THEIR COUNTRIES  
LIBERTY: WHEREOF THIS WHOLE DISCOURSE PROPOS'D  
WILL BE A CERTAINE TESTIMONY, IF NOT A TROPHY, FOR  
THIS IS NOT THE LIBERTY WHICH WEE CAN HOPE, THAT



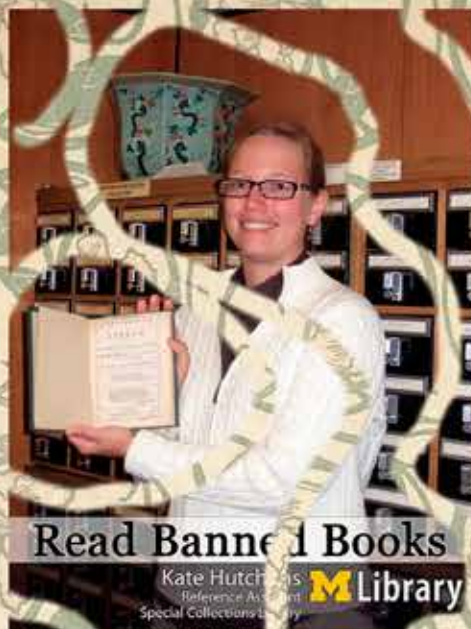
♣ IN THIS REPRINT OF THE AREOPAGITICA THE TEXT  
AND SPELLING OF THE FIRST EDITION (1644) HAVE BEEN  
FOLLOWED CLOSELY, BUT ITALICS ARE NOT USED AND  
THE QUOTATION FROM EURIPIDES ON THE TITLE PAGE  
HAS BEEN EMENDED. ♣ THE BORDER & INITIAL LETTERS  
HAVE BEEN DESIGNED BY LUCIEN PISSARRO & ENGRAVED  
ON THE WOOD BY ESTHER PISSARRO. THE FIRST PAPER  
ISSUE PRINTED BY THEM AT THEIR ERAGNY PRESS,  
THE BROOK, HAMMERSMITH, FINISHED IN OCTO-  
BER, 1903, WAS PARTLY DESTROYED BY FIRE,  
AT THE BINDERS, ONLY THE SAMPLE  
COPY AND 40 UNBOUND COPIES BEING  
SAVED, OF WHICH THE LATTER  
ARE FOR SALE. THE SECOND  
ISSUE, CONSISTING OF 160  
COPIES, OF WHICH 134  
ARE FOR SALE, WAS  
FINISHED IN  
MARCH,

1904.





AREOPAGITICA  
A SPEECH BY  
JOHN MILTON.





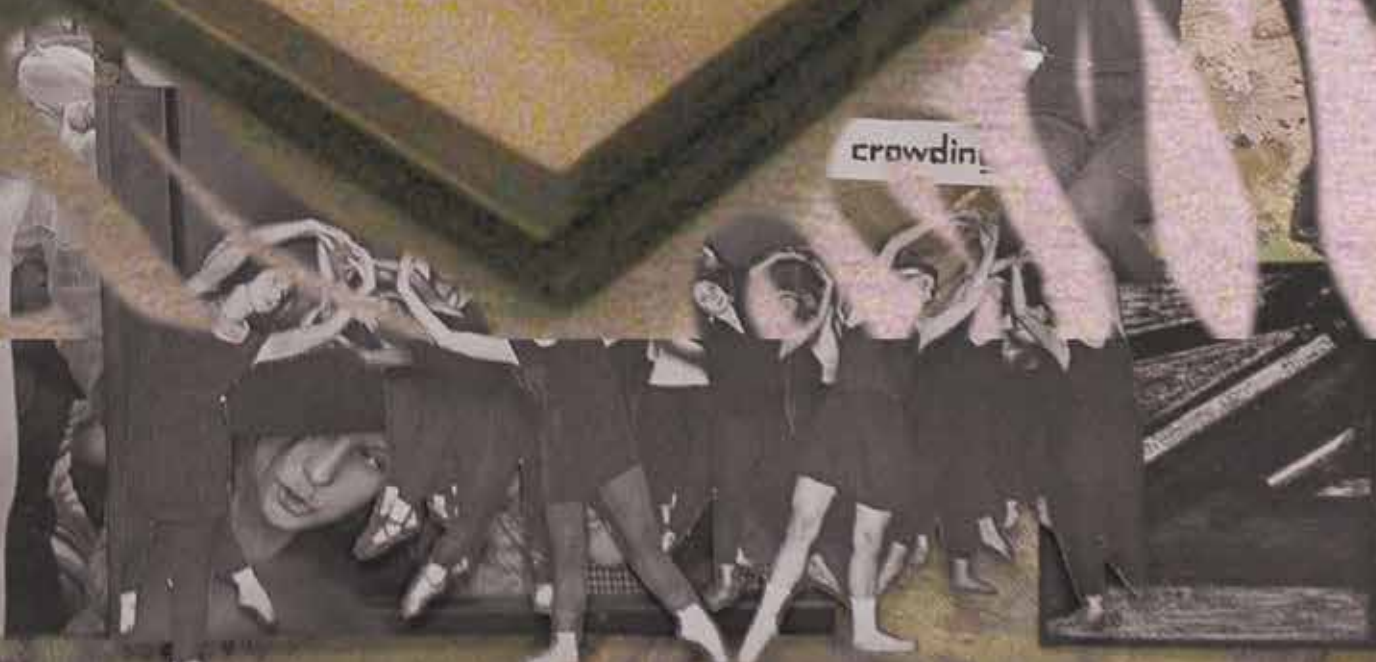




And it is impossible to find them in a more convincing, e-

[illegible]

crowdin







## AREOPAG

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of Religion, ...ood manners  
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not therefore labour...a he...  
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mens vassals. Another...d is...  
some of them in pro...g by...  
having power in their...ls, n...  
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highest actions, and whereof...  
greatest and wisest men.<sup>8</sup>

*The E*



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End



MR. JOHN MILTON  
For the Liberty of *V*ULGARISED  
PRINTING,  
To the PARLIAMENT of ENGLAND





cmw.

14

AREOPAGITICA;

A

SPEECH

OF

JOHN MILTON

the Liberty of UNLICENC'D  
PRINTING,

+

To the PARLAMENT of ENGLAND.

Τὸ δὲ θεῶν δ' ἐκείνο, εἴ τις θέλῃ πόλιν  
Χρηστὸν τι βάλειν, εἰς μέσον φέρειν, ἔχων.  
Καὶ ταῦθ' ὁ χεῖρων, λαμπρὸς ἔσθ', ὁ μὴ θέλων,  
Σιγῇ, τί γὰρ τῶν ἐστὶν ἰσχυρὸν πόλιν;

Euripid. Hicetid.

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

Euripid. Hicetid.



LONDON,  
Printed in the Year, 1644.



life.

Thus the Books of Protagoras were by the Judges of Areopagus  
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Books were filenc't

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and

libellous Books, which  
were mainly intended to  
be fuppreft

to have a vigilant eye

how Bookes demean e

themselves as well as I

For Books are not abfo-  
lutely

dead things, but doe con-  
tain a potencie of life in  
them

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almoft kill a Man as kill a  
good Book;

but a good Booke is the

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imbanding and treafur'd

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the books of Hereticks,  
of Gentiles

the Books not fit  
which they fo dealt  
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hereticall Books

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as

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Till then Books were ever  
as freely admitted  
into the World as any other  
birth; the iffue of  
the brain was no more  
then the iffue of the  
womb.

But this Book in wors  
condition then a peccant

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Books

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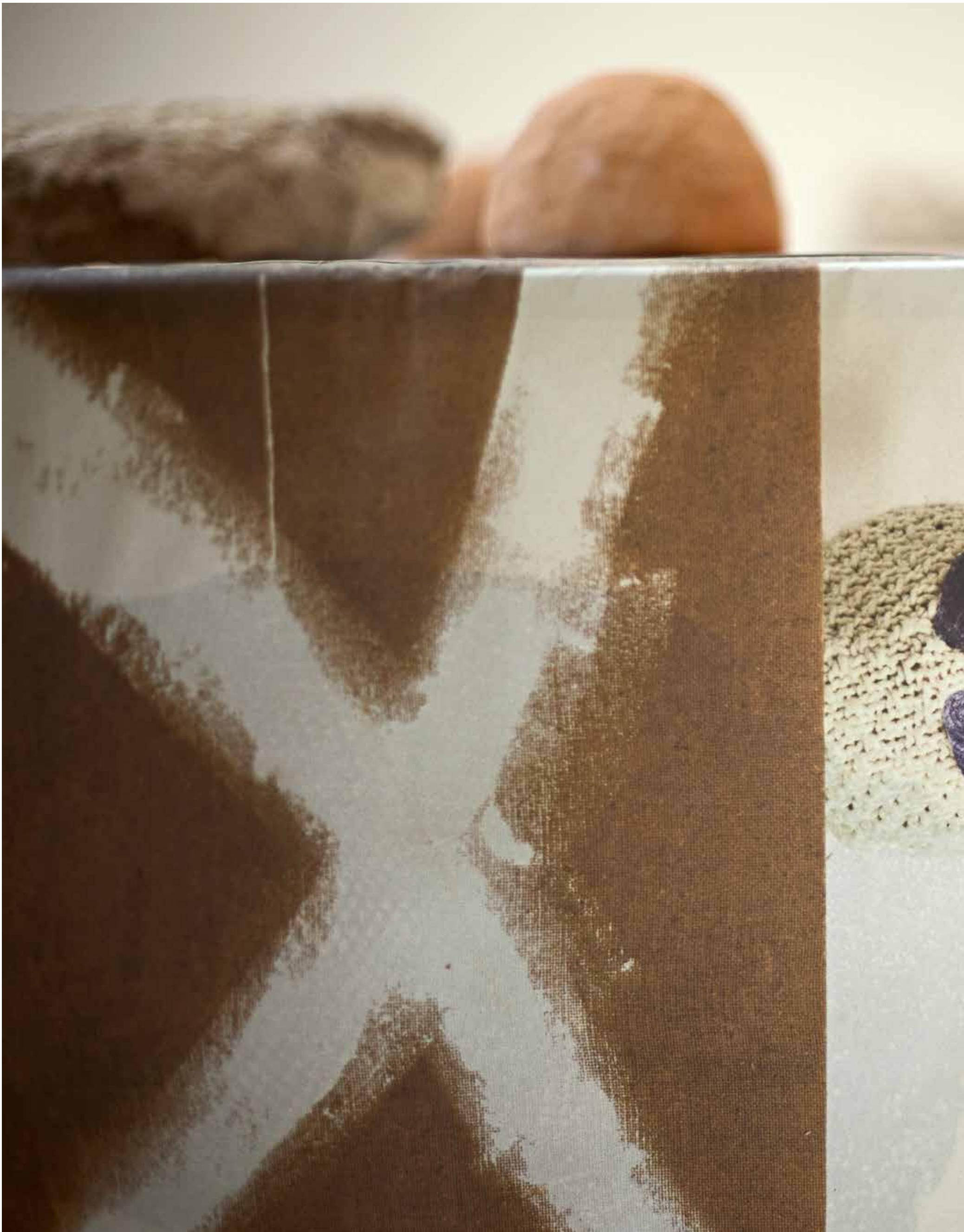
are  
and catching  
he learned, from

this is the benefit which

may be had of books

whom to the common  
people





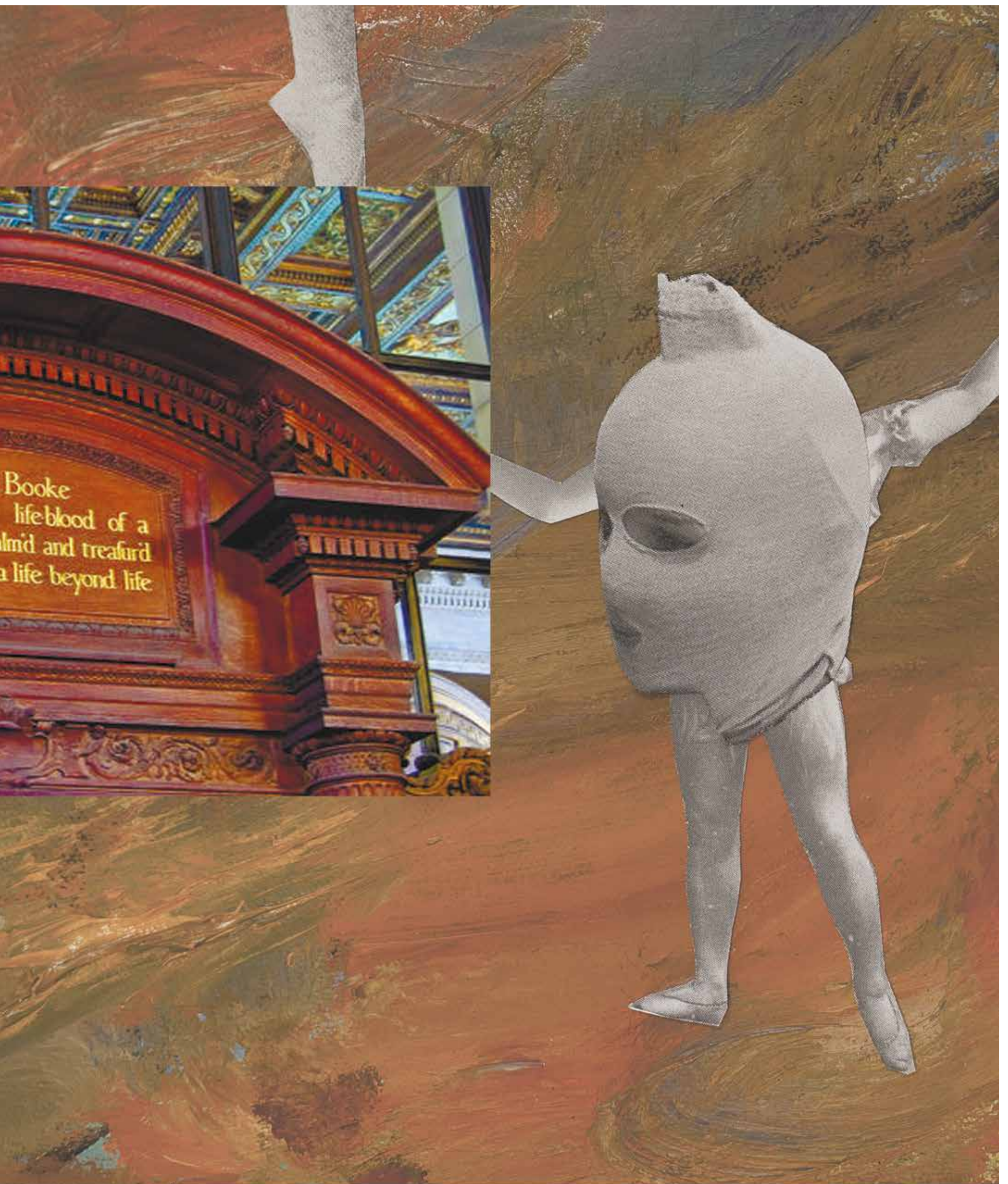


















AREOPAGITICA:  
A  
S P E E C H

OF

Mr. JOHN MILTON,

For the LIBERTY of Unlicens'd  
PRINTING,



L O N D O N :

Printed for A. MILLAR, at Buchanan's Head,  
over-against St. Clement's-Church, in the  
Strand. 1738. (Price One Shilling.)











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

2. There were Warden in the Stationers' Company.

3. Reprinted at page 24.

4. BERNARDO DAVANZATI—born [b. 30 August 1580]—d. 20 March 1606]. A Florentine author of some reputation. He wrote several works. I have not, as yet, been able to identify the particular one referred to by Mr. [?].

5. ROBERT GREVILLE, LORD BROOKE—The title of this book is, *A discourse opening the nature of Episcopacie, which is exercised in England. Wherein with all Humility, are represented some Considerations touching the much-desired Peace, and Union, of This our Mother Church.* By the Right Honourable ROBERT GREVILLE, Lord Brooke. London, Printed by R. C. for Samuel Cartwright, and are to be sold at the signe of the Hand and Bible in St. Dunstons Church-Lane 1641. This Lord Brooke was born in 1607—the son of the celebrated Fulk Greville, Lord Brooke, of Souchamps-court, the friend of Sir Philip Sidney. He was killed on 2 March 1642, while commanding the parliamentary forces attacking the Church-clofe at Litchfield. 'It fell out that he having planted his great guns against the South-East Church-clofe, he was, tho' harneffed with plate-armour, cap-a-pe, thro' the forehead, in the eye by one Dr. [?], a Clergy-man's son, (who could neither swim nor stand in a doore) whither he came to see the occasion of a fudder [?], which he instantly died.'—A. A. Wood. *Athene Oxonienses*, II. 435, 1815.

6. Reprinted at page 24.

7. Reprinted at page 7.

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



J. & W. Rider, Printers, London.









and civility, it is to be wonder'd how mulcters and un-bookish they were, minding nought but the feats of Warre. There needed no licencing of Books among them for they dislik'd all, but their owne *Laconick Apothegms*, and took a slight occasion to chafe *Archilochus*



In *Athens* where Books and Wits were ever buſier then in any other part of *Greece*, I find but only two ſorts of writings which the Magiſtrate car'd to take notice of; thoſe either blaſphemous and Atheiſticall, or Libellous. Thus the Books of *Protagoras* were by the Judges of *Aræpagus* commanded to be burnt, and himſelf baniſht the territory for a diſtracted humor with his









(1)

## For the Liberty of unlicenc'd Printing.

**T**hey who to States and Governours of the Commonwealth direct their Speech, High Court of Parliaments, or wanting such access in a private condition, write that which they force may advance the publick good; I suppose them as at the beginning of no mean endeavour, not a little alter'd and mov'd inwardly in their minde: Some without doubt of what will be the success; others with feare of what will be the censure; some with hope, others with confidence of what they have to speake. And me perhaps each of these dispositions, as the subject was whereon I enter'd, may have at other times variously affected; and likely might in these formost expressions now also discolore which of them sway'd most, but that the very attempt of this addresse thus made, and the thought of whom it hath recourse to, hath got the power within me to a passion, farre more welcome then incidentall to a Preface. Which though I stay not to confesse ere any aske, I shall be blamelesse, if it be no other, then the joy and gratulation which it brings to all who wish and promote their Countreys liberty; whereof this whole Discourse propos'd will be a certaine testimony, if not a Trophy. For this is not the liberty which wee can hope, that no grievance ever should arise in the Commonwealth; that let no man in this World expect; but when complaints are freely heard, deeply consider'd, and speedily reform'd, then is the utmost bound of civil liberty attain'd, that wise men looke for. To which if I now manifest by the very sound of this which I shall utter, that wee are already in good part arriv'd, and yet from such a steepe disadvantage of tyranny and superstition groundd into our principles as was beyond the manhood of a *Roman* recovery, it will be attributed first, as is most due, to the strong assistance of God our deliverer; next to your faithfull guidance and undaunted Widome; Lords and Commons of *England*. Neither is it in Gods essence the diminution of his glory, when honourable things are spoken of good men and worthy Magistrates; which if I now first should begin to doe,







