

to abide in the city of Jerusalem until they be endowed with power from on high, does not refer to the coming of the Holy Ghost, which, it is argued had no reference to a dwelling at Jerusalem, but referred to the reverence which was to be shown to Jerusalem as the holy place and centre of Christian devotion, till the reverence once paid to Jerusalem should be transferred to Mecca.

These are the arguments of an earnest man, put forth it is plain, in thorough good faith. And we can hardly blame the eagerness of Syed Ahmed to see prophets of Mahomet in such passages as we have just spoken of, when we think of the like eagerness on the part of Christian interpreters to see prophecies of Christ in passages of the Old Testament, where there is nothing, either in the words of the original, or in any New Testament reference, to lead us to put such a meaning upon them. We should be still more curious to see how the Syed would deal with those passages in the life of his Prophet which are the greatest stumbling-blocks to Western writers, who are anxious to do justice to him. As we said a little time back, we place the beginning of Mahomet's falling away at the time when he first came into contact with the other monotheistic creeds. We do not doubt his sincerity either then or at any other stage, but it does seem to us, that from that stage his career begins to be mixed up with ordinary, sometimes unworthy, human motives. This in no way disproves his sincerity. Indeed, his full confidence in his own mission might often lead him astray; once accustomed to think of himself as an instrument in the hands of God, to look on his sayings and actions as prompted by God, he would, in his later days, easily come to look on the most truly earthly workings of his own heart as no less divine than the call which bade him go forth and proclaim the unity of God to the idolators. The strange power which man has of controlling his own belief, of persuading himself of the truth and righteousness of whatever he finds it convenient to deem true and righteous, would in the case of Mahomet acquire a tenfold strength from the mere conviction that he was divinely guided, from the habit of looking on his

own words as the words of God, and on the impulses of his own heart as divine commands. In this way we shall find no need to believe that, even in his worst actions, he ever descended to conscious imposture. The flight to Medina, was the beginning of Mahometanism as part of the history of the world, but it was also the beginning of a distinct fall in the personal character of its founder. The preacher of righteousness now appealed to the sword. Had he not done so, it may be that his religion would have died out, and Islam might have been remembered only by curious inquirers into the history of human thought. But looking at the man's own moral being, from the moment of his appeal to the sword, he fell away from the righteousness of his earlier days. He stooped from the rank of a religious teacher to the rank of one of the ordinary powers of the world. He put on the character of a statesman and a warrior; he exposed himself to the temptation which beset either character, and he learned to practice the baser as well as the nobler arts of both. It may be that neither character suited him; it may be that, as his last biographer hints, he would utterly have failed in both characters, had he not been able to lean on the mild wisdom of Abou-Bekr, and on the warlike might of Omar and Khaled. In his wars, he certainly showed in his own person, but little of military skill, and not much of personal courage. It was indeed but seldom that he mingled in the fight. The new Moses was for the most part content to trust the cause of the Lord to the arm of the new Joshua. Yet it may be that he knew where his strength lay; when in symbolic act the Prophet threw the dust toward the enemy at Bedr, with the prayer, "May their faces be confounded," he did more for the success of the day than if he had used the subtlest tactics or displayed the most heroic courage in his own person. It may have been, as it is also argued, weakness to show the trust and favor which he showed to late and unwilling converts, who were doubtless only wanting a favorable moment to fall away. Yet it was in the spirit of the highest wisdom, of that daring which is oftentimes the prudence—it was the spirit of a leader who could read the hearts of