

# Methodist Magazine and Review.

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## THE UNSPEAKABLE TURK.

The Rev. Dr. Cyrus Hamlin, founder of Robert College, Constantinople, and one of the editors of this book, than whom few men better understand the problem, writes thus of the failure of Islam :

"Islam as a religion dates from the Hegira, A.D. 622. The spread of the faith was slow and disheartening until the Prophet took the sword. From that time forward he went on conquering and to conquer. The Christian faith never spread with such rapidity and power. There were potent reasons for this, which we have only to name. The terrible alternative, 'Islam or Death,' was simple and cogent. The form of acceptance was extremely simple : 'There is no God but God, and Mohammed is the Prophet of God !' The repeating of this simple sentence is the confession of faith, makes the person a Mussulman, and saves him from death. Successive tribes, beaten in battle, eagerly accepted this condition of life. Idolatry must be abandoned; polygamy and slavery remained. No moral change of character was required. A ritual of prayer, ablutions, prohibition of wine, fasting alleviated by feasting—a sensual paradise promised to

the believer, and a fearful hell to the unbeliever ! It required only one battle to convert a tribe. When the new faith was once on its feet, led by the brave and impetuous Prophet, its progress was like that of an avalanche.

"For a time the Prophet and his immediate successor were tried by defections from the faith, quite openly and in considerable numbers, among the Jewish and Christian converts. This led to one of the strongest principles or laws of Islam—death to the renegade ! This has never, to this day, failed of execution, wherever Islam has had the power. When the penalty cannot be inflicted openly, it is done secretly by dagger or poison. This has kept the body of believers solid.

"The Prophet found many ready to submit to his authority as governor, without force of arms, if they might retain their faith. The Prophet, in order to secure a great number of valuable tax-payers and commissariat supplies, promulgated the law that all 'peoples of a book'—that is, of a divine revelation—as Jews and Christians, should be received on submission and the paying of a tax of subjection. To all others—idolaters and men in arms—death or slavery. This remarkable faith, half good, half bad, pursued its conquering way over all the ancient countries of the Christian faith. The Cross everywhere went down before the Crescent. Christianity had become corrupt, and governments

\* "Turkey and the Armenian Atrocities." By the Rev. Edwin M. Bliss, assisted by the Rev. Cyrus Hamlin, D.D., with an introduction by Miss Frances E. Willard. Profusely illustrated. Philadelphia: Hubbard Publishing Co. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 574. Price, Cloth, \$1.50. From this book, by the courtesy of the publishers, the illustrations which accompany this article are taken.