

darkness and moral and intellectual death. Within the last ten years—since the end of the Crimean war—millions of serfs have become freemen. Religious toleration has been conceded to all parts of the Empire, and the Bible is being freely circulated and eagerly sought after. A recent traveller, an experienced Agent of the "Church Missionary Society," states that the Synod of the Greek Russian (Established) Church has itself issued a new translation of the Scriptures in modern Russ:—

"The Russian clergy have never made, like the Council of Trent, a decree against Bible circulation amongst the people, and, though apathetic, put no bar in that way. I spent some time lately in the company of Kasim Beg, Professor of Persian at the University of St. Petersburg, who is a Christian, and greatly respected. He told me he had translated the New Testament into the Tartar language, at the express request and with the aid of the archbishop of Lazan, whom he describes as a man ready for every good word and work. He, in common with others, spoke to me of various elements of good at work in the Russian church."

The newly emancipated serfs are eager for learning, and especially for religious knowledge. They buy cheap editions of the scriptures as fast as they can be supplied. There is a tide setting in in favour of religion as well as political reform. The Church in Rome is hated on account of her intrigues

Poland, but British Christianity is admired, and information regarding it is sought. The writer to whom we have referred gives the following indications of missionary spirit in Russia:—

"A Russian nobleman, a member of the council of State, whom I had met some months ago at a missionary meeting I held at St. Petersburg, wished me to call on him on my return from the interior. I did so a week ago. He told me he had thought much of what I had proposed, viz., that evangelists should do something themselves in sending out missionaries from Russia to Central Asia and Northern China; there was one obstacle to it, the Russian requires all converts to be members of the Greek church. He wished me to see on this subject General Ignatieff, who is at the head of the Foreign Department for Asiatic Affairs, and who had expressed himself favourable to removing all obstacles to missionary exertions. He fixed a day for me to come on the subject; but I was out of town on that day, and the general has left

St. Petersburg for a month. This Russian gentleman urged me very much to visit Finland, where a missionary spirit has lately been awakened; the people have collected within the last few years thirty thousand roubles, or five thousand pounds for missions. They have begun a seminary for training missionaries, and are most anxious to enter on the work; they are Lutherans, and are imbued with an evangelical spirit. The Lutherans at St. Petersburg are also anxious to do something in the same cause.

"I preached in the English Church in St. Petersburg lately, on the subject of Missions to India. There are about four thousand English in St. Petersburg.

"I spent an evening recently in company with a Russian noble, who is one of the emperor's chamberlains, and takes an interest in missions. He gave me much information on what the Russian church is doing for the missionary cause; they have missionaries located at the Altai mountains, at Kamtschatka, and the Caucasus, near Lake Baikal, and have also a number who labour among the Buriats, who are Buddhists.—He promised to procure me a translation of some of their proceedings from the Russian into the English language, and wished me to procure for him the publications of the Missionary Societies of the English church, which I promised to do. The Russians intend shortly to found a missionary seminary, to be located either at Kazan or Irkutsk, as St. Petersburg is unsuited for it, and they wish to have it in a place where the Oriental languages can be taught to the students; as also to write an address on the duty of Russians with respect to missions in Central Asia, giving them suggestions drawn from the history of our Indian Missions, which he would translate into Russian, and print in all the leading journals and magazines of Russia: and may the Lord send his blessing with it! I spoke with him also on the importance of enlisting the services of Russian ladies as missionary collectors; he is determined to do something in this respect. I feel very strongly that Russia from her geographical and political position as respects Central Asia, must be the base of missionary operation in these countries; while Russian missionaries, as semi-Orientals, would have in this respect a great advantage over Anglo-Saxons, whose natural temperament alienates them from the Asiatic."

After giving his testimony over and over to the remarkable movement among the emancipated serfs, the writer expresses himself as confident that a slow but sure work of reformation is going on. He adds:—

A few weeks ago I attended a religious meeting at a Russian general's house, who took much interest in missionary subjects.