

ever we choose, even in the very city itself. The change in this respect is certainly very great, and it would be ungrateful to deny it.

Formerly, our schools and our religious assemblies, although they were in our own private apartments, were liable at any time to be interrupted. Being unauthorized they were irregular, and as such they were without the pale of protection. But now we can open schools and consecrate chapels wherever we please, and we can, in case of necessity, claim the protection of Government. Then all who wished to have religious intercourse with us, or receive any kind of instruction from us, were obliged to come all the way to Pera, however great the distance, and to be received into our own apartments, however great the inconvenience to ourselves. Now "the kingdom of God is come nigh unto them," and we can meet them in their own suburbs and in their own houses, and we can open both schools and chapels in their own villages. Has there been no advance in religious liberty?

It is said that the Grand Charter of religious toleration in Turkey exists only in name, and is virtually a dead letter. To this it is sufficient to reply, that before the hattı humayoun, there were more cases of persecution reported to us every week than there are now in a whole year. Then, much of our time and strength was taken up, and all our wisdom and influence were employed, in our appropriate missionary work.

Again, it is said that the Turks are insincere in their professions for toleration, and that it is only under foreign pressure they are ever brought to act in favour of it. But it would be much more in accordance with truth to say, that so far as Protestantism is concerned it is only under such pressure that they have ever been brought to act against it. There is, and there always has been, ten times—perhaps I should say a hundred times—as much influence exerted upon the Turkish Government against liberty of conscience as has ever been exerted in favour of it. These Armenian and Greek and Catholic communities are themselves mighty, and they exert a mighty influence; and they are always exerting it against each other, each endeavouring to enlist the Turk on his side. Now all these mighty communities united all their mighty energies to

oppose Protestantism. To secure the sword of Mohammed in their cause, they spared neither bribes nor falsehoods; and furthermore, they were backed up by the influences of the Greek and Russian and nearly or quite all the Papal Governments, through their representatives—their ministers, consuls, dragomans, and numerous attaches at the Sublime Porte.

The influence, then, which was and which still is exerted upon the Turkish Government against religious liberty is much more powerful than can well be expressed. But, blessed be God! there is now another influence, the pressure of which they begin to feel, and we most devoutly pray that they may feel it more and more. Whatever influence the Representatives of England and of other Protestant Governments have exerted upon the Turkish Government in favour of Protestantism, has been mainly in opposition to other mighty influences of a most adverse character. Whoever has read the *Missionary Herald* for the last forty years must have seen, that in perhaps ninety-nine cases out of a hundred our persecutions have come not from the Turks, but from these corrupt Churches—the Turks never of themselves showing a disposition to molest us, and being drawn in to side with our persecutors only when under this terrible outside pressure, to which we have alluded.

Heretofore its principal use was to secure us from the molestation of these corrupt Churches, but we have now begun to test its importance with reference to the Mohammedans themselves. Only a few years since, the headless bodies of apostates from the Mohammedan faith might be seen "lying in the streets of the great city; and for three days and a half their bodies were not suffered to be put into graves;" and unless flight from the country was possible, nothing better than this was ever expected. But now, such apostates may be seen at all hours of the day, walking these same streets without any apparent danger, urging the claims of Christianity even in the very courts of the royal mosques, and teaching and preaching in the chapel, and in the private circle, and sometimes even in the palaces of the great, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. And all this wonderful security is, under God, owing entirely to the hattı humayoun."