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WHAT CONSTITUTES INFIDELITY?

To the Conductors of the Spirit of the Pilgrims.

GENTLEMEN,

AN article with the above title, which appeared in your pages several months since, appears to have excited unusual attention, and to have occasioned, in some minds, not a little disquietude. With the review in your last, in reply to the Christian Examiner, I have no reason to be dissatisfied, and shall not think it necessary to call further attention to what has of late been published in that work. On an article in the Unitarian Advocate for May last, I propose to offer a few remarks; in doing which, I shall of necessity be led into a more particular investigation of the general subject.

The conductors of the Advocate commence with saying,

“We are utterly at a loss to conceive how there can be any difference of opinion on the question, what profession of faith is necessary to constitute a man a Christian, as distinguished from an infidel; and we believe that until a comparatively recent date there has been but one opinion on the subject. The test now adopted by Christians of the exclusive sect, is altogether arbitrary and fallacious, and to us appears opposed to reason, to the usage of all Christian antiquity, and to the plain import of the language of the Bible.” “If we carefully read the New Testament, we shall find that the faith deemed necessary to constitute a Christian, by Jesus, and his apostles, was exceedingly simple. It consisted in the belief of this single proposition—*Jesus is the Messiah, or Christ*. Whoever made this profession was considered a Christian as distinguished from a Jew, or a Heathen; and whoever now makes it is a Christian, so far as faith is concerned. He is a Christian, as distinguished from an unbeliever or infidel, and he is authorized to complain of injustice done him, if his title to the name of Christian be denied him.”

“This, we conceive, is the sense of the term Christian, as distinguished from infidel. Whoever employs it in any other sense, departs from primitive usage; he assigns to it a meaning which was unknown to Jesus and his apostles; sets up a test not sanctioned by their example.”

VOL. III.—NO. IX.

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THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS. *From the earliest period to the present time.* By Rev. H. H. MILMAN. With Maps and Engravings. In three Volumes. New York: J. & J. Harper. 1830.

WE have read this work with mingled emotions of pleasure and pain. It is a vivid history: the picture is touched by the hand of genius; but if art has heightened the coloring, it has also desecrated the subject. The imagination of a poet has been too exclusively at work, where a fervid as well as rational piety should have accompanied and influenced the researches of the grave historian. It wears throughout the appearance of having been written with great rapidity,—for general readers, rather than for critical scholars. This would perhaps be no objection in itself, but it has sometimes occasioned inaccuracies and great obscurities in the style; it has produced assertions that have no support in critical research; and not unfrequently it has led to such a hasty, indiscriminate conglomeration of facts and events, that the perusal of a chapter leaves upon the mind a confused, transitory impression. Add to this, a great number of typographical errors, the immense length of unbroken paragraphs, and the absence, through the greater part of the work, of marginal, historical dates, and it makes the whole book careless in appearance, unmethodical in execution, troublesome to the memory, and inconvenient for reference.

We have heard that the work has been treated, in some publications, with unjustifiable and undignified reproach. The chief ground of complaint—and it is a heavy accusation—is its alleged infidel tendency. While we attempt to show that there is some reason for this charge, we willingly declare that, in our opinion, the history of the Jews, considered principally in a popular light, was never before presented to the mind in a manner so novel, classical, spirited and attractive. We know not when we have perused any history with such thrilling and continued interest. Its author displays a brilliant imagination, fine taste, various, though somewhat superficial reading, and composes in a glowing, though often abrupt and careless style. The merits of the work are therefore considerable, but mingled with many defects, besides the important one of which we shall particularly speak. That part which relates to the destruction of Jerusalem is instructive and interesting. The whole of the last volume is written in a spirit of benevolence towards the suffering Israelites, which is calculated to infuse a similar feeling into the mind of the reader. The work is valuable also for its graphic exhibition of the manners, habits, customs, observances, edifices, worship, and character of the Jewish people.

Probably the author, in preparing this work, was not conscious of contributing to weaken or destroy, in any mind, its impressions in

regard to the sacredness and divine authority of the historical portions of the Old Testament ; yet we are compelled to believe that this must be the natural consequence of its perusal, unless great care be previously used, in pointing out and guarding against its dangerous tendency. Such an influence it would not exert, were the history intended exclusively for scholars ; or for those who, with firm moral principles, have had opportunity to go over an extensive course of reading ; or for those whose judgements and opinions possess the experience and stability of manhood. They could detect the ignorance of the writer, the weakness of the reasoning, and would be prepared to resist the insinuating influence of sophistry and doubt.

But the readers of these volumes will be confined principally to the younger and more inexperienced portion of the community. They stand first in the general series of the 'Family Library.' We can scarcely be too solicitious in our anxiety, or too severe in our judgement, in regard to the moral character of all books that are to influence the minds of our children ; especially, that are adapted to form or modify their opinions in regard to the sacred oracles. This consideration will make us more severe in criticizing this work, than otherwise we should deem necessary.

And here we might say much on the responsibility which that club of literary adventurers are assuming, who have undertaken to form a *Family Library* for the people of England, if not for those of America ; and on the caution which it becomes them to use, lest they sanction and circulate what is morally injurious ; especially, as the various works they may issue are likely, for a time, to be received by the public with uncommon trust and eagerness. Such a caution is not merely becoming, but obligatory ; and men of high moral principle, anxious that the rising generation may be trained to the service of God, would esteem it no common happiness to be enabled powerfully to subserve this purpose, by making the moral tendency of every volume published under their patronage elevated, vigorous and pure. It may be well at present for the American public to use a little caution as to the reception of the works which come forth under their auspices. They have lately issued the *Life of Napoleon* by Mr. Lockhart, which we fear may have been written with the same flippant haste that disgraces the *History of the Jews*. But we would rather see the Harpers of New York pour from their prolific press almost anything in the form of historical literature, than have the American libraries deluged with such a flood of immoral novels, and romances of high life in England, as they have been sending through the country. If a bill could be passed preventing the importation to this country of at least nine tenths of the modern English literature, it would be a great and lasting benefit. We presume that thousands of our people, who scarcely know that such venerable Christians as Lord

Teignmouth or Wilberforce exist, are well acquainted with the character and manners of half the dissipated, degraded, licentious nobility in England, and ape them, as far as they can conveniently, on this side the water. Strange delusion! that the citizens of a republic can condescend to be the admirers and imitators of despicable, titled, monarchical buffoons.

Mr. Milman could hardly have desired a better opportunity for communicating moral and religious instruction in an attractive form, than was furnished in the composition of a history of the Jews. He might have led the youthful mind to venerate its instructive exhibitions of the character of Jehovah, and gratefully to admire his dealings with the Israelites; and he might have powerfully confirmed the faith of all his readers in the inspiration of the Hebrew Scriptures, exciting a deeper reverence for their sacredness, and a more heartfelt admiration of their beauty. We regret to say that he has done almost nothing of this. The solemn, instructive, and interesting lessons, to be learned from nearly every page of the sacred history, the reader may here search for in vain. We are surprised that a clergyman of the Church of England, writing for the Family Library, the domestic circle, should have permitted himself to degrade the tone of his work almost to a level with that of the merest political and worldly story. But he thought the world disposed to look with too great a feeling of reverence on the Jews, and everything belonging to them;—he has certainly been very successful in making it impossible that such a feeling should ever spring from the perusal of his own history. “In fact,” he says in the preface, “we are apt, in our reverence for *“the Bible,”* to throw back the full light of Christianity on the olden volume; but we should ever remember, that the best and wisest of the Jews were not Christians—they had a shadow, but only a shadow, of good things to come.” This is, perhaps, to some extent, a truth. But the evil, if such it can be called, needs a very delicate and cautious hand for its correction, lest, in our zeal to eradicate superstition, we weaken the ground-work of a rational faith, and destroy what is a just and necessary awe; while we root up the tares, there is certainly some danger lest we carry the wheat with them. We hope the time will never arrive, when Christians can come to the perusal of the Scriptures, New or Old, without a deep, solemn impression that they are divine in their origin, and sacred in their character—a feeling, that while within the precinct of “the Bible,” they stand on holy ground.

The sanctity with which the pious mind is accustomed from childhood to invest the ‘distinguished characters in the Mosaic annals,’ is not without authority, and that, too, of a very high kind. When we look into the New Testament, we find them mentioned with a reverential regard, very different from the unceremonious style in which they are treated by our author. “Superior in one

respect alone," says he, "the ancestors of the Jews, and the Jews themselves, were not beyond their age or country in acquirements, in knowledge, or even in morals; as far as morals are modified by usage and opinion." This is an extravagant statement; their writings alone attest their superiority. "This," said Moses, speaking of the law, "is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." A people who could relish such poetry as that of Moses in the nineteenth Psalm, must have been not a little advanced in refinement, as well as in piety.

Mr. Milman did not wish to meddle with theology—he had no desire to make his work a sermon. And "it is possible that, wishing to avoid the tone of a theological treatise, he may sometimes have left the reader to *infer that*, which was constantly present in his own mind." But moral and religious inferences, left for the reader to draw at his option, are rather apt to be overlooked. Here is one reason why Mr. Milman has produced a work, which, without alteration, is hardly proper for the shelves of any Family Library, and in its best view is rather a brilliant, interesting history, than a very moral or instructive one. Instead of making it an object, in the composition of his work, to strengthen the belief of his readers in the inspiration of the sacred oracles, to lead the mind to the contemplation of God, to point out the methods of his discipline with his people, to enforce the authority of his laws, and the sentiment of dependence upon him, and to make the heart feel the importance of obeying him, by the lessons which compel the attention of every man of piety, in whichever way the history, character, and prospects of the Jews may be contemplated, he seems resolutely to have retreated as far as possible from the consideration of topics so trite, and to have refrained from looking at his work in a religious view, lest he might unfortunately incur the odium of theological dullness. In his eagerness "to avoid the tone of a theological treatise," a phrase which to us savors somewhat (though we may be uncharitable) of a sneer at the character of histories, whose object it is to make men more pious as well as more learned,—he has almost hurried into the opposite extreme.

He has generally excluded from observation, whenever it could easily be done, the agency and interposition of God. In the preface to the second edition of his work, he labors to vindicate this course, and appeals to the authority and argument of Warburton, that God, in choosing a man learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, as was the Jewish leader and lawgiver, did it to spare himself the necessity of a perpetual interposition; in accordance with a principle of his moral government of the world, "never to do in an extraordinary, what may be done in an ordinary way." Now we have no great veneration for the character of Warburton,

either as a critic, theologian, or Christian ; but without speaking of this, we have only to turn the eye upon almost any page in the early history of the Jews—the history in the Pentateuch—to find that God does exhibit his own marked agency, necessary or not, by a perpetual interposition. It is therefore presumption in any individual to labor to conceal or keep out of view such interposition, and nonsense in the highest degree to pretend in this way to write a more *rational* history.

One would really imagine that Mr. Milman thought Moses himself too “theological,” too superstitious, too devout, too anxious to attribute everything to the omnipotent and omnipresent energy of Jehovah ; and so intended to improve on the model of the sacred historian. He keeps too much out of view the theocratical constitution of the Hebrews, nor does he commence the work with a sufficient exhibition of this peculiarity in their condition as a people. The sovereignty of the Jewish Commonwealth is practically transferred from God to Moses ;—this great lawgiver, who, in his own history, always acts by command from the Deity, and appears in a subordinate, dependant capacity, in Mr. Milman’s work acts for himself, legislates by his own authority, and almost performs miracles by his own power. In the Pentateuch, it is God acting through Moses as the instrument ;—everywhere an entire dependence upon Jehovah is minutely recognized. It is he who directs his people in their measures ; it is he who leads them through the wilderness ; it is he who gives them bread from heaven to eat, who brings water from the rock, who sunders the Red Sea, and rolls back the Jordan, who goes before them in the fire and the cloud, who protects his people and leads them like a flock. The 78th, 105th, and 106th, and 136th Psalms are not less beautiful for their spirit of deep devotion, their simple and confident recognition of the hand of God, than for the historical accuracy with which they have sketched the picture from the annals of the nation. This grateful, joyous recognition of the divine presence is what gives its inimitable sweetness to the sacred poetry. But in Mr. Milman, God is put out of the way—it is human agency, almost all. Now this is the very spirit of infidelity—an unwillingness to recognize the hand of God, wherever such recognition can be avoided, and a desire to shut up the mind’s vision exclusively to the notice of human means and the human instrument.

We cannot conceive what object is gained by thus excluding all immediate agency of God but what is absolutely necessary. Mr. Milman does indeed avoid the “tone of a theological treatise ;” but he also avoids the opportunity of giving solemnity, sacredness, and instructiveness to the history, and of sustaining the mind’s reverence for the sacred oracles, its source. We deem it quite unnecessary to entertain a more jealous caution for the dignity and grandeur of Jehovah than the inspired writers themselves entertain-

ed and exhibited. If they did not think it derogatory to the divine character to introduce the Deity on the scene, continually interposing by the exertion of power and authority, it is paltry affectation of superior wisdom in any man, to pretend, as often as possible, to get along without acknowledging the supreme agency, merely because the author of the divine legation of Moses asserts that it is a principle in God's moral government of the world "never to do in an extraordinary way that which can be equally effected in an ordinary." It should have been sufficient for Mr. Milman, that he finds God present and acting on every page in the Mosaic history : he should have imitated, in the character of his own work, this striking peculiarity in that of the sacred historian, without perplexing his mind, and hampering his piety, by the fear of falling into "the tone of a theological treatise."

It will be gathered from the tenor of our remarks, that we consider the Jewish history a subject of peculiar sacredness and importance, and to be treated, so far as the pen of inspiration has traced it, in a manner altogether different from that with which any portion of profane history, so called, would be written ; in entire subordination, especially if it be intended for youth, to the example of the sacred oracles, and with evident and perfect reliance on the truth of their whole contents. The pages of a work of this nature, a work to exert its influence on the feelings and opinions of the young, are no place for the discussion of disputed points, the examination of infidel objections, or the exhibition of doubts whether this or that miracle may not be resolved into the vagaries of poetic license. A man of piety and firm faith in the truth of inspiration would conduct the narration in such a manner as to show his own unhesitating and well-grounded confidence in its truth, and to inspire a kindred feeling in the bosom of his reader. A man ignorant, doubtful and unbelieving, is the last person in the world to engage in such a task—the task of preparing a history of the Israelites for the library of the family.

In regard to any other work, we should not have found fault with Mr. Milman for refusing to notice and exhibit, in a decided manner, the constant agency and the providence of God. We are conscious that in writing history, men have sometimes fallen into the gross presumption of undertaking to tell God's reasons for every event, and his intentions in every revolution of empire. All must disapprove the mistaken, presumptuous zeal, which pretends to explain the hidden, inscrutable arrangement of providence, and to reveal the purposes of the infinite mind. But with the history of the Jews it is far different. Follow closely the divine oracles, and there is no danger of mistakes ; exercise the spirit which they breathe and inculcate, and there is no fear of presumption, while there can be no dearth of practical piety. In "*the Bible*," the chart is already made for us ; God himself holds up his providence, with

its secrets laid open, and its springs bare, to our notice ; nor are we at liberty to pass it by as a thing of mystery, insignificance, or doubt. We are bound to remark it, and to draw from its exhibition the salutary lessons it is well adapted to enforce, without fear of falling into "the tone of a theological treatise."

Our objections are principally confined to the first volume of Mr. Milman's history, for with this, his guide in the sacred oracles has nearly ended ; afterwards he stands on much the same ground with the profane historian, and is not exposed to the censure, which he deserves hitherto. We fear the transition from the sacred, simple, God-exhibiting books of the Old Testament, to the secular, common, worldly, political, human air, pervading the pages of Milman, must be injurious in its tendency. The youthful mind feels there is a contradiction, and receives a shock. Instead of meeting with a full, unhesitating confidence in the truth of what inspiration has written, it finds a caution, a suspicion, a half-doubting manner, a readiness to give credence to objections, and an attempt to meet them by lowering the claims of the sacred history. He finds the Hebrews, (we speak only of the first volume) another sort of people than the one he has been accustomed to contemplate as the chosen people of God, the subjects, though obstinate and rebellious, of a glorious theocracy ; he finds, indeed, in the manner of the whole narrative, something very diverse from what the Bible, the revered, beloved Book has presented to his view. We cannot help contrasting the work of Milman, in these respects, with that of Jahn. Jahn's volume is the production of immense, patient, cool, judicious research—a work for the critical scholar, and one to be carefully studied. In writing such a work, its author might, if ever with propriety, have presented it merely in a political aspect ; for it is not to influence the faith or guide the opinions of youthful, inexperienced minds. But this has not been the course he has chosen. He keeps in view, with a broad decisive mark, the theocratical constitution of the Hebrews—God, their sovereign and the supreme administrator of their state—and their entire dependence upon him. The influence of this work is to strengthen the convictions of the reader in regard to the truth and inspiration of the Old Testament history.

Mr. Milman's tone in the first volume, seems confident, hasty, and destitute of humility : at least, this is the impression we receive while he is on ground where the sacred historian has been before him. His unwillingness to receive the literal account of some of the miracles in the Hebrew Scriptures is very apparent. Did the author suppose it would make his own mind appear more independent, give a greater dignity or interest to his history, or add to its credibility in the view of any sober, judicious believer in the truth of the Bible ? He was certainly mistaken. Perhaps he sincerely thought it might convince infidels : this is the

more likely, since the preface closes with this declaration. "To conclude; in the works of writers hostile to revelation, the author has seen many objections, embarrassing to those who take up a narrow system of interpreting the Hebrew writings; to those who adopt a more rational latitude of exposition, none."

We have no desire to confine ourselves to a narrow system of interpretation; but we know, that of all impossible vagaries of a learned fancy, that of making the Bible a book which infidels will believe, is the wildest. As long as the spirit of infidelity exists, objections will be invented; it is vain to hope to prevent them by any concessions for the purpose. We may go on conceding point after point, and yielding inch after inch, till at length we are left with no ground to stand upon, while infidelity remains as rank as ever, and the ranker for our ill-judged attempts to make the dignity of revelation bow before its insolence. Unbelievers will but laugh and exult, when they see a grave and apparently learned churchman cutting down the miracles in order to meet objections, till they dwindle away into mere natural phenomena, or vanish in the poetical license of an Eastern imagination, and anxious to exclude every thing peculiarly religious from the view, lest he offend by the tone of a "theological treatise." Let the defender of the inspiration of the Bible take the highest ground; he will find it easiest to maintain. Let him enlarge his researches; they will prove the wisdom and the reasonableness of his faith. He will find that human investigations, the deeper and more thorough they are, strengthen his elevated position, and confirm his arguments in an increasing degree. Let him not be anxious to explain every thing to the contracted, distorted, vision of infidelity. If even the eye of *faith* meets with arrangements at which she can only wonder, to the sight of an infidel the pages of God's administration must teem with monstrous shapes, and be covered with a darkness that may be felt. Such a vision is no more fitted to scan the history of God's providence, than the fly on the stone in Westminster cathedral to behold the grandeur of the symmetry of the whole building; than the mole that digs in the earth, to measure the sun's orbit.

We shall notice some particular passages in the work, which appear to us objectionable. We have said they are principally confined to the first volume, and for a very obvious reason. Thus far the steps of the sacred historian have gone before the author, and if he departs from their course, it is an unwarrantable liberty.

After relating the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the author goes on to tell the escape of Lot.

"Lot, warned of the impending ruin, fled with his daughters; his wife lingering behind was suffocated by the sulphureous vapors, and her body encrusted with the saline particles, which filled the atmosphere. Later tradition, found-

ed on a literal interpretation of the Mosaic account, pointed to a heap or a column of salt, which bore, perhaps, some resemblance to a human form, and was believed, even by the historian Josephus, who had seen it, to be the pillar into which she was transformed."

We are amused with the confident manner in which the writer here describes the death of Lot's wife, just as if he had been an eye-witness of her fate. It is not impossible, indeed, that she might have been suffocated, as Mr. Milman relates; or she might, in her great haste, and while looking back, have fallen into a pit of salt or bitumen; but who will dare assert this? We have a very plain historical account by the inspired writer,—and why not believe it as it stands?

In his account of the passage of the Red Sea, Mr. Milman apparently imagines that a literal acceptance of the words of Moses, is altogether out of the question.

"Still, wherever the passage was effected, the Mosaic account can scarcely be made consistent with the exclusion of preternatural agency. Not to argue the literal meaning of the waters being a wall on the right and on the left, as if they had stood up sheer and abrupt, and then fallen back again; the Israelites passed through the sea with deep water on both sides; and any ford between two bodies of water must have been passable only for a few people, at one precise point of time."

He says likewise, with singular carelessness, that they began to pass over at night-fall, *probably about eight o'clock!* In regard to this miracle, let us hear the statement of a critic, who does not merely conjecture. We refer to professor Stuart, and quote from one of the valuable excursus, to be found at the end of the second volume of his course of Hebrew study.

"But in addition to all this, it should be stated, that the waters were miraculously divided by the power of God, and stood up, on the right and left of the Israelites, as they passed through, like a wall or ridge, Ex. 14. 22. This took place after the operation of the strong east wind upon them during most of the night, Ex. 14: 21. Of course, when the sea returned to his strength, (Ex. 14. 27.) these accumulated and elevated masses of water, suddenly flowing down, with the addition of the water that would be accumulated, in case the wind came round into the south quarter, would be amply sufficient for the accomplishment of all which is stated by Moses to have happened.

"I know, indeed, that the French legation, and Du Bois Ayme in particular, make the supposition that the passage of the Hebrews may be accounted for from merely natural causes; and that the accumulation of waters on the right and left of the Israelites, is merely a "poetic ornament," added by the writer of Ex. 14. 22. But then, our belief of facts like these must depend on the *credibility* of the sacred writers; for surely, the God who *mades* the sea, can *divide* it. To dispute the question of their credibility, does not comport with my present design. I write for those who believe in the credibility of the narrations of the Bible."

The following passage in regard to the numbers of the Israelites, contained in a note, on page 119, of volume first, is still more exceptionable.

"It is by no means easy to reconcile the enormous numbers contained in the census, with the language of other passages in the scriptures, particularly, that of the seventh chapter of Deuteronomy. The nation which could arm 600,000 fighting men, is described as the fewest of all people; as inferior in numbers,

it should seem, to each of the seven greater and mightier nations, which then inhabited Canaan. And it is remarkable, that while there has been much controversy whether the whole area of Palestine could contain the Hebrew settlers, the seven nations are 'to be put out by little and little,' lest the beasts of the field increase upon the new occupants. The narrative of the campaign in the book of Joshua is equally inconsistent with these immense numbers; e. g. the defiling of the whole army of 600,000 men, seven times in one day round the walls of Jericho; the panic of the whole host at the repulse of 3000 men before Ai. The general impression from this book is, that it describes the invasion of nations, at once more warlike and numerous, by a smaller force, which, without reliance on divine succor, could not have achieved the conquest; rather than the irruption of a host, like that of Attila or Zengis, which might have borne down all opposition by the mere weight of numerical force. *We have not, however, thought fit to depart from the numbers as they stand in the sacred writings; though, if we might suppose that a cipher has been added in the total sum, and throughout the several particulars; or if we might include men, women and children under the 600,000, the history would gain, in our opinion, both in clearness and consistency!*"

We scarcely know which to admire most in this passage, Mr. Milman's thoughtlessness, ignorance, or want of ingenuity. It seems as if he wrote merely to show that he possessed independence enough to doubt;—it is wanton irreverence to the sacred oracles, to huddle together such crude and unfounded objections, and set them before his readers, without an attempt even to obviate them. But the reader has only to glance at a few chapters in Numbers and Deuteronomy, and to examine with attention "the narrative of the campaign in the book of Joshua," and he will at once be convinced of the looseness of this writer, and the complete futility of the objections which he, with such a grave tone of infidelity, brings forward. Is Mr. Milman quite certain that the whole army defiled around Jericho: or has he given the reason which the Bible does, for the panic which he mentions? Or has he read the narrative of the second attack of Ai, when the history speaks of Joshua sending away by night, to lie in ambush, so large a detachment from the main army, as 30,000 men—mighty men of valour—*picked men*, chosen from all the people of war? Still more—is it possible that the author could have had the ignorance to imagine that the Hebrews used *ciphers* in their method of notation? Yet such is the meaning on the face of this passage: At all events it shows a carelessness and a want of research which is utterly disgraceful. How much easier it is to scribble such a note, than to submit to the labor of a critical investigation—to examine with patience and pronounce with humility! And what must be the effect of such a passage on the mind of inexperienced youth.*

* This is not the place for an examination *in extenso* of the point, in regard to which, Mr. Milman has so judiciously displayed his want of critical investigation; nor is such an investigation necessary. If the reader will turn to the twenty-second chapter of Numbers, he will find a striking corroboration of the truth of the Scripture account. "*Behold they cover the face of the earth,*" said the king of Moab, speaking of the Israelites; "*now shall this company lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field.*" In Deuteronomy, several of the 'greater and mightier' nations are described as nations of giants—their enormous stature, as well as their numbers, struck the Israelites with dread.

"*The Lord your God hath multiplied you,*" said Moses to the Hebrews, just before

We pass by his account of the miracle of the Sun and Moon arrested in the Heavens, at the command of Joshua, though it is open to severe censure for the doubtful, hesitating style in which it is related. We can scarcely learn his own opinion as to the reality of this supernatural and astonishing event.

The following are his remarks respecting the miraculous destruction of the Assyrian host.

"The destruction of Sennacherib's army is generally supposed to have been caused by the Simoom, or hot and pestilential wind of the desert, which is said not unfrequently to have been fatal to whole caravans. The Arabs, who are well experienced in the signs which portend its approach, fall on their faces, and escape its mortal influence. But the foreign forces of Sennacherib were little acquainted with the means of avoiding this unusual enemy, and the catastrophe taking place by night, (*the miraculous part of the transaction, as the hot wind is in general attributed to the heat of the meridian sun*) suffered immense loss."

Now it is not impossible that the Simoom may in this case have been the instrument employed by the destroying angel; though it is rare indeed that this wind occurs near Jerusalem, as its violent effects are always weakened by passing over cultivated land; but it is curious to see this author defining with such particularity "the miraculous part of the transaction," and with so much appearance of certainty in the limitation, when the fact only of a supernatural interposition is known to us, and the *modus in quo* is mere conjecture.

Mr. Milman's account of the death of Herod Agrippa, in the second volume, page 164, is liable to censure, because he passes by the sacred history of the same event with too little notice, and omits, indeed, one important particular in the narration of Luke.

"On the second day of the spectacle, at early dawn, the King entered the theatre in a robe of silver, which glittered with the morning rays of the sun, so as to dazzle the eyes of the whole assembly, and excite general admiration. Some of his flatterers set up a shout '*A present God!*' Agrippa did not repress the impious adulation which spread through the theatre."

He goes on to say that he was "eaten of worms." Luke, it will be remembered, relates in the Acts, that he made an oration to the people, and was smitten of the angel because he gave not God the glory. Jahn's account is much more calculated to confirm that of the inspired writer.

"On the second day of the games, he appeared in the theatre very early in the morning, arrayed in a magnificent robe of silver, to give audience to the

they were to pass over Jordan, "and behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude." Had not Mr. Milman been so anxious 'to avoid the tone of a theological treatise,' the consideration would naturally have occurred to him that God intended, in all his dealings with the Israelites, to convince them that their strength lay not in numbers, however great, but in his assistance; '*not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.*' The moment they were unmindful of the Rock of their Salvation, one of their enemies might 'chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight;' a truth which is confirmed not merely from the history of the Hebrews; for such has been the experience of the Lord's people in all generations.

Syrians and Zidonians. "At the close of his oration, the multitude saluted him as a God, according to the customs of that period." * * * Both Luke and Josephus concur in the statement, that the disease of the intestines, with which he was attacked, was a divine judgment."

To some, the points we have now noticed, may seem to be of little importance; but they forget the inexperience and susceptibility of the youthful mind, and the necessity of an early and unshaken confidence in the truth of the Bible. Things that are trifles to mature and ripened judgment, may be full of danger, when opinions are forming, and the soul is receiving a bias, to determine perhaps its eternal welfare.

We were grieved and disappointed to find, in this history for the perusal of families, the birth, the life, the miracles, the teachings, the example, the sufferings, and the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, all glanced over in the short space of a solitary page—noticed, indeed, in so abrupt, hasty, and general a manner, that the mind is scarcely conscious of the presence of Him, *of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write*;—him, because of whom Abraham was called, and the very Israelites were constituted a people, and sustained in their national existence through so many ages and so many changes, by the miraculous interposition and the over-ruling providence of God. The author seems to imagine that this subject belongs to the Christian, rather than the Jewish historian;—but its place too, is here,—and a man of deep piety would have made it the most interesting, solemn, and instructive chapter in the whole work. Instead of this, the reader is turned aside, with a dry reference to the pages of the Evangelists;—and Christ and his cross, the very life, centre, energy of all revelation—the story which the genius of the poet and the heart of the Christian might have united to display—they are lost from the volume; the reader expects them in vain, and the work goes on in the same vivid, indeed, and highly coloured, but soulless and secular strain. Others may regard the omission with a different feeling, but we deeply regret it.

It is easy enough to see, that Mr. Milman's opinions, in regard to inspiration, are very loose. "A late writer," he remarks in his preface, "of great good sense and piety, seems to think, that inspiration may safely be limited to doctrinal points, exclusive of those which are purely historical. This view, if correct, would obviate many difficulties."

We should more than doubt both the good sense and the piety which could dictate such an opinion. It is however the clue to our author's style of narration, particularly his manner of relating the miracles. The history gains, in his opinion, "both in clearness and consistency," by considering it in some respects erroneous. It obviates also many difficulties, to regard the purely historical parts of Scripture, as uninspired! These are creditable max-

ims, truly, for a minister of the Church of England, and equally so, for the Professor of Poetry in Oxford University! The venerable Lowth, who long ago adorned that office with so much dignified piety and learning, would have looked upon them with equal astonishment and reproach. We desire to keep aloof from the library of our family, a history of the Jews, written under the influence of such opinions, however interesting it may be in other respects.

SPEECHES ON THE INDIAN BILL.*

ACTUM EST DE REPUBLICA! The contemplated perfidy is accomplished; the constitution has been violated by its appointed guardians; and whatever may be its consequences to the Indians, a page of the darkest guilt is already written in our country's history. The passage of the Indian Bill has disgraced us as a people, has wounded our national honor, and exposed us to the merited reproach of all civilized communities in the world. If we go on in this way, we shall become a by-word to the nations. It will no longer be *Punica fides*, that points the moral of the school-boy, and tips the arrow of the public satirist with gall. *The memory of the wicked shall rot*;—but the memory of a faithless nation cannot mingle itself with perishable elements; can never stagnate in the forgetfulness of contempt. Ours will be embalmed, unless we prevent it by a timely interposition, in curses that can never lose their energy, or weary the tongue which utters them.

The world may now see what reliance can be placed upon the faith of a republic. Had we been dealing with a European community, instead of an Indian tribe, who would have dared mention the claims of selfishness, or the clamors of party, against the solemn obligation of treaties? The frown of the eastern continent alone would have intimidated the most reckless politician. But a nation that will cheat an inferior, will also, should a fair opportunity occur, overreach and violate justice with a higher power; nor can any confidence be placed, either in an individual or a community of individuals, proved to have acted, on a great and important occasion, rather as a furious partisan, or an unprincipled marauder, than from a sense of duty, or a knowledge of the truth. This is not the first time that the American Republic has shown a disposition to trifle with the sacredness of its plighted faith; it was all that the eloquence of an Ames could do, to keep his countrymen, in

* The speeches against this Bill are now in press in this city, and will shortly be published in a neat duodecimo volume.