

It is not true of God ; for God is great, and he can do what men could not safely do. He can pardon sin in his infinite mercy and power, without asking punishment of the sinner, or of anybody else in his stead." From this ground I could not drive him. "God is great," was his constant reply, "and is not bound by the ways of men." There was no use to reason out this point with him ; for this is not so much a question of *reason*, but as a question of *revelation*. I asked him, in parting, to read carefully for himself the Jewish Scriptures, which he acknowledged to be divine, and that he would find in them a clear statement in regard to the point on which we had disputed. He said he would. He bade us farewell that night, as he said he intended to be in the saddle and away before day-light next day. The above conversation I do not profess to give in the exact words used. But the substance of our talk made too deep an impression on me ever to be effaced ; showing me, by the mouth of a devout Moslem, the necessity of clear views on the justice and holiness of God, before men can understand the cross of Christ. It is good for preachers and teachers to dwell on the love and the pity of God ; but if we keep his justice and holiness in the background, how can we meet the objections of Moslems, Rationalists, and Unitarians, (all agreed on this point,) that there is no need Christ should die for the sins of his people.

CHAPTER V.

THE TRUE CROSS AND THE FALSE.

On our way to the Sea of Galilee, we turned aside to visit Cana, the scene of our Lord's first miracle. They showed us waterpots, in which we felt little interest, from doubt as to their being genuine ; but there could be little doubt as to the genuineness

of the spring whose water was turned into wine. The village is small, and the people poor ; but it is easy to perceive that this spot was one of great beauty and wealth the night of that memorable marriage. And surely it speaks much in behalf of the sobriety of the district, that such a miracle was performed there by our Lord ; while it is a sad reflection on our country and social habits, that we cannot conceive it possible that at a marriage-feast in our land our Redeemer could do what he did in Cana. In this little village the key-note of the Christian dispensation was given to the world : as (1) a dispensation of mercy, turning water, not into blood as in Egypt, but into the best wine (whatever that is), typical of that new wine that Christ promises to drink with his disciples in the kingdom above ; as (2) a religion at peace with all innocent mirth and social gatherings of friendship ; as (3) a religion that ratifies, honours, and exalts marriage, and recognizes the Christian household (in which the Lord is a welcome guest, and from whose hand comes its joys), as the true foundation of a living church and a prosperous state. Thus it is that Cana is held in everlasting remembrance, while great cities have gone down to oblivion.

But we hasten forward over a rough, rocky path, and through a hilly country, poorly tilled, when we reach, in early noon, what is called the Mount of Beatitudes, supposed on good grounds to be the spot whence Christ preached the sermon recorded largely by Matthew, and more briefly by Luke. This spot answers all the requirements of the scene, as described by Luke, in his usual style of sparkling, vivid, detailed narrative. It is (1) near to the plain on which stood Capernaum, to which place Christ retired after preaching that sermon (Luke vii. 1). It is (2) in a spot suitable for a gathering of all Galilee,