

ifest, that the plagi-
facts and narratives
arities; to its modes
very forms of expres-
egregious blunders,
sume, as must con-
downright falsifica-
contemporary with
instead of Isaac, Sael
nk instead of Gideon,
ats Mary, the mother
n, the sister of Moses!

tion to Holy Writ, and
fabricator, have very
y of its composition.
following the opinion
on supposing that in
ndebted to the assis-
from the pages of the
outset of his career.—
an teacheth him to com-
is Koran is no other
er people hath assisted
a falsehood." But this
roduce conviction. The
de with those of Mec-
s have been designated
ciated with the impos-
s. The more general
ncipal aid from a Nes-
the same person as the
an early period of his
Sale remarks: "If Bo-
t the least intimation in
his monastery to go into
at Bosra was too early
Koran, though Moham-
nowledge of Christianity
e to him therein." The
d others, that while Mo-
jector and the real au-
d, in some measure, by
erecy make it impossible
o what extent, this was
pect to the part borne by
ever been authenticated
an hypothesis framed to
re the popular belief of

this question to be admitted, it would not do away all the difficulties which embarrass the subject. For who was capable, in that dark period, of producing such a work? This pretended revelation, independently of its plagiarisms from our Scriptures, contains passages as much superior to any remains, whether Jewish or Christian, of the literature of the seventh century, as they are utterly inferior to the contents of that sacred volume which the Koran blasphemously assumes to resemble and supplant. The whole subject, therefore, of the origin of this remarkable book, with the history of its composition, as well as the question how far Mohammed was acquainted with the Christian Scriptures, must doubtless remain an unsolved problem to the end of time.

Of the literary merits of the Koran, a fair estimate is not easily to be formed from a translation. By those who are acquainted with the original, it is universally acknowledged to possess distinguished excellencies, which cannot be transfused into any other languages. It is confessedly the standard of the Arabic tongue; is written, for the most part, in a pure and elegant style, abounding with bold figures after oriental manner; aiming at a conciseness which often renders it obscure.—Though written in prose, the sentences usually conclude in a long continued rhyme, for the sake of which, the sense is often interrupted, and unnecessary repetitions introduced. This feature of the composition, though a disadvantage and a deformity to a translation, is one of its superlative charms in the estimate of the native Arabs, whose ear is singularly susceptible to the harmony of the 'rhythmical' cadences with which the periods conclude.

When we pass from the mere sound and diction which mark "the perspicuous book," it is indubitable that its finest passages are devoid of the merit of originality. Sir William Jones remarks; "The Koran indeed shines with a borrowed light, since most of its beauties are taken from our Scriptures; but it has great beauties, and the Mussulmans will not be convinced that they are borrowed." In describing the majesty and the attributes of God, and the variety and grandeur of the creation, it often rises to an expressive elevation; but in almost every instance of this kind, it is evident that some passage of inspiration of corresponding import was in the eye of the writer, and the copy is inferior to the original. Yet the result of a candid examination of this pseudo-bible of Mooammedans, even in our English version, would probably be a more favourable impression of the book on the score of its composition, and a conviction that amid the multitude and heinousness of its defects, scarcely common justice had been done by Christian writers either to the character of its beauties, or the extent in which they obtain. Taken however as a whole, so far from supporting its arrogant claims to a super-human origin and eloquence, it sinks below the level of many confessedly human productions, to be found in different languages and regions of the earth "With occasional passages of real beauty and power, it is, on the whole, a strange medley, in which the sublime is so nearly allied to the bombastic, the pathetic to the ludicrous, the terrible to the absurd, that each chapter, each page, almost