

Miscellaneous.

THE APOSTLE OF THE GENTILES.

FROM SALATHIEL.

When we say that Salathiel is a work worthy of the brilliant reputation of Mr. Croly, we pay it one of the highest panegyrics which it can receive. We have seldom read a composition so replete with eloquence of the loftiest and purest kind. Our readers are aware that its hero is the Wandering Jew, whom the author presents, however, in a form essentially different from that in which we usually meet him in the legends. His travels and adventures form the material of the book, and Mr. Croly has made him a witness of the most interesting and agitating events of the most wonderful period of history, the epoch of the first preaching of Christianity.

We extract the following scene, which describes the martyrdom of the Apostle of the Gentiles, which will speak for itself. Sacred fictitious writing is the bow of Ulysses. No feeble writer can manage it. Milton alone in English has succeeded; Cowley, no small name, has failed wholly in the Davides; and so has Cumberland in his Calvary. The Germans never have been eminently successful—Klopstock's Messiah, which is their best effort, cannot be reckoned very high; and the death of Abel deserves no greater praise than that of being a pretty book. The sublime poem of Athalie, which is the triumph of French poetry, would of itself immortalize Racine; but besides him the French have no other, and this short list exhausts (with the exception of Dante, whom we pass for obvious reasons) the continental writers. We think that our readers will agree with us when we assert, that in this difficult task Mr. Croly has succeeded—we scruple not to say, that some passages of the following extract, rise to the simple sublimity of the scriptural style itself.

"But the grand display was prepared for the time when those Christians, who had been denounced on my discovery, were to be executed; an exhibition at which the Emperor himself testified his intention to be present. The great circus was no more; but a temporary amphitheatre of the turf had been erected, in which the usual games were exhibited during the early part of the day. At the hour of my arrival, the low bank circling this immense enclosure, was filled with the first names of Rome, knights, patricians, senators, military tribunes, consuls; the Emperor alone was wanted to complete the representative majesty of the empire. I was to form a part of the ceremony, and the guards who had me in charge cleared the way to a conspicuous place, where my national dress fixed every eye on me. Several Christians had perished before my arrival. Their remains lay on the ground, and in their midst stood the man who was to be the next victim. By what influence I know not, but never did I see a human being that made on me so deep an impression. I have him before me at this instant. I see the figure, low, yet with an air of nobleness; stooped a little with venerable age; but the countenance, full of life, and marked with all the traits of intellectual power, the nose strongly aquiline, the bold lip, the large and rapid eye; the whole man conveying the idea of an extraordinary permanence of early vigour, under the weight of years. Even the hair was thick and black with scarcely a touch of silver. If the place and time were Athens, and the area of Demosthenes, I should have said that Demosthenes stood before me. The vivid countenance and manner; the flashing rapidity with which he seized a new idea, and compressed it to his purpose; the impetuous argument that, throwing off the formality of logic, smote with the strength of a new fact, were Demosthenic. Even a certain infirmity of utterance, and an occasional slight difficulty of words added to the likeness; but there was a hallowed glance, and a solemn, yet tender reach of thought, interposed among these intense appeals, that asserted the sacred superiority of the subject and the man.

"He was already speaking when I reached the circus; and I can give but an outline of his language.

"He pointed to the headless bodies around him.

"For what have these my brethren died? Answer me, priests of Rome; what temple did they force—what altar overturn—what insults offer to the slightest of your celebrations? Judges of Rome, what offence did they commit against the public peace? Consuls, where were they found in rebellion against the Roman majesty? People! patricians! who among your thousands can charge one of these holy dead with extortion, impurity, or violence; can charge them with anything, but the patience that bore wrong without a murmur, and the charity that answered tortures only by prayers."

"He then touched the nature of his faith.

"Do I stand here demanding to be believed for opinions? No; but for facts. I have seen the sick made whole, the lame walk, the blind receive their sight, by the mere name of Him whom you crucified. I have seen men once ignorant of all languages but their own, speaking with the language of every nation under heaven—the still greater wonder, of the timid defying all fear—the unlearned instantly made wise in the mysteries of things divine and human—putting to shame the learned—awing the proud—enlightening the darkened; alike in the courts of Kings, before the furious people; and in the dungeon, armed with an irresistible spirit of knowledge, reason and truth, that confounded their adversaries. I have seen the still greater wonder, of the renewed heart; the impure, suddenly abjuring vice; the covetous, the cruel, the faithless, the godless, gloriously changed into the holy, the gentle, the faithful, the worshipper of the true God in spirit and in truth; the conquest of the passions which defied your philosophers, your tribunals, your rewards, your terrors, achieved in the one mighty name. These are facts, things which I have seen; and who that had seen them could doubt that the finger of the eternal God was there? I dared not refuse my belief to the divine mis-

sion of the being by whom, and even in memory of whom, things baffling the proudest human means were wrought before my eyes. Thus irresistibly compelled by facts to believe that Christ was sent by God, I was compelled with equal force to believe in the doctrines declared by this glorious Messenger of the Father alike of quick and dead. And thus I stand before you this day, at the close of a long life of labour and hazard, a Christian."

"This appeal to the understanding, divested as it was of all ornament and oratorical display, was listened to by the immense multitude with the most unbroken interest. It was delivered with the strong simplicity of conviction. He then spoke of the Founder of his faith.

"Men may be mad for opinions: but who can be mad for facts? The coming of Christ was prophesied a thousand years before!

"From the beginning of his ministry he lived wholly before the eyes of mankind. His life corresponds with the prophecies in a multitude of circumstances which must have been totally beyond human power. The virgin mother, the village in which he was born, the lowliness of his cradle, the worship paid to him there, the hazard of his life—all were predicted. Could the infant have shaped the accomplishment of these predictions?—The death that he should die, the hands by which it was to be inflicted, even the draught that he should drink, and the raiment that he should be clothed in, and the sepulchre in which he should be laid, were predicted. Could the man have shaped their accomplishment? The time of his resting in the tomb, his resurrection, his ascent to heaven, the sending of the holy Spirit after he was gone: all were predicted; all were beyond human collusion, human power, or human thought—and all were accomplished.

"Those things were universally known to the nation most competent to detect collusion. Did Christ come to Rome, where every new religion finds adherents, and where all pretensions might be advanced without fear; where a deceiver might have quoted prophecies that never existed, and vaunted of wonders done where there was no eye to detect them? No! his life was spent in Judea, perhaps for the express purpose of adding to his misery and long suffering, the most unanswerable proofs of his divine mission. He made his appeal to the scriptures, in a country where they were in the hands of the people. His miracles were wrought before the eyes of a priesthood that watched him step by step; his doctrines were spoken, not to a careless and mingled multitude, holding a thousand varieties of opinion, but to an exclusive race, subtle in their inquiries, eager in their zeal, and proud of their peculiar possession of divine knowledge.

"Yet against his life, his miracles, or his doctrine, what charge could they bring? None. There is not a single stigma on the purity of his conduct; the power of his wonder-working control over man and nature; the holiness, wisdom, and grandeur of his views of Providence; the truth, charity, and meekness, of his counsels to man. Their single source of hatred was the pride of worldly hearts that expected a king, where they were to have found a teacher. Their single charge against him was his prophecy, that there should be an end to their Temple and their state within the life of man. They crucified him; he died in prayer that his murderers might be forgiven; and his prayer was mightily answered. He had scarcely risen to his eternal throne, when thousands believed, and were forgiven. To him be the glory, for ever and ever!

"Compare him with your legislators. He gives the spirit of all law in a single sentence—*Do unto others as you would they should do unto you*. Compare him with your priesthood. He gives a single significant rite, capable of being extended to every land and every age, and in them all speaking to the heart; he gives a single prayer, containing the substance of all that man can rationally implore of heaven. Compare him with your moralists. He lays the foundation of virtue in love to God. Compare him with your sages. He leads a life of privation without a murmur; he dies a death of shame, desertion and agony; and his last breath is sublime mercy! Compare him with your conquerors. Without the shedding of a drop of blood, he has already conquered hosts that would have resisted all the swords of earth, hosts of stubborn passions, cherished vices, guilty perversions of the powers and faculties of man. Look on these glorious dead, whom I shall join before the set of the yonder sun. Yes, martyrs of God! ye were his conquests; and ye too are more than conquerors, through him that loved us, and gave himself for us. But a triumph shall come, magnificent and terrible, when all eyes shall behold him; and the tribes of the earth, even they who pierced him, shall mourn.

"Then rejoice, ye dead! For ye shall rise. Ye shall be clothed with glory; ye shall be as the angels, bright and powerful, immortal, intellectual kings! For though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

"The sky was cloudless; the sun was in the west, but shining in his broadest beams; the whole space before me was flooded with this light; when, as I gazed upon the martyr, I saw a gleam issue from his upturned face; it increased to brightness, to strong radiance, to an intense lustre, that made the sun-light utterly pale. All was astonishment in the amphitheatre, but all was awe. The old man seemed unconscious of the wonder that invested him. He continued with his opened hands lifted up, and his eyes fixed on heaven. The glory spread over his form; and he stood before us robed in an effulgence which shot from him like a living fount of splendour round the colossal circle. Yet the blaze, though it looked the very essence of light, was strangely translucent; we could see with undazzled eyes every feature; and whether it was the working of my overwhelmed mind, or a true change, the countenance appeared to have passed at once from age to youth. A lofty joy, a look of supernal grandeur, a magnificent, yet ethereal beauty, had transformed the features of the old man into the likeness of the winged sons of immortality!

"He spoke; and the first sound of his voice thrilled

through every bosom, and made every man start from his seat.

"Men and brethren—it is the desire of God that all should be saved—Jew and Gentile alike; for with him there is no respect of persons. He is the father of all!—Christianity is not a philosophic dream; nor the opinion of a sect struggling to gain power among contending sects; but a divine command—the summons of the God of gods, that you should accept the mercy offered to you through the sacrifice of the Eternal Son!—the opening of the gates of the eternal world! It is not a summons to the practice of barren virtue, but a declaration of the real reward, mightier than the imagination of man can conceive. It raises the spirit of man, forgiven for the sake of Christ, into the imperishable possession of an actual power, to which the ambition of earth is a vapour; it invests the redeemed with all that delight the eye, or rejoice the heart, or elevate the understanding. Would you be kings—would you be glorious as the stars of Heaven—would you possess mighty faculties of happiness, supremacy, and knowledge? Ask for forgiveness of your evil in the name of Christ; and whether you live or die, those things shall be yours. What is easier than the price?—what more transcendent than the reward? Who shall tell the limit of the risen Spirit? Over what worlds, or worlds of worlds, he may be sovereign! What resistless strength—what more than regal majesty—what celestial beauty may be in his frame!—What expansion of intellect—what overflowing tides of new sensation—what shapes of glory and loveliness—what radiant stores of thought, and mysteries of exhaustless knowledge, may be treasured for him! What endless ascent through new ranks of being, each as much more glorious than the last, as the risen Spirit is above man!—For what can be the bound to the exaltation of the fellow heirs with Christ, for whom the Eternal stooped to suffer upon the cross, and for whom he rose again to his throne, their leader in trial, their leader in triumph! Omnipotence for their protector, their friend, their father! He who gave to us his own Son, will he not with him give us all things!"

"King of kings! if through a long life I have laboured in thy cause, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness; thine alone be the praise, thine the glory, who hast brought me through them all with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. Now Lord! thou who shalt change my vile body into the likeness of thy glorious body, be with thy servant in this last hour! Lord receive my spirit; that where thou art, even I may be with thee!"

"He was silent: the splendour gradually passed away from his form. He knelt upon the sand, bowing down his neck to receive the blow.

"But to lift a hand against such a being, seemed an act of profanation. The axe-bearer dared not approach. The spectators sat hushed in involuntary homage. Not a word, not a gesture broke the silence of veneration. At length a flourish of distant horns and trumpets was heard, Cavalry galloped forward announcing the Emperor; and Nero, habited as a triumphant charioteer, drove his gilded car into the arena. The Christian had risen; and, with his hands clasped on his breast, was awaiting death. Nero cast the headman an execration at his tardiness; the axe swept round; and when I glanced again, the old man lay beside his brethren!"

ALL persons who have unsettled Accounts, and are indebted to the Subscriber, will please to call and settle them satisfactorily, or they will be put into the hands of an Attorney to collect without discrimination.
Fredericton, April 22, 1828. JEDEDIAH SLASON.

NEW-BRUNSWICK

AGRICULTURAL AND EMIGRANT SOCIETY.

At a General Meeting of the New Brunswick Agricultural and Emigrant Society, holden at the Province Hall on the 31st day of January, 1829, it was

RESOLVED, that a premium of Five Shillings per Chaldron, to the extent of Ten Pounds, shall be awarded for such quantity of good Coal, (the produce of this Province,) fit for Household use, as shall be delivered at Fredericton, during the ensuing summer; such premium not to be allowed on any quantity less than Twenty Chaldrons.

WM. TAYLOR, Secretary.

March 28, 1829.

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