

time there was a spirit of inquiry and a desire for reform, which made them particularly accessible. For several years the hope was entertained by the missionaries and the converts that a reformation might be effected within the Armenian or Gregorian Church itself. Schools were opened, inquirers multiplied, and for a time even the Armenian patriarch himself expressed his satisfaction with the movement. It soon became apparent, however, that the ecclesiastics did not wish a genuine reform, and they inaugurated a violent persecution, which drove all the evangelicals out of the old church, and completed the organization of an evangelical church.

One hundred and twenty-five churches have now been organized, with a membership of about thirteen thousand. The first churches were naturally formed upon a Presbyterio-Congregational basis, after the polity of the missionaries who organized them; but as churches have multiplied no effort has been made by the missionaries to control their polity or to interfere with their perfect independence. They prefer to see them adopt the form that is the most natural expression of their religious life as it is modified by national characteristics. Some influential Protestants are of the opinion that an episcopal form—a modification of their ancient church government—is the best adapted to them as Orientals; but the large majority, having had an experience of self-government, are afraid of anything that resembles their former despotic system. The missionaries have held and still believe that the outcome of genuine missionary work is the organization of believers into self-supporting churches, having their own pastors, and that from the outset they should be independent of missionary control, and that the entire work should be committed to the churches as fast as they are able to assume it.

As to the general management of the missionary work during its present stage of development, after considerable discussion a plan was adopted by a general conference at Constantinople in 1883, and approved by the Board, which provides that missionaries and natives are to share the responsibility equally. Whenever there is a difference of opinion as to the use of missionary funds—a contingency which seldom arises—the missionary voice is to control. In everything else the responsibility is equal. This plan has worked well, and ought to have been adopted much earlier. Both parties have been benefited by this sharing of the work together, and it has been a gain to the work itself. It shows the people that the work is properly their own, and the missionaries are merely their helpers; and it is a step preparatory to the transfer of the whole responsibility to the people.

From the beginning of this work in Turkey the supreme aim has been, not educational, but evangelistic. The Bible has been the basis, and the effort has been to put the Bible within the reach of every family in their own vernacular. In this endeavor we have always had the most generous and hearty co-operation of the American and the British and Foreign Bible societies. A degree of education was necessary in order to make the