

But, while violent rejoinder from high places is doubtless better than silent contempt, how shall I bear up under the load of detraction which my adversary has ruthlessly heaped upon me in his frantic reply? May the Prophet fortify me!

And now to the fray.

It is not my intention to follow "R. W. Douglas," through the tangled maze of his remarkable misapprehension of my "Plea" and "Defence." To do so would be but little edifying. These articles, to speak *a la* "Senex," suffer violence, and the violent hath taken them by force.

What surprises me greatly in this controversy is the astounding views which Mr. Douglas directs against the people whose cause I have ventured to champion.

What mad dog has bitten him? The Turks are pretty bad, but why foam at the mouth at them? They have not a monopoly of vice. Can it be that he is a disappointed holder of Turkish bonds, who resents in this way the distressing bankruptcy of his unfortunate debtors?

If so, I can make every allowance for him. Wanting some such explanation, his extraordinary rage against them is a puzzle to me. He is certainly without the judicial calm which a disinterested spectator of passing events would be expected to shew. We who demur to this indiscriminate and wholesale condemnation of a nation whose fortunes are on the decline, certainly do not run amuck in this blind and bitter fashion, or we might find a wide and fertile field for disparagement and abuse in the character and history both of Russia, and of the subject peoples whose cause Mr. Douglas and his party so wildly take up. But nowhere do I see a disposition amongst us to make capital in this way. The facts are sometimes touched upon, but that is all. Yet there is something very singular, when one thinks of it, in the fact that so superior a people as the Christian population of Turkey are made out to be, should have so miserably succumbed to the conquering arms of the Turks, and have remained in such abject bondage for so many centuries. Other peoples have suffered defeat by the accidents of war, but have quickly reasserted themselves and won their way back to dominancy.

There is a notable instance of this in our own history. Saxon England, after the battle of Hastings, lay quite as much under the feet of the conquering Norman as ever Christian did under Turk. Yet how speedily did the solid, indomitable qualities of the Saxon come again to the front, and give point and expression to the national character! Why? Because the Saxons were men, as good as, or better than, the Normans whom the fortune of war made their conquerors, and although reduced to a state of serfdom could not be held in that condition, but were bound to regain their position as freemen. The Christian population of Turkey originally fell into the hands of their conquerors because they were a degenerate race, who had lost manliness and forfeited their right to an independent existence. They passed under the yoke, and have remained in bondage because they had not those regal qualities essential to dominant races, and which inevitably bring men to the surface from any depth of temporary immersion which ill-luck or passing weakness may subject them to.

Ugly as may seem some of the prospects which its admission suggests, there is nevertheless a profound and irrefutable truth in that hard doctrine of Carlyle's, "might is right." He who has the upper hand upon the whole, merits it as long as he can maintain it. His right melts away then only when his hand loses its might and cunning. Power, whether physical or mental, or both combined, has ever held, and will always hold sway upon this earth. Now apply this doctrine to Turkey and her subject populations. Take away Russian influence, and Turkey face to face with her rebellious subjects is by a long, long way the master. Any opposition which they can offer melts away like morning dew before the superior manliness and courage of their masters. Even free Greece would shrivel up like a mushroom under the mid-day sun were she to throw herself unsupported in the way of Turkey. I very much question if the standard of insurrection would ever have been raised, but for outside intrigue and encouragement.

Then as to the capacity of the Turk for reform, why does Mr. Douglas shut his eyes to the testimony of the American missionaries? Here we have the evidence of conscientious and Christian men to the tolerance and beneficence of Turkish rule, and to the intolerance of Russia. And we have further the evidence of a man in every way competent to know the truth, Hobart Pasha, that Turkey's honest efforts in the way of reform have always been treacherously undermined and sometimes rendered null by the designing machinations of Russia.

Even so anti-Turk a man as Lord Shaftesbury is fain to admit, in view of the abominations that are being perpetrated in Bulgaria, the utter hypocrisy of Russia.

If the Turkish power be broken it will be not by the native and irrepressible superiority of its suzerainties, but by the overpowering might of Russia. The Turk may be a good deal behindhand, but he has the capacity and the will for improvement.

He is even now a better master upon the whole than Russia would be, or than his Christian subjects would be to themselves.

That the Turk is not immaculate is freely enough admitted, but neither is he the outrageous and unspeakable brute that some people would make him out to be.

A truce, however, to this bootless hammering for and against the Turk.

The practical question before Englishmen at the present time is not whether a heavy charge of misdoing can or cannot be brought against him, but whether on the whole anything in the interests of England and of humanity can be made of him.

England, by the policy of her present administration, has decided that, bad as the Turk may be, he is notwithstanding amenable to reason and open to improvement; and, his longevity being very much to England's advantage, she has accordingly espoused his cause, not as against his Christian subjects, but as against Russia, his hereditary enemy and her probable foe.

As a patriotic British subject I, in common with the majority of my fellow-countrymen, heartily approve of this conclusion, and wish the Turk a long life and a better one. We have evidence that within the last twenty years he has

improved, and we believe that under the beneficent and enlightened tutelage of England he will go on improving. As long as he is reasonable, and the man he is, we shall befriend him. When his improvement becomes hopeless, and his manhood a thing of the past, we must give him up, even though it be against our own interest.

And now, in conclusion, let me say that this will be my last word on the subject. I thank the Editor of this paper for his courteous admission of views opposed to his own, and expressed with a freedom, doubtless, somewhat irksome to him.

To "R. W. Douglas" I leave, if he wish it, the monopoly, whether of Olympian *hauteur*, or of Billingsgate abuse. This condescension in noticing me, although it has led to his indignant discovery of "nonsense," "utter nonsense," and a strong affinity to the sentiments of the "Father of lies," in my humble remarks, is doubtless a boon to remember and to be grateful for. A continuance of the discussion would, I fear, only lead to the intensifying of his exasperating discoveries, the multiplication of explosive rejoinders, and the disgust of readers of this paper.

May Allah enlighten him and

TURK!

A SUNDAY IN THE BACKWOODS.

This summer I spent my holidays in the lake country north of the town of Cobourg. During our first week we camped near a very pretty fall,—a regular Minnehaha, not far from the village of Minden. The following Sunday I was put into harness by a friend who at present enjoys the position of Presbyterian minister in that neighborhood. Early in the morning—about eight o'clock, I think—we started for the scene of operations, a log church, some twelve miles away. Our conveyance, a sort of buggy, bearing the stylish name of "buck-board," was made to do duty for three,—the minister, the minister's wife, and myself. Our drive, though a rough one, was full of interest. For a long time we followed the course of a river which now flowed between banks of emerald, now went splashing and spluttering among the hard-ribbed Laurentian rocks, which are so wonderfully at home in this northern country. After a while the stream widened out into an eccentric but charming sheet of water called Horse-shoe Lake. You could not tell which way was the length of it, nor which way the breadth, there was such a cunning complexity of bays, headlands, river-stretches, and islands. It never seemed the same lake two minutes in succession, for every turn in the road gave us some fresh glimpse of its changeable beauty. No sooner had we lost sight of Horse-shoe Lake on our right than we caught sight of Twelve-mile Lake on our left. On the eastern shore of this lake stood the church.

As we drew near the simple log-building, a new style of church-going appeared to us. Not with rustle of silk along the sidewalk, nor with pompous roll of carriage-wheels were the people coming, but in Hiawatha's own conveyance,—that light, graceful, ingenious thing, the birch-bark canoe. On this side and on that we could see the diamond-like flash of the paddles, as with quick but steady stroke the worshippers approached the house of God. Finally, when the last canoe had reached the shore, we went in and began our services.

Do you ask what sort of folks the sixty or seventy people were who made up the congregation? Were they not rough and ignorant and hard to preach to? Let me take up the adjectives in order. Were the people rough? Yes; a little. Most of the faces were very bronzed, and most of the hands very hard and coarse. Some of the men came to church carrying their coats on their arms, and some came without any coats at all. The women folk were not fashionably attired. They did not need to study how to sit down because of the "hold-backs," "skirt-lifters," &c., which modern society prescribes for the modern girl. According, then, to a fashion-plate estimate, my hearers were undeniably rough. Were they ignorant? No. In the first place, they understood their own line of business just as well as any business man or professional man understands his. And more than that, though the Post-office was miles away they got their papers, and knew something of the way the great world wags. Shrewd, intelligent, thoughtful people many of them were. Were they hard to preach to? Again I answer No! Some of our town and city congregations are like a full sponge,—so saturated with sermons that they can't hold any more. Not so with these people. Their minds were fresh and receptive. They had manners enough to listen to the man that spoke to them. Never did I enjoy a service more than in that log-built church.

Now for the service. The pastor of the church opened with prayer, and the giving out of the 23rd Psalm. In front of the pulpit was the precentor's desk, and behind the desk was the precentor himself. Among my boyish memories is one of a kirk-precentor, who, with gown and bands, looked as grand as the minister. No gown and bands had this backwoods precentor, but flummery, or even for a coat. Gravely he rose and pitched the tune. Gravely the people rose and sang with him:

"The Lord's my shepherd; I'll not want—
He makes me down to lie."

The singing may not have been good, I don't know. But this I do know, that the quaint old psalm seemed to ring out with new force and meaning when sung near the "still waters" of the lake, which I could see gleaming through the windows, and by these dwellers in the forest, whose life must have made the thought of a sheep-herding God peculiarly dear to them. After singing came the reading and the prayer. Then the sermon. I felt nervous, for I did want to speak some helpful, hopeful words to these settlers, and I scarcely knew how to do it. My subject was the influence of Hope upon life. I did not lack for illustrations. The tourist penetrating the woods in search of more beautiful landscapes; the *voyageur* clinging to his upturned canoe, and wearying for daylight and help from the shore; the settler battling with the "forest primeval" in hope of wealthier days,—all came in naturally to fix the higher truths of the Christian life. The people listened well to a sermon which before some audiences would have been a very broad mark for critical sharp-shooters.

Service being over we went for dinner to a house about two miles from the