

Lord Jesus, which is described by John the Baptist—"Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor." (Mat. iii. 12.) No one will venture to affirm that any action answering to the foregoing declaration, has taken place as yet. Micah iv. 12, and Rev. xiv. 15, predict judgment as about to ensue in that region. The meaning of the names of the places at which the numbering and subsequently the slaughter took place, would appear to confirm the view above indicated, unless any resolute objector will avail himself of the convenient plea of "a coincidence." The numbering commenced at *Dan*, which means "*Judgment*;" the enumerators pass thence over *Jordan*, "*the river of judgment*," and the pestilence is stayed at the threshing-floor of an inhabitant of *Jebus*, "*a place trodden down*;" this appears to be a forecasting of that "*treading the wine press alone*" of which we read in Is. lxiii. 3, and in Rev. xiv. 19, 20, and xix. 15. The Lord Jesus when he refers to the "days of Noe," and "the days of Lot" respectively, (Matt. xxiv. 37, 39, and Luke xvii. 26-29,) teaches us to read the future in the past. With regard to the foregoing, it may be well, in conclusion, to echo the words of the Apostle Paul, *as he wrote them*—"What if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?" Rom. iii. 3.

The apostate Superintendent of a Sunday school appeared to think that he presented an insuperable objection, when he pointed to Matt. ii. 15., as an alleged fulfilment of Hos. xi. 1. To suppose that it was not a fulfilment of the prophecy is to assume that the evangelist, and they whom he addressed were so utterly ignorant as to be unable or unlikely to look from the first to the second verse of the passage quoted, an assumption on the part of the objector, which appears to involve his unacquaintance with the fact that the people of Israel jealously guarded every word of

their Scriptures, and must have been as well acquainted with the second as with the first verse of the passage quoted; they would moreover have been but too glad to repudiate the citation as applying to *the Messiah*, because *with them* the question was whether or not the Lord Jesus were he. When it is apprehended that the purpose of God has always been to send the Messiah, and that for reasons which the Almighty has not deigned to explain, "it behoved the Messiah to suffer" (Luke xxiv. 46.), it does not appear very extraordinary that this under-current-truth should pervade the whole Bible, and that like some terrestrial currents, it should at times come to the surface, and then again sink out of sight. In the adjoining chapter of Hosea (x. 1.) we have a somewhat similar thought presented—"Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit to himself;" it is worthy of note that in the eightieth Psalm, this "vine out of Egypt," and its reverses being the subject of it, when the desolate condition of "the vine" is bewailed, "it is burned with fire, it is cut down" (ver. 16), the only hope of the suppliant is in "the true vine" (John xv. 1., etc.), "Let thy hand be *on the man of thy right hand*, on *the Son of Man* whom thou madest strong for thyself." Psalm lxxx. 17. As it is with ourselves, in regard to any object of our affections, so it is with Him who made us; *we* delight in speaking of those we love, and the Almighty, from one end of the Bible to the other, (in ways not always visible to un instructed eyes,) has shown his delight in the Son of his love. "*The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*" 1 Cor. ii. 14.

#### EXTRA PULPIT CRITICISM.

There can be none, one may presume, but will sympathise with Mr. O'Brien, in his persistent efforts to minister to the bodies and souls of the inmates of the

\* Clearly an act of judgment.