

legislator by Divine appointment, it must be more easy to find points of distinction than of resemblance between Moses and any of those about him; and he must in a great measure be viewed throughout his busy eventful career as taking council in his own thoughts, and acting from himself, and by himself, or at least on motives, and under the power of principles, and with a reference to objects and ends, peculiar to himself, even when assisted by the concert and cooperation of others; yet with all this it would be difficult to find in the whole compass of the world's history, ancient or modern, another example of a great leader living so familiarly among his followers as the founder of the Jewish nation. He felt certainly as the shepherd of his people, and not as one of the common herd, but not at all as a superior being, standing aloof from common sympathies, and high raised above the ordinary cares and hopes and fears of humanity, sent down from Heaven to perform a needful part upon earth, only as one partaking in the vicissitudes of a condition he had assumed for a season, and not as a genuine son of fallen Adam, inheriting by birth the universal lot with all its outward fightings and inward fears, because sharing in all its infirmities and all its sins. In their marching through that great wilderness he did not stalk along in solitary grandeur before his people at the side of the pillar of cloud by day, nor was his tent seen pitched in the midst of its fiery gleams by night, as if he were a mere part of these heavenly portents. Nor was he always found standing before the Shechinah, as if he were more fit to associate with God than keep company with the people. Nor was he in the midst of those earthly flames which set on fire the course of man's nature, as a bush burning, but not consumed; alas! no, he too was scorched by the fire of unholiness as it passed over him, and, therefore, though permitted to behold, was not permitted to enter the land promised to his fathers. We see in Moses a man great by nature, and highly favoured of God, placed in very extraordinary circumstances, and performing a very extraordinary part, not only in his own generation, but which has no parallel in any other, yet a man of like passions with ourselves, tasting and enjoying the ordinary pleasures, and touched by the ordinary cares, and pained by the ordinary griefs, and agitated like other men in the usual manner by the various vicissitudes of this changeable, uncertain, anxious life. As Moses entered warmly into the joys and sorrows of his brethren, and took a deep interest in all their affairs, and felt for them in the least dignified, or, what the spirit of modern romance would consider, the least dignified of their sufferings, so we are persuaded, extraordinary as was the man, and his situation and his work, there is no person recorded in history, with whom the common reader finds it more easy to sympathise, and enter into his feelings under

his various trials. Not many of our race have been leaders of nations; but a great many have been fathers of families; and most like to a father in his family, a master in his household, did Moses go out and in among his people. Every father in his family, and every master in his household, stands in some measure alone among those by whom he is surrounded; so stood Moses, the servant of God, in the house of Israel. A much enduring man he was, a man of many cares, who experienced many provocations from the great congregation in the camp, and oftener, we dare say, met with vexatious opposition, petulant contradiction, and senseless objections, than sympathy, wise council, and hearty cooperation when he proposed his measures in the more select assemblies of the Elders of the people. But with all these drawbacks, which are things common to men in his situation, we have no doubt he was happier and better content to dwell in the midst of this turmoil than he would have been to enjoy his own solitary reflections in the caves and among the rocks of Horeb. The circumstances under which Moses sought out his brethren at first, and the way in which he introduced himself to their notice, avenging the wrongs of one by slaying his oppressor, and endeavouring to compose the differences of others whom he found at variance, shows him to have been a man of action, formed for affairs, born a ruler and a judge, not a melancholy dreamer, one who would be more in his element, deciding causes from morn to night with the concourse of people standing round, than following out any train of meditation, however sublime, in the solitudes of nature. The earth would present no spectacle so attractive to the great prophet's eye as the thousands of Israel on their march, and the tents of the sons of Jacob spread over the plain in their places of rest.

Mr. Gilfillan has, we think, been led to draw a false and fantastic picture of the great Hebrew Lawgiver by fixing his attention, and for the sake of effect directing that of his readers too exclusively to those striking points of contrast which must needs have existed between such a leader and such followers, not sufficiently advert- ing to the presence of a most powerful bond of union between them, and greatly overlooking its extraordinary effects in producing common sympathies, which melt down and absorb all minor moral, intellectual and spiritual differences, to say nothing of such inferior ones as spring from education and outward condition. The meanest in the twelve tribes of Israel shared equally with Moses in the hope of the promises of God made to their fathers; and it was his own part in this common inheritance, which Moses valued more highly than all the treasures of Egypt. The possession of this, and not his being learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, constituted in his own eyes his highest and most

honourable distinction, and was that in which he would be most disposed to glory. But here the least of his people was his equal. He was bound to his brethren of the stock of Abraham, the heirs of the promises, by a tie which did not lead him to expect or hope, and which taught him not to wish, to enter alone into the better country of his desires. The bonds of the Covenant of God draw together all, whom they encompass, into one family, and unite them into one household of faith in the prosperity and adversity of which all are part-takers, and from whose fortunes no one member can separate himself without having his name blotted out of the Book of Life. If the being of one blood links the whole human race together by many natural sympathies, from which neither the highest nor the lowest can shake himself entirely free, and makes all men feel that they are bound to each other by bonds which cannot be thoroughly broken or utterly cast away, the one hope of our calling in God binds together all who entertain it with cords of love, which they desire only to see strengthened and extended, and which, leaving all outward and many inward distinctions untouched, produce that spiritual union, now called the being all one in Christ Jesus. But this principle of union is the strongest and most equalising of all social sympathies. Let a Christian king and a Christian slave meet together to converse or to cooperate on the common subject of their Christian hope; and, though nothing should be forgotten on either side, they will feel as brethren, without the king being mortified, or the slave puffed up by the reflection, we are equal in Christ.

But Moses was a man as well as a Jew, a son of Adam, as well as a son of Abraham, and had a distinct natural character assigned to him in the one capacity, independent of the peculiar modification which had been imparted to it in the other. But the natural disposition of Moses as a man urged him to enter society and mingle with his brethren and take part in their affairs, not to flee into solitude, or indulge in solitary meditation. His social propensities, it is true, were not of a common order. He did not, like most of us, desire mere companionship; still less, like many, who, too weak to rely upon themselves, seek for support in the sympathy of others. He could endure to be left alone, though he did not feel it good to stand by himself and alone. He was evidently endowed with energies which would seek employment and possessed sympathies, which would find satisfaction by employing them for the benefit of others. This is attested by his first visits to his brethren, and his conduct among them.

He was of course alone in his flight from Egypt. The outlawed Hebrew manslayer, with the blood of an Egyptian on his head, the avenger of the poor slave's wrong, marked-out for destruction by the king of the slave-master caste, was not likely to seek