

ious reformation of the sixteenth century, followed by the almost equally important intellectual reformation of the succeeding century under Francis Bacon. Already signs of an approaching change were beginning to appear, already faint streaks of light were beginning to brighten the world's horizon, betokening the dawn of a brighter day, already rills of influence were beginning to flow, which were, ere long, to deepen and widen into the majestic river, bearing on its bosom priceless blessings to mankind. And the same influences which went to emancipate men from the spiritual thralldom under which they were writhing, went also to emancipate them from the no less painful mental bondage which they suffered; for the Church, let us remember, not only threw its chain around the *soul*, but around the *mind* as well; it proscribed both spiritual and mental liberty, liberty to investigate the Bible and Nature. God has given us, at least, two revelations of his will—the Bible and Nature—the one, written by a human hand guided by a divine Spirit; the other, the fresh outcome of his creative power. The one is the depository of spiritual truth; the other, the depository of physical truth. Now, what the Church did, was to seal from common view both the book of nature and that of scripture. It taught that itself was the infallible depository of spiritual, that Aristotle was the infallible depository of physical, truth, and woe betide the man who dared to question her lofty pretensions. But the time had come when signs of a great and approaching change were beginning to appear, as already indicated; the cloud, as yet no bigger than a man's hand, began to darken the sky and to herald the approach of a storm which was destined to break forth with merciless fury upon the Church, shaking it to its very foundations, but fraught with

beneficent results to the world. It was to purify the atmosphere from its foul vapours, to emancipate men from the mental and spiritual tyranny under which they writhed, to restore to men the right to read an open Bible and investigate broad nature, and to inaugurate a golden age of liberty and progress.

Among the many influences which went to bring about this result, we mention (1) the *study of Natural Science*, introduced into Europe by the Arabs, during the time of their short but brilliant rule in Spain. After the death of Mahomet, the tide of Arabian conquest rolled westward, victorious over every opposing obstacle, until it became a colossal power in the world, rivalling the grandeur and magnificence of all preceding kingdoms. Crossing the strait of Gibraltar, the victorious Moslem set his foot in Spain and introduced into that country a reign of splendour. The most brilliant period in that country's history is the period of its occupation by the Arabs. A golden age of prosperity dawned; science and literature were sedulously cultivated; schools of philosophy and medicine dotted the land, to which pupils resorted from far and near; learned treatises on chemistry and medicine were written; poetry of richest imagery was composed; the winding labyrinths of metaphysics were explored; the sun was weighed and the orbits of the planets measured; and all this when the other and adjacent parts of Europe were sunk in the thick darkness of ignorance and degradation. But this reign of splendour seemed too bright to last; it came to a sad and sudden end. Urged on by the lust of power, proud in the consciousness of strength, the Moslem scaled the lofty Pyrenees and descended into the sunny plains beneath, moving onward in his victorious career, elate with the hope of seeing all Europe crouch at his feet.