to be within reach of some of the friends he had made in these visits—among others the De Witts—that prompted his changed 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- politicusi continens disseτtationes aliquot, quibus ostenditur libertatem philosophandi non tantum salva pietate et reipublicae pace posse concedi sed eandem nisi cum pace reipublicae 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 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 aegis 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 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 Heinricum 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 reissue 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 *Tractal·us* 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 which forms a circle with its tail in its 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 months. “ When he happened to be tired by having applied himself too much to his philosophical meditations, he would go downstairs to refresh himself, and discoursed with the Van der Spijcks about anything that might afford matter for an ordinary conversation, and even about trifles. He also took pleasure in smoking a pipe of tobacco; or, when he had a mind to divert himself somewhat longer, he looked for some spiders and made them fight together, or he threw some flics into the cobweb, and was so well pleased with the result of that battle that he would sometimes break into laughter " (Colerus). He also conversed at times on more serious topics with the simple people with whom he lodged, often, for example, talking over the sermon with them when they came from church. He occasionally went himself to hear the Lutheran pastor preach—the pre­decessor of Colerus—and would advise the Van der Spijcks not to miss any sermon of so excellent a preacher. The children, too, he put in mind of going often to church, and taught them to be obedient and dutiful to their parents. One day his land­lady, who may have heard strange stories of her solitary lodger, came to him in some trouble to ask him whether he believed she could be saved in the religion she professed, " Your religion is a good one,” said Spinoza; “ you need not look for another, nor doubt that you will be saved in it, provided that, while you apply yourself to piety, you live at the same time a peaceable and quiet life.” Only once, it is recorded, did Spinoza’s admir­able self-control give way, and that was when he received the news of the murder of the De Witts by a frantic mob in the streets of the Hague. It was in the year 1672, when the sudden invasion of the Low Countries by Louis XIV. raised an irresis­tible clamour for a military leader and overthrew the republican constitution for which the De Witts had struggled. John De Witt had been Spinoza’s friend, and had bestowed a small pension upon him; he had Spinoza’s full sympathy in his political aims. On receiving the news of the brutal murder of the two brothers, Spinoza burst into tears, and his indignation was so roused that he was bent upon publicly denouncing the crime upon the spot where it had been committed. But the timely caution of his host prevented his issuing forth to almost certain death. Not long after Spinoza was himself in danger from the mob, in consequence of a visit which he paid to the French camp. He had been in correspondence with one Colonel Stoupe, a Swiss theologian and soldier, then serving with the prince of Condé, the commander of the French army at Utrecht. From him Spinoza received a communication enclosing a passport from the French commander, who wished to make his acquaintance and promised him a pension from the French king at the easy price of a dedication to his majesty. Spinoza went to Utrecht, but returned without seeing Condé, who had in the meantime been called elsewhere; the pension he civilly declined. There may have been nothing more in the visit than is contained in this narrative; but on his return Spinoza found that the popu­lace of the Hague regarded him as no better than a spy. The town was full of angry murmurs, and the landlord feared that the mob would storm his house and drag Spinoza out. Spinoza