

“ ‘ Zounds, madam ! ’ cried Mr. Coverly with uncontrollable anger, ‘ do you mean to contravene St. Paul, and deny the Scriptures ? ’ ”

“ ‘ The old stronghold,’ into which, exclaimed Agnes, ‘ the baffled controversialist retreats ; whence he silences those he cannot answer, and assails their belief when he cannot attack their understanding. And are you really going to march out Adam and the Apostles, with King Ahasuerus at their head, against me ? As to the first witness, let me examine his character before I admit his evidence. He, when he erred, yielded to an inferior power ; for it was the spirit that even God could not conquer that tempted Eve, while only a mere mortal solicited Adam ; and when he was questioned as to his disobedience, how readily he cried out—‘ The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, *she* gave me of the tree, and I did eat.’ As he greedily partook of the fruit, he might have generously shared the fault. How like dutiful sons you have followed the example of your father ever since ! From the co-partnership of error and folly you never shrink ; but as for the penalty, you leave to woman the full benefit of *that*. No, no ; as to your great prototype, Adam, I’ll none of him.’ ”

“ ‘ But the Apostles, madam ! ’ ”

“ ‘ They were,’ said Agnes, ‘ *men* ; and though filled with the divine doctrine of their great Master, they could not transmit it without giving it a tinge of the earthly vessel through which it passed. As for him who reigned from ‘ India unto Ethiopia ’ he proves to me how little change, time, clime, and Government have effected in men ! You will say, or in woman either, when I tell, under like circumstances, it is highly probable I should act like the rebellious Vashti. Every sect, my dear Mr. Coverly, have their own interpretation of Scripture, why not every individual ? I could show you some you could find it easier to frown at than refute. The world may yet see a translation of the Scriptures by a woman, who may detect more mistranslations than even Mr. Bellamy. It will be interesting, if not instructive, to collect the old and new translation.’ ”