ment of the truth reached by its means. The *Amendment of the Understanding* was therefore put aside unfinished, and was first published in the *Opera Posthuma.* Spinoza meanwhile concentrated his attention upon the *Ethics,* and we learn from the correspondence with his Amsterdam friends that a considerable part of book i. had been com­municated to the philosophical club there before February 1663. It formed his main occupation for two or three years after this date. Though thus giving his friends freely of his best, Spinoza did not cast his thoughts broad­cast upon any soil. He had a pupil living with him at Rhijnsburg whose character seemed to him lacking in solidity and discretion. This pupil (probably Albert Burgh, who afterwards joined the Church of Rome and penned a foolishly insolent epistle to his former teacher) was the occasion of Spinoza’s first publication,—the only publi­cation indeed to which his name was attached. Not deeming it prudent to initiate the young man into his own system, he took for a text-book the second and third parts of Descartes’s *Principles,* which deal in the main with natural philosophy. As he proceeded he put Descartes’s matter in his own language and cast the whole argument into a geometric form. At the request of his friends he devoted a fortnight to applying the same method to the first or metaphysical part of Descartes’s philosophy, and the sketch was published in 1663, with an appendix entitled *Cogitata Metaphysica,* still written from a Cartesian standpoint (defending, for example, the freedom of the will), but con­taining hints of his own doctrine. The book was revised by Dr Meyer for publication and furnished by him, at Spinoza’s request, with a preface, in which it is expressly stated that the author speaks throughout not in his own person but simply as the exponent of Descartes. A Dutch translation appeared in the following year.@@1

In 1663 Spinoza removed from Rhijnsburg to Voor- burg, a suburban village about 2 miles from The Hague. His reputation had continued to spread. From Rhijnsburg he had paid frequent visits to The Hague, and it was prob­ably the desire to be within reach of some of the friends he had made in these visits—among others the De Witts —that prompted his change of residence. He had works in hand, moreover, which he wished in due time to publish ; and in that connexion the friendly patronage of the De Witts might be of essential service to him. The first years at Voorburg continued to be occupied by the composition of the *Ethics,* which was probably finished, however, by the summer of 1665. A journey made to Amsterdam in that year is conjectured to have had reference to its publication. But, finding that it would be impossible to keep the authorship secret, owing to the numerous hands through which parts of the book had already passed, Spinoza determined to keep his manuscript in his desk for the present. In September 1665 we find Oldenburg twit­ting him with having turned from philosophy to theology and busying himself with angels, prophecy, and miracles. This is the first reference to the *Tractatus Theologico- Politicus,* which formed his chief occupation for the next four years. The aim of this treatise may be best under­stood from the full title with which it was furnished— *Trac­tatus Theologico-Politicus, continens dissertationes aliquot, quibus ostenditur libertatem philosophandi non tantum salva pietate et reipublicæ pace posse concedi sed eandem nisi cum pace reipublicæ ipsaque pietate tolli non posse.* It is, in fact, an eloquently reasoned defence of liberty of thought and speech in speculative matters. The external side of religion—its rites and observances—must of necessity be

@@@1 The title of the Latin original ran—Renαti des Cartes Principiorum Philosophise pars i. et ii. more geometrico demonstrates per Benedictum de Spinoza Amstelodamensem. Accesserunt ejusdem Cogitata Meta­physica.

subject to a certain control on the part of the state, whose business it is to see to the preservation of decency and order. But, with such obvious exceptions, Spinoza claims complete freedom of expression for thought and belief ; and he claims it in the interests alike of true piety and of the state itself. The thesis is less interesting to a modern reader—because now generally acknowledged—than the argument by which it is supported. Spinoza’s position is based upon the thoroughgoing distinction drawn in the book between philosophy, which has to do with knowledge and opinion, and theology, or, as we should now say, reli­gion, which has to do exclusively with obedience and con­duct. The ægis of religion, therefore, cannot be employed to cover with its authority any speculative doctrine; nor, on the other hand, can any speculative or scientific investiga­tion be regarded as putting religion in jeopardy. Spinoza undertakes to prove his case by the instance of the Hebrew Scriptures. Scripture deals, he maintains, in none but the simplest precepts, nor does it aim at anything beyond the obedient mind ; it tells us nought of the divine nature, but what men may profitably apply to their lives. The greater part of the treatise is devoted to working out this line of thought ; and in so doing Spinoza consistently applies to the interpretation of the Old Testament those canons of historical exegesis which are often regarded as of compara­tively recent growth. The treatise thus constitutes the first document in the modern science of Biblical criticism. It was published in 1670, anonymously, printer and place of publication being likewise disguised *(Hamburgi apud Hein- ricum Künraht).* The storm of opposition which it encoun­tered showed that these precautions were not out of place. It was synodically condemned along with Hobbes’s *Levia­than* and other books as early as April 1671, and was con­sequently interdicted by the states-general of Holland in 1674 ; before long it was also placed on the Index by the Catholic authorities. But that it was widely read appears from its frequent re-issue with false title-pages, represent­ing it now as an historical work and again as a medical treatise. Controversialists also crowded into the lists against it. A translation into Dutch appears to have been proposed; but Spinoza, who foresaw that such a step would only increase the commotion which was so distasteful to him, steadily set his face against it. No Dutch translation appeared till 1693.

The same year in which the *Treatise* was published Spinoza removed from his suburban lodging at Voorburg into The Hague itself. He took rooms first on the Veerkay with the widow Van de Velde, who in her youth had assisted Grotius to escape from his captivity at Loewenstein. This was the house afterwards occupied by Colerus, the worthy Lutheran minister who became Spinoza’s biographer. But the widow insisted on boarding her lodger, and Spinoza presently found the expense too great for his slender purse. He accordingly removed to a house on the Pavelioen Gracht near at hand, occupied by a painter called Van der Spijck. Here he spent the remaining years of his life in the frugal independence which he prized. Colerus gives particulars which enable us to realize the almost incredible simplicity and economy of his mode of life. He would say sometimes to the people of the house that he was like the serpent who forms a circle with his tail in his mouth, meaning thereby that he had nothing left at the year’s end. His friends came to visit him in his lodgings, as well as others attracted by his reputation-—Leibnitz among the rest—and were courteously entertained, but Spinoza preferred not to accept their offers of hospitality. He spent the greater part of his time quietly in his own chamber, often having his meals brought there and sometimes not leaving it for two or three days together when absorbed in his studies. On one occasion he did not leave the house for three