

PROTESTANTISM IN TURKEY.

The following statements, made by a correspondent of the *London Christian Times*, have a very special interest in the present crisis of affairs in the East.

The spread of Bible truth has been such in Turkey for the last twenty years, that it is impossible for me to believe that it is now about to give its work up to the destroyer. A distinguished Christian traveller from England recently put the question to the American missionaries here, whether the statement made by Mr. Layard in Parliament, that there are more than forty towns and villages in Turkey in which are Protestant congregations, is strictly true? This led to the writing down of a list of names of places, and the cheering fact was established, that in more than 200 towns and villages in this empire there are Protestant assemblies for divine worship on every Lord's day. The largest of these congregations is that at Aintab, about three days north-east from Aleppo, where there are more than 200 Protestants, and the smallest may perhaps not number more than three or four souls. But yet in all these different places, the word of God has entered, and some souls are found who, we may hope, are his spiritual worshippers. And besides these, who have openly avowed themselves as Protestants, sticking all the consequences, there are known to be thousands among the Armenians, in the capital and throughout the interior of Turkey, who are really Protestant in sentiment, though not yet sufficiently moved by religious truth to impel them to take an open stand for the gospel before the world. Now, may we not reasonably hope that all this preparation is to be followed by a glorious completion? Twenty-five years ago, not a single Protestant could be found among the natives of this land, and Protestantism was either wholly unknown, or where known at all, it was considered as synonymous with infidelity and atheism. And, alas! the careless and worldly lives of most of the few foreign Protestants residents here at that time, gave too strong a confirmation to this original Jesuit calumny.—In this respect also there has been a very pleasing change; and we have now persons of noble minds living here, from England and America, and from various parts of the Continent, letting their light shine on all around. Just look, for a moment, at the following comparative statistics:—

Number of Protestant clergymen labouring in Constantinople and its suburbs in.....	1830—0
Do, do, do.....	1854—19
Number of Protestant sermons preached on every Sabbath in different languages in do.....	1830—0
Do, do, do.....	1854—26
Number of Protestant schools in do.....	1830—0
Do, do, do.....	1854—14

You will understand that these statistics refer to Constantinople and its immediate environs alone. In the whole Turkish empire (including Constantinople) there are at the present time not fewer than sixty-five Protestant preachers! And I have another pleasing and most encouraging fact to state, which is, that although among these there are representatives of several different branches of the Protestant Church, yet, so far as I know, without at present a single exception, they are all labouring harmoniously for one and the same great object. For example, at the metropolis, from which I now write, among the nineteen clergymen mentioned, there are Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Lutherans, and one Waldensian, and yet but one spirit seems to pervade them all; and they often come together for prayer and conference in regard to the great work in which they are engaged.

SPLIT AMONG THE JEWS.

Are our readers aware of what is happening among the British Jews? A few weeks since, the Board of Deputies held its annual meeting. This Board is an institution of about one hundred and fifty years standing. It possesses no religious functions or authority, but is concerned solely for the liberties and secular rights of the Jewish community. Its members are delegated, in stated proportions, by all the synagogues of the United Kingdom. Some ten years ago, in London, a small body of Jews separated from their co-religionists, on the ground that the traditions of the fathers are not binding, and that the Bible, (that is, the Old Testament) and the Bible alone, is the religion of Israelites. The seceders constituted a new synagogue, known by the name of the Margaret Street Synagogue. They are a highly respected body, and their leader, the Rev. W. Bresslau, is known to us as a gentleman of ability and character. A *Cherem*, or act of excommunication, was shortly directed against him by Chief Rabbi Herschell, cutting them off from the communion and privileges of the orthodox Jew.

Of the sixty or seventy deputies who assembled at the annual meeting of the Board, it appears that four gentlemen—Messrs. Johnmolin, Elkin, Ellis, and Davis, chosen by four orthodox provincial synagogues, Sunderland, Portsmouth, Chatham, and Norwich—were members of the heterodox congregation of Margaret Street. A formal objection was at once raised to their taking their seats. In anticipation of the proceedings of the day, the opinion of Sir F. Theagar and Mr. Badeley had been obtained, whether the Board were entitled to examine into the personal sentiments of men admitted to be duly elected by recognized constituencies. The opinion was in the affirmative. Counsel held, that though the Board has no religious functions, it is a body of religionists, charged with the

interests of Jews, as such. It, therefore, the Board is of opinion that a man has ceased to be a Jew, it may reject him, however conscientiously chosen. A division was consequently taken on the question that the four deputies be rejected. Thirty voted for, thirty against their admission. The casting vote was given by Sir Moses Montefiore, and by that vote they were excluded.

It would exceed the limits of this article to describe the intense party excitement which this result has evoked. The Households voted with the majority. Alderman Salomons, who also did so, in a published address says, "What I presume I must call the religious element in the Board (Sir Moses Montefiore's party) is evidently quite prepared to carry the scene of discord, hitherto confined to the metropolis, into the bosom of every congregation in the kingdom to maintain its false position, and both within and without the community, take all the consequences of this struggle." The Board of Management of the New Synagogue, Great St. Helens, London, have expressed "their sense of the enlightened views and public spirit" displayed in the letter of Alderman Salomons. The *Hebrew Observer*, a weekly journal, says, "We say it with deep grief, the struggle is renewed, and we apprehend that it will be carried on more fiercely than ever."

These expectations are being fully realised. The minority have resolved that no lesser remedy will suffice for the crisis than to insist on the repeal of the *Cherem* lying upon the body of the seceders. They say that it is not enough to press the admission into the Board of the rejected deputies, but their ecclesiastical excommunication must be nullified. A crowded assembly was addressed at Manchester on the 29th ultimo, by Mr. T. Theodore, who, in a lecture of great learning and ability, is said to have satisfied men of all parties that "the members of the Margaret Street Synagogue are not legally under any sentence of excommunication."

The entire party of movement and of progress are committed to this course, which involves the principle that the reception of the Talmud, or oral tradition as of equal obligation with the word of God, is not binding upon Israelites. If the *Cherem* is taken off from the Margaret Street Synagogue, it will amount to an admission that nothing is binding upon Israel but the Scripture. Should this be so, our readers will believe with us, that the time to labour Zion is not distant. The impartial, prayerful use of the Old Testament, as the only rule of faith and practice, must lead men to seek for the Messiah—to seek till they find.—*London Christian Times*.

A schism, similar to the one described in the above article, has existed for some years among the Jews on the Continent of Europe and in the East. The seceders are called Karaites, or Jews who keep by the text of the word of God, and reject traditions. They abound most in the Crimea, and hence some erroneously give that country the honour of originating the name. Their prayer-book is a beautiful compilation, being taken almost entirely from the Scriptures, with a few hymns; and they do not omit any book of the Bible in the Scriptures, as some have asserted. The other Jews hate this sect more than they do the Gentiles.—*London Record*.

MORAVIANS—LARRADOR.

A VISIT TO THE MISSION STATION AT NORFOLK.

I reached the Station on Sabbath afternoon, and entered the Chapel in company with the two missionaries, who were stationed there. On entering we found some 200 of the natives collected and engaged in the performance of sacred music. Following the Missionaries towards the desk, one of them stepped in, and the other beckoned me to a seat and sat down beside me.

In a few moments the music ceased. The missionary from the desk then called the number of a Hymn or Ode, and read the first stanza.—The piece filled four pages of a large hymn-book in the Esquimaux language. The whole congregation appeared to be supplied with books, and those who performed on the instruments (of which seven were used) had music-books placed upon stands before them. A sound was given by one of the instruments—a moment's silence, and all the instruments, together with voices, amounting to about 150, male and female, joined in the performance of a slow, distinct and solemn piece of music. The voices were clear and animated, and all in perfect harmony with each other and with the instruments, one of which was a very powerful bass viol, which seemed to fill the whole space with its long mellow notes, and yet all the other instruments and voices could be heard distinctly. I sat with surprise and delight surveying the scene before me, and mentally exclaiming "What hath God wrought." Can it really be that this reputed savage and degraded race are capable of such cultivation and such enjoyment as their countenance manifest? Their performance lasted about 20 minutes without any discord or faltering that I could discover, and seemed to flow with the greatest ease, and in perfect harmony without any apparent effort. As soon as the music ceased, the missionaries rose, beckoning me to follow. We retired to their dwelling apartments. I was somewhat disappointed to find that all the public religious services of the day were over, this last consisting of music only; the two other stated services of the day were past before my arrival, in which prayer and preaching formed parts. I enquired how they had taught their people music in such perfection; they replied that a great deal of labour and attention had been bestowed on them in the early stages of the mission.