

sal, and now England is in possession, and *Ullah* alone knows if she will ever move out. Cyprus, off the coast of Asia Minor and twelve hours from Syria, is under the English flag, and a mysterious protectorate of Asia Minor is latent in English policy, the exact meaning of which probably neither Turkish nor English statesmanship would be willing to define until circumstances arise which make it desirable to give it whatever interpretation is a convenience to the parties interested. Algiers and Tunis have gone to France, and Tripoli is conveniently near to Italy. The Black Sea is once more a Russian lake, in defiance of the Treaty of Paris. The splendid "Orient-Express" train, without change of cars from Paris to Constantinople, now shoots down through the whole length of the Balkan Peninsula until it stops under the shadow of the Sublime Porte. A branch line to Salonica is also ready for use. The Turkish ironclads lie rusting and rotting in the Golden Horn. The imperial finances are fermenting and threatening to explode in the very precincts of the Seraglio. Turkey is in sore straits, and God's will is mysterious.

Yet, despite these changes and harassing troubles within and without, Turkey still exercises an efficient and increasingly defiant control over her internal affairs. Nothing which has been done, either by the great ambassador, Sir Stratford Canning, afterward Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, who was prominent at the Porte from 1812 to 1858, or by the united diplomatic efforts of Europe since then, has ever secured the slightest recognition on the part of the Turkish Government of the liberty of the Moslem to change his creed. The Hatti-Sharif of Gulhane in 1839—which has been called the Turkish Magna Charta—the Hatti-Humayun in 1856, the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, all of which, so far as they refer to the Christian subjects of the Porte, amount in substance to a declaration on the part of Turkey that she will give entire religious liberty and full toleration and equal rights to all her subjects if Europe will not meddle, have never for an instant been acknowledged by the Turk as referring to the Moslem, or recognized as securing to him any liberty of conscience whatever. Every time a Christian diplomat, or a missionary organization, or even the united corps of European ambassadors at Constantinople has quoted these or any other official utterances of the Turkish Government, in behalf of a Moslem's liberty to accept Christianity, the Turkish authorities from the Sultan downward have either repudiated the idea, or quietly and effectively snubbed it. The old Moslem law that the penalty of apostasy is death is to-day the inexorable rule in Turkey. The Ottoman authorities will not publicly execute, as was formerly the custom, but will arrest upon some false criminal charge, as for example desertion from the army, or attempting to avoid the draft, or some imaginary misdemeanor, and will transfer the victim from one prison to another and put him out of the way by some secret