

sideration will probably satisfy the candid enquirer, that the real benefit of Christians has been best consulted by the method actually adopted of keeping the glorious exertions of these human instruments of the Spirit in the shade. A full detail of the labors and fate of the Apostles would have kept the human agents too prominently before us, and tempted us to overlook the true source of the gospel's success. The work in which they were engaged would have been viewed as the result of human virtue, more than of Divine power; and Christ's servants would have been exalted to that place in our regard which their Master alone ought to occupy. As God hid the body of Moses, that the Jews might be prevented from worshipping their departed leader; so a veil has been left on the exploits of the Apostles, to remove a similar temptation from Christians. And the lesson taught by this omission, is the same with which our Lord rebuked the inquisitiveness of Peter regarding the fate of the beloved disciple: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me."

2. An omission still more singular, considering the position and habits of the sacred writers, is the absence of precise and authoritative directions as to forms of Christian worship and ecclesiastical polity. In the Koran, we find minute regulations concerning fasts, prayers, ablutions, the amount of alms, and all other points of Mahomedan observance; and the same is represented to be the character of the Hindoo Shaster and other sacred books of the heathen. But in the statute-book of the Christian Church there is no complete directory of worship and government—not even a detailed account of the constitution and canons of the Apostolic Church.—How is such an omission to be accounted for in the writings of persons who were brought up as Jews—who were accustomed from infancy to a prescribed and fixed ritual—and who, moreover, were in the habit of instituting and "setting in order" specific modes of religious observance in the various churches which they founded or visited? Is it credible that these writers, if left to their own direction, would have abstained from prescribing a fixed and permanent rule of worship for the Christian world?—*Te*—indeed, who live in an advanced

period of the Christian dispensation, the wisdom of the omission is obvious. It is now *clearly* seen that a fixed and unyielding system of forms and canons would have been unsuitable to a religion designed for all times and places, and for men in every stage of social improvement. To us the wise foresight is apparent, which left it to each church "to steer its own course by the chart and compass which God's Word supplies, regulating for itself the sails and rudder according to the winds and currents it may meet with." But whence got these unlettered Galileans this wise and far-reaching foresight? It is plain from their own writings that they were dull in apprehending and slow in admitting the *universal* character of Christianity: nor is there any evidence that the idea ever occurred to them, that a religion of universal and unchangeable truths must of necessity be plastic and variable in some respects. But even supposing them to have perceived that the universality of its character required its ritual and policy to be left at large, how came they to abstain from recording, in their accounts of the primitive church, the modes of worship and administration which were actually in use under their own directions? Is it supposable that they were sufficiently far-sighted to perceive, that even such a record as this would have been perilous to the liberty of the church; that it would have been regarded as a part of *Scripture*, and therefore scrupulously followed as a directory of ecclesiastical forms even after a change of circumstances rendered it inapplicable? The conduct of the sacred writers in this matter can be explained only on the theory that they were supernaturally withheld from recording the usages of the apostolic church—restrained from it by that Divine Spirit, whose penmen, this, in common with countless other evidences, proves them to have been.

THE BEAUTY OF THE GRASS:

It seems as if nothing could be said under this head; because, in truth, there is so much to say. To get a good idea of the beauty of the grass, endeavour, in imagination, to form a picture of a world without it. It is precisely to the scenery of nature what the Bible is to literature. Do you remember that idea of Frobenius, that the Bible had been obliterated, and every other book had therewith lost its