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## PROGRESS OF EDUCATION IN TURKEY.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Athenæum* gives the following interesting account of the present state of education in Turkey:

The Medressehs, or Mussulman Colleges, are to be found in all the cities on a greater or less scale, and more or less in number. The nature of these establishments is pretty well known. They assimilate to the colleges of the middle ages, where scholastic theology, and philosophy, and canon law were taught in a dead language, the dead language for Turkey being the Arabic; but it must be observed, that in Asia, beyond the line of Asia Minor, the Arabic is a living language, and the Turkish a foreign language.

Nevertheless, the Medresseh is not more flourishing in the Arab-speaking provinces than in the Turkish-speaking provinces. Bagdad and Damascus are no longer great schools of learning; the predominance of the Turkish element is sufficient to unsettle the supremacy of Arabic learning; while in the Arabic as in the Turkish provinces, the endowments of the Medressehs through the change in the value of money, are no longer adequate for the maintenance of the professors or students. The student must become truly the poor scholar of the middle ages; and even in Constantinople, many of the thousands of students receive their dole from the *imaret*, or public soup-kitchen, affording a bare ration.

It is in Constantinople alone that the Medressehs can be said to survive, and that is rather by the decline of the provincial Medressehs. Hence, as a political consequence, the diminution of power of the ecclesiastical and fanatical element, and the consequent increase of power of the Kiatibs, while the thousands of mollahs and students in the metropolis, although not wanting

in the disposition, can no longer exercise their turbulent hostility against reform.

The Government has honestly set itself to the reform and utilization of the Medressehs, but the spirit of conservative resistance has been too strong and the result will ultimately be the earlier and more complete subjugation of the old ecclesiastics under circumstances created and favoured by their own obstinacy and blindness. The political power of the Ulema is now only a shadow; their stronghold in the possession of judicial appointments is assailed by the establishment of independent civil and criminal courts; their enjoyment of ecclesiastical and educational endowments is rendered onerous by the constant decline in value of nominal revenues in presence of a general establishment of European prices.

The government has proposed that one or two professorships in each Medresseh, and a few bursarships, should be appropriated for the promotion of practical knowledge, and this moderate proposition has been generally resisted. The Government is already master of the situation, for the Church lands are under the lay administration of the Evkaf Naziri, and it offers to impoverished functionaries and starving students improved incomes and repaired edifices, with funds to be obtained by the enfranchisement of the cumbrous Church tenures. Great interests second the Government. Proprietors and tenants throughout the empire, whose fathers sought the sanctuary of the Church when life and property were at the peril of an arbitrary pasha, now urge, under an administration where life and property are safe, the emancipation of their lands, for which they offer high terms.

In the meanwhile the Medressehs impede the development of education, but in the end only to afford a more solid base for the propagation of enlightened teachings, for when the time comes the terms of the Government will be enhanced. Even as it is, the sons of the Ulema, the consecrated heirs of the patrimony of the Church, in many cases seek instruction in secular schools, and aspire to the brilliant honours of a civil career.

The decline of these institutions in their present state, is to be looked upon as a blessing rather than an evil. In a large provincial city may be seen an ancient and picturesque building, with its quadrangle and rows of apartments around. You ask what it is, and are told it is the Medresseh. The court-yard is neglected, and the cells are only half-tenanted,—so many champions of obstructiveness the fewer. As it is, they just furnish forth the smaller ecclesiastical functionaries and village *hojabs*;