

way, it would be slow and difficult. Whereas in a nation where a false religious system sits loose upon the people, and has little social or governmental support, and especially where commerce, education, and free principles are breaking up the torpid and indurated mass, the way is prepared for the gospel's catalytic power to show its mighty transforming energy.

Facts now corroborate the truth of these principles. For never has the gospel made rapid progress in any country where a false system of religion has entrenched itself behind the prejudices, the social habits, the pecuniary interests, the splendor of rites and forms, and governmental favor; and its most signal triumphs have been witnessed where the false system has but a feeble hold upon the public mind, or men have begun to think for themselves. Certain conditions seem necessary, in order that the leaven may work; nor where these are wanting are we to expect success, any more than that the laws of chemistry will be set aside in the process of bread making. God does sometimes, indeed, give unexpected success by the power of his Spirit, to show that, after all, the efficiency lies with him. But such cases are exceptions, which we cannot calculate upon, and are not our rule of judgment or of duty.

From these principles we should confidently infer, that Mohammedanism, and especially popery, would offer more powerful obstructions to the spread of the gospel than any other systems of error. Hence it is, that while missionary stations are multiplied among the heathen, they are yet so few in the great centres of Mohammedan and Papal influence in Asia and Europe. Nor can we doubt, that long after every heathen pagoda has been converted into a Christian temple, — nay, long after the Bible shall have supplanted the Koran in every mosque and minaret, — will the perverted Christianity of