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LANDMARKS OF HISTORY.*

III.

WE turn for a time from the records of battles and sieges to the gentler and more beneficent triumphs of literature. More and more is being realized the truth of the saying of the poet, "The pen is mightier than the sword." One of the noblest intellects, one of the purest poets, one of the most ardent lovers of liberty, who ever enriched the literature of the English, or any other language, was John Milton, known chiefly to fame as the author of that incomparable poem, "*Paradise Lost*." He has, perhaps, still greater claim upon the gratitude of mankind, as the champion of civil and religious liberty, than even as the writer of immortal verse. He himself has left us an account of his noble ambition to "leave something so written, to after times, as they should not willingly let die." He proceeds to review the great epics of the age, and characterizes the Apocalypse of St. John as "the majestic image of high and stately tragedy, shutting up and intermingling her solemn scenes and acts with a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies." He then announces his own desire "to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's almightiness, and what He suffers to be wrought with high providence in His Church; to sing victorious agonies of martyrs

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