

CHRISTIANITY AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions give in their last report a very encouraging account of their missions in the East. The seminary at Constantinople has twenty-five pupils, and the female boarding-school, twenty-two. Five free schools for Protestant children, taught by pious natives, contain 173 pupils. The desire for the Holy Scriptures is steadily increasing all over the country. In the region of Erzurum, more copies were sold last year than in the two or three previous years. Even the enemies of the mission seek for copies, through the native Protestants. The demand is great in the country around Amnash. More than two thousand copies, in different languages, were disposed at Constantinople in the year ending with June last. Copies find their way into Russia, and are frequently bought and carried into Roumelia and Bulgaria. But the charter granted to the Protestant Christians by the Imperial Government of Turkey is a matter of the highest and most exciting interest.

Say the Board in their report —
 "For some three years or more there has been a general recognition, and the complaints of the community have been listened to by the Porte; but it seems there was nothing which necessarily survived a change of administration. The firman now obtained, being from the Sultan himself, and placed in their own hands, gives them the stability and permanency to which all Christians, but the older Christian communities enjoy. They are distinctly declared to have the same privileges of building churches, holding burying-grounds, &c., that are granted to the other rayahs. A Turkish Pasha has been appointed to attend to their affairs; and they are to appoint a waker or agent from among themselves, as their organ of transacting business with the Government, and a council or committee to decide upon the civil affairs of the community. At the request of Sir Stratford Canning, the British Ambassador, in which the Christian world is much interested —
 "Thirteen of the leading Protestants, says Mr. Dwight, called upon him on the occasion of his procuring for them this charter of rights, and for three quarters of an hour he addressed them on their duties and responsibilities in view of their present position in the Empire. He told them that they ought to thank God that they were the first to be relieved from the shackles of superstition, and to be made acquainted with the pure gospel of Christ. He told them that many eyes were upon them here, and that they ought to excel all others in the land in faithful obedience to the Government, in a kind and brotherly deportment to those of other religious opinions, and in a universally honest and upright example. Again and again did he exhort them to act, in all things, according to the principles and doctrines of the gospel. From the impression made upon their minds, he must have spoken with great tenderness and power. Their hearts were all melted, and their countenances betrayed the deep interest and strong emotion with which they were struggling within. Ambassador for himself was moved almost to tears, and expressed to them his high gratification at the interest they manifested in his counsel and warnings. The scene was truly affecting, and will long be remembered. How admirable are the ways of Providence, in putting in such a post, for such times, such a man!"

"A letter from our brethren at Constantinople to Sir Stratford, acknowledging his valuable services in this matter, with his reply, may be found in the Missionary Herald for June."

"The present number of Protestants in Turkey is estimated at about fifteen hundred. The following paragraph is from the close of a late letter from the mission —

"No such class of persons existed in this country, when your missionaries first came here; and now they have become numerous and important enough to call for a distinct recognition as a separate civil organization, by and of the Sultan himself. This community is, therefore, composed not only of Protestant Armenians, but also of Protestant Greeks, Jews, Syrians, Maronites, and Druzes; and just now a body of Protestant Germans, who have removed from Russia to the borders of the Danube, and have voluntarily become subjects of the Porte, are asking for admission to its privileges. The firman is general, and secures protection to all Protestant subjects of Turkey, whatever may have been their origin or former connection. We understand that both Nazareth and Sidde, as well as in some other towns in Syria, a considerable number of families belonging formerly to the Greek and Catholic churches, now openly profess Protestantism, in connection with the Anglo-Prussian episcopate of Jerusalem. These also must be arranged under the same civil organization, having the same civil head with the Armenians in other parts of the Empire."

The Head of the Mahomedan Empire has recently won applause from the world by several good services, but the charter which he has conferred upon Protestant Christians outshines in glory, as we trust it will in beneficence, all others.

CHARTER OF THE PROTESTANTS IN THE TURKISH EMPIRE.

To my Vizir, Mohammed Pasha, Perfect of the Police in Constantinople, the honorable Minister and glorious Counsellor, the Model of the world, and Regulator of the affairs of the community; who, directing the public interests with sublime prudence, consolidating the structure of the Empire with wisdom, and strengthening the columns of its prosperity and glory, is the recipient of every grace from the Most High. May God prolong his glory!

"When this sublime and august mandate reaches you, let it be known that hitherto those of my Christian subjects who have embraced the Pro-

testant faith, in consequence of their not being under any special appointed superintendance, and in consequence of the Patriarchs and primates of their former sects, which they have renounced, naturally not being able to attend to their affairs, have suffered much inconvenience and distress. But in necessary accordance with my imperial compassion, which is the support of all, and which is manifested to all classes of my subjects, it is contrary to my imperial pleasure that any one class of them should be without the benefit of my offering of aid.

As, therefore, by reason of their faith, the above mentioned are already a separate community, it is my total compassionate will that for the sake of better, the conducting of their affairs, and that they may obtain ease and quiet, and safety, a faithful and trustworthy person from amongst themselves, and by their own selection, should be appointed, with the title of 'Agent of the Protestants,' and that he should be in relations with the Prefecture of the Police.

It shall be the duty of the Agent to have charge the register of the male members of the community, which shall be kept at the police; and the Agent shall cause to be registered therein all births and deaths in the community. And all applications for passports and marriage licenses, and all petitions on affairs concerning the community, that are to be presented to the Sublime Porte, or to any other department, must be given in under the official seal of the Agent.

For the execution of my will, this my imperial sublime mandate and august command has been especially issued and given from my sublime chancery.

Hence, then, who act the minister above named, according as it has been explained above, will execute to the letter the preceding ordinance; and, as the collection of the capitation tax and the delivery of passports are subject to particular regulations, you will not do anything contrary to those regulations. You will not permit anything to be required of them, in the matter of other petitions, for marriage licenses or restrictions. You will see to it, that like the other communities of the Empire, in all their affairs, such as procuring conveniences and places of worship, they should have every facility and every needed assistance. You will not permit that any of the other community shall in any way interfere with their affairs, or with their worldly matters or concerns, or, in short, with any of their affairs, civil or secular or religious, that thus they may be free to execute the wages of their faith.

And it is my command upon you not to allow them to be molested in law in these particulars, or in any others; and that all attention and perseverance be put in requisition to maintain them in quiet and security. And in case of necessity, they shall be free to make representatives regarding their affairs through their Agent to the Sublime Porte.

When this my imperial will shall be brought to your knowledge and appreciation, you will have this august decree registered in the necessary department, and then give it over to remain in the hands of those my subjects. And see you to it, that its requirements be always in future performed in their full import.

"Thus know thou, and respect my sacred signet! Written in the holy month of Moharrem, 1267. (November, 1850.) Given in the well-guarded city Constantinople."

CONTINENTAL EUROPE.

Dr. Baird, on his return from a tour of observation on the continent of Europe, visited Edinburgh, during the session of the Free Church Assembly, and was invited to give a public statement of the results of his observations. This he did in a long speech, which we find condensed by the Editor of the Boston Recorder. Dr. Baird began his review with the following

DETAILS.

"This nation with four and a-half millions of people, was wholly Romanist, till recently. In 1836, there were three Protestant clergymen; there are now about twenty. In 1836, he found in Brussels one minister preaching to one hundred and fifty people in a weigh-house. Him he encouraged to go to America, and raise funds to build a church; which he did, to the amount of \$10,000. His church is now attended by three hundred people.

HOLLAND.

In Holland he found great inquiry for the truth, and the prospects of evangelical religion are more encouraging. The National Church, is indeed, in a hopeless state, but faithful ministers are gradually increasing, and there is a great increase of true piety among the people. This is the case more particularly in Amsterdam, and Hague. There is a great demand for Scriptures.

GERMANY.

In Germany a double movement is in progress, a movement of truth and infidelity. The deplorable state of the National Church is the cause of this. The separation of the Government from the church seems manifestly coming. There is a great spread of the spirit of liberty, and of something more than liberty. It is becoming fashionable for the people to turn away from the churches. But at the same time, the number of those who love the truth is increasing, and they are becoming more and more established in the truth. He was present at a meeting at Elberfeld, where eight hundred ministers and two thousand laymen, embracing persons of all shades of faith, from the highest to the lowest, and that was a representation of the state of things throughout Germany. But