

## The Presbyterian Review

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Toronto, Nov. 19, 1896.

### Helpless Armenia.

TURKEY'S promise of drastic reforms said to have been extracted from the Sultan by France is not regarded in Britain as genuine, yet it has aroused great interest indicating as it does that Russia and France have been active in the matter. Italy, also, has been insisting on the fulfilment of the undertaking given to the powers and has been demanding indemnity for outrages upon her subjects. These are surface indications of what may be a serious groundswell to the Turk.

Considerable light is thrown upon the situation by the Duke of Argyle who reviews the whole question in a letter of singular force, published in the *Times*. The root of the evil he finds in "the dangerous instability of the existing distribution of territorial power in Europe, and the universal sense of that instability which sits like a nightmare on all its governments." "With the exception of Spain," says his Grace, "it may be said with truth that there is not one of the greater continental nations that is really satisfied with its present territory—not one of them that would not like to get something that now belongs to others—or is not uneasy lest it should lose something that is not its own." Therefore, the huge armies of Europe, the jealousy, the intriguing and the fear of isolation and of a European war. Then follows this truly terrible and sadly true indictment. "This is the reason why governments which call themselves the 'Great Powers' of Europe have been exhibiting themselves as the most conspicuous impotencies in the world. This is the reason why they have cowered before a brutal despotism which they have set up and fortified in its dominion over millions of their fellow-Christians, both by their diplomacy and by their arms. This is the reason why, with an awful hypocrisy they pretend to talk of that despotism as an independent Power, when it is nothing but the creature of their hands, and can be made at any moment the submissive instrument of their will. This is why they talk of the danger of war, when they know perfectly well that if they were themselves united in any demands on Turkey there could be no danger of war at all. Turkey has now no frontier fortresses on the Danube—nor on the Balkan—not even another Plevna to stop for a moment an advance of European armies and navies on her capital. No; what the Continental Cabinets have been fearing is war among and between themselves—not war between themselves united and Turkey standing alone. It is to conceal this discreditable fact that they talk vaguely of fearing worse massacres if Turkey is coerced, and avow the shameless doctrine that the blood and tears of millions whom they have pretended to protect is—however deplorable—a necessary human holocaust in order to avoid any risk to their own callous and cowardly repose."

The Duke sees not reform but dissolution facing Turkey; "The dismemberment of her territories is now coming into sight," and he urges that the concert of Europe be kept up by letting it be seen and known what the solution

is to which it must look, and he sums up by putting his solution into broad yet definite terms, thus: "Austria has a vital interest in not allowing herself to be enveloped and outflanked by a Great Power to the East and South. Russia has a vital interest in getting free access for her fleets to the Mediterranean. All the Maritime powers are entitled to seek a similar free access to the Euxine, independent of the will of Russia. England has no separate or individual interest at all beyond the extension of peace and plenty and of her commerce over some of the richest regions of Europe and Asia. Surely, then the solution of the difficulty is easy if this principle be agreed upon. It hardly matters at all how the remainder of the Balkans be sub-divided among new or existing governments. They are all at least tolerable, while the status quo is not. Let the Bosphorous and Dardanelles be neutralized—declared open to all the world. Let no fortifications be allowed to close that highway of all the nations; and then the so called powers of Europe will be redeemed from the disgraceful condition to which they have been reduced—namely, that of protecting and maintaining a savage and brutal Government over millions of the human race, merely because they cannot agree among themselves as to a problem which really represents no difficulty at all, if they will but follow historical precedents and recognize the known interests and demands of Russia and of Austria and of all the maritime states

### Home Missions.

Readers of the *Presbyterian Review* are well aware of the supreme importance this journal has always attached to the cause of Home Missions. The Home field is to the church as the family is to the community; as is the individual to the family; or as is the heart to the individual. Let the heart be right, and the circles which it influences will be leavened aright. We turn therefore with no little concern to the statement just issued by Rev. Dr. Cochrane, Convener of the Home Missions Committee. He shows the extensive field and its importance—and it is of vital importance; then he deals with the funds and here he becomes doleful. "If this rate is continued, during the present year," he says, "then the Committee must take further steps to keep their expenditure within the amount placed at their disposal. This can only be done by reducing grants, or abandoning important fields now occupied, and refusing rigidly all new applications. The Committee are slow to believe that the Church is prepared for such action. If Presbytery Clerks, members of the Home Mission Committee and Ministers will only state these facts to their several Presbyteries and congregations, the membership will respond. But unless individual Ministers do their part, and congregations endeavour conscientiously to reach the amount allocated to them by Presbyteries, the result will be disappointment and suffering to the hundreds of Missionaries and families under the care of the Committee, and disastrous to our cause in the vast North-West mission field." We appeal, we must appeal; it is our privilege to appeal for a liberal response to the committee's cry. Let the church come forward to the full extent of her privilege.

### The Late Rev. George Smellie, D.D.

One of the fathers of the Church, who, in his day, wielded a wide influence, has passed away in the person of the late Rev. Dr. George Smellie, of Fergus. He was one of the oldest Presbyterian ministers in Canada and had an extensive circle of intimate friends in the Church. For more than fifty years he resided in Fergus, having been pastor of St. Andrew's Church from 1843 to 1844 and of Melville Church (Free) from 1844 until 1888 when he retired from the active ministry; and he still resided in the town until the death, two