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THE PUBLICATION
OF
THE NEW KORAN.

A FEW WORDS FROM THE AUTHOR.

In the autumn of 1861, I published a didactic poem, in Scriptural style and arrangement, called the New Koran. It was my original intention to carry out the whole edition to Constantinople, and distribute it among the English and American residents there, with the view of making it the banner of an ambitious reformation movement. Finally, on getting it through the press, circumstances compelled me to relinquish this plan, and risk its publication in London, where it sold badly, and even so far as it did sell, failed altogether to kindle any enthusiasm, or lead to any organic action among religious reformers. Last summer, when I had neither seen nor heard anything of the book for a year and a-half, it was brought under the notice of the Rev. C. Voysey, by one of the members of his congregation at St. George's Hall. No person who had hitherto read it could so well understand and appreciate its aim: the story of the Jewish reformer (Jaido Morata), struggling with difficulties, contending against superstitions, gathering followers from all sects, and carrying on the same catholic and cosmopolitan work in Palestine which he was himself endeavouring to accomplish in London, naturally afforded him the highest interest and pleasure, notwithstanding minor differences of doctrine appearing in a few of the chapters, and it is through calling attention to it in some of his sermons that it has recently sold well, and the whole of the copies being at length disposed of, inquiries are now made for a new edition.

So far as the literary part of the task goes, there will be no difficulty in supplying a second edition, since I have already carefully revised the book and added to it several important

chapters. In order, however, that no prospective reader may be disappointed as to the nature and extent of the alterations which have been made, it may be well here briefly to specify them. The first edition, having for its secondary title, "Text-Book of Turkish Reformers," was intended for export to the East; the second, in which Turkish affairs will hold a more subordinate place, is intended for home consumption. The former was issued with the aim of its becoming a veritable Bible in the midst of a small colony; the latter, if it appears, will only be expected to take the rank of a religious poem, such as that of the Pilgrim's Progress, among the reformers of a great nation. So far, and with respect to certain doctrinal corrections and developments which friendly criticism, a riper experience, and further research after truth have enabled me to make, most people who have seen the old edition will probably like the new better. It must not, however, be supposed that in any of the alterations and adaptations which have been made in the book, I have sacrificed my convictions and pandered to popular passion and class prejudice, like the editor of a newspaper, in order to increase the number of my readers. Several people have objected to the New Koran for no other reason than because it is many-sided, and they would greatly prefer it to be one-sided. Those, who contend that it has not done justice to Christianity, would, probably, be as little disposed as the old Crusaders to render justice to the long-persecuted Jews. Christianity is too high seated and domineering to be in danger of suffering wrong from anything which is said in my book; it is not the flourishing cause, with many friends, but the cause which is down and kicked, and has but very few friends, that is always in danger of suffering injustice. Journalists are for the most part nothing better than literary advocates, engaged to take the side of their clients through thick and thin, and daring not to assume the position of a judge, because impartiality will not pay. Let a paper be started as the one-eyed mouth-piece of some trade, interest, class, party, or sect, and it will not want subscribers; but if it attempts to speak honestly and fairly in behalf of all people, as God himself would speak, it will get the support of none. Authors, as well as journalists, must be partial if they intend to please a partial selfish community; but this is what I never set out to do when I commenced to write the New Koran, neither have I had any such aim in revising it; I shall continue in the second edition, as in the first, to be true

to my view, and say just what I see, without fear and without flattery, whether in the presence of King Christ, or King Caste, or King Mob.

It must thus, I think, be evident that if a second edition of my book should be actually published, notwithstanding the advantages which it will have over the preceding one, it cannot, from the very nature of its teaching, and the host of prejudices arrayed against it, be expected to command a very ready and brisk sale. And this brings me to the consideration of another point, namely, the cost of printing and publishing a Second Thousand copies of the work, and the price at which they can be reasonably offered to the public, with the view of nearly defraying that cost. It is a well-known axiom of commercial economy, that just in proportion as the demand for any article of consumption is small, the cost of its *distribution* will be great. The keeper of a clothing or furniture shop may do very well with a profit of from ten to twenty per cent. on the selling price of his goods, but a publisher of books must have *fifty per cent.*, and even at this high charge, if he has a good business, he will not care to encumber his shelves with literature of an unpopular character, and in little request. And consequently some heterodox books, among others, which respectable publishers refuse, are generally taken in hand by a class of adventurers, whose honesty and solvency are not to be depended on, and their authors thereby have frequently to make still heavier sacrifices in endeavouring to get them into the hands of the public. Let me here briefly place before my prospective readers the extent of the losses which I have had to bear on the first edition of the New Koran.

The printing of the book, by Messrs. Saville and Edwards, came to £141 15s. 6d. Manwaring, the first publisher, estimated the binding of the Thousand at from £20 to £24, making the whole cost of production about 3s. 3d. per copy; and in order that the sale, if successful, should pretty nearly defray this cost, with that of advertising, he fixed the price at 7s. 6d. In a few months' time, when only eleven copies had been sold, he became bankrupt, and so far from having anything to receive from his assignees, I had a very crooked bill of £31 11s. 6d. to pay for advertising, and for binding 250 copies, &c., making, with the printers' bill, my total expenditure by the summer of 1862, £173 7s., a sum of no small consideration to me, as the whole had been saved out of earnings which hardly amounted to £1 a week.

The unsold stock, being refused by Trübner and other publishers, was at length taken by a poor publishing company in Fleet-street, who agreed to offer it at the reduced price of 5s. per copy, and out of this give me one-half. Soon after, at my direction, fifty bound copies were transferred by the company to the hands of a third publisher, to be sold on the same terms, and I found this man exceptionally honest; he disposed of about twenty-five copies in the course of a year, and gave me half the sale price, as agreed on; and as there was nothing to pay for advertising, the small sum I received from him was an actual return. He told me, however, that the business of selling heterodox books had been to him a very unremunerative one, and gave it up at the end of 1863, transferring what copies remained of the New Koran, with his other unsold stock, to an adventure publisher, with small means, then newly established in a neighbouring street. Hearing a very fair account of this man, and a bad account of the publishing company, I directed them to transfer the whole of their unsold New Koran stock to him early in 1864, which they at length did reluctantly, after they had been threatened with legal force. They proved, however, in the end, more honest than I had been led to expect; they fairly accounted to me, as the retiring publisher had done, for all that they had sold—nearly twenty copies, and the whole return from both these parties came to about £5, and not a farthing have I received since. Even this small sum, which came to me from the sale of the book, was soon more than swallowed up in further expenses attending it, namely, the cost of binding a second 250 copies, and the printing of 2,000 descriptive handbills, to assist the fourth publisher in getting it into circulation. This man agreed to sell the book at the further reduced price of 2s. 6d. a copy, and divide the proceeds with me; but his notions of equity not being satisfied with the fifty per cent. allowed him for selling, he made up his mind to keep *all*. Moreover, he not only withheld from me what money was due on the sale of the book, but the sympathy and moral encouragement of a number of readers, by refusing to give them my address, under the pretence that he had never had or known it; thus, evidently hoping that I, living far away in the country, and hearing nothing of my literary enterprise, should in time forget all about it, and be myself forgotten, just as every kidnapper endeavours to cut off all communication and draw a curtain of obliviousness between parent and child, the better to accomplish his nefarious design. When

Mr. Voysey, with considerable difficulty, discovered my address in August, 1872, he could get no information through the publisher, either of my whereabouts or existence; and had there been no other means of tracing me out, I might have been to this moment regarded as a myth. A few friends, who knew that I had been shamefully defrauded, advised me to seek redress before a court of justice, and I took the requisite preliminary steps to do so; but on learning that there was a possibility, or rather a probability, of the suit costing more than the debt was worth, I felt that offering justice to a poor man by way of our expensive and uncertain law administration was a sham, and that I had better remain content with my present wrong than run the risk of aggravating it with further mockery and disappointment.

I now wish to direct the attention of my readers to something far better than the punishment of roguery, and that is, the effecting, by a more economical system of trade, its *prevention*. My esteemed friend, William Ellis, from whom I have learnt much, and always differ with reluctance, has, among his other valuable contributions to the elucidation of social science from a commercial view-point, written an able little tract to prove, against the co-operators, the advantages which society derives from competition. In the recent revision of my book I have endeavoured to present the reverse side of the picture, and show that *unregulated* competition is a great evil to society, very nearly approaching that of civil war. Wherever we see industry effectively organised, there is true economy; no farmer, builder, or manufacturer would think of putting two men to do the labour of one; but where ignorant people set themselves to work with no other guidance but blind inclination, and the ill-understood law of supply and demand, there is a great deal of carrying coals to Newcastle, and the business of one person may often be seen divided among three. Many ill-trained human beings (of whom the Jews, Greeks, Armenians, and Yankees are notable examples) have a great dislike to earning their bread slowly and surely by any kind of productive industry, and prefer embarking in the adventures of commerce, and consequently all our cities are overcrowded with traders; there are far more people engaged in the distribution of wealth than are really needed by the exigencies of society. One necessary result of this overcrowding and immense waste of power among distributors is, that their operations are thereby rendered very costly; they want a much

larger percentage of profits, on sales effected, to enable them to live, than would be required if the whole business of distribution were regulated and conducted with strict economy. Another consequence is, that the weaker tradesmen, in order to maintain their ground in the face of stronger rivals, are driven to all sorts of *fraudulent practices*, such as adulteration, colouring, false measuring, swindling, and embezzlement; indeed, thousands of needy adventurers who go unprepared into the fierce arena of competition, soon find themselves in such straits, that they are just as much necessitated to choose between fraud and bankruptcy as the City Arab is often compelled to choose between theft and starvation. What we really ought to do, then, is to discourage rash speculation, to check unwise competition, to prevent, as much as possible, two rivals from wasting their energies in contending for a sphere of labour which only affords occupation for one. In some instances, where large interests are concerned, the duty of restraining wanton and dishonest competitors is already effected by the Government. Hundreds of railways are projected by scheming adventurers, where they are not really needed, and there is no reasonable prospect of their being remunerative; but any such line will serve the purpose of the schemers if it can only allure shareholders for its construction, or be worked in such a way as to annoy some other company, and force it to buy up the annoyance. The Government, therefore, though sometimes imposed upon, generally refuses to sanction such ill-planned enterprises; it agrees to protect the really useful companies from injurious competition, on the condition that the public shall receive from them liberal treatment, and fairly share their advantages. The same legislative restraint, which prevents railways, board schools, and post-offices from cutting each other's throats, might justly be extended to ordinary shops; the Government, for instance, might very reasonably refuse to allow any person to start a publishing business in London, until he should first show that he had got a sufficient capital for the undertaking, and the promise of a certain number of commissions, as a fair guarantee for his honesty and success. By this regulation, a host of needy and unscrupulous adventurers would be kept out of the trade, and compelled to earn their living as printers, shopmen, and clerks, or to emigrate; while the Government, in return for protecting and economising the labour of genuine publishers, might require them, as they could well afford, to distribute books at reduced

charges. But such a vast extension of Board-of-Trade interference in behalf of the public, though perfectly legitimate and reasonable, is, at the present day, very far from practicable, and people, who suffer for the want of it, must seek a remedy at their own hands; the business of distribution, as now wastefully conducted by the shop-keeping world, can only be gradually economised and reformed by establishing *co-operative societies*.

Co-operative publishing has been successfully carried on for a very long period by a number of societies in connection with the Church of England, and we heterodox people, who are endeavouring to organise a church outside the pale of Christianity, may with good profit study their example. See how well, for instance, the Religious Tract Society has been made to work for the diffusion of religious knowledge of the Evangelical pattern, among the poorer population of this country. Some Cumberland curate, or Cornish schoolmaster, or Methodist preacher in Kent, writes an instructive tale, which he has no means of publishing at his own expense, or, even if he can accomplish this end, will not be able to sell more than fifty copies; but he sends it to the Repository, Paternoster Row, it goes before the Committee, is approved and published, and in less than half-a-dozen years will be read in almost every town and village of the kingdom. The books and tracts, which the Society thus puts into the hands of the people, are not only cheaper, but better, than those of the same class which are ordinarily distributed by private houses; for the labour of their publication is strictly economised, and they are selected by an impartial and competent literary tribunal, who are resolved that the shelves of the Repository shall not be encumbered with trash. The Jews and Unitarians have each a similar co-operative society for the diffusion of the select and standard literature of their respective faiths; and to show that we constructive Theists, Theofederans, or whatever we are called, have very great need of such an organisation for the dissemination of our views, it will suffice to state some of the difficulties which I had to encounter, years ago, both in seeking light, and imparting it to others.

It was my lot to be born behind the plough, and to labour in the fields from the age of eleven to twenty-five as a farm servant, and, had it not been for the National Society establishing a school in the neighbouring parish, and the Christian Knowledge Society publishing the *Saturday Magazine*, which my

self-taught father regularly purchased, I should probably have remained, at the present day, an almost illiterate clown. I owe an especial debt of gratitude to the charming little illustrated periodical of 1832-44; the variety of useful information, which I acquired from it, set me craving for more, and, having no educated friends to assist me, I left my home clandestinely at the age of sixteen and started off to London for the purpose of consulting the editor as to how and where I could obtain better means of self-culture. On arriving at the publisher's office in West Strand, my rustic garb and singular errand occasioned some surprise, but I was kindly told that "the editor was not to be seen," and advised to apply to the London Mechanics' Institute, Southampton Buildings. I went thither, but, possessing only two shillings and being without employment, found its advantages inaccessible to me, and thenceforth began to wander about London for a fortnight, visiting coffee-house libraries, picking up information from book-stalls, and sleeping in a suburban stable, till hunger compelled me to return to my native fields. The rich intellectual feast which I gathered from studying in the streets so amply compensated for all my physical privations, that I was tempted in the following year to repeat my runaway adventure, when I acquired much enlargement of mind, not only from books, but from visiting a Catholic chapel, a Jews' synagogue, and the British Museum. Such a spirit of inquiry and reflection was now awakened within me that at the age of eighteen I completely shook off the trammels of the orthodox creed and began to take up the position of a religious reformer. Early in 1849, I again tramped up to London to gather more light, and being now much better provided, having for the first time the sum of £3 15s. in my pocket, I determined to purchase a good selection of what Emerson would perhaps call Representative Books, to study at my leisure in the country. I obtained from the stalls, in the first place, Josephus, the Koran of Mohammed, and the Dictionary of Voltaire; and afterwards picked out and added to my literary wallet, the Apology of Grotius, Butler's Analogy, and Paley's Evidences. I greatly admired Paley's calm philosophical spirit and masterly special pleading, while perceiving the unsoundness of his reasoning at every step, and imagined that there must surely exist the work of some modern scholar who had refuted him. So indeed there did (*Hennell's Inquiry*, at the shop of T. Allman, Holborn), but, such is our present defective system of distributing the light of

advanced thought, that I was quite unable to find it out. A much better known heterodox publisher, James Watson, of Queen's Head Passage, I discovered with little difficulty, and asked him to show me the very best modern works which his shop contained, and above all a good refutation of Paley. He laid several books before me, with the merits of which I was by no means prepossessed, yet purchased five from his recommendation and they all disappointed me, especially Taylor's *Diegesis*, in which the most extravagant of mythical theories was advocated with a sad mixture of ribaldry and rant. Having exhausted my funds, and being unable to make further research, I returned with my pack of theological books to the country, and, under the impression that the learned champions of Christian orthodoxy had never been effectually answered, set about in leisure hours to controvert their arguments myself. In the course of a year and a-half I had written with this view a treatise of considerable length, and in the summer of 1850 again left my plough and went to London for the double purpose of getting it published there, and obtaining some new sphere of employment. I succeeded in neither object: no London publisher could be induced even to read my rough manuscript, much less risk the expense of its publication. Just as I was about to return in despair to my native parish, I happened, by the merest chance, to see in the heretical *Leader*, but recently started by G. Lewes, a notice of Professor Newman's new work, *Phases of Faith*, which was then causing some excitement in religious circles. Had I seen it noticed by any orthodox reviewers, these defenders of Christian miracles are such genuine spiritual descendants of the old miracle workers, they go to such lengths in pious frauds to keep up the original illusion, and their skill in sham-sampling and misrepresentation is so great, that I should probably have been led to imagine it a lame and despicable production unworthy of being sought after as a gift. But the new journal of free thought did justice to the book, and I was so charmed by the powerful reasoning and high moral tone of one or two extracts from it, that I hastened to the publisher, obtained the author's address, and immediately wrote to him expressing the pleasure which I experienced from meeting unexpectedly an abler controversialist in the same field of reformation in which I was labouring myself. Professor Newman, on receiving this letter, directly came to visit me at my humble lodging, and after some friendly conversation on my special

views and aims, agreed to take a portion of my manuscript home with him and give me his candid opinion of it. In a few days it was returned to me with an accompanying critical letter, commenting on the weak and strong points of my treatise, and disapproving of my attempts to connect the early Christians with the Essenes, and reconstruct the Gospel story* in a manner similar to that of Charles Hennell,

* It may be well to say here, in reference to a portion of my prepared Second Edition, that Professor Newman classed my dramatic theory of explaining the Gospels with those which are called by German scholars Rationalistic, and declared his own preference for the Mythical Theory of Strauss. From what he said, I was led on the first opportunity to study very carefully the writings of Strauss, R. W. Mackay, Niebuhr, and Grote, together with his own Hebrew Monarchy and Regal Rome, and my opinions were in consequence considerably modified with respect to the general credibility of ancient records, but in the main I was still forced to cling to my original view, and consequently re-stated it in the New Koran. Within the last ten years I have found the hypothesis set forth in Questions xxxviii.—xliv., strongly confirmed by further historical research, and have developed it in another work, and in a series of articles contributed to the *Jewish Chronicle*. What I maintain is simply this :—

I. That it is useless to insist on the late origin of our present Gospels as an evidence of their being unauthentic, because even if they were all written in the second century, it is no proof that they were not derived from earlier contemporary records. Several minor contradictions by no means convict the writers of myth-making, but only furnish a clear proof of their fallibility. So, too, the fact of their adding some undoubted legendary matter, such as the prefatory stories of Matthew and Luke, affords no better ground for rejecting their testimony in the mass, than for treating in a similar manner the Life of St. Bernard or the Book of Maccabees.

II. That Christianity, if we rationally interpret the testimony of the Evangelists, was from the very first of a composite character, originating from a small religious confederacy, and not from the spontaneous action of one reformer of extraordinary genius as Strauss, Renan and others have represented.

III. That Jesus resembled the monk Jetzer of Berne, rather than the founder of the Dominican or Franciscan brotherhood, being evidently a poor Galilean devotee, tutored by apparitions to act the part of a suffering Messiah, and acquiring the whole of his mighty influence, not from his actual teaching and labours, but from his *supposed conquest of death*.

IV. That the crucifixion of Jesus, like many child-crucifixions which were turned against the poor Jews in the middle ages, was a masked drama got up to excite strong feeling and move the multitude, while his Resurrection also was as clearly dramatic as the annual Easter miracle exhibited in his pretended sepulchre.

V. That the faith and enthusiasm which moved the peasant followers of Jesus after his death, was started wholly by dramatic illusions, similar to that miraculous performance before shepherds, which in our own times has established the Confraternity of Our Lady of La Salette.

As I have not a greater love for my own opinion than for truth, I shall feel thankful to any reader who still believes with Strauss, that Christianity arose

who had thus exposed his otherwise unanswerable argument to the attack of orthodox reviewers. "Hennell's Inquiry," he continued, "is a very able, temperate, well written book, yet I am told that *it sells badly, and does not satisfy the publisher.*" On the strength of this disinterested and competent judgment I bought the fine work of Hennell with the first 12s. 6d. which could be spared from my poor means, and only regretted that I had not seen it earlier, when a number of greatly inferior books were thrust into my hands. German scholars may well express their surprise that Hennell, in his own country, the country which produced Chubb, Collins, Toland, Tyndal, Bolingbroke and Gibbon, should still continue to be so little appreciated and comparatively unknown. Now that the poor hubbub of a Government prosecution no longer serves to make a lay heretic notorious in England, such is the general stupidity and prejudice of our literary tribunals, and such is our want of organised distribution that more than half the soldiers of the Rationalist camp may be seen going forth to combat with old rusty muskets, pitchforks, and clubs, when they might be all furnished with arms of precision. Even the powerful attacks on orthodoxy by Professor Newman, W. R. Greg, Lecky, Matthew Arnold, Miss Cobbe, and a few other writers who have acquired, apart from these works, a high literary reputation, remain unread and unheard of by thousands of their country people, who are struggling hard to free themselves from the oppressive bonds of Christian superstition, and would greatly rejoice at their aid. One gentleman, Thomas Scott, Esq., now of Norwood, author of *The English Life of Jesus*, has been so strongly impressed with the present imperfect means of publication afforded to controversial writers of his class, that he has formed, by his own individual efforts, a Society for the Diffusion of Rational Knowledge. The many good things which he has

among the peasants of a superstitious thaumaturgic country without any appeal to miracles, to point, as he has not done, to some other adequate power for producing the primitive Nazarene excitement, and also explain how it was that dramatic wonder-working was so early and extensively resorted to in the Christian Church as a legitimate means of kindling religious fervour, and has continued to be so employed till discredited by the rise of the spirit of Rationalism, when nothing similar can be pointed to in the history of the Mahometan Church. We plain, honest truth-seekers, who are not writing for Christians, have no need to care about conciliating their prejudices, or study to furnish such an explanation of the Gospel narrative as shall give the least offence to their absurd idolatry.

both written himself, and reprinted from other authors in behalf of our New Reformation, if he were to depend on the ordinary commercial channels of distribution afforded by London publishers would never be got into circulation, even by expending a fortune. Therefore, rather than incur a heavy loss in this way, to no good purpose, he has chosen to distribute his books and pamphlets gratuitously through the post, among just those people who are likely to appreciate them, and aid in effecting their further dissemination. Two years ago when I found him busily engaged in his Repository, at Ramsgate, he told me that his mission work was steadily increasing, and that the bread which he had perseveringly cast on the waters was beginning to be found again after many days. For awhile he was heavily burdened with his benevolent enterprise, and could not count with certainty on being able to continue it, but sympathising helpers wrote to him one after another, till at length he had a good number of regular subscribers, and friendly contributions and correspondence were flowing in upon him from all parts of the kingdom. In proportion as help came, his publishing, under the most economical management of himself and wife, grew and extended, and I see at the end of one of his recent pamphlets, a well selected catalogue of upwards of a hundred modern heterodox works which would do credit to the Index Expurgatorius. Those people, who object to Mr. Scott's mission, as a mischievous proselytising work, should bear in mind that it has never provoked any Belfast riots, or Indian mutinies, or Chinese insurrections and massacres. It is not his plan to distribute his publications indiscriminately in the parks, or thrust them into the hands of the congregants at orthodox churches, or even advertise them in orthodox journals, or offend the susceptibilities of their editors by obtruding them under their notice. He has wisely avoided stirring up angry passions and encountering the blind hostility of Christian bigots, and has proceeded in a quiet, judicious manner to diffuse a higher religious light among his countrymen only just where it will receive a welcome, and be productive of good. Perhaps, even Lord Shaftesbury and a few other Exeter Hall magnates may derive a considerable amount of spiritual benefit from this new missionary enterprise, however much they may be disposed to condemn it; while they are moving heaven and earth to convert other nations from idolatry, it may prove a wholesome check to their intemperate zeal to know that a band of philanthropic men are labouring, with equal

earnestness, to deliver our own "land from error's chain," and are regarding them as idolaters themselves. Those who now frequently procure Mr. Scott's publications through the post, esteem him not only as a religious reformer, but as a commercial economist; "he has worked himself," as a late Judge of the High Court of Madras observes, "into a position of considerable notoriety, and for years has been the centre of a wide circle of readers and writers,"* and the success which has attended his labours, proves the existence of a vast amount of co-operative illuminating power in the world of free inquiry, which, if well organised, would accomplish much greater results. I hope the time is not far off when we shall see in this country a regularly constituted League of Light, under the direction of an able committee, and that authors who write to impart a higher religious knowledge, and readers who seek it, may, with a little more exertion, so contrive to stretch forth and join hands as to avoid altogether the losses and disappointments which are now occasioned by the intervention of those rascally "Carry your parcel, sir?" boys, the needy adventure publishers.

After the somewhat discursive explanation which I have found it necessary to make, will those of my readers who desire to see a second edition of the New Koran, be willing to co-operate with me for the purpose of lessening the expense of its distribution? My direct pecuniary loss on the first edition, is at the very least £250; if I reckon four per cent. interest, which might have been obtained from a safe investment of the money which I expended in 1861-2 to produce no return. I know too well that I cannot afford to lose another such sum, nor even half of it, and should not expect to do so, even by the ordinary means of publication, because the book has a decidedly better prospect of selling now than at first, and would probably be accepted by a respectable and honest publisher. But even in this case, it could only be placed in the hands of the reader at such a price as must tend in no small degree to limit and retard its circulation. As the second edition will contain about thirty new chapters, the cost of production cannot, with the most rigid economy, be estimated at less than four shillings per copy. To defray this expense and satisfy the publisher, and pay for advertising, it could not be offered to the public for a less price than ten shillings; but if a sufficient number of readers can be got to order the book directly of me, or my friends, it shall be sent to

* T. Lumsden Strange, Esq. : "The Christian Evidence Society," p. 4.

them through the post for *five*. "Spoke-work is a deal better than spec'-work," a village cobbler, who was weary of serving the town shops, once said in my hearing, and I am disposed to say the same to my readers. It so happens, however, that since the invention of printing, books can no longer be made singly to order like boots, but must of necessity be produced in great batches, and therefore a prudent scribe who wishes to work economically, and avoid risk, should receive a large number of orders before he can feel warranted in going to the press. It will not be safe for me to venture on printing a second thousand copies of the New Koran, and offering them at the price named, till I can be assured of effecting an immediate sale of *one half*. I may have to wait several years to obtain this guarantee against a heavy loss, and it may never be obtained, but a very bitter experience determines me not to spend another penny on publishing my hitherto burdensome book without it.

Even if 500 copies of the second edition should be ordered, as I cannot afford to advertise, I must ask for the further co-operation of my readers to aid me with their recommendations in selling the rest. Nearly the whole of the first edition was got into circulation by such means, after advertising had proved an entire failure. One person, who had read and appreciated the book, presented it to a friend, or induced a neighbour of kindred spirit to purchase it, who, in turn, spoke favourably of it to some one else, till it at length reached the hands of an eloquent religious reformer, who has well fulfilled the duty of passing on to others every lamp of light which he receives, and he speedily diffused it among hundreds. Some judgment and discrimination must, of course, be used in introducing a book of this kind to individuals, in order that it may not be as seed scattered among thorns and in stony places, and unproductive of good. It is by no means desirable that it should get into the hands of a class of idle, luxurious drawing-room readers, who would enjoy it for about nine days as a sort of literary novelty, and then cast it aside. I should be sorry for any people to be bored with it, or induced to buy it, when they are not likely to devote a single hour to its perusal. It would also be a great mistake to obtrude it on quiet, orthodox Christians, or use it in any way as an instrument of proselytism. I have half-a-dozen brothers and sisters of this class, who have never seen the New Koran, nor will ever see it from me, so long as they are not educated up to it, but remain contented and happy in the bonds

of their childhood's belief. Years ago, Professor Newman, in a letter from which I have already quoted, after advising me not to seek employment in London, nor think of separating from my parents and friends, without good reason, continued—"Do not imagine that any book of yours will ever soothe or convince *them*. Dutiful and affectionate conduct, a manifestly pious and conscientious mind in you, are what will most soothe and most convince them. . . . Men will never be converted from a religion which has much moral excellence in it, *until they see a higher moral excellence in those who impugn it*. The inveterate belief that all who reject Christianity are immoral, or unspiritual, is the strength of the existing creed, as indeed the strength of Trinitarianism lies in the prevalent want of spirituality in Unitarians. Argument is important, yet argument of itself is useless. Trinitarianism has been argued down a thousand times, yet no impression is made on it commensurate with the strength of the refutation. Religious creeds were not originated by the pure intellect, nor will they be ever overthrown by it. See how, even in France, Popery has budded and renewed its strength in the last fifty years! That is because no higher spiritual movement followed on its prostration."

The longer I live the more strongly do I find the truth of these sentiments confirmed, and if they were more generally entertained and acted on by religious reformers, it were well for human progress. In order to benefit our fellow men, who are contented slaves of superstition, we should be more anxious to improve their character than to reform their creed; it is desirable, before all things, to elevate them, and they will in due time liberate themselves. The opposite unwise course, of destroying reverential feeling in people who are morally weak and ill-trained, and unprepared to make a good use of the intellectual freedom which is forced upon them, has ever been attended with mischievous results; it has produced nothing better than religious rowdyism, bear-garden debates, and French revolutions. Then, there are many thoughtful and pure minds who, after slowly working their way towards a safe emancipation from orthodox thraldom, turn back at last, appalled on beholding the utter anarchy which prevails outside the pale of Christianity, and believe Rationalism to be condemned by its fruits. Other more courageous reformers having ventured further and entirely got away from the old dominion of falsehood, on finding in the world of free-thought no new fellowship

or religious communion to aid and cheer them in the path of duty, nothing but cold, cavilling, self-reliant criticism, also retrace their wandering steps at length, and, thoroughly broken-hearted and weary of spirit, re-enter their nursery fold as prodigals, under the conviction that the bondage of its erratic creed, with sympathy and love, is more easily to be borne than liberty without. It is abundantly clear from such cases and from the revolutionary history of the last hundred years, that our mere destructive preaching and writing will avail little to overthrow superstitions of twenty centuries' growth; we must contrive somehow and somewhere to set up the light of a higher example. The world is not to be reformed by argument but by action.

As the immediate object of this paper is a simple matter of business, I must not unnecessarily complicate it, or allow my pen to wander further in the discussion of principles which may be more appropriately treated of elsewhere. The difficulties and losses attending the publication of my book by the ordinary commercial channel, and the circumstances which have compelled me to think of some more safe and economical arrangement, required a full and candid explanation. There is nothing more to add; I will merely ask those of my readers who are in favour of co-operative publishing, where exceptionally needed, and who wish to see the second edition, which I have prepared, brought out partly or wholly in this way, and are willing to purchase copies on the terms mentioned, to kindly notify the same to—

JOHN VICKERS,
Sarness, Waltham,
Canterbury,

or

REV. CHARLES VOYSEY,
Camden House,
Dulwich, S.E.

June 1st, 1873.