ture was ſufficient, why ſhould this *original* taint infect men rather than the sins of their immediate parents@@\*?”

The more violent Arminians, on the other hand, deny that we inherit any moral taint whatever from Adam, or that the rational powers of our minds are naturally weaker than his were. Of that wonderful degree of perfection which is uſually attributed to the firſt pair, they find no evidence in ſcripture. All that we learn of them, ſay they, is, that they fell from a ſtate of exquiſite happineſs by yielding to a temptation leſs powerful by far than ſome others which many of their degenerate ſons have ſucceſsfully reſiſted. “Heave you to judge (ſays Dr Taylor @@\*), whether Joſeph, when he reſiſted the ſolicitations of his miſtreſs, and Moſes when he refuſed to be called the ſon of Pharaoh’s daughter, chooſing rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleaſures of sin for a ſeason, eſteeming the reproach of true religion greater riches than the treaſures of Egypt, did not exhibit proofs of regularity of paſſions and appetites equal at leaſt to what Adam diſplayed in the gar­den of Eden. When the three young men mentioned in the book of Daniel submitted to be burnt alive in a fiery furnace rather than worſhip Nebuchadnezzar’s golden image ; when Daniel himſelf reſolved, rather than conceal the worſhip of God for one month only of his life, to be torn in pieces by hungry lions ; and, to come nearer to our own times, when numbers of men and women, during the reign of Mary Queen of England, choſe rather to be burnt at a ſtake than renounce the reformed religion and embrace the errors of popery — ſurely all theſe persons exhibited a virtue, a faith in God, and a ſteady adherence to what they believed to be the truth, far superior to what Adam diſplayed, when his wife gave him of the forbidden fruit, and he did eat.” If it be ſaid that theſe perſons were ſupported under their trials by the grace of God ſtrengthening them, the same will be ſaid of Adam. He was undoubtedly ſupplied with every aid from the ſpirit of grace which was neceſſary to enable him to fulfil his duty; for being deſigned ſor more than mere animal life, even for the refined enjoyments of heaven, there is every reaſon to believe, as we have already obſerved, that he was put under the guidance of the Holy Ghoſt, to train him for that ſupernatural ſtate of felicity. Theſe communica­tions of the ſpirit would of courſe be withdrawn when he forfeited his right to thoſe privileges, on account of which they were orignally vouchſafed to him ; but that any poſitive malignity or taint was infuſed into his nature, that his mere rational powers were weakened, or his appetites in­flamed by the forbidden fruit, there is no evidence to be found in ſcripture, or in the known conſtitution of things. The attributing of this ſuppoſed hereditary taint to the noxious qualities of the forbidden fruit, is a whimsical hypotheſis, which receives no countenance from any well authen­ticated fact in natural hiſtory. After the numberleſs falſehoods that have been told of the poiſon tree of Java (ſee *Poi­son Tree),* ſomething more would be requisite than the common evidence of a lying voyager to give credit to the qualities of the Indian tree, of which the fruit inſtantly turns the wiſeſt man into an idiot : and yet for this singular ſtory our ingenious author vouchſafes not even that evidence,slight as it generally is. The inference drawn from the covering uſed by our firſt parents is contradicted by every thing that we know of human nature ; for ſurely no man, infla­med to the utmoſt with the fire of animal love, ever turned his eyes from a naked beauty ready and eager to receive him to her embrace. Yet this, it seems, was the behaviour of Adam and Eve in ſuch a ſtate ! According to our author, the juice of the forbidden fruit had rendered their carnal appetites violent and independent of reaſon ; according to the ſcripture, they were both naked ; and as they were huſband and wife, there was no law prohibiting them from gratifying theſe inflamed appetites. In ſuch circumſtances, how did they conduct themſelves ? One would naturally imagine that they immediately retired to ſome ſhady grove, and pleaſed them­ſelves in all the ſoft dalliancies of wedded love. Their con­duct, however, was very different. We are told, that “ they ſewed fig-leaves together, and made themſelves aprons to cover their nakedneſs ;” And this tranſaction is brought as a proof of the impetuoſity of their carnal appetites @@(K). The truth is, that the carnal appetite appears not to be naturally more violent than is neceſſary to anſwer the end for which it was implanted in the human conſtitution. Among ſavages the deſires of animal love are generally very moderate ; and even in society they have not often, unleſs inflamed by the luxurious arts of civil life, great­er ſtrength than is requisite to make mankind attend to the continuation of their ſpecies. In the decline of empires highly poliſhed, where the difference of rank and opulence is great, and where every man is ambitious of emulating the expence of his immediate ſuperiors, early marriages are pre­vented by the inability of moſt people to provide for a fami­ly in a way ſuitable to what each is pleaſed to conſider as his proper ſtation ; and in that ſtate of things the violence of animal love will indeed frequently produce great irregularities. But for that ſtate of things, as it was not intended: by the Author of nature, it is perhaps unreasonable to ſuppoſe that proviſion ſhould be made ; and yet we believe it will be found, upon due conſideration, that if the desires of animal love were leſs violent than they are, the general conſequences would be more pernicious to ſociety than all the irregularities and vices which theſe desires now accidentally produce ; for there would then be no intercourſe between the ſexes whatever except in the very higheſt ſtations of life. That our conſtitution is attended with many ſenſual appe­tites and paſſions, which, if ſuffered to grow exceſſive or irre­gular, become ſinful, is true ; and that there is great danger of their becoming exceſſive and irregular in a world ſo full of temptation as ours is, is alſo true ; but there is no evidence that all this is the conſequence of Adam’s fall, and far leſs that it amounts to a *natural propensity* to sin. “ For I preſume (ſays Dr Taylor), that by a natural propenſity is meant a neceſſary inclination to sin, or that we are neceſſarily sinful from the original bent and bias of our natural powers. But this muſt be false ; for then we ſhould not

@@@[m]\* Gill's Body of Divinity, book iii. ch. 10, 11. and 13.

@@@[m]\* Scripture Doctrine, &c.