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*Samuel Miller*

ART. I.—*The Life and Times of Red-Jacket, or Sa-Go-Ye-Wat-Ha ; being the sequel to the History of the Six Nations.* By William L. Stone. Svo. pp. 484. New York and London. Wiley and Putnam. 1841.

IN the volume of the Repertory for January, 1839, we took a highly favourable notice of a larger work by the same author, containing an account of the "*Life and Times of Joseph Brant*," the famous Mohawk chief. We remarked, that, under this title, Colonel Stone, while he made Brant a conspicuous and very striking figure in his narrative, had contrived to embrace a large amount of interesting and instructive matter, and, in fact, had given an entirely new history of the war which issued in American Independence. It cannot be said that the volume before us comprehends as large a portion of the history of our country as the preceding work ; but we may truly say of this, as well as of that, that the "*Life of Red Jacket*" occupies a prominent place in a large and rich narrative, which brings to our view, in a manner no less instructive than interesting, a great number of facts and characters with which the life of the celebrated Orator of the Senecas was immediately or remotely connected.

The Seneca chief and orator, popularly known by the name of *Red Jacket*, was born about the year 1750, at a place called *Old Castle*, about three miles from the town

majority of mere English pupils, after many years of seemingly assiduous attention, with competent and faithful teachers, never become fluent and thorough in all these branches; they get to a certain point and there they remain in utter disgust at the whole. But we do know also from experience, that if a classical teacher is a man of talents and skill, he can so order matters, that all the above named English studies, and several others not named, shall, provided the parent will have patience, and will aid too, in keeping the pupil up to the high-water mark of his diligence and duties, be entirely mastered by the time that his elementary classical discipline is ended. The impatience, the ignorance, the niggardliness of some parents, when teachers are competent, generally forbid the experiment, and the incompetency of professed modern teachers, would too often abuse the confidence and liberality of other parents; and hence, another forcible argument for presbyterial or synodical grammar schools. Indeed we have no doubt that such, notwithstanding their increase of price and sectarian character, would at last be popular among men of the world, and perhaps among other sects, unless they chose to establish such themselves. This, indeed, they are to some extent, already doing, and whatever scruples we might feel as to the liberality of such a course, are removed by the example of our neighbours. But whatever course may be pursued by Presbyterians, as to the organization of church schools, we do indulge the hope that they will more and more unanimously favour the old thorough modes of education, as contrasted with all modern and empirical contrivances. We know not how far the prevailing current, both of practice and opinion, can be counteracted by force of argument or elegance of style, or we should look, with still more sanguine expectation than we now do, for a change of public sentiment, by means of such performances as that before us.

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*Charles Henry*

ART. IV.—*The History of Christianity, from the Birth of Christ to the Abolition of Paganism in the Roman Empire.* By the Rev. H. H. Milman, Prebendary of St. Peter's, and Minister of St. Margaret's, Westminster.

With a Preface and Notes by James Murdock, D. D.  
New York: Harper and Brothers, 1841. pp. 528.

BEFORE the publication of the American edition of this work, we had seen the review of Mr. Milman's History, in Fraser's Magazine. The estimate formed of it by that authority may be learned from the following extracts: "We were about" says the reviewer, "to give a specimen of the most obvious feature of this imitation—the adoption of Gibbon's peculiar style; but on turning over the volumes, the difficulty was how to select from that which is continuous and all-pervading. Every page of the book rings with Gibbon's sounding periods. But this is no excellence. Hardly bearable in that writer's own volumes, in the imitation this artificial and turgid style becomes unspeakably fatiguing. A degree of admiring wonder, excited at first by the singular success of the parody, soon changes into tedium and disgust. Worse, however, far worse, than the mere style, is the adoption of Gibbon's spirit. The prebendary of Westminster thinks and feels with the deceased infidel. Their sympathies and partialities are the same, modified only by Mr. Milman's professional obligations, in the single point of external Christianity; such modification, however, being too slight to render his work even tolerable to the mind of a sincere believer in the word of God."

Again: "Drawing his historical outlines from Gibbon, he still needed some writer or writers of less notorious infidelity, to furnish him with theological criticisms which might appropriately coalesce with Gibbon's sketches of men and events. In the German rationalist all this is found. Here are a few passages, which evince how apt a scholar Mr. Milman has proved himself in this new school of disguised infidelity." After giving several passages from the History relating to the character and work of Christ, the reviewer adds, "We have copied these passages with a disgust amounting almost to horror. The open blasphemies of our English infidels were less revolting than the patronising air, the 'philosophical tone' with which the prebendary of Westminster describes HIM who is none else than 'the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.' We declare that we find a difficulty even in alluding to this subject. An open blasphemer may be dealt with, but how are we to speak of one who praises Him 'who holdeth the stars in his right hand,' in just such language as might be applied to Aristotle or Plato?"

After another series of extracts, it is said, "Nothing can be plainer than the drift of all these passages. They are totally irreconcilable with a belief that the Bible is a divine revelation. Inspired writers would not have deluded us by descriptions which were untrue; the Holy Spirit, dictating plain and distinct accounts of actual transactions, would not have given us as facts what were merely appearances. . . . If the Bible be not the very word of God, and entirely and absolutely true, then is it a matter of slight importance what its real place and meaning is. It must be either inspired, and therefore authoritative; or else a fiction and a forgery, and therefore to be rejected. Mr. Milman's book, therefore, by casting, as it does, a doubt on the first branch of the alternative, and refusing full credence to the word of God, is essentially an infidel production."

In the conclusion of the review the writer asks, "Why is Mr. Milman still a clergyman of the Church of England? The answer throws us back upon the innate imperfection of all human institutions. Mr. Milman, it appears to us, ought not to contaminate the church with his presence, and his evil example. But his conscience is the only court to which we can appeal. He is too well practised in the arts of controversy, and has too much at stake, both in rank and in revenue, to commit himself to the extent of an open offence against the laws of the church. In all the disgusting passages which we have quoted in the preceding pages, we are not aware of a single sentence involving the writer in the charge of heresy. We gather, legitimately and fairly gather, from them all, that he is deeply tinged with the scepticism of the German rationalists; but all this may be made perceptible enough, without a single positive attack upon revelation, or one avowal of heretical opinions. Hence, as we have already said, so long as Mr. Milman can quiet his conscience, so long may he continue to thrive on the endowments of the church, while he inflicts upon her the deepest injuries. Nor, when we speak of his conscience do we profess to entertain any hopes from this quarter. The rationalists of Germany are for the most part professors in the colleges and ministers in the churches founded by Luther and Melancthon, by Calvin and Beza. 'Liberal ideas' in religion are ever accompanied by 'liberal ideas' in matters of honour and integrity. Perfect uprightness is a rare thing in this world; and seldom indeed found, except in connection with genuine Bible Christianity."

In a contemporary American journal,\* there is a notice of this work, from which we extract the following passages. After quoting the author's declaration, that instead of dwelling on the internal feuds and divisions in the Christian community, and the variations in doctrine and discipline, he proposed to direct his attention to the effects of Christianity on the social and political condition of man, his American critic says, "From the first announcement of this plan, it has struck us as a design of great value to the cause of Christian knowledge; and from the character of the author, as well as from several favourable notices and reviews of his work which have appeared in the British periodicals, we were prepared to welcome its appearance from the American press. It is brought out by Harper and Brothers in good style, and the Preface and Notes by Dr. Murdock, though not voluminous, add not a little to the historical value of the work. We have read a large portion of it, and must gratefully acknowledge that our raised expectations have been fully answered. The learning and indefatigable industry of the author are worthy of the highest praise; and his style, though sometimes obscure, is often glowing and splendid, in keeping with his reputation as a poet, as well as a historian."

"His remarks on the 'Life of Jesus,' [by Strauss,] as well as on the nearly contemporary work of Dr. H. Weisse, are placed in several appendices and notes, and contain a valuable though perhaps not a sufficiently thorough refutation of the mystical theory of these German writers. In this relation his vindication of the Divinity of the Saviour is by no means an unimportant part of his work. And, as a whole, we regard this history as justly entitled to the high character of a standard work. It is not in all respects as we could wish. The author in his liberality to German writers, to whom he acknowledges his indebtedness, has allowed himself to be influenced in some degree by the sceptical tendency of their philosophy. But as a history, his work is generally impartial and candid, as well as learned and amply supported by the best authorities."

Dr. Murdock gives his recommendation, without even the slight qualification which the Repository thought it necessary to add. "This work," he says "bears a genuine

\* American Biblical Repository, conducted by Absalom Peters, D. D., and Selah B. Treat. January, 1842.

historical character. Indeed, it is a pretty full Ecclesiastical History, although, as we have before observed, one of a peculiar character. It details all those facts in ecclesiastical history which the author supposed would be generally interesting in a secular point of view; and, by the splendour of its style, and the fulness and accuracy of its statements, it is well adapted to afford both pleasure and profit. At the same time, its religious tendency is salutary; it is a safe book for all to read. The divine origin of Christianity, and the authority of the holy scriptures, are every where maintained. Indeed, a large part of the book,—all that relates to the history of Jesus Christ and his apostles—seems to have been written chiefly for the purpose of rescuing this portion of sacred history from the exceptions of infidels and the perversions of rationalists. In addition to this fundamental point, the book distinctly maintains the divine mission of Christ, his equality with the Father, and his ability to save all who believe in and obey him; also, the reality and necessity of the new birth; the future judgment, and the retributions of the world to come. These and other Christian doctrines are not, indeed, kept continually before the reader's mind, and urged upon him with the zeal of a religious teacher, but they are distinctly recognized as taught by Christ and his apostles, and as being essential and vital principles of the Christian religion. This book, therefore, though not professing to teach articles of faith, or to inculcate piety, is a safe book for all classes of readers; and, while it is an appropriate work for the use of statesmen, philanthropists, and literary men, it deserves a place in most of our social and circulating libraries, and in all those of our higher literary institutions.\*

Here then is a book which an English journal of high authority, condemns as "essentially an infidel production"; pronounces its author guilty of contaminating the Church of England with his presence, and of violating the obligations of "honour and integrity," in continuing to thrive upon its endowments; recommended by American clergymen "as justly entitled to the high character of a standard work"; its religious tendency declared to be salutary, and the book pronounced safe for all classes of readers. It is very obvious either that the English reviewer is guilty of the grossest injustice, or that 'liberal ideas in religion' have made deplorable progress among American critics.

\* Preface, p. vii.

These contradictory judgments excited in us a curiosity to see a work which presents such different aspects to different eyes. We have accordingly read it through with a good deal of attention, and though we think the English reviewer does Mr. Milman injustice, we are far less surprised at the severity of his condemnation, than we are to find such a book endorsed by American clergymen professing orthodoxy.

It is not an easy matter to present a fair estimate of this work. To those of our readers who are familiar with the recent theological works of Germany, we should convey a tolerably correct idea of its character, by saying it is a German work written by an English clergyman. But as German works differ very much among themselves, or as they have what is characteristic of them as a class, in very different degrees, we must be more explicit in our description. There is, then in this work a disposition to represent Christianity as a development, as being the result of predisposing causes, the progress of the human mind under the influence of the spirit of the age, and assuming in each successive age, as of necessity, the form imposed upon it by the operation of causes within the sphere of nature. This is considered philosophical. Every thing is traced psychologically. Judaism was what it was in the time of Christ, because it had been in contact with Zoroastrianism in the East; Christianity was what it was in the beginning, because it sprang from Judaism; the Christianity of the third and fourth centuries was the necessary result of the Orientalism, Platonism, &c, &c., by which its character was determined. This disposition, when carried to an extreme, is not only infidelity but fatalism. Christianity not only arose without any interference on the part of God, but every change for the better or worse, was a necessary change. Nothing is to be praised and nothing blamed. Every thing is the unfolding of a principle or Spirit which the atheist leaves without a name, and the pantheist calls God.

Mr. Milman, though his work is pervaded by the disposition to account for every thing by natural causes, does not go to the length of his German models. He distinctly admits that there is something supernatural in the origin of Christianity. "I strongly protest," he says "against the opinion, that the origin of the [Christian] religion can be attributed, according to a theory adopted by many foreign writers, to the gradual and spontaneous development of the human mind. Christ is as much before his own age, as his

own age is beyond the darkest barbarism. The age though fitted to receive, could not by any combination of prevalent opinions, or by any conceivable course of moral improvement have produced Christianity."—p. 37. The necessity of this protest on the part of a Christian historian, clearly indicates the characteristic of his work, to which we have referred. This characteristic is manifested in the preliminary account which the author gives of the Jewish religion. Down to the captivity, the Jews, he tells us, had been in contact only with the religions of the neighbouring nations. "In the East, however, they encountered a far nobler and more regular structure; a religion which offered no temptations to idolatrous practices; for the magian rejected, with the devout abhorrence of the followers of Moses, the exhibition of the Deity in the human form; though it possessed a rich store of mythological and symbolical figures, singularly analagous to those which may be considered the poetic machinery of the later Hebrew prophets." To this source Mr. Milman seems inclined to refer, in a great measure, if not entirely, the Jewish doctrine respecting angels, Satan, a mediator, a future state, and the resurrection of the body. "It is generally admitted," he says, "that the Jewish notions of angels, one great subject of dispute in their synagogues, and what may be called their demonology, received a strong foreign tinge during their residence in Babylonia. The earliest books of the Old Testament fully recognize the ministration of angels, but in Babylonia this simpler creed grew up into a regular hierarchy, in which the degrees of rank and subordination were arranged with almost heraldic precision. . . . In apparent allusion to a coincidence with this system, the visions of Daniel represent Michael, the tutelar angel or intelligence of the Jewish people, in opposition to the four angels of the great monarchies; and even our Saviour seems to condescend to the popular language, when he represents the paternal care of the Almighty over children, under the significant and beautiful image, 'that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.'

"The great impersonated principle of evil appears to have assumed much of the antagonist power of darkness. The name itself of Satan, which in the older poetic book of Job is assigned to a spirit of different attributes, one of the celestial ministers who assemble before the throne of the Almighty, and is used in the earlier books of the Old Testa-



ment in its simple sense of adversary, became appropriated to the prince of the malignant spirits—the head and representative of the spiritual world, which ruled over physical as well as moral evil.”

It is here said, with as much plainness as Mr. Milman is accustomed to say any thing, that the doctrine of Satan as a personal being and prince of the demons, so abundantly sanctioned by Christ and his apostles, was derived from the Persian system of an original principle of evil, of which he had been speaking.

“Even the notion of the one Supreme Deity,” says our author, “had undergone some modification consonant to certain prevailing opinions of the time. Wherever any approximation had been made to the sublime truth of one great First Cause, either awful religious reverence or philosophical abstraction, had removed the primal Deity entirely beyond the sphere of human sense, and supposed that the intercourse of the Divinity with man, the moral government, and even the original creation, had been carried on by the intermediate agency, either in oriental language, of an Emanation, or in Platonic, of Wisdom, Reason or Intelligence, of the one Supreme. This Being was more or less distinctly impersonated, according to the more popular or more philosophic, the more material or more abstract notions of the age or people. This was the doctrine from the Ganges, or even the shores of the Yellow Sea, to the Ilissus; it was the fundamental principle of the Indian religion and Indian philosophy; it was the basis of Zoroastrianism; it was pure Platonism; it was the Platonic Judaism of the Alexandrian school. . . . In conformity with this principle the Jews, in the interpretation of the older scriptures, instead of direct and sensible communication from the one great Deity, had interposed either one or more intermediate beings as the channels of communication. According to one accredited tradition alluded to by St. Stephen, the law was delivered by ‘the disposition of angels;’ according to another, this office was delegated to a single angel, sometimes called the angel of the law, at others the Metatron. But the more ordinary representative, as it were, of God to the sense and mind of man, was the Memra, or the Divine Word; and it is remarkable that the same appellation is found in the Indian, the Persian, the Platonic, and the Alexandrian systems. By the Targumits, the earliest Jewish commentators on the scriptures, this term had been already applied to the

Messiah ; nor is it necessary to observe the manner in which it has been sanctified by its introduction into the Christian scheme."—p. 46.

All this is said in illustration of the influence of the religions of the East on Judaism. Every reader of the scriptures, however, knows, that in the earliest books of the Bible, we find constant mention made of the Angel of Jehovah, called also the Angel of the presenee or face, Jehovah, Adonai, distinguished from Jehovah, yet called by his names, assuming his attributes, and claiming the same homage. This person we find called afterwards the Angel of the Covenant, the Mighty God, the Son, the Image of God, the Word. As the doctrine of redemption was first revealed in the obscure intimation given to our fallen parents, and was gradually unfolded by subsequent revelations into the full system of the gospel ; so the doctrine of a divine Person, distinguished from Jehovah, and yet Jehovah ; the image, the revealer, the word of God, was declared first obscurely in the books of Moses, and then with constantly increasing clearness, till God was manifested in the flesh. The Jews had this doctrine long before their intereourse with the East ; and, in accordance with the whole system of revelation, it was gradually developed, not by the progress of the human mind, but by successive disclosures from the source of all divine truth.

"No question" continues Mr. Milman, "has been more strenuously debated than the knowledge of a future state entertained by the earlier Jews. At all events, it is quite clear that, before the time of Christ, not merely the immortality of the soul, but, what is very different, a final resurrection, had become interwoven in the popular belief. Passages in the later prophets, Daniel and Ezekiel, particularly the latter, may be adduced as the first distinct authorities on which this belief might be grounded. It appears, however, in its more perfect development, soon after the return from the captivity. As early as the revolt of the Maccabees, it was so deeply rooted in the public mind that we find a solemn ceremony performed for the dead. From henceforth it became the leading article of the great schism between the traditionists and the anti-traditionists, the Pharisees and the Sadducees ; and in the gospels we cannot but discover at a glance, its almost universal prevalence. Even the Roman historian was struck by its influence on the indomitable character of the people. In the Zoroastrian religion, a resurrection holds a place no less prominent than in the later Jewish belief."—p. 46.

In like manner, he represents the Jewish doctrine of the Messiah, the origin of which he does not distinctly mention, as owing much of its form at least, to the oriental religion and philosophy. It is certainly a very remarkable fact that there should be this striking coincidence, on all the points above specified, between the doctrines of the Jews, and the views prevalent from the remotest East to Greece and Egypt. There are three hypotheses on which this coincidence may be accounted for. First, the Jews may have derived their doctrines of angels, Satan, a divine mediator, of a future state, &c. from the East. If so they were not matters of divine revelation to the Jews. They are matters, according to Mr. Milman, of religious speculation, of more or less plausibility, which owe their origin to human ingenuity, or to the necessities of the human heart, and their propagation to their suitableness to the existing state of the human mind. This is the hypothesis which Mr. Milman's whole mode of representation favours, and which the German writers, Bertholdt more especially, to whom in his notes he constantly refers, openly avow.

A second hypothesis, which has many advocates and for which much may be said, is, that the East derived their doctrines, on these subjects from the Jews and not the Jews from the East. The doctrine of one supreme God, of a divine Revealer, of angels, of Satan, of a future state, are all taught more or less clearly in the earliest Jewish scriptures. It may be considered a moral impossibility that a nation so centrally situated as the Jews were, should possess these doctrines, so consonant with the nature and necessities of man, and yet no intimation of them be conveyed to the thoughtful and inquisitive minds around them. It is just what might have been anticipated that these doctrines would be gradually and widely disseminated; variously modified and combined by being wrought up with the religious philosophy of the nations to which they gained access. This is just what has happened to Christianity, whose distinguishing principles have been wrought into the various systems of eastern and western philosophy and religion with which it has come into contact.

The unreasonableness of supposing that the Jews borrowed their doctrines from the East is still more apparent, if we accede to the opinion that Zoroaster lived as late as the reign of Darius Hystaspes, a thousand years after the age of Moses. But even if with Niebuhr, Heeren,

and Rhode, a much higher antiquity be assigned to the magian religion, the case is but little altered. The truth is the age of Zoroaster is unknown, and it is uncertain whether he was the author of a new system, or the reformer of an old. The magian religion is the old nature worship combined with principles, either the result of speculation, or derived indirectly from revelation. This much is certain, that we have no authentic records of that system, which are not posterior by centuries to the writings of Moses. We might, therefore, almost as reasonably assert that Christianity has borrowed from Mohammedism the principles which are common to the two religions, as that Judaism derived its peculiar doctrines from the East. It is also to be remembered, that Christianity is as old as the creation, if we may borrow the language of infidelity to express an important truth; that is, that Christianity is but the full development of truths contained in the earliest records of revelation. Every thing in the gospels is potentially in the Pentateuch; what is fully disclosed and expanded in the writings of Paul, has its germ in the writings of Moses. The religion revealed in the scriptures, is a consistent, gradually unfolded system; its last and highest development may be traced back to its earliest and simplest declarations. It is therefore in this sense a self developed system. It is not composed of heterogeneous principles, or of principles derived from different sources. And so long as the latest enunciations of the prophets can thus be shown to be in harmony with the earlier teaching of Moses, it is certainly most unreasonable to assume that these later doctrines were borrowed from the heathen.

There is a third hypothesis, on which the coincidence between Judaism and the religions of the East may be accounted for. All mankind are the descendants of the same parents. The revelations made to Adam and Noah were the common property of the race. What amount of religious knowledge was possessed by Noah cannot be ascertained, but we know that it included all that was necessary to a life of true godliness. How was this knowledge, so congenial to human reason, to perish from among men? It has become obscured and corrupted partly by the speculations of philosophers, and partly by the superstition of the people; but it has probably never yet perished entirely even among the most degraded of the descendants of Adam. And the higher we ascend in the history of our race, the

purser do we find this traditionary knowledge. What therefore is more probable than that the portion of truth found in the early religions of the East, was derived partly from this original revelation common to all mankind, and partly from communications more or less direct with the chosen depositories of divine truth, subsequent to the time of Moses and the prophets?

At any rate, as we know, on the authority of Christ and the Apostles, that the doctrines contained in the Jewish scriptures are true, the fact that other nations, to a certain extent, had the same doctrines more or less corrupted, must be accounted for, on a hypothesis consistent with the truth and divine origin of those doctrines. And we think that Mr. Milman in favouring a hypothesis which assigns a heathen origin to so many of these doctrines, does thus far throw his weight on the side of infidelity.

This disposition to account for every thing philosophically, or from natural causes, which is so strikingly exhibited in his account of Judaism, is manifested no less clearly in his history of Christianity. "Our history," he says, "will endeavour to trace all the modifications of Christianity by which it accommodated itself to the spirit of successive ages; and this apparently almost skilful, but, in fact, *necessary condescension* to the predominant state of moral culture, of which itself formed a constituent element, maintained its uninterrupted dominion." Again, "Christianity may exist in a certain form in a nation of savages as well as in a nation of philosophers, yet its specific character will almost entirely depend upon the character of the people who are its votaries. It must be considered, therefore, in constant connexion with that character; it will darken with the darkness and brighten with the light of each succeeding century; in an ungenial time it will recede so far from its genuine and essential nature as scarcely to retain any sign of its divine original; it will advance with the advancement of human nature, and keep up the moral to the utmost height of the intellectual culture of man."—p. 37.

If this means that an ignorant and corrupt people will be apt to misconceive and pervert the doctrines of the gospel; and that philosophers will be disposed to explain them away, it is all true. But Mr. Milman means something very different from this. He loses sight of Christianity as a system of objective truths, recorded in the scriptures, and of divine authority. He contemplates it almost exclusively,

as it exists in the minds of men. He regards it more as a spirit or disposition arising out of certain primary truths, "the unity of God, the immortality of the soul, and future retribution,"\* which adapts itself to all states of human nature and all forms of human thought. Instead of mastering, it is itself mastered by the superstitions or speculations of men. When Europe sunk into barbarism, Christianity of necessity, assumed the form "of a new poetic faith, a mythology, and a complete system of symbolic worship;" with "the expansion of the human mind," it gradually assumes the form "of a rational and intellectual religion." p. 27.

Agreeably to this principle we find some of the worst corruptions of the church represented as "necessary condescensions of Christianity to the state of moral culture" of the age. "The sacerdotal power," we are told, "was a necessary consequence of the development of Christianity. The hierarchy asserted (they were believed to possess) the power of sealing the eternal destiny of man. From a post of danger, which modest piety was compelled to assume by the unsought and unsolicited suffrages of the whole community, a bishopric had become [in the time of Constantine] an office of dignity, influence, and, at times, of wealth. The prelate ruled not now so much by his admitted superiority in Christian virtue, as by the inalienable authority of his office. He opened or closed the door of the church, which was tantamount to an admission or an exclusion from everlasting bliss."—p. 291. On a subsequent page, speaking of the same subject he says, if the clergy "had not assumed the keys of heaven and hell; if they had not appeared legitimately to possess the power of pronouncing the eternal destiny of man,—to suspend or excommunicate from those Christian privileges which were inseparably connected in Christian belief with the eternal sentence, or to absolve and re-admit into the pale of the church and of salvation—among the mass of believers, the uncertainty, the terror, the agony of minds fully impressed with the conviction of their immortality, and yearning by every means to obtain the assurance of pardon and peace, with heaven and hell constantly before their eyes, and agitating their inmost being, would have been almost insupportable."—p. 442.

This is miserable theology, and, if possible, still worse

\* See p. 414, where these doctrines are said to be the first principles of Christianity.

philosophy. If God has really invested any set of men with the power of deciding on the eternal destiny of their fellow creatures, we would reverently and cheerfully bow to his appointment, in the confident belief that where he had lodged so awful a prerogative, he would give the infallibility necessary to its righteous exercise. But if he has never given this power to feeble, erring mortals, no crime can be greater than its unauthorized assumption. And for a man, who does not believe that Christ ever gave his ministers this power, or that they in fact possessed it, to represent the claim to it on the part of the priesthood, and the recognition of it on the part of the people, as the "necessary consequence of the development of Christianity," is to blaspheme the religion of the Saviour. The idea that the anxiety of the people about their future destiny forced the clergy to arrogate to themselves the power of opening or shutting the gates of heaven, at pleasure, may, without disrespect, be pronounced absurd. Falsehood is not the cure for anxiety: The gospel reveals the way of peace to the broken hearted; and the priest could have pointed the penitent to the Saviour, without interposing himself as the necessary dispenser of salvation.

Thus also Mr. Milman represents the celibacy of the clergy, though not an institution of Christ, as necessary to the very existence of Christianity, during the dark ages. "The overweening authority claimed and exercised by the clergy; their existence as a separate and exclusive caste, at this particular period in the progress of civilization, became of the highest utility. A religion without a powerful and separate sacerdotal order, even perhaps if that order had not in general been bound to celibacy, and so prevented from degenerating into a hereditary caste, would have been lost in the conflict and confusion of the times. Religion, unless invested in general opinion in high authority, and that authority asserted by an active and incorporated class, would scarcely have struggled through this complete disorganization of all the existing relations of society."—p. 371. Mr. Milman speaks of celibacy as an element foreign to Christianity, as unrequired in the early church, as productive of certain evil (see pp. 452, 453.); he represents the clergy in the apostolic times as clothed with no authority but that of superior excellence and ecclesiastical discipline, yet so entirely does he lose sight of the divine origin of the gospel, as to represent the preservation of Christianity to the two vices

of constrained celibacy and overweening power of the priesthood.

We need not be surprised therefore to find him attributing to Monachism, another institution entirely foreign to the spirit of the gospel, the same beneficial effects. The introduction of Monasticism into the West is said to have been one of the two "important services" rendered by Jerome to the church. "In Palestine and in Egypt, Jerome became himself deeply imbued with the spirit of Monachism, and laboured with all his zeal to awaken the more tardy West to rival Egypt and Syria in displaying this sublime perfection of Christianity."—p. 421. "Monachism was the natural result of the incorporation of Christianity with the prevalent opinions of mankind, and, in part, of the profound excitement into which it had thrown the human mind."—p. 422. "Monachism tended powerfully to keep up the vital enthusiasm of Christianity. . . . Its peaceful colonies within the frontier of barbarism, slowly but uninterruptedly subdued the fierce or indolent savages to the religion of Christ and the manners and habits of civilization. But its internal influence was not less visible, immediate, and inexhaustible. The more extensive dissemination of Christianity naturally weakened its authority." "The beneficial tendency of this constant formation of young and vigorous societies in the bosom of Christianity, was of more importance in the times of desolation and confusion which impended over the Roman empire. In this respect also, their lofty pretensions secured their utility. Where reason itself was about to be in abeyance, rational religion would have had but little chance; it would have commanded no respect. Christianity in its primitive and unassuming form might have imparted its holiness, its peace and happiness to retired families, whether in the city or the province, but its modest and retiring dignity would have made no impression on the general tone and character of society."—p. 431. Another of the advantages of Monachism on which our author dilates, is the promotion of celibacy among the clergy. "It is impossible to calculate the effect of the complete blending up of the clergy with the rest of the community, which would probably have ensued from the gradual abrogation of this single distinction at this juncture. . . . Individual members of the clergy might have become wealthy, and obtained authority over the common herd; but there would have been no opulent and powerful church, acting with vigorous unity and ar-



ranged in simultaneous hostility against barbarism and paganism."—p. 432.

Yet the system, whose beneficial effects are thus elaborately set forth, is at the same time declared to be entirely opposed to the genius of the gospel. "Nothing," says Mr. Milman, "can be conceived more apparently opposed to the designs of the God of nature, and to the mild and beneficent spirit of Christianity; nothing more hostile to the dignity, the interests, the happiness, and the intellectual and moral perfection of man, than the monk afflicting himself with unnecessary pain, and thrilling his soul with causeless fears; confined to a dull routine of religious duties, jealously watching and proscribing every emotion of pleasure as a sin against the benevolent Deity, dreading knowledge as an impious departure from the becoming humility of man."—p. 432. And still more explicitly: "Besides those consequences of seclusion from the world, the natural results of confinement in close separation from mankind, and this austere discharge of stated duties, were too often found to be the proscription of human knowledge, and the extinction of human sympathies. Christian wisdom and Christian humanity could find no place in their unsocial system. A morose, and sullen and contemptuous ignorance could not but grow up where there was no communication with the rest of mankind, and the human understanding was rigidly confined to certain topics. The want of objects of natural affection could not but harden the heart, and those who, in their stern religious austerity, are merciless to themselves, are apt to be merciless to others, their callous and insensible hearts have no sense of the exquisitely delicate and poignant feelings which arise out of the domestic affections. Bigotry has always found its readiest and sternest executioners among those who have never known the charities of life. These fatal effects seem inherent consequences of Monasticism; its votaries could not but degenerate from their lofty and sanctifying purposes."—p. 428. All this is true, and finely said, but how a system thus opposed to the will of God, and the spirit of the gospel; thus inherently vicious in its tendency, could be necessary to the preservation or extension of Christianity is more than we can conceive. There is no such thing as un-mixed good or evil, in this world. And we have no disposition to deny that God overruled Monasticism to the accomplishment of good; but to represent the various forms of fanaticism and error which have existed in the church as

“necessary condescensions” of Christianity in order to maintain her ascendancy and even her existence, is a virtual denial of the divine origin and divine power of the gospel.

It is in the same spirit that Mr. Milman uses such language as the following: “Even the theology maintained its dominion, by in some degree accommodating itself to the human mind. It became to a certain degree mythic in its character, and polytheistic in its form. Now had commenced what may be called, neither unreasonably nor unwarrantably, the mythic age of Christianity. As Christianity worked downward into the lower classes of society, as it received the rude and ignorant barbarians within its pale, the general effect *could not but be* that the age would drag down the religion to its level, rather than the religion elevate the age to its own lofty standard. . . . A strongly imaginative period was the necessary consequence of this extraordinary impulse. It was the reign of faith; of faith which saw or felt the divine, or at least, supernatural agency in every occurrence of life, and in every impulse of the heart; which offered itself as the fearless and undoubting interpreter of every event; which comprehended in its domain the past, the present, and the future, and seized upon the whole range of human thought and knowledge, upon history, and even upon natural philosophy, as its own patrimony. This was not, it could not be, that more sublime theology of a rational and intellectual Christianity; that theology which expands itself as the system of the universe expands upon the mind; and from its wider acquaintance with the wonderful provisions, the more manifest and all-provident forethought of the Deity, acknowledges with more awe-struck and admiring, yet not less fervent and grateful homage, the beneficence of the Creator; that Christian theology which reverently traces the benignant providence of God over the affairs of men; the all-ruling Father; the Redeemer revealed at the appointed time, and publishing the code of reconciliation, holiness, peace, and everlasting life; the Universal Spirit, with its mysterious and confessed, but untraceable energy, pervading the kindred spiritual part of man. The Christian of these days lived in a supernatural world, or in a world under the constant, and felt, and discernible interference of supernatural power. . . . Each individual had not merely his portion in the common diffusion of religious and moral knowledge and feeling, but looked for his peculiar and special share in the divine bless-

ing. His dreams came direct from heaven ; a new system of Christian omens succeeded the old ; witchcraft merely invoked Beelzebub or Satan instead of Hecate ; hallowed places only changed their tutelary nymph or genius for a saint or martyr. It is not less unjust to stigmatize in the mass as fraud, or to condemn as the weakness of superstition, than it is to enforce as an essential part of Christianity, that which was the necessary development of this state of the human mind. . . . . The clergy, the great agents in the maintenance and communication of this imaginative religious bias, the asserters of constant miracle in all its various forms, were themselves, no doubt, irresistibly carried away by the same tendency."—p. 500.

This is the philosophy of the legends, of the saint-worship, of the manifold idolatry of a fallen church. This is Mr. Milman's apology for those who beguiled the people of God of their reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which they had not seen, vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind. This is his account of the rise of that power whose coming was after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders ; and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish ; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. All was nothing but "the necessary development" of the human mind !

There is in this whole mode of representation, which pervades the book from the first page to the last, as we have already repeatedly remarked, a forgetfulness of Christianity as a recorded system of divinely revealed truth, which cannot be altered to suit the temper, the opinions, and passions of different ages ; which has its form as well as its substance ; and which for the wise and the unwise is the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation. When the gospel says, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve ; may we to humour polytheists allow the worship of saints and angels ? When the gospel says we must be renewed by the Holy Ghost in order to salvation, is it merely a condescension to teach that the washing with water will answer the purpose ? When the gospel says we are freely justified by faith in the blood of Christ, is it a pardonable accommodation to teach that we are justified by alms, pilgrimages, or self inflicted pains ? When Christ says, come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest, is the priest to be ex-

cused who assumes the right of saying who shall and who shall not obey that call? To say that Christianity must accommodate itself to the speculations of philosophers in one age; to the superstitions of the ignorant in another; to the fanaticism of the excited in a third; to affirm that it must "darken with the darkness, and brighten with the light of each succeeding century," in order to maintain its existence, is to affirm that it must deny itself in order to continue to exist.

This is not a mere confusion in the use of terms, taking Christianity sometimes for the real religion of Christ as taught in the scriptures, and sometimes for the aggregate of the religious doctrines and usages of any particular age; for it is of Christianity in its primitive simplicity and purity that Mr. Milman asserts, that it could not sustain itself among the conflicts and revolutions of the world. It must, according to him, cease to be pure, and rational, and such as Christ revealed it, in order to maintain its power or its being. It is no doubt true, that when large bodies of men, whether philosophers or savages, are brought by external influences to profess faith in Christianity, without knowing its doctrines or experiencing its power, it is necessary, in order to keep up that profession, to accommodate Christianity to their peculiar views. That is, as they neither know nor believe the doctrines of the gospel, to make them say and think that they believe them, you must represent it to be whatever they may happen to believe. And it is too true that in this way nominal conversions to the religion of Christ have often been made. But what ignorance of the true nature of the gospel, or what a lack of reverence for its divine origin, does it imply, to assert that this is the only way in which conversions can be made. Was this the way in which the apostles converted the world, Jews and Greeks, Barbarians, Scythians, bond and free? Does experience show that the gospel must be degraded into superstition in order to give it access to the ignorant, or evaporated into speculations to make it acceptable to philosophers? Are not the very same doctrines believed, and understood, and felt by the pious African and by the pious Englishman? It is the very glory of the gospel that it is, in its purity, equally adapted to all classes of men, civilized or rude. It is a simple form of truth, made by the teaching of the Spirit, as intelligible to the savage as to the philosopher; and when thus understood by the former, he ceases to be a savage; he is intellec-

tually an enlightened man, as well as morally renewed. His views of his own nature, of God, of duty, of eternity, are purer, more just, more adequate than those Plato ever attained. "The entrance of thy word giveth light." The gospel being the wisdom of God, makes those who receive it truly wise. Where is the wise of this world? Where is the scribe? Where is the investigator? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Greeks require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ and him crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the wisdom of God and the power of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. It is this system of divine wisdom which Mr. Milman would have us believe must become a system of mythology to be received by the ignorant, and a system of refined speculation to suit the philosopher; that it must darken with the darkness, and advance with the advancement of human nature.

We have dwelt the longer on this characteristic of this history, because it was this that struck us on perusal as its most prominent feature. It is to this the English reviewer probably referred when he said that Mr. Milman had adopted the spirit of Gibbon; not his sneering, satirical spirit, but the disposition to treat Christianity as a mere theory of government, or system of opinions, without objective truth or real authority, constantly and of necessity modified by the character of each succeeding century, undergoing a "slow, perhaps not yet complete, certainly not general, development of a rational and intellectual religion." It is this that throws an air of infidelity over the whole performance, and accounts for, if it does not justify, the severe condemnation which the work has received in England.

There is another characteristic of this work which is worthy of remark. Mr. Milman says the successful execution of his task as a historian required the union of "true philosophy with perfect charity," a "calm, impartial and dispassionate tone." He has however mistaken indifference for impartiality. No two things can be more unlike. No book is so impartial as the Bible, and none is less indifferent. The sacred writers always take sides with truth and

righteousness, against error and wickedness. They give every man his due; narrate without faltering or apology, the faults as well as the virtues of the people of God, but they never leave the reader for one moment to doubt to which side they belong. Mr. Milman's idea of impartiality is a sort of philosophical indifference. He places himself on an eminence, and looks down on the struggle between good and evil, light and darkness, without any apparent interest in the conflict. All appears to him under the form of "necessary development," as the "progress of the human mind;" nothing is to be greatly approved, nothing severely censured; what is wrong, could not under the circumstances have been otherwise, and what is right is so more from necessity than from the choice of men. He seems to feel quite as much interest in Julian as in Theodosius; in Arius as in Athanasius. You read this work without knowing what his real opinion is on any of the great subjects of controversy which have agitated the church; a few great leading principles, such as the supernatural origin of Christianity, are distinctly avowed; but whether he is a Trinitarian, or Arian; whether he believes in an atonement, in regeneration, and other equally important doctrines, it is difficult, or impossible to decide. There may be avowals on these points which have escaped our notice, in a somewhat careful perusal of the work; but should such avowals be found, they would not remove the ground of our present complaint, which is, that a Christian minister should write a history of the Christian church and leave it a matter to be determined only by minute research, whether he is himself a Christian.

The difficulty of ascertaining Mr. Milman's real opinions is increased by another characteristic of his book. For the sake of effect, he identifies himself with the actors in the events which he narrates; and tells his story as it would have been told by an eye witness. The consequence is that what is true and what is false is narrated in the same tone of veritable history. The events of the Saviour's life, his discourses, his miracles, the assertion of his claim to divine homage, are narrated as real events, and seem to be, in fact, so regarded; but on the other hand, the most fabulous occurrences are narrated just as if they were no less matters of fact. Thus, when speaking of the efforts made by the philosophers to confirm Julian in his purpose of returning to Paganism, he says, Eusebius described the "power of Maximus in terms to which Julian could not listen

without awe and wonder. Maximus had led them into the temple of Hecate, he had burned a few grains of incense, he had murmured a hymn, and the statue of the goddess was seen to smile. . . . Julian was brought into direct communion with the invisible world. The faithful and officious genii from this time watched over Julian in peace and war; they conversed with him in his slumbers, they warned him of dangers, they conducted his military operations." "Instead of the Christian hierarchy, Julian hastened to environ himself with the most distinguished of the heathen philosophers. Most of them indeed, pretended to be a kind of priesthood. Intercessors between the deities and the world of man, they wrought miracles, foresaw future events, they possessed the art of purifying the soul, so that it should be reunited to the primal spirit, the divinity dwelt within them." Speaking of Olympus, a heathen, he says, "In the dead of night, when all were slumbering around, and all the gates were closed, he heard the Christian Alleluia pealing from a single voice through the silent temple. He acknowledged the sign or the omen, anticipated the unfavorable sentence of the emperor, the fate of his faction and of his gods." Speaking of baptism he says, "It was a complete lustration of the soul. The neophyte emerged from the waters of baptism in a state of perfect innocence. The dove (the Holy Spirit) was constantly hovering over the font, and sanctifying the waters to the mysterious ablution of all the sins of the past life. If the soul suffered no subsequent taint, it passed at once to the realms of purity and bliss; the heart was purified; the understanding illuminated; the spirit was clothed with immortality." This mode of writing gives a graphic effect to the narrative, but when the writer identifies himself first with the hearers of Christ, then with the disciples of the heathen philosophers, and then with the Christians of the fourth century, narrating what is true and what is false in exactly the same way, he leaves his readers in the dark as to his own real position. We have no idea that Milman really sympathizes with the disciples of Maximus, or with those of Cyprian; but we wish we had more evidence that he sympathizes with the believing followers of the Redeemer.

This uncertainty as to our author's views is increased by his philosophical and ambiguous way of stating the most important doctrines. "The incarnation of the Deity," he says, "or the union of some part of the Divine Essence

with a material or human body, is by no means an uncommon religious notion, more particularly in the East. Yet, in the doctrine as subsequently developed by Christianity, there seems the same important difference which characterizes the whole system of the ancient and modern religions. It is in the former a mythological impersonation of the power, in Christ it is the goodness of the Deity, which, associating itself with a human form, assumes the character of the representative of the human race; in whose person is exhibited a pure model of moral perfection, and whose triumph over evil is by the slow and gradual process of enlightening the mind and purifying the heart. . . . The Christian scheme, however it may occasionally admit the current language of the time, as where Christ is called the 'Light of the world,' yet in its scope and purport stands clear of all these physical notions; it is original, inasmuch as it is purely, essentially, and exclusively a moral revelation; its sole design to work a moral change; to establish a new relation between man and the Almighty Creator, and to bring to light the great secret of the immortality of man." pp. 53, 54. This is language which possibly a sincere believer in the Christian doctrine of the incarnation, might use; but at the same time it is language which those who openly reject that doctrine, would find no difficulty in adopting. Indeed the writings of German pantheists abound with more seemingly orthodox declarations of this and kindred Christian doctrines. Men who with Strauss can say, "The supernatural birth of Christ, his miracles, his resurrection and ascension, remain eternal truths, however their reality as historical facts may be called in question;" are capable of saying any thing. Mr. Milman is unwilling thus to abandon the firm ground of historical evidence, but the loose way which he adopts of stating what that evidence teaches, leaves us very much in the dark as to his real opinions.

If Mr. Milman believes the doctrine of the Trinity at all, it is very evident, from the manner in which he speaks of the Arian controversy, that he regards it of very little importance. "The Trinitarian controversy," he says, "was the natural, though tardy, growth of the Gnostic opinions, it could scarcely be avoided when the exquisite distinctness and subtlety of the Greek language were applied to religious opinions of oriental origin."—p. 310. "The doctrine of the Trinity, that is, the divine nature of the Father, the Son,



and the Holy Ghost, was acknowledged by all. To each of these distinct and separate beings (?) both parties ascribed the attributes of the Godhead, with the exception of self-existence, which was restricted by the Arians to the Father. Both parties admitted the antemundane being of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. But, according to the Arian, there was a time, before the commencement of the ages, when the parent Deity dwelt alone in undeveloped, undivided unity. At this time, immeasurably, incalculably, inconceivably remote, the majestic solitude ceased; the Divine unity was broken by an act of the sovereign Will, and the only-begotten Son, the image of the Father, the vicegerent of all the divine power, the intermediate agent in all the long subsequent work of creation, *began to be.*" . . . . "It might be supposed that a profound *metaphysical* question of this kind would have been far removed from the passions of the multitude."—p. 413. Speaking of Constantine, he says, "His impartial rebuke condemned Alexander for unnecessarily agitating such frivolous and unimportant questions; and Arius for not suppressing, in prudent and respectful silence, his objections to the doctrine of the patriarch." "He [Athanasius] endured persecution, calumny, exile: his life was endangered in defence of one single tenet, and that, it may be permitted to say, the most purely intellectual, and apparently the most remote from the ordinary passions of man; he confronted martyrdom, not for the broad and palpable distinction between Christianity and heathenism, but the fine and subtle expressions of the Christian creed. . . . . Neither party, in truth, could now yield without the humiliating acknowledgment that all their contest had been on unimportant and unessential points."—p. 319. "He [Athanasius] denounces his adversaries, for the least deviation, as enemies of Christ; he presses them with consequences drawn from their opinions; and, instead of spreading wide the gates of Christianity, he seemed to unbar them with jealous reluctance, and to admit no one without the most cool and inquisitorial scrutiny into the most secret arcana of his belief. . . . . It cannot be doubted that he was deeply, intimately persuaded that the vital power and energy, the truth, the consolatory force of Christianity, entirely depended on the unquestionable elevation of the Saviour to the most absolute equality with the Parent Godhead."—p. 342. And such, we may add, has been the almost universal conviction of the Christian world. You may ex-

alt a creature, as high as language will admit, the interval between him and the Creator, is still infinite; and therefore the difference between a system which assigns plenary Divinity to the Son, and that which makes him a creature, is absolute and entire. It is hard to conceive of a question of more practical import than whether we are to worship, trust, and serve a created being, or the infinite Jehovah alone. Mr. Milman should not be surprised that Athanasius was willing to confront martyrdom for the doctrine he defended; or that it should take so strong a hold on the feelings of the people. So far from being a question of "religious metaphysics," the whole character of the spiritual life depends upon it. The man who regards the Saviour as the infinite God, and he who regards him as a creature, can hardly have one religious feeling in common. Whether it was God or a creature, who assumed our nature, in that nature suffered for our sins, and demands our faith and love, is a question upon which "the vital power and energy, the truth, the consolatory force of Christianity" do indeed depend. And that Mr. Milman can regard it as a "frivolous and unimportant" question, shows how little sympathy he has with the faith and experience of the Christian church.

We are not sure whether the most objectionable feature of the work before us, is not the disregard which it every where exhibits for the authority of the sacred writers. Mr. Milman evidently looks upon the evangelists as well meaning men, ignorant and prejudiced however, liable to error, and who often did err, and whose statements may be received or rejected, according to the rules which are applied to ordinary historians. Even the authority of Christ is effectually evaded by assuming the doctrine of accommodation, which supposes that the Saviour not only adopted the "current language" of his age, but lent his sanction to popular errors, by speaking and acting as though he believed them to be true. All this will be abundantly proved by the following specimens of our author's manner of speaking on these subjects.

Speaking of "the angelic appearances and the revelations of the Deity addressed to the senses of man," he has this comprehensive paragraph, "Whether these were actual appearances, or impressions produced on the minds of those who witnessed them, is of slight importance. In either case they are real historical facts; they partake of poetry

in their form, and, in a certain sense, in their groundwork, but they are imaginative, not fictitious; true, as relating that which appeared to the minds of the relators exactly as it did appear. Poetry, meaning by poetry such an imaginative form, and not merely the form, but the subject matter of the narrative, as, for instance, in the first chapters of St. Matthew and St. Luke, was the appropriate and perhaps necessary intelligible dialect; the vehicle for the most important truths of the gospel to later generations. The incidents, therefore, were so ordered, that they should thus live in the thoughts of men; the revelation itself was so adjusted and arranged, in order that it might ensure its continued existence throughout this period. Could, it may be inquired, a purely rational or metaphysical creed have survived for any length of time during such stages of civilization?"—p. 67. Thus it seems that all the events recorded by the evangelist as facts, which involve the apparition of angels to Zachariah, to Mary, to Joseph, to the disciples at the tomb of the Saviour, &c. &c., are all to be explained as mere imaginations, and no more true than the dreams of other enthusiasts.

Of the temptation of Christ he suggests two explanations; according to the one, it "is a parabolic description of an actual event; according to another, of a kind of inward mental trial, which continued through the public career of Jesus." The latter, he says, is embarrassed with fewer difficulties; and according to this view, "at one particular period of his life, or at several times, the earthly and temporal thoughts thus parabolically described as a personal contest with the Principle of Evil, passed through the mind of Jesus, and arrayed before him the image constantly present to the minds of his countrymen, that of the author of a new temporal theocracy."—p. 75.

"There was a pool situated most likely to the north of the temple, near the sheep-gate, the same, probably, through which animals intended for sacrifice were usually brought into the city. The place was called Beth-esda, (the house of mercy,) and the pool was supposed to possess most remarkable properties for healing diseases. At certain periods there was a strong commotion in the waters, which probably bubbled up from some chymical cause connected with their medicinal effects. Popular belief, or rather, perhaps, popular language, attributed this agitation of the surface, to the descent of an angel; for of course the

regular descent of a celestial being, visible to the whole city, cannot for an instant be supposed.”—p. 95.

“Yet concealment, or at least, less frequent publicity, seems now to have been his object, for, when some of those insane persons, demoniacs as they were called, openly addressed him by the title of Son of God, Jesus enjoins their silence.”—p. 97. On a subsequent page, he says, he has no scruple in avowing his opinion on “the subject of demoniacs to be that of Joseph Mede, Lardner, Dr. Mead, Paley, and all the learned modern writers. It was a kind of insanity, not unlikely to be prevalent among a people peculiarly subject to leprosy and other cutaneous diseases; and nothing was more probable than that lunacy should take the turn and speak the language of the prevalent superstition of the times.”

Speaking of the unpardonable sin, he says, “It was an offence which argued such total obtuseness of moral perception, such utter incapacity of feeling in comprehending the beauty either of the conduct or the doctrines of Jesus, as to leave no hope that they would ever be reclaimed from their rancorous hostility to his religion, or be qualified for admission into the pale and benefits of the new faith.”—p. 101.

Speaking of the difficulty of ascertaining the chronological order of the events of the latter period of the Saviour's life, he says, “However embarrassing this fact to those who require something more than historical credibility in the evangelical narratives, to those who are content with a lower and more rational view of their authority, it throws not the least suspicion on their truth.”—p. 122.

“As he [Christ] was speaking, a rolling sound was heard in the heavens, which the unbelieving part of the multitude heard only as an accidental burst of thunder; to others, however, it seemed an audible, a distinct, or according to those who adhere to the strict letter, the articulate voice of an angel, proclaiming the divine sanction to the presage of his future glory.”—p. 124. It was on the occasion here referred to, it will be remembered, that our Saviour said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

“The same convulsion would displace the stones which covered the ancient tombs, and lay open many of the innumerable sepulchres which perforated the hills on every side of the city, and expose the dead to public view. To the awe-struck and depressed minds of the followers of Jesus,

no doubt, were confined those visionary appearances of the spirits of their deceased brethren, which are obscurely intimated in the rapid narratives of the evangelists."—p. 143. The evangelist says, "The graves were opened, and many bodies of saints which slept, arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Here is a distinct assertion not of the appearance of spirits, but of the resurrection of bodies. Mr. Milman seems to take up with the off-cast garments, of that class of rationalists, which has been driven from the field in Germany, by the contempt and ridicule of both orthodox and unbelieving interpreters. We know no German writer of note, who within the last ten years, has ventured to publish such comments as the above. We thought that the age of Paulus and Wegscheider, was forgotten.

This same method of perverting the sacred narrative is continued through the whole of this portion of the work. Speaking of the women who visited the sepulchre on the morning of the resurrection, he says, "To their minds, thus highly excited, and bewildered with astonishment, with terror, and with grief, appeared what is described by the evangelist as a vision of angels."—p. 147.

Of the occurrence at Philippi we have the following account; the conversion of Lydia having been mentioned, our author proceeds: "Perhaps the influence or example of so many of her own sex, worked upon the mind of a female of different character and occupation. She may have been an impostor, but more probably was a young girl of excited temperament, whose disordered imagination was employed by men of more artful character for their own sordid purposes. The enthusiasm of this 'divining' damsel now took another turn. Impressed with the language and manner of Paul, she suddenly deserted her old employers, and, throwing herself into the train of the apostle, proclaimed, with the same exalted fervour, his divine mission and the superiority of his religion."—p. 177.

The history of the sons of Sceva is thus disposed of: "Those whom this science or trade of exorcism (according as it was practised by the credulous or the crafty) employed for their purposes, were those unhappy beings of disordered imaginations, possessed, according to the belief of the times, with evil spirits. One of these, on whom they were trying this experiment, had probably before been strongly

impressed with the teaching of Paul and the religion which he preached ; and, irritated by the interference of persons whom he might know to be hostile to the Christian party, assaulted them with great violence, and drove them naked and wounded out of the house.”—p. 182.

After reading the numerous extracts we have given from this history, most persons will not be surprised that the English reviewer should pronounce it, “essentially an infidel production.” The correctness of this position depends on the meaning of the terms. If we take the ground of that reviewer, that the Bible is either inspired and authoritative, or a fiction and a forgery ; then indeed his sentence is just. But this is doing Mr. Milman injustice. An infidel, in the ordinary sense of the term, is a man who denies any supernatural revelation in Christianity. This our author never does, he not only avows his belief of the supernatural origin of Christianity, but admits that it was authenticated by supernatural evidence. He belongs therefore to that class of writers, who suppose that the life of the Saviour and the account of his doctrines, have been recorded by uninspired, fallible historians. It is the denial of inspiration and the adoption of the latitudinarian doctrine of accommodation, which gives to the early part of his history so much the appearance of open infidelity.

It may be said that there is little difference, as to their evil consequences, between the principles which Mr. Milman has adopted, and those of avowed infidels. It is certainly true that very few of those who stand on the ground occupied by our author, do in fact believe any more of the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, than was received by the more respectable of the English Deists. The unity of God, the immortality of the soul, and future retribution, which Mr. Milman calls the first principles of Christianity, have been admitted by many who do not believe in the divine mission of Christ. It is indeed an advantage to have these doctrines confirmed by an express revelation, and so far, there is an important difference between the two cases. But as to those doctrines which are properly peculiar to the Bible, there is no security for one of them being held by those who deny the infallible authority of the sacred writers, and who suppose that both Christ and his apostles so far accommodated themselves to the language and opinions of the age in which they lived, as to adopt and sanction erroneous and superstitious doctrines. There is not one whit more evi-

dence that the sacred writers taught the doctrines of the Trinity, of atonement, of the resurrection of the body and of a future judgment, than that they taught the existence and agency of good and evil angels. And if the latter is rejected as mere accommodation to prevailing opinions, the rest may in like manner be discarded. Without, therefore, pretending to say how far Mr. Milman has gone in unbelief, we have no hesitation in saying that his principles are subversive of the gospel.

We have confined our attention to the religious character of this history, because this is the point of most importance and most appropriate for our pages. The literary merits of the work are such as would be expected by those acquainted with Mr. Milman's previous productions. It is a work of great research, and learning. The narrative is glowing, and the style, though laboured, formal, and not always accurate, is elevated and impressive. The philosophy of the book we estimate at a very low rate. The effort to trace all events and all forms of opinions to their causes, which is one of the most prominent characteristics of the history, we think is in a great degree unsuccessful. There is nothing very profound or original in Mr. Milman's disquisitions; but his genius and power as a writer have secured the production of a work in which the reader's interest is sustained from the beginning to the end.

Of Dr. Murdock's notes, of which the title page makes mention, we have little to say. We question whether all together they would fill half a page; and, what we confess is to us a matter of surprise and regret, they have no reference to the objectionable portions of the work. In a single instance, (the only one which we have noticed,) when Mr. Milman had traced the peculiarities of Augustine's theology to his early Manicheism, Dr. Murdock ventures to ask in a note, Is this capable of proof? Mr. Milman quotes Acts xiii. 2, as the record of the investiture of Paul and Barnabas with "the apostolic office;" Dr. Murdock corrects him with a quotation from Doddridge. Mr. Milman calls the council of Jerusalem, "a full assembly of the apostles." Dr. Murdock adds, "and elders, with the whole church." Now surely if these little matters, relating to church government, were worthy of notice, some correction, or some indication of dissent might be expected, and even demanded of a Christian minister, when the author manifests the loose and dangerous principles with which his work abounds.

As to our brethren engaged in conducting the contemporary journal, to which we referred in the beginning of this review, we cherish the hope that their favourable judgment of this work, was formed without due consideration. We are not prepared to believe that any portion of our New School brethren are willing to sanction any such near approach to infidelity as this History of Christianity.

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ART. V.—*Mission to England in behalf of the American Colonization Society.* By Rev. R. R. Gurley. Washington. *Archibald Alexander*

THE occasion of sending the Rev. Mr. Gurley on a mission to England, was the appearance of a work of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, on the slave trade and its remedy. The high standing and reputation of this gentleman, and the leading part which he took in all that related to the suppression of the slave trade, and in West India emancipation, were adapted to give his work a more than common interest. From the candid statements of the author, it appears, that after an expenditure of more than fifteen millions of pounds sterling, for the suppression of the slave trade, and an incalculable loss of human life, this traffic had been increasing rather than diminishing. The remedy proposed for this enormous evil, seemed to be so coincident with the views and principles which had been for twenty years pursued by the American Colonization Society, that the managers and agents of that society thought that it would be highly desirable to endeavour to agree upon some plan of mutual co-operation with the "African Civilization Society," which had just been organized, to carry into effect the scheme recommended by Sir T. F. Buxton.

The subject was brought before a public meeting in the city of New York, in which several speeches were delivered, and several resolutions adopted, all expressing the strongest approbation of the English plan of African civilization. And immediately after this meeting, the Board of the New York City Colonization Society adopted resolutions, in which they earnestly recommended to the Executive Committee of the American Colonization Society, to