

means. If any fanatical Moslem privately assassinates the victim, or his neighbors or friends poison him, no questions are asked and the government is saved all trouble. Even in Egypt, where there is considerable liberty, no convert is safe from private conspiracy by fanatical Moslems.

If we seek for the reason for this inflexible persistence in the desperate methods of the old Mohammedan bigotry we find it in the instinct of self-preservation, and also in the undying spirit of Islamic pride and fanaticism. Turkey is on the defensive. Islam sees that it is a struggle for existence. The Turk realizes that as things are now tending he must go to the wall, and Moslems must be left behind in the race. The Christian communities are coming forward so rapidly in wealth and numbers, and rising so conspicuously to positions of social respectability, education, influence, refinement and general culture, that the Moslem feels himself to be sadly behind the times and out of date. While he clings to his religion and to the old Islamic traditions and practices he cannot compete with the Christian in the race of civilization and improvement. He must, therefore, by all means at his command, strive to set back this rising tide of missionary influence and especially take stringent measures to prevent the Mohammedan constituency of the empire from coming at all within the range of its movement.

The Turkish Government, representing both church and state, is reluctant to allow and cannot ignore a social and religious revolution of this kind. Islam must not lose its proud position; its prestige and glory must not be dimmed. Liberality, so the Moslem reasons, would be fatal to both church and state. Self-reform is both dangerous and impossible. Islam needs no reformation. Amalgamation with other existing social and religious organizations is self-annihilation. Joining the march of progress and civilization is losing its distinctive identity. Concessions to Christianity are disparagements to Islam. The Sultan himself cannot make them without putting himself in danger. Christianity can be and has been tolerated in Christians just as many other nuisances are submitted to because you cannot get rid of them, but never can Christianity be tolerated in Moslems. Liberty of conscience in this sense is treason to heaven.

In many other respects mission work is an offense to the Turk. The translation of the Bible into so many languages of his empire,—the united work of the Bible societies and missionaries—the industrious and successful distribution of the Scriptures, at the present time, amounting to about 100,000 full or partial copies a year, and making a total of 2,250,000 copies since organized work of this kind began in the Levant, is an impertinence which so annoys him that he seizes innocent colporteurs and puts them in prison as common criminals, where they often stay for months. He will do this even though