

good offices of Mr. Straus at Constantinople and Mr. Bissinger at Beirut several of these schools have been opened, but not all. The Turk publicly orders them opened and at the same time takes measures to have them kept closed. It is almost impossible to get a permit to purchase or build for school or church purposes. In some places all right of public assembly for religious worship has been denied. School teachers have been arrested as disturbers of the peace; churches have been closed and a government seal put on the door. The authorities are just now very jealous of even the foreign press, and European or American periodicals and journals are watched to see if anything of an unfriendly or critical tenor against Islam or Turkey appears. If so the magazine is not allowed to enter the empire.

A conflict between Christianity and Islam is coming on apace; it will not be a conflict of arms, but a struggle for moral supremacy. Christianity claims the right in the name of her Divine Master to win her way in the world wherever she can by the use of weapons which He Himself has put in her hands—persuasion, entreaty, argument, the demonstration of her great foundation truths, the appeal of divine love in sacrifice, the touch of human sympathy, the word of cheer, the deed of kindness, the helpful ministry, the gentle reproof and the solemn warning. In this great ministry of instruction and reformation she has the indorsement—in fact, she is the embodiment of the highest authority in the universe. She cannot concede that any earthly authority has the moral right—although it may for a time have the power—to forbid her entrance or banish her agencies, if she is true to her message and limits herself to the simple methods and the spiritual weapons she is entitled to use. The world is slow to recognize the fact that the consciences of all men are free. No authority has been given to any human power of church or state to rule the moral nature. God has created it free. Its freedom is essential to its moral accountability. When, therefore, a civil power undertakes to prohibit by force all contact of Christian truth with the consciences of its subjects, it is assuming an attitude which is an offense to the highest moral rights of the race, and usurping a function which does not rightly belong to human governments. We do not deny that much wrong has been done in this direction in the name of a false Christianity, but never with the sanction of the Christianity which the Bible teaches, and the Divine Master inspires and leads. Let the Christianity of our century, and especially of our beloved America, which we believe to be ripening into something nobler, sweeter, and more beneficent than that of long generations past, declare for a world-wide liberty of the conscience, and seek by all gentle and proper means to free the down-trodden nations from spiritual slavery, and bring mankind into that noble and genial atmosphere where the soul can have untrammelled intercourse with its Creator and freely seek its own highest welfare as God gives it light.