

crisis in English history, we find that Milton is developing his philosophy of freedom. In his previous writings, all of them timely performances, he had contended for religious and domestic freedom, for a free interpretation of the Bible, for free education, for liberty of investigation, of speech, of the press;¹ in *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* he was to re-emphasize most of these ideas, and to make his first plea for civil liberty, to anticipate modern thought in the statement and defence of great and generous principles. In the compact and weighty pages of this pamphlet, he presents the following leading ideas, which were to command such attention from the whole of Europe in their elaborated form, in the Latin periods of the replies to Salmasius and Morus:— (1) All men naturally were born free (9. 24); (2) as a result of a voluntary compact, kings and magistrates were appointed by the people as deputies and commissioners, repositories of communicated and entrusted power (9. 31 ff.); (3) laws were invented by the people as checks to confine and limit the authority of magistrates (10. 21 ff.); (4) bonds or covenants were also imposed upon rulers to compel them to observe the laws which the people had made (11. 9 ff.); (5) the power of kings and magistrates remains fundamentally in the people as their natural birthright (11. 7 ff.); (6) the king or magistrate may be chosen or rejected, retained or deposed by the people (15. 11 ff.); (7) men should be governed by the authority of reason (1. 1, *et passim*). Commenting on these political maxims for a new society, Geffroy says: 'Milton was not a practical statesman, and his plans for a future social fabric were too often pure

¹ See his own statement in *Sec. Def.* (Bohn 1. 257 ff.).