

he leads them to wars and raids, in which he shows himself unscrupulous and merciless ; he repeatedly, for the objects of his policy or of his personal vindictiveness, instigates and sanctions the most dastardly assassinations. At the same time, he plunges deep into the filthiness of the Harem, and has revelations from Heaven to hallow his inordinate lusts. His religion, meanwhile, is visibly sinking into ceremonialism, and becomes centred in the Kaaba, the old lair of idolatry ; Mecca being now adopted as the Kibla, or point to which the believer turns in prayer, in place of Jerusalem, which had been the Kibla in Mahomet's earlier and better day. The Koran betrays its earthly source by changing with the character of the Prophet. Zeal for the propagation of monotheism, the universal brotherhood of believers and the love of conquest, have, no doubt, all been elements in the success of Islam ; but the last in the order has been by far the first in importance. The success of Islam has been almost wholly military ; and of military success, it might, without miracle, achieve an immense measure amidst the loose and crumbling fragments of the Roman Empire, over which it careered in the South, while tribes not more numerous than the Bedouins were doing the same thing in the North. Anything high and enduring in the way of moral and intellectual civilization ; anything worthy of the name of a polity, or even a community, it has never produced ; hardly a power that had vital energy enough in it to stand long. The brief intellectual glories of Bagdad, Cordova, and Delhi, as they were mainly the work of sceptics or Liberals, can hardly be called Mahometan. In the Arabian Nights, the great literary product of Islam, there is the charm which all of us have felt in childhood, and a fantastic beauty like that of the Alhambra, but there is no soul ; all is mere adventure, without a touch of that interest in character which is found even in the poorest of European novels. The Ottoman Empire is in its death throes ; the Kingdom of Persia is in the last stage of its foul decrepitude. When they are gone there will not be a Mahometan power of