

MILTON,
THE POET AND PATRIOT.

WHEN the historian has examined the fields of the past, after time has swept by bearing upon its tide all that is light, all that is unimportant, all that has failed to make a name to live, he tells us that the impressions made upon the centuries by men who were truly great, generally occur in groups, and that a great character must be studied in comparison with his contemporaries, amid the associations of his life; not beneath the critical glare of this nineteenth century sun, but in the shadow of the age in which he lived.

While we observe this rule to-day, let us in imagination go back two hundred and fifty years and visit that group of men, who about that time were the great actors upon the