



*J. H. 1830*

A  
**LETTER**

TO  
**GODFREY HIGGINS, Esq.**

CHIEFLY IN REFERENCE TO CERTAIN ARGUMENTS  
UNFAVOURABLE TO

THE CHRISTIAN PRIESTHOOD  
AND THE

*Christian Religion,*

WHICH HAVE APPEARED IN HIS RECENT WORK,  
ENTITLED,

"AN APOLOGY FOR THE LIFE AND CHARACTER  
OF MOHAMED."



BY

**THE REV. GEORGE WYATT, LL. B.**

*Rector of Burghwallis, in the County of York.*

"I will hear you arraign others, provided that you will allow, that you are arraignable yourself."

*WILSON, Bishop of Sodor and Man.*

**DONCASTER:**

**L. AND J. WHITE, BAXTER-GATE; BROOKE AND CO.  
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**MR. SIBBS, RIVINGTON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD AND WATERLOO-PLACE,  
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**1829.**

*769.*



A  
LETTER,

&c.

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MY DEAR SIR,

WHEN a man presents himself to the public in the shape of an author, he generally *hopes* for applause, but if he is wise, he will also be prepared for censure; and no one, I am sure, would be less disposed than yourself to wish, that any feelings of private friendship and esteem should shield you from a candid declaration of the impressions, which your publications may create. I have read your "Apology,"—I have read Mr. Beverley's answer to it,—and I have read the letter or note, which you addressed to him in consequence thereof, and of which a printed copy was sent to me. If I venture, therefore, to offer you some animadversions on your own work, I shall hope, at least, (though I may speak my mind honestly,) to give you no

ground for charging me with any treacherous or uncourteous behaviour towards yourself, whatever insignificance may intrinsically belong to my observations.

You call your book, "An Apology for the Life and Character of Mohamed," &c. Under such an announcement one should naturally expect to find that your prevailing object would be, to emancipate the character of that far-famed individual from the misrepresentations and aspersions, which misguided zeal, or blundering ignorance may, from time to time, have raised up against him. To have done this by every fair and legitimate means in your power, would indeed have been an honourable work; and well worthy of one, who sets out by expressing a desire "to abate the mischievous spirit of intolerance, which has hitherto existed between the followers of Jesus and Mohamed."\* So amiable and propitious a beginning, I thought, must be followed by corresponding labours. I therefore took up your book with interest, but disappointment soon overtook me, and I found the "Apology for Mohamed" to partake *more* of the character of an attack upon Christian priests, Christian writers, Christian believers, and even

\* Preface.

upon Christianity itself, than of the object for which it is professed to be written. Did you find it, then, so difficult a task to set the character of the Arabian prophet in its true light, that you could not accomplish it without going out of your way to assail (with unaccountable inconsistency, I think) the sacred institutions, and even the sacred doctrines and structure of what you yourself, in more than one place, acknowledge to be "the true and perfect religion of Jesus?"\* It were, indeed, but a sorry task, which should stand in need of such sorry measures; and I, for one, would never consent to waste my time, nor defile my pen, by writing on a subject which should require me to resort to means so unhappy, or expedients so unworthy, in aid of its accomplishment. If it really were your wish fairly and evenhandedly to illustrate the character of Mohamed, depend upon it, you have pursued a course, which will give a fatal stab to your intentions. Whatever you may have done for the prophet himself, I very much fear you have added no laurels to the brow of his "Apologist;" and I wish I could bring myself to any other conclusion than that your book is calculated to do incomparably more

\* See sect. 48, 62, 133.

injury to your own good name, to your own literary character, and to your own ultimate happiness, than to benefit the reputation of your "Pericyte," correct the errors, or smooth the "bigotry" of the priests, or promote the cause of Christian truth and charity in the world. These indeed are heavy charges; and if, on examination, they turn out to be unfounded, I shall sink lower in priestly degradation, than even Mr. Beverley himself would place me, who, to his honourable and gentlemanly taste be it spoken, seems to out-cobbett Cobbett in low, vulgar slang, and idle ribaldry against the clergy. That is *his* forte; and an elegant distinction it is, truly, for a man of letters and refinement!

It is, therefore, mainly upon those points which relate to "the religion of purity and truth," its sacred appendages and precepts, on which I am at issue with you;—as to the prophet himself, you have so bravely contended for him, through thick and thin, that I leave him, with but little concern for his safety, to battle it out with his calumniators under the protection of your own literary panoply.

You proclaim, undisguisedly, it must be admitted, your hostility to priesthoods;—priesthoods, I believe you mean, of all persuasions, Jews, Turks, Heathens, or Christians; but that

the *latter* come in for a most abundant share of your condemnation, is conspicuous in almost every page of your book. You denounce them (sect. 26.) as “in all ages, and in all nations, the enemies of the happiness of mankind;”—the grand movers of “almost all the great revolutions of the world.” Now, your prejudices, I know, are not personal, nor even local. You have no dislike to the *men*, but to the “*order*.” I proclaim it therefore with pleasure that, individually, you can respect a *priest* as much as a layman, and can believe, that an ecclesiastic may be as upright, as independent, and as well-informed, even when he speaks in defence of his own order, as the most *unpriestly* or uncompromising laic amongst you. Suffer a word, then, from a poor Christian priest, a member of the “accursed tribe,” one of that vast and interminable army, which (as you would have it) stand out from age to age, “the enemies of mankind.”

Even God himself may be and has been abused, blasphemed, opposed, and even denied;—people have been heard of in the world, who have carried their daring even thus far. We must not wonder then that those sacred institutions and ordinances which have emanated from Him, should also become subject to every kind of



misapplication and maltreatment. But we are not to argue against the use of a thing from the abuse of it. You, Sir, know much better than to do this. You will not say that the Almighty is a defective being, because *some* have chosen to cavil at Him. You will not say, that religion is an evil, because some make so bad a use of it, —or that the gospel is a fraud and a curse, because so many are found, who deride and revile it. Nothing, however holy, estimable, and beneficial it may be, in the abstract, has ever yet escaped abuse and misapplication, through the manifold weaknesses and corruptions which reign in our nature. And when we come to contemplate the Christian priesthood, it cannot be denied that, “in all ages and in all nations,” its holy and important purposes have been dreadfully abandoned and misused. Ecclesiastics have undoubtedly been found too much mixed up with transactions, calculated to spread abroad in the world misery and ignorance. But have there been no exceptions? have there not been *abundant* exceptions? have there not been many “a glorious company” of Christian priests, in both ancient and modern times, who have been, not altogether immaculate perhaps, but so far fulfilling the purposes of their calling, as to become an unquestionable honour to it, and to

prove to the world, by the peculiar holiness and endowments of their lives, that the sacerdotal order, when erected upon, and conducted by "the religion of purity and truth," becomes, not the "curse," but the blessing of the world? Reprimand the *delinquent priests*, then, if you will;—but do it, dear sir, in justice and in charity. Do not expect them to be angels incarnate, and especially do not revile the *institution* as a "pernicious order," because its holy purposes have not, at all times, been properly respected by its members, or because all have not, in an equal degree, been an honour to it. When you exclaim, therefore,\* "How happy had it been for Europe, if the religion of Jesus had *forbidden* the use of priests and priesthoods," I would put it to your conscience, as a sincere inquirer after truth, to your honour, as a faithful historian, and to your candour, as an honest apologist, even for Mohamed, whether it would not have been a more becoming and a more consistent observation to have said, "How happy had it been for Europe, if the priests of the religion of Jesus had had a better sense of their sacred calling, and had more fitly fulfilled the holy purposes of their institution." Truly it *might* have been

\* Sect. 47.

more happy for Europe; except that *then* indeed your friend Mohamed would have had the less excuse for his intervention, and my friend Mr. Higgins no call, probably, for this recent exercise of his ingenuity.

But you allege also that these unconscionable ecclesiastics (sect. 73.) "teach what is not in the gospels," by laying claim to a tithe of agricultural produce. Were you awake when you penned this section? Sleeping or waking, you have certainly put forth an insinuation, to which I know not how to apply a milder term than calumnious. It is, I perceive, a mere idle rhapsody, resorted to just to cast a sarcastic, but unmerited, dart at the "accursed order." It is not of a piece with that candour and fairness, which we have a right to look for, in the avowed champion of those virtues. It does not sit becomingly on one, who writes a book for the express purpose of putting down *misrepresentation*, and promoting "*fair play*" for a poor oppressed prophet. No man knows better than yourself, that these "tenths" are a most ancient, honourable, and legitimate source of revenue for the Christian priesthood. And whether such a source is expressly sanctioned by the gospels or not, you cannot assert that it is, in anywise, incompatible with their spirit, or at variance with their pre-

cepts. Why then throw out so unmerited and unqualified an insinuation? You are well aware too, after all, that these "tenths" are become *now* as much in the hands of the lay-squire, as of the priest; and unquestionably more rigidly exacted by the former, than by the other. Refuse not, then, in *sentiment*, as well as in *substance*, to "render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's."

The priests, however, you say, "forget the poor," whom, as you truly assert, the gospels enjoin them to protect. Are you serious? and, if serious, do you allude to the priests of former days, of the present, or of both? If to those of former days, we can know but very little of their personal or individual charities; but *hospitality* to the poor, and a distribution in charity of a very considerable portion of ecclesiastical income were things, which, whatever may have been their immoralities in other respects, form no inconsiderable part of the character of our sacerdotal forefathers. If, however, you would arraign the priests of modern days for this dereliction of Christian duty, go forth, I beseech you, into any one of the ten thousand parishes or upwards in this kingdom, and especially where the priest is a resident, and you will find, if not in all, (for there may be *some* exceptions,)

yet in nine-tenths of them, such unqualified evidence, both of a spiritual and temporal nature, of priestly attention to the necessities of the poor, as will at once put your charge to an unquestionable and practical refutation. These are not words of show, but matters of fact; and, allow me, Sir, to say, you never made a more fugitive charge, than in this unhappy allegation against the Christian priests.

Fain would you make that sacred order, not only the grand instrument of all the ill-blood, and blundering ignorance, which have disturbed and disfigured the world, but you would "shew them up" too, as a sort of impudent interpolation upon mankind; "not one word being to be found in the gospels, that *you* know of, to justify or excuse our hierarchies or priesthoods." (Sect. 51.) Should this be true, I will then join you in all the reprobation which you are disposed to cast upon the institution. But, "to the law and to the testimony." You are a diligent examiner of your Bible. You cannot therefore be ignorant that Jesus Christ, as you will find in Mark, iii. 14, "ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach;"—that the remaining eleven of these apostles (the defection of Judas reducing them to that number) were

expressly despatched by their divine Master (Matt. xxviii. 19) on the business of "teaching" or making disciples of "all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And lastly, that to those original apostles Christ "appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face, into every city, and place, whithersoever he himself would come." (Luke x.)—Now, would you call these persons, under so express and so divine an appointment, ministers of religion, set apart for a distinct and momentous office, or would you call them men, put to a mere worldly calling, unrestricted to any specific charge, or sphere of life? Priests, perhaps, in the technical sense of the term, they might not yet be; the *order* being not yet regularly organized, as it regarded the Christian constitution. But ordained ministers of the gospel they certainly were, and holding the office on an expressly divine authority. Nor was it long, as you find in Acts vi. and xiv. before the very same ministers, whom Christ had himself ordained, and who must, of necessity, have best known their Lord's intentions, and what was most of all expedient for the welfare and propagation of his religion;—it was not long, I say, before these same apostles took such measures

as would best ensure a due fulfilment of their great work, and an adequate subsistence for the Christian church, wherever the providence of God might permit it to be planted. For this very reason it was that St. Paul (1 Tim. iii.) pronounced it so be a "good work, if a man desire the office of a bishop,"—that he permitted or commissioned Titus "in Crete to ordain elders in every city," (Titus i.)—and that Timothy himself had been "ordained a preacher and an apostle." (1 Tim. ii.) Is not this evidence enough of a *divine* institution? and can these sacred "*orders*" then be looked upon as *unauthorized* by the genuine religion of Jesus? In sect. 8. you throw out an insinuation, whether in play or in earnest I am not sure, that the "zeal" of the "Christian priests" *against* Mohamed has, in some cases "actually destroyed their sense of right and wrong, and, as it should seem, taken away from them the use of their understanding." But what will an uncurbed zeal *for* the great prophet do,—not indeed to a Christian priest,—but to a lay and learned gentleman? You have given us the answer in your own words, and it may not be necessary to repeat them. I would ask, however, whether it can be consistent with common sense, and the very nature of things, to suppose, that the very personal

friends and apostles of our Saviour, would so impudently and daringly have foisted into the economy of his church, an institution in any wise incompatible with its holy nature and purposes? If, indeed, you would level your animadversions against the *worldly grandeur and wealth* of our hierarchies; *then* you move *another* question. I mean not to contend for a *divine authority* for their, or for any one's wealth; whether it be of individuals, of corporations, or of nations. But, if it happen that a hierarchy be rich, it no more follows that it should therefore be at variance with the spirit and principles of the gospel, or be the less qualified to guard its interests and promote its cause, than it does, that a Christian minister should be unfit for his office, because he does not wander about from place to place, "providing neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in his purse; nor scrip for his journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet a staff."\* More humble circumstances for our priesthood than we now see, may *seem* perhaps to come nearer to an apostolical character, and, in the opinion of the world, may be more becoming a Christian ministry. But this is only judging of things by the outside. I do not

\* See Matt. x. 10.



mean to stand up the *advocate* of a *wealthy* hierarchy, in preference to a more subdued one. The latter, as a mere individual opinion, I should decidedly choose; but I cannot conceive the apostolical and evangelical character to be very much invaded, or lost sight of, even by a priesthood richly endowed, when we see it dispensing its wealth and its influence, as many of our well-offered ecclesiastics have done and still do, in promoting the cause of the gospel, and the relief, both spiritual and temporal, of mankind. This is what wealth and power *ought* to do, especially in ecclesiastics,—for “against this, the gospel itself has no law.” A rich hierarchy, therefore, is not *necessarily* unchristian, or unapostolical. Let it beware, lest by *misuse* of its sacred functions and advantages, it should make itself so. Rich bishops and rich rectors, like all other rich men, have doubtless a heavy burden to bear, and a most momentous stewardship to discharge; but my own honest and independent impression is, that with all the wealth of the Protestant church, there are and have been so many in it, who dispense their abundance, and employ their influence in so judicious and unqualified a spirit of uprightness, benevolence, justice, and piety, that it is enough to show indisputably the fact, that riches and religion, both vital and prac-

tical, even in priests, are not *necessarily* incompatible with each other.\*

The last charge, which I have marked (but not which you have made) against *priests* is, sect. 131., viz. that they have almost always exerted their influence to "increase," rather than to "prevent corruptions." We need not repeat what has already been admitted in regard to the manifold abuses of the sacerdotal office: no one denies that it *has* been so, though, in weighing impartially the *black and white* sides of history, much might perhaps be said in extenuation of those offences. You mean now to say, as also in sect. 51. that the priests have ever been the wakeful "enemies to the improvement of mankind." How is it then that, turn to whatever history you please concerning "nations, people, and languages," you always find the ecclesiastics taking the lead, or at least a conspicuous part, in the learning and science of the times? Enormous as some priestly transgressions may sometimes have been, yet is it not mainly through

\* I cannot refrain here from transcribing a very just observation (comprised in a note,) from page 301 of the British Critic and Quarterly Theological Review, for October, 1829. "We call the church wealthy purely with reference to the aggregate of her resources. But if those funds be considered with reference to the whole number of her ministers, she would be found to be in a state of almost primitive poverty." See also a tract published last year, entitled, "Church Reform," by a Churchman.

the agency of priests, (I do not say, altogether unmixed with corruptions and superstitions,) but is it not mainly through their means, that literature and science have flourished? Where, my dear sir, would have been by far the greater part of those recondite treasures of learning and instruction, which now weigh down your own shelves, and the shelves of other learned men, *but for the industry and intelligence of the priests?* Where would have been, if not the foundation, at all events, the succeeding lustre and renown, of the learned universities, and other institutions for education in this land, *but for the labours and influence of the priests?* And, with all their sins and weaknesses, and all the superstitious bigotry of former times, where, *but for the priests*, would have been the diffusion of that benign and beneficent gospel, which with slow but steady and persevering step, and against the accumulated resistance of corrupt passions, tempers, and interests, hath nevertheless come rolling on in its divine course, still making its way to its destined fulness over the face of the earth, abundantly enlightening the world by its wisdom, and meliorating the condition of mankind by its benevolence? In short, Sir, it is nothing but an honest and straitforward conclusion to draw, that, but for the instrumentality

of that order of men, whom your Mohamedan affections have led you to fancy "the enemies of mankind," these things would not have attained to even the happy condition in which we now find them; deficient as they yet may be, and much as may yet remain to be done.

Do you really think, however, that because the Christian religion has still to contend against "a perverse and crooked generation," it has therefore "failed in its object?" In sect. 124. you say, indeed—"It seems odd that it should have failed in the object for which it was sent,"—alluding to the great corruptions in the Christian world at the period when Mohamed first appeared. But what a sad rock is this you now split upon! You will not allow the Christian religion to do its own work, in its own way, and at its own time, under the providence of its own divine founder! It looks as if you would arraign its operations, because they do not quite square with your own peculiar notions! In this instance, however, you are wrong in your *premises*, and quite out in your logic. The Christian religion has *not* "failed in its object," but it is still (under God's providence) triumphantly pursuing it. Nor are we any more justified in making such a charge against that religion, on account of the wickedness which may at any

time reign upon earth, in spite of its divine laws; than we are in charging the sun with a failure of his vast luminous powers, on account of this dense, dark, and dismal atmosphere, which, in these November days, in spite of those powers, robs us of so much of his light, and so much more of his effulgence. In short there is nothing “*odd*” in the case; except the oddity of your taking up so “*odd*” a notion about it. We have only to look at the Christian religion as its divine author has given it out to us. It is expressly a growing and an expanding religion. Like the grain of mustard seed, small at its beginning, but in God’s good time, “*becoming the greatest among herbs, and a tree shooting out great branches, so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.*”\* It is also a triumphant religion, whose “*dominion*” shall extend “*from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before it, and its enemies shall lick the dust.*”† It is also an impregnable, though not an unassailable, religion;—for though “*the gates of hell*” may be let loose, yet shall they “*not prevail, against it.*”‡ This, Sir, is the character of that religion, which, in

\* Matt. xiii. Mark iv. † Psalm lxxii. ‡ Matt. xvi.

a moment of inadvertence, you have thought, without a shadow of reason, had really "failed in its object ;"—and this also is the religion, for the administration and promulgation of which, the Christian priesthood are expressly the agents under the ordinance of its divine founder.

Depend upon it, then, though you may like to indulge your *misohieristical* prejudice sometimes, it will take more than all the wit and wisdom of Mohamed himself, with all his Muftis, and even his learned "apologist" into the bargain, to disprove the divine origin, the sacred nature, the surpassing usefulness, and the indispensable expediency of the Christian priesthood. All history, in short, and all right reason would be against you ; and "it is hard," you know, "to kick against the pricks."

But you would fain allege, (sect. 47.) that because the Moravians, Quakers, and Mohame-dans have no priests in *their* religion, the institution of a priesthood is therefore by no means necessary to the "flourishing" of religion at all. The argument, Sir, is a fallacy. In the first place, the Moravians and Quakers, and all other Christian sects, do not pretend to a religion *distinct* from the gospel: they are merely so many excrescences or ramifications from the grand sacerdotal body, or centre, the Protestant

church of Christ. I mean nothing disrespectful or uncharitable when I call them excrescences: I give it merely as a figurative delineation of their position in the vast field of Christian believers. Now, an excrescence may exist, even in a healthy state *as such*, and may even increase in bulk, without possessing any of those appendages, which of necessity belong to the main stem or body, such as arms, legs, eyes, &c. So may any congregated knot of persons maintain their own peculiar tenets, and their own sectarian constitution, independently of either priests, or sacraments, or sabbaths, or any other ordinance essentially necessary to the main body. The *religion* therefore of Quakers, Moravians, or any other *Christian* sect, is virtually *priestly*; being a ramification of the great priestly religion of the gospel; and if *that* religion were not sustained, as it is, by the diligence, ability, piety, and learning, of the Christian priesthood, where would be, and what would be, the religious economy of the Moravians, the Quakers, and all other sects and parties, which now diversify the Christian world?

As to the priestless religion of Mohamed, I doubt, in the first place, whether it really be so. In sect. 30. you tell us, that he “declared himself high-priest of his religion.” Now, a “high-

priest" necessarily supposes priests of a lower grade also; and this conclusion receives some confirmation from your 47th section, where you tell us, that in their places of worship "the Iman, or some respectable elder, ascends the pulpit to begin the prayer, and pronounce the sermon." Here then is, at all events, a priestly office and administration; which is enough to show that, upon whatever terms the sacerdotal *order* may externally be sustained, no religion can be upheld *as a whole*, divested of a priestly administration.\*

I cannot, however, admit that Mohamedism *does* "flourish." It may have maintained its ground, perhaps, over a vast extent of country, and over a vast accumulation of people, and for upwards of twelve hundred years. So also has idolatry and paganism. Look at China,—look at Hindostan. But, for religion to "flourish," something *more* is wanting than mere local influence and duration. It must be perpetually making its progress *over the world*, "as the waters cover the sea:"—it must not merely be suited to the habits and fancies of any peculiar nation or people, but it must be catholic in its empire, catholic in its spirit, and catholic in its

\* See Appendix.



objects. It must not be limited to times and seasons, but it must be calculated for eternity. Now you know, as well as I do, that Mohamedism, notwithstanding some very praiseworthy moralities it may enjoin, possesses none of these properties, nor is in a way to do so: and I dare say, you do not forget the admission you once made to me in our private conversations, that Christianity would, in due time, become the religion of the whole world, though we differed as to the mode of its propagation.

Let us not then, dear Sir, dabble away our time by disputing what need not be disputed, whether religion will flourish better with or without a priesthood. You may “wonder” (sect. 51.) that the religion of the gospel should be “the most priestly of any on the face of the earth;” but the reason is soon explained, viz.—because the religion of the gospel is the express, and the only express, religion of heaven now vouchsafed to man for his guidance. *That* is the reason why it is “the most priestly.” The priesthood, by God’s own ordinance, is therefore a “part and parcel” of that religion; and that which He “hath joined together, let no man put asunder.” I would even indeed say, when I contemplate the peculiar nature and character of that divine authority on which the church of

*Christ* is erected, that although a *false* religion may have its regular priesthood, as well as the *true*, yet, if there be any religion upon earth, which admits not of an order of men especially set apart for the ministry of holy things, I would even say, that *that* religion, however sound some of its doctrines may be, is not only deficient in one of its most essential requisites, but it stands out as an undeniable testimony that *such* a religion is more of man's work than of God's grace.

I perceive you are not satisfied with handling rather roughly the institution of the priesthood. You would fain also (sect. 46.) question "the wisdom" of the Christian dispensation. This is another of those unhappy and *ugly* features in your book, which have awakened me to this remonstrance. One is at a loss, however, to know, whether you would question "the wisdom of the religion of Jesus," or, whether you would question what you would call the "complicated system" of creeds, by which "the priests" would explain it; or, whether you think it *would* "in reality" be "prophane" to "question" either. At all events, we must come, I think, to this conclusion, viz.—that you really are disposed to believe, that the religion of Jesus is not altogether so perfect as it might be;—that the

“reality” of its being a “wise dispensation” may be “doubted.”

Now, I do not mean to accuse you of any *intention* or *desire* to be prophane: I am always willing to believe your *intentions* good, though I cannot reconcile myself to your measures. I verily believe you to be a sincere inquirer after truth, though, in my view of the case, an inquirer, on *this* occasion, deeply and grievously bewildered in the mazes of misconception and prejudice. In the first place, you direct your “questioning” (sect. 18.) to the “wisdom” of the choice made by our Saviour in the matter of the apostles, destined to be the first promulgators of the gospel to the world. *You* would have had them learned and powerful. *He* selected the ignorant and mean; and perhaps it was to show, that all the intelligence, wit, wisdom, learning, and influence in the world, could not put in motion the great machinery of Christianity, so well as the illiterate and the humble, elevated by the special inspiration of heaven, and backed by the perpetual care and guardianship of the divine founder of it. Why should we be dissatisfied then with what has been done? Why should we think that Jesus Christ would have done more wisely by choosing twelve “Antonines, Locks, or Newtons,” rather than the

twelve unschooled apostles? The wonder is the greater, that the means adopted *seemed* to be so inadequate and unpromising. I see no cause for my part for dispute. It is quite clear that Jesus Christ *did* prefer the unlettered to the lettered on this occasion, and therefore it satisfies me, and all Christendom besides, (whatever *fancies* we may have upon the subject,) that the unlettered was the best of the two. To this opinion you are an exception, it seems,—but what *is* an exception? *Exceptio regulam probat.* Besides, have not “the Locks, the Newtons,” and a goodly host of other men of a like calibre,—all thinking, inquiring, intelligent, enlightened, and unprejudiced men too,—have they not all, without any imputation upon their wisdom, humbly and teachably bowed their heads to the teaching of those twelve untaught men? Give me your own words then, as a conclusion to *this* point:—“We do not show our wisdom by despising such an argument.” (See sect. 98.)

You speak exultingly of the law of Mohamed, (sect. 60.) because it “prohibits all games of chance;” and you say with an insinuation not to be mistaken, that “you have not observed such prohibition in either the decalogue or the gospels.” Behold, then, how a burning “zeal” *for* the prophet of Arabia will sometimes (see

sect. 8.) "take away from one the use of his understanding!" Why did Mohamed prohibit games of chance? Truly, because, as you yourself tell us, he wished to "adopt such parts of the religion of Moses and Jesus as appeared to him to be their pure and unadulterated doctrine." Well, then, it seems Mohamed *did* discover, what has unluckily escaped *your* observation, that such indulgences *were*, in fact, discountenanced by both the religion of Moses and of Jesus, and were at variance with their spirit and principles. Perhaps you may not find an express prohibition against them;—but what of that? There is prohibition enough, as you are well aware, against all kinds of intemperate indulgences,—all fraud, overreaching, falsehood, deceit, covetousness,—all idle and vicious revelry, and all such associations as generally accompany games of chance. This indeed is better than stopping at the mere external prohibition of such games; for it gives us a *principle*, upon which even our games and amusements may be made harmless, and become divested of every vicious and unchristian character.

I do not think you are more happy in your animadversions (sect. 61. 62.) on "the religion of Jesus." In your zeal for, and devotion to, the cause of Mohamed, you venture an insinua-

tion, that what "the religion of Jesus" teaches in regard to "sobriety and moderation," is only a "canting recommendation;" whereas the "decrees" of Mohamed against "drunkenness and gaming" pronounce those sins to be "unpardonable," and "cut them up by the roots at once." It is with difficulty I bring myself to conclude, that you really intend here to make an invidious comparison with the *law of the gospel itself*; but the following passage, at the conclusion of this 61st section, leaves one no other alternative. "Happy indeed I think it would have been for Europe, if it had been consistent with the ways of Divine Wisdom to have prohibited them\* in the religion of Jesus." You admit then, that the "religion of Jesus" is under the special authority and control of "Divine Wisdom." How then shall we venture, even by the most distant implication, to arraign that inscrutable Power for what it may, or may not have done in that religion! Shall we say that it was left for the "decrees" of Mohamed to correct the errors, and supply the omissions of "Divine Wisdom in the religion of Jesus!" or, are we to lay the miseries of Europe, or any part of them, to the negligence of

\* I. e. sensual indulgences, drunkenness, gaming, &c.

“Divine Wisdom in the religion of Jesus!” Your own words absolutely go, though you may not have meant it, to this very extent. For God’s sake, then, let us take care that this new “march of intellect” does not lead us into the “march” of *blasphemy* too! Whatever we do, let us not arraign the wisdom of God in his dispensations to man. Whether *this* “decree” or *that* “decree” had been happier for Europe, neither you, nor I, nor even the “Newtons” or the “Lockes” can tell, and therefore we can never hope to enlighten or to pacify the world by any suggestions of our own, when they are levelled against the dealings and determinations of “Divine Wisdom.” Where, after all however, are to be found any of those “canting recommendations to sobriety and moderation” in the religion of Jesus, which you seem to place in rather invidious comparison with the more express decrees of Mohamed? You are not surely so entranced in the “hallucinations” of Islamism as to be insensible to that surpassing and unspeakable excellence, the awakening truths, the deep-searching spirit, the uncompromising and heaven-like dignity, so peculiar to those lessons of practical holiness and religion, which proceeded from the lips of him whom you call the “*incomparable Jesus*,” (sect. 133.) and

from the pens of his own apostles? You should not do so great an injustice to your *taste* and your discrimination, as even to *admit* these things *into comparison!* with the less searching, and more superficial injunctions of the Koran; or to think them really deserving of so ungracious a character as that of “canting recommendations.” Even Mohamed himself does not seem disposed to do this; and God forbid, that my good friend Mr. Higgins should handle, even one single letter of the gospel, with less reverence than was done by the Arabian prophet.

But how can you show, that the express “decrees” of the Koran are so well calculated to “cut up certain sins by the roots at once;”—you will not say that cutting off the mere external and visible part of the noxious weed, even to a level with the earth, is to be called *eradication*, or to prevent its reappearance when an opportunity offers. It may do to make things *look* well superficially, but it is not *eradication*—no; we must go rather deeper than this. We must not expect to *root out* any evil propensity, by saying, it shall not be done; but rather by saying, it shall not be harboured in the heart—it shall not be cherished—it shall not “*reign* in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the



lusts thereof."\* "Blessed are the pure in heart,"† saith Christ. Here then is *eradication* in the true sense of the word: and if the religion of Mohamed had been less worldly; or less factitious than it is,—if it had had more divinity, or more heavenly wisdom in it,—it would not have done things in so superficial and temporizing a way as it has. It would have laid "the axe," as the gospel has done, "to the root of the tree;"—it would have gone to the cleansing of the heart,—to the extirpation of desires and propensities—to the "crucifixion of the affections and lusts,"‡—to the inculcation of a holy, pure, and virtuous principle within—"truth in the *inward* parts." This is to make men, not merely good in character, but good in conscience;—good spiritually, as well as secularly;—good as Christians, as well as citizens. Now, you well know, that the "religion of Jesus" is expressly, fully, and unexceptionably calculated for this end. If it were not so, it would not deserve the title, which you yourself have, more than once, given to it, viz.—"the religion of truth and purity." Why then, Sir, should you wish to "amend" such a religion?" (Sect 62.) Do you seriously think, indeed, that

\* Rom. vi. 12. † Matt. v. ‡ Gal. v. 24.

you really *could* improve it? Whether it be "profane or arrogant" to propose such an amendment, others will judge: but I am sure "we should not show our wisdom," (as you say on another occasion) and much less our humility, by such a procedure; and you yourself indeed would be rather puzzled, I think, how to amend that, which you yourself call the "already *perfect* religion of Jesus." Can that which is "already perfect" be still improved? When indeed the desire for "*amendment*" in religious matters is *sincere* and earnest, it had better bend its operations and labours to the object which stands in most need of it, viz. *man*, rather than to that which is already "more precious than rubies, and more to be desired than fine gold," "the religion of Jesus."

It is, in fact, Sir, the prevailing error and misfortune of your book,—the great drawback to its interest and its value,—that you so frequently and gratuitously indulge in these unhappy insinuations against the wisdom and the sufficiency of certain parts of the sacred writings, and especially of the gospel. You may think this charge overstated, if not wholly unfounded. If, however, I found myself standing alone, or any thing like alone, in this opinion, I should be still more diffident in making it



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public. Do not then suppose it to be the mere bigotry and prejudice of a Christian priest. You will admit, that however unworthy of my office in other respects, I am no bigot: and who is *less* of a priest than Mr. Beverley, yet even *he* cannot approve of the views you have taken of certain parts of the sacred volume. But I have no farther business with *his* book, than to show that others, besides those of the sacerdotal order, are at issue with the apologist of Mohamed.

In sect. 90. I perceive some account of a certain ordinance among the Mohamedans, that “in the sale of slaves, the mother shall on no account be separated from the children,”—and you then add, “I have not observed any ordinance of this kind in the gospels, therefore Mohamed did not copy it from them.” Now, it cannot, I think, be denied that the drift of this observation (and there is another exactly like it, sect. 93.) is to applaud the law of Mohamed at the expense of the gospels. But a moment’s recollection will show the inanity and futility of such an attempt. If you do not happen to find *such* an ordinance in the gospels, yet do you not find, what is incomparably better, more efficacious, more comprehensive, and more awakening? Do you not find with what powerful and persuasive energy the *principles* of charity, benevolence,

mercy, humanity, and justice, are laid down for our guidance? Do you not find, illustrated by the demonstration of parables, and inculcated by the most emphatic language, not merely the worldly expediency, but also the spiritual consolation, of adhering to and acting upon those principles? What imputation then can possibly be cast upon the gospels for not containing a particular ordinance of common humanity, when their very characteristic is known to be, benevolence, charity, and love towards all men; and when they already advocate those qualifications with the most touching and impressive energy, and the most unceasing diligence? For truth, for honesty, and, above all, for *God's sake*, then call not these things "canting recommendations." You know, as well as I do, that such an epithet conveys ideas which do not, and cannot in any way be associated with those inculcations to virtue and holiness which adorn the pages of the gospel: and you know too, that there is no dispensation upon earth, which sets the moral and religious duties of man, whether in regard to his Creator, to his neighbour, or to himself, in so influential, so chaste, so pure, so exalted, and yet so simple a light as the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The great rock on which, it appears to me,

you are always splitting is, that you cannot be satisfied with any part of the sacred writings, unless they are found to quadrate with a pre-conceived system of your own. You will not consent to your opinions or your prepossessions being corrected by those writings; but you must make *them* bow to your opinions. In this "Apology" for Mohamed, you seem to exhibit this propensity in numberless places; a propensity exceedingly to be lamented, inasmuch as you certainly possess within yourself, from your thinking, investigating, and literary habits, your extensive reading, and your beneficent disposition, such ample means for promoting a more sound, a more rational, and a more irrefutable view of things.

You will smile, perhaps, that I should charge *you* with "bigotry;" the avowed advocate of "religious liberty" (as it is called) and intellectual independence. But our "*new*" and "*liberal*" philosophy, I find, as well as the old and rigid, has its bigots and its *hard* ones too. If bigotry, then, be that blind devotion to a cause, which keeps truth and reason in the back ground, then I really think, you have carried on this "Apology for Mohamed" rather too much in the spirit of that untoward qualification. Is there nothing like bigotry in your sweeping and uncompromising hostility to the sacerdotal in-

stitution? Is there nothing like bigotry in that prostration you have shown to Islamism, which leads you to think, that nothing can be so “beautiful, plain, and intelligible,” as the “Mohamedan profession of faith,” (sect. 46.)—(if you had said, “nothing can be more *flimsy*,” you had been right!) that nothing is so pure as its morality,—that nothing “defines so well the precise measure of charity,” (see sect. 72.)—that the morals of Christian nations are far inferior to those of Mohamedan,\*—that nothing is so efficacious an extirpator of base passions, (see sect. 61.)—and nothing can be so free from tyranny and “intolerance” as the decrees of Mohamed! (See sect. 103.)

In your zeal to illustrate this last *compliment* to the shrine of the prophet, you unhappily throw an invidious dart at the scriptures; for you broadly (sect. 103.) invite us to make a comparison between *his* decrees on this head, and the account in the sacred writings of “Moses and the Canaanites—of Samuel, Agag, and the Gibeonites.” Well, once again then “to the law and to the testimony.” All the accounts we have† of the hostile conduct of Moses towards the Canaanites, however intolerant and unsparing it may seem to us, go to prove that he

\* Sect. 79. † Josh. v. and Deut. ix. &c.



consideration of a part of the sacred writings; which no more proves them either to possess or to inculcate an “*intolerant*” spirit, than it proves them to teach us the superstitions of idolatry, or the obliquities of the church of Rome. It is quite a *new* charge to attribute, even by insinuation, such a spirit as *this* to the inspired volume;—a charge as bold as it is new, and as groundless as either.

But how is it, Sir, that, after all, you can think yourself justified in “questioning” the “wisdom of the Christian dispensation;”—proposing amendments to the religion of Jesus;—alluding to scripture as the “unerring book of divine wisdom;” (sect. 52.)—throwing out allegations of “intolerance” against the sacred scriptures;—and calling “the gospel the poor man’s friend;” (sect. 70.)—when those very same scriptures, to which you refer in support of your opinions, are all denounced by you (sect. 109.) as “faulty translations,” not teaching the true doctrine of Jesus, and unfit to be put into the hands of our people. I do not overstrain your meaning, I believe, when I state this, though I have not quoted the whole passage as it stands.

Now, what are the faults of *our* version of the scriptures which can possibly make it so objectionable, and especially of the New Testa-

ment? *In no case* do they amount to a perversion of the truth,—or a misstatement of doctrine,—or a deficiency of argument,—or any adulteration of divine and practical precept. Grammatical, and even rhetorical, errors may sometimes, though I think very rarely, be found, and *in some cases*, from too rigid an exactness in translation, perspicuity may not be so fully attained, as ordinary readers could wish. But what sort of translation, Sir, would you have? Would you not warp it too much, to suit your own pre-conceived and favourite system? Would you not substitute “the illustrious Mohamed,” for the more unassuming and tranquil term “Comforter?” Would you not dismiss St. Paul from the rank of an inspired apostle? You see how easy a thing it is for you, or any one, to become captious and dissatisfied even with the most unimpeachable things;—and you see too if in the case of a translation of the sacred writings, we were to let every man follow his own prejudices, what an indigestible mass of contradictions we should have. No, Sir, we have done the thing much better as it is. You know the history of our present translation,—and you know what a mass of learning, piety, integrity, and judgment, were brought to the work. You know too that it has now stood the test and investigation of more than two hundred

years: and, considering that all human efforts must be mixed up with *some* imperfection, the present version now stands out a monument of extraordinary and scrupulous fidelity to the original, transcendent majesty and unmixed purity of sentiment, and inimitable beauty of language. Has it no faults then, you may ask? Yes, it has the fault as before observed, of being so rigidly accurate in the application of its phraseology to the original, as to become, in many places, very difficult of apprehension. But the translators, feeling the *sacredness* of their undertaking, and that they were all along treading upon holy ground, considered themselves, and very wisely, not at liberty to introduce any enlarged or paraphrastic meaning to the inspired original; their sole duty demanding no more of them, than a faithful and unadorned representation of it. The proper *study* of that translation,—the proper *handling* of it,—in the matter of spiritual and religious improvement, was, of course, no business of the translators. They gave the holy scriptures, faithfully and conscientiously to the English reader, and here their work ended.

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to be understood." I look upon the *mysteries* of the Bible as among its most useful qualities. These, Sir, are things which go very far to the excitement of greater diligence, earnestness, and anxiety, in the *study* of the holy scriptures. The obscurity, or abstruseness, of a passage does not weaken its intrinsic truth, interest, or importance—nor does it in anywise lessen that sacred fidelity, and simplicity of character, which belong equally to the original as to the translation. A more modern version might, perhaps, give a more *copious* explanation, or a more *dressed* and fashionable phraseology to a sentence—but in this there would be an air of human taste and ingenuity which would be but a very unkindly vehicle for the conveyance of the express words of eternal life, the direct revelations of Heaven. The very form and fashion of the language of the sacred volume, especially when associated with the exalted holiness of its doctrines, and the incomparable heavenly purity of its admonitions and precepts, emphatically proclaim, that *such* a production has divine truth, character, and correctness stamped upon its very words;—so that whoever may be led astray from the truth or reason of scripture, by following our present version, may, in no case, attribute his failure to the *unfaithfulness* or "*faultiness*" of the translation.—but rather to his own misapprehension, his



[The text in this section is extremely blurry and illegible. It appears to be a list or a series of entries, possibly a table of contents or a list of references, but the individual words and numbers cannot be discerned.]

days,—this, I affirm, is the way to dispense, not spiritual good, but spiritual disease and perplexity among mankind. Deprive our “soldiers, sailors,” and people, of the “plain” but powerful “English” of our Bible, and you will leave them to become (as must be clear to you) a prey to all the superstitions, vanities, vices, absurdities, and schemes, which can haunt the mind of man. Bad enough, indeed, we are already; but to spread abroad a feeling of reverence, distrust, and suspicion against the holy scriptures, is not the way to make things better.

Say the truth, then, my dear Sir. Is not the “plain English” of our present version an overmatch for you? Is it not *too* “plain” for you? Does it not meet you, confound you, and overpower you at every step you take in your own speculations? Does it not show, more than all the arguments in the world, that the Koran is a piece of earthly though perhaps ingenious manufacture—and that Mahamed, being already foretold as one among the many “false prophets” who should arise, was, therefore, anything but a prophet, and any thing but “in fact, a Christian,” although he *might* have “admitted the divine missions of Moses and Jesus”—and have “professed to build his religion on them as a foundation.” (Sect. 61.)

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rest from those learned researches which now engage your time—and in which (except upon some of these more *serious* matters) you have shewn how much you can contribute to the entertainment and instruction of the world—my hope is, after all, that the “plain English” of our *unmendable* and imperishable translation of the scriptures, will be your great comfort, guide, and friend *at last*—and that you will come to listen, with composure and a good conscience, to the advice of one, who, though you have classed him (sect. 40.)—(I wish, indeed, you had not been quite so coarse and unmerciful)—among “profligate liars” and “hypocrites,” did *for once in his life* present us with a beautiful sentiment of instruction. “The knowledge of holy scripture,” saith St. Augustine, “is a great, large, and high place; but the door is very low, so that the high and arrogant man cannot well enter therein; but he must stoop low, and humble himself, that shall wish to enter into it.” This, Sir, is “plain English,” and what is more, it is plain good sense too. Let me commend it to your meditations.

My attention is drawn to your 123d section, where you say—“The Christians would do well to recollect that the doctrines of Mohamed created a degree of enthusiasm in his followers, which is to be sought in vain in the immediate

followers of Jesus, and that his religion spread with a rapidity unexampled in that of the Christians." I look upon this, however, to be rather too indefinite and unqualified a statement; for in section 19. you tell us, that "for several years after the beginning of his mission, Mohamed appears *not* to have made any great progress, \* \* \* \* until the end of the fourth year, when he is stated by the Christians to have made, including those before named, only *thirty-nine* proselytes." What then is this, compared with the accounts we have in the gospels of the vast numbers of converts to, and followers of, our Saviour, even during his own life-time; to say nothing of the "three thousand souls" which, in one day, were added to them on the preaching of the apostles, not many days subsequent to the final departure of Jesus Christ from the earth?\*

But, however, I will concede to you the point, that when there came to be a regular, determined "*fight for it,*" sword in hand, Mohamed did, as you say (sect. 1.) "scatter before him empires, kingdoms, and systems, like dust before the wind"—and especially in comparison with the more lingering and difficult progress of the "religion of Jesus." But then, what does all this prove? Certainly not that Mohamedism is

\* Acts, ii. 41.



entitled to our particular reverence as a "religion of purity and truth," or as the favoured religion of God! And still less does it prove, that there is any real or intrinsic weakness, or insufficiency, in the religion of the gospel. Quite the contrary. Look at the ambitious, worldly, glittering, seductive, fictitious, and *accommodating* character of Mohamedism—for it was by art, as well as arms, that "the prophet" so rapidly spread his religion abroad. You will soon see that *such* a religion would soon become popular and palatable; for men are too ready to follow an *easy* way to heaven. We need not wonder, therefore, that his followers should multiply so rapidly, and show so much enthusiasm in his cause. Not so, the cause of Christianity. *That* provided no "royal road" to salvation—it was of too searching and uncompromising a nature—it made too heavy demands upon the conscience—it required too persevering a practice of self-denial—it was, in short, not a "kingdom of *this* world," and, therefore, having to encounter every bad passion and propensity which can assault the heart of man, it would not be so popular, or so palatable, to the world as the religion of Mohamed. Its progress would, of necessity, be more tardy, in proportion as it had to contend against the greater moral obstructions.

*Why* then would it be so "well for the Chris-

tians," that they should "recollect" this contrast in the progress of Mohamedism and Christianity? You have yourself given us *no reason* for this. Allow me to give one, viz. because Christians, by keeping up this recollection, will be perpetually reminded, that Mohamedism, with all its swelling pretensions—and its triumphant, ambitious, and overwhelming commencement, turns out to be a mere "hallucination,"—it has, at length, *had its day*—neither "empires, kingdoms, nor systems, are any longer to be scattered before it." The light of Christianity, unostentatious, unwordly, unambitious, benevolent, deep-searching, holy Christianity,—though of such *un-Mohamed-like* origin, that its founder, so far from being a conqueror, "had not where to lay his head," and was "despised and rejected of men;"—this Christianity, I say, is at length opening the eyes of the world to the dictates of real divine truth,\* and exposing the fallacy and imposture of that faith, which, at its first rising, seemed, as you say, "destined to sweep like a tornado over the face of the earth."

\* Perhaps one instance of this may be your "young friend the Egyptian," (see sect. 235.) as well as the other "young men" sent to Europe by the Grand Seignior and the Pacha of Egypt, under the pretence of education,—but who are all come, I apprehend, for the real purpose of imbibing the principles of "the religion of purity and truth." The Grand Seignior and the Pacha beginning to suspect probably that the religion of the Koran has neither "truth" nor "purity" in it.

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own want of investigation, or his own (perhaps unconscious) prejudices—or his own involuntary ignorance.

If then we are not to “put into the hands of our soldiers and sailors,” and all other people, our present “received version” of the holy scriptures—if we are not to instruct them to “believe the plain English which they find there,”—what alternative must we adopt? Would you give them a translation of the Koran, that “double-distilled fabrication,” as you call it, (sect. 215.) “of Othman and Abubeker?”—or would you give them that still more anti-christian concoction, so ingeniously, but daringly, “got up” by Unitarians, which dismisses or disfigures, with unceremonious presumption, just whatever *parts* of the sacred volume, and whatever *writers* in it, may be a stumbling block to their own views and system! Your *wishes* and *intentions* for the *spiritual* good of mankind may be sincere and benevolent. I believe them to be so; for I know how much *temporal* good you are the means of effecting, and how ready you always are to do it. But, Sir, this relaxing system, however liberal and philosophical it may *seem* to be—this indiscriminate levelling and confounding of *all* religions—this habit of “questioning,” and speculating upon, the truth, value, and comfort of the holy scriptures, which is so prevalent in these

days,—*this*, I affirm, is the way to dispense, not spiritual good, but spiritual disease and perplexity among mankind. Deprive our “soldiers, sailors,” and people, of the “plain” but powerful “English” of our Bible, and you will leave them to become (as must be clear to you) a prey to all the superstitions, vanities, vices, absurdities, and schemes, which can haunt the mind of man. Bad enough, indeed, we are already; but to spread abroad a feeling of irreverence, distrust, and suspicion against the holy scriptures; is not the way to make things better.

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followers of Jesus, and that his religion spread with a rapidity unexampled in that of the Christians." I look upon this, however, to be rather too indefinite and unqualified a statement; for in section 19. you tell us, that "for several years after the beginning of his mission, Mohamed appears *not* to have made any great progress, \* \* \* \* until the end of the fourth year, when he is stated by the Christians to have made, including those before named, only *thirty-nine* proselytes." What then is this, compared with the accounts we have in the gospels of the vast numbers of converts to, and followers of, our Saviour, even during his own life-time; to say nothing of the "three thousand souls" which, in one day, were added to them on the preaching of the apostles, not many days subsequent to the final departure of Jesus Christ from the earth? \* But, however, I will concede to you the point, that when there came to be a regular, determined "*fight for it,*" sword in hand, Mohamed did, as you say (sect. 1.) "scatter before him empires, kingdoms, and systems, like dust before the wind"—and especially in comparison with the more lingering and difficult progress of the "religion of Jesus." But then, what does all this prove? Certainly not that Mohamedism is

\* Acts, ii. 41.



entitled to our particular reverence as a "religion of purity and truth," or as the favoured religion of God! And still less does it prove, that there is any real or intrinsic weakness, or insufficiency, in the religion of the gospel. Quite the contrary. Look at the ambitious, worldly, glittering, seductive, fictitious, and *accommodating* character of Mohamedism—for it was by art, as well as arms, that "the prophet" so rapidly spread his religion abroad. You will soon see that *such* a religion would soon become popular and palatable; for men are too ready to follow an *easy* way to heaven. We need not wonder, therefore, that his followers should multiply so rapidly, and show so much enthusiasm in his cause. Not so, the cause of Christianity. *That* provided no "royal road" to salvation—it was of too searching and uncompromising a nature—it made too heavy demands upon the conscience—it required too persevering a practice of self-denial—it was, in short, not a "kingdom of *this* world," and, therefore, having to encounter every bad passion and propensity which can assault the heart of man, it would not be so popular, or so palatable, to the world as the religion of Mohamed. Its progress would, of necessity, be more tardy, in proportion as it had to contend against the greater moral obstructions.

*Why* then would it be so "well for the Chris-

tians," that they should "recollect" this contrast in the progress of Mohamedism and Christianity? You have yourself given us *no reason* for this. Allow me to give one, viz. because Christians, by keeping up this recollection, will be perpetually reminded, that Mohamedism, with all its swelling pretensions—and its triumphant, ambitious, and overwhelming commencement, turns out to be a mere "hallucination,"—it has, at length, *had its day*—neither "empires, kingdoms, nor systems, are any longer to be scattered before it." The light of Christianity, unostentatious, unwordly, unambitious, benevolent, deep-searching, holy Christianity,—though of such *un-Mohamed-like* origin, that its founder, so far from being a conqueror, "had not where to lay his head," and was "despised and rejected of men;"—this Christianity, I say, is at length opening the eyes of the world to the dictates of real divine truth,\* and exposing the fallacy and imposture of that faith, which, at its first rising, seemed, as you say, "destined to sweep like a tornado over the face of the earth."

\* Perhaps one instance of this may be your "young friend the Egyptian," (see sect. 235.) as well as the other "young men" sent to Europe by the Grand Seignor and the Pacha of Egypt, under the pretence of education,—but who are all come, I apprehend, for the real purpose of imbibing the principles of "the religion of purity and truth." The Grand Seignor and the Pacha beginning to suspect probably that the religion of the Koran has neither "truth" nor "purity" in it.

You have, however, fought resolutely for the prophet; and truly he seems to have stood in need of some kind friend to help him out of that deep slough of calumny, in which he has been floundering for many hundred years. But I think you have not fought fairly. You have resorted to illegitimate weapons; and have sought too eagerly to elevate the character of Mohamed and his religion, at the expense of things incomparably more holy, and incomparably more valuable to human happiness. I am, therefore, you see, decidedly at variance with the "internal policy," tendency, tone, and spirit of your book. And I am indeed, notwithstanding this new "march of mind" and this "new philosophy," which, whatever good they may do in matters of *science*, are, in regard to *religion*, displaying their gaudy and fantastical colours to "take in the unwary" of these days, and are so accommodating to mankind as to suggest to them, that *one* religion is just as good as another, and the gospel, therefore, a superfluity; notwithstanding this fashionable mode of thinking, I am still *old-fashioned* enough, and tasteless enough, to love, before every thing else, the good "plain English," the divine teaching, the incomparable and dignified simplicity, together with the holy and solemn mysteries, of our present version of the scriptures: and I am

dull enough too, to "believe all the plain English that I find there," and to think that *that* version *par excellence*, "teaches as one having authority."\* And furthermore, I am rude enough to take it into my head, that, although no human efforts can achieve *perfection*, yet the wisest among the sons of men can never make that version better than it is, or more suited to its purpose. I cannot, therefore, make up my mind to be altogether satisfied with your book, which seems to me calculated too much to depreciate these things; and therefore have I set myself in array against this "Apology for the Life and Character of Mohamed."

Many of its delinquencies I must yet leave untouched upon; for it is time I should have some mercy on your patience. In the words of Lord Bacon, therefore, I have only to say, "howsoever it be, if the world take any light and use by this writing, I will the gratulation be to the good friendship and acquaintance between us two: and so I commend you to God's divine protection."†

Believe me, sincerely yours,

GEORGE WYATT.

*Burghwallis Rectory, Nov. 24, 1829.*

\* Matt. vii.

† Lord Bacon's Letter to Sir Henry Savill, touching helps for the intellectual powers.

## APPENDIX:

The following extract from Mills's "History of Muhammedism" is at once a confirmation of the fact, that the religion of Mohamed is *not* priestless. I would indeed that it *had* been priestless, for then it would have exhibited another, to the many proofs we already have, of the absence of all divine authority in it:—

"Of the Turkish hierarchy some ideas should be formed. As the Koran was supposed to be the treasure of divine and human laws, and as the Caliphs were the depositaries of this treasure, they became at once pontiffs, legislators, and judges—and the sacerdotal, regal, and judicial officers, were united in their persons. \* \* \* \* The Grand Sultan is styled the *Sultandin*, the protector of the faith; the *Pudishah-Islam*, or emperor of Islamism; and the *Zil-Ullah*, or shadow of God. The administrators of the various powers, which are centered in the Sultan's person, form the body of the learned men called the *Oulema*. Three descriptions of persons constitute this assembly. The first are the ministers of religion, called the Imams; the second the expounders of the law, called the Muftis; and the third the ministers of justice, called the Cadis. The chief Imams are part of the Oulema; the inferior clergy are not. The immediate ministers of religion are of five descriptions. 1st. The Sheiks, or ordinary preachers in the mosques. 2d. The Katibs, readers or deacons, who, in imitation of the Prophet or Caliphs, and in the name, and under the sacerdotal authority of the Sultan, discharge the function of an Imam or high priesthood, and read the prayers on Fridays. 3d. The Imams, a general title for the priests, who perform the service in the mosque on ordinary days, and consecrate the ceremonies of circumcision, marriage, and burial. 4th. The Maazeens, or criers. 5th. The Cazims, or common attendants of the mosque. The numbers of the priests attached to the different mosques are various. The imperial temples have one Sheik, one Katib, two, three, or four Imams, twelve Maazeens, and twenty Cazims. Except in the fourteen principal mosques at Constantinople, the Katibs enjoy a pre-eminence over the rest of the clergy," &c. &c.—(See "Mills's History of Muhammedism," second edition, 1818, page 470.)

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