

The main form of Protestant missions in Turkey and Persia has been that of the American Board, whose Persian and Syrian missions, however, have been assumed by the Presbyterian Church. The American Board had mainly and ultimately in view the evangelization of the Moslems, who number about 16,000,000 out of the 22,000,000 of the Turkish Empire, since the Christian principalities have been detached. Incidentally, however, the missionaries aimed at reviving and purifying the Eastern churches. The hostility of the government has hitherto confined direct operations mainly to the latter object, though the missionaries have never lost the former out of sight. The Board has not had in view, and does not now have in view, the propagation of Protestantism as such. So far as spiritual life is revived, and superstitions done away, and spiritual despotism transformed into brotherly service, so far as burdensome observances are abolished and faith manifested in charity and pure morals, the intended work is done. The elder churches are so deeply intertwined with the Christian memories of their respective nations, above all of the Armenian nation, which professed the Gospel the earliest of any people in the world, that we can easily understand and sympathize with their desire to maintain the elder organizations. Unhappily, however, most of the Monophysite and Nestorian bishops, especially the former, and still more most of the Greek bishops, have shown themselves hostile to any innovations, however necessary for intellectual and spiritual revival, and so persecuting toward those of their people who desired a freer and more living Gospel, that the organization of Protestant churches soon showed itself a matter of necessity, although the influence of Protestantism is far from being confined within its own avowed limits, but is extending farther and farther within the elder churches, especially within the Armenian Church. The Gregorians, as the members of this Church are called, from its apostle Gregory the Illuminator, are

in some parts on cordial terms with the Protestants, and even more or less hold joint services with them. Unfortunately this good intelligence is not as widely extended as we could wish, or as it is hoped it may yet be. Among the Nestorians, it is known that a considerable number of the native clergy—deacons, priests, and even some bishops—have encouraged the missionary work. The precise forms of the work in the future may be left to the wisdom of the Head. It is certain that it will not relapse into the deadness of the past, and that a debt of lasting gratitude will be owing to the Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and United Presbyterians of our country, for Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt.

If we should estimate the number of Protestant communicants at 50,000 in European Turkey, Bulgaria, Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and Persia, this would be an exaggeration which the fact is rapidly moving to overtake. In Bulgaria the American Board and the American Methodists are at work; in European Turkey and Asia Minor the American Board; in Syria and Persia the American Presbyterians; in Egypt the United Presbyterians of our country (not to be confounded with the entirely different Scottish church of the same name), and the movement proceeding from the admirable schools of the Misses Whately, daughters of the former eminent Archbishop of Dublin. In Palestine all Protestant movements are only initial, the Church Missionary Society leading, though rather crossed than aided by Bishop Blyth, a worthy man, but infatuated with a somewhat fantastic dream of "corporate unity" with the Greek Church. In other parts of Turkey also, and in Persia, there are disintegrating interferences, some from England and some from America, which seem to have ritual propagandism more deeply at heart than the advancement of living faith. Yet the main work is not very greatly put back thereby.\*

\* The different statistical authorities are more or less in conflict, which will account for some inconsistencies of statement.