

the men he led—that Mahomet won back his discontented followers, the helpers of his earlier days, by the sublime appeal that he had given the things of earth to the men who cared for the things of earth, but to them he had given the higher gift that the Prophet of God had come to dwell among them. Appeals somewhat of the same kind are recorded of mere worldly leaders, of Alexander and Cæsar ; but no challenge of mere human loyalty could have called forth such a burst of passionate remorse as when the helpers with one voice answered, with tears coming down their beards, that they were content with the lot which their Prophet had given them.

This and many other incidents in the latter life of Mahomet show that to the last the old spirit had not wholly forsaken him, and to the last he maintained most of the personal virtues with which he had set out. His heart may have been led astray by the acquisition of power ; but he was satisfied at least with the reality of power ; he rose high above the temptation to which so many men who have risen to power have yielded, the fascination of the mere titles and trappings and gewgaws of princely state. The Prophet to the last kept up his old simplicity of life, his faithfulness in friendship, his kindness and thoughtfulness towards all men, his boundless liberality which sometimes left himself and his household to be dependent on the gifts of others. Yet his policy was now of the earth, earthy ; in becoming a ruler and a warrior he had become a man of craft and a man of blood. There is perhaps none among those actions of Mahomet which we condemn for which it would not be easy to find a precedent or an example in the old dispensation. But the man who professed to be a teacher of a system purer than the Gospel, ought not to have fallen back upon the lower level of the Law. When Mahomet first drew the sword against the unbelievers, he might plead that he was but like the Hebrew fighting his way into the land of promise. But to walk in the path of the elder Jesus was a falling back from the teaching of Him who warned his followers that they who took the sword should perish by the sword. When Mahomet applauded as Heaven-sent the

judgment which sent seven hundred captives to the slaughter, he was but as Samuel hewing Agag in pieces before the Lord, or as Elias bidding that none of the prophets of Baal should escape. But to walk in the path of Samuel or Elias was a falling back from the teaching of Him who declared that His kingdom was not of this world, and who forbade His servants to fight that He might not be delivered to His enemies. When Mahomet sent forth his emissaries on errands of secret slaughter, he might deem himself to be but yielding the dagger of Ehud or the hammer of Jael, but weapons like those had been cast away for ever at the bidding of Him who healed the wound of the man who was sent to seize Him. The general clemency and magnanimity of Mahomet, above all in the great day of his outcry in his native city, stand forth in marked and honorable contrast to the common horrors of Eastern warfare. But there was something mean in excepting from the general amnesty a few persons and some of the women, who had specially kindled his wrath by personal gibes and sarcasms on himself. And in the bloodiest scene of all, in the massacre of the Jewish tribe of the Koreitza, of which we have already spoken, he showed somewhat of low craft when he declined to pronounce any sentence himself, and left the bloody judgment to be pronounced by another, who he knew to bear the bitterest personal hatred towards the victims. Yet even here we see a spirit not widely different from that of the dying King who left the mandate to his son to bring down to the grave with blood the hoar hairs of those to whose safety his own oath was pledged.

One aspect more of the Prophet's life we must examine, an aspect which some later writers seem disposed to slur over, but which it is absolutely necessary to bring into prominence in order to gain a true and complete view of his character. What Mr. Froude says of Henry VIII., is yet more truly to be said of Mahomet, that he ought to have lived in a world from which women were shut out. We may truly say that Mahomet practised all the moral virtues but one. And that one he practised when temptations to its breach must have been strongest, and fell