

But to counterfet the hand of God is the boldest of all Forgery: And he, who without warrant but his own fantastic surmise, takes upon him perpetually to unfold the secret and unsearchable Mysteries of high Providence, is likely for the most part to mistake and slander them; and approaches to the madness of those reprobate thoughts, that would wrest the Sword of Justice out of Gods hand, and imploy it more justly in thir own conceit. It was a small thing to contend with the Parliament about sole power of the Militia, when we see him doing little less than laying hands on the weapons of God himself, which are his judgements, to weild and manage them by the sway and bent of his own fraile cogitations.

behold lying Visions, and prophecy our [*sic*] of their own hearts: whose thoughts are thoughts of iniquity, as the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks, wasting and destruction are in their paths. And I would to God you for your part would seriously consider (to use his words once more) *that to counterfeit the hand of God is the boldest of all forgeries; and that he who without any warrant but his own surmise takes upon him perpetually to unfold the secrets and unsearchable Mysteries of high Providence, is likely for the most part to mistake and slander them: and approaches to the madness of those reprobate thoughts that would wrest the sword of justice out of Gods hand, and imploy it more justly in their own conceit. It is but a small thing for such men as these to grasp at all power here on earth; when we see them doing little less than laying hands on the Weapons of God himself, which are his judgments; to weild and manage them by the sway and bent of their own frail cogitations.*

This use of *Eikonoklastes* by Patrick provides an interesting hint of the political climate of 1669. Patrick was a tolerant writer who identified scrupulously the writers he made use of. With his personal history it is not surprising that he should have known *Eikonoklastes* and wanted to borrow some striking and apt images from it. For him to have referred to Milton only as 'a famous writer against Church and State in another cause' (thereby misleading the annotator of the Turnbull copy) seems to imply that he felt it might be dangerous to refer openly to Milton's political writings with anything other than the greatest hostility. The nature of recorded references to Milton in the Restoration period sug-