

are engaged is too great for us, but there is nothing too hard for the Spirit. We know that, even at this present time of Israel's blindness and degradation, "there is a remnant according to the election of grace." That remnant, confiding in the almighty agency of the Holy Spirit, our Missionaries are labouring to gather from among the nations. They are using the instrument which God has appointed to gain this object. They "preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." Let us sustain them by our prayers. Let us continue in prayer and supplication on their behalf. Let us wait for the Spirit until He be poured on Israel "from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field; and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. Then judgement shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field; and the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever."—*Missionary Herald*.

RELIGION IN TURKEY.

There can no longer be any doubt that the Turkish mind is beginning to be interested in the study of the Bible, and the search after truth. For centuries, this strange people have been stationary in religion, and in almost everything else; because everything else with them is intimately connected with religion. It is chiefly within the last quarter of a century that some signs of a movement and of progress among them have appeared; and, in the department of religion, chiefly within the last two years.

The Turks have been said to be naturally a religious people; and, in a certain sense, this is true. They know more about religion than they do about anything else. Their studies and thought run very much upon religious subjects. If you speak with them about the sciences or general history, or about geography or the arts, you only awaken a vacant stare. But if you introduce a religious topic, they are immediately at home; and even the illiterate can discourse to you on "the true faith," like children who have got their lessons off by heart. And, besides this, there is a seeming recognition of God in all they undertake to do, and a constant and fearless avowal of dependence on him in all the common matters of life. To the daily salutation of "good morning," the Turk replies, "I commend you to God;" and to the inquiry, "Is your health good?" he says simply, "Thanks be to God." If you say to a Turk—will you be at a certain place at such a time? he never ventures to say anything more than, "If it please God." If one would announce to another the death of a mutual friend, he always prefaces the announcement with "May God give you life," or something equivalent.

All this, and much more of the same kind, we are hearing from the lips of the Turks every day. Now, it is easy to say that this is all a mere matter of custom and form, and that, after all, there is no real recognition of God in the mind; that these words are uttered with no more sense of their meaning, than we have, when we say, "good-bye" (*God be with you*). But, while there is certainly ground for such a suspicion, still I cannot persuade myself that the two cases are exactly parallel. To my mind there is a stronger development of the religious sense among the Turks than among the other classes of people in Turkey, not even excepting the Armenians. And without going into any theories on the subject now, I would simply suggest that the chief reason for the difference may be found in the fact, that the Turks have adhered, constantly and strongly, to the worship of God as a pure, invisible, everywhere-present Spirit, while the so-called Christian people around them have re-

sorted to the use of pictures and images in their religious worship—a practice whose constant tendency undoubtedly is to deaden the spiritual perceptions, and to weaken in the mind the subduing influence of the great truth—that God is EVERYWHERE.

Whatever may be the cause, I have no doubt of the fact, that the Turks, as a body, have a strong religious sense. For centuries, however, they have believed a lie. They have received the Koran as a revelation from God, and by it they have been encouraged in the free indulgence of their carnal appetites and passions. It is doubtful whether a race of men can be found on earth whose minds are more filled with what is "earthy, sensual, and devilish." If this appears to conflict with what has been said above, the reconciliation of the discrepancy is easy. The book which they receive as having come down from heaven, encourages in them the most voluptuous practices and hopes. We must not, therefore, anticipate that the work of introducing the Gospel among them will be easy. If there are no idols to be swept away, there are strong and clamorous passions to overcome. Depend upon it, the "offence of the cross" has not ceased among those people; neither can it cease, until it is taken out of the way by the grace of God breaking the power of sin over the mind, and renewing the soul into his own image, "from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of God."

I have hope for the Turks, from all that I can see and hear, and my hopes are based upon the signs that are apparent of the actual working of the Holy Spirit upon their minds. You must not understand that there is anything like a general influence of this sort manifest; far from it. The work hitherto has been confined to individuals here and there, and they are very few compared with the great mass of the people; but their number is steadily increasing, and every now and then one and another show themselves who have been secretly reading the Scriptures for years, and have been inwardly convinced of the truth of Christianity, but have feared to avow it under the terror of the awful penalty of "death to the apostate."

Everybody is waiting to see what stand the Government will take when the first case of a full-blooded Mussulman becoming a Christian is forced upon their attention, and they are called upon to act upon it in some official manner. Cases of this sort are already known to them, though hitherto it has been easy to ignore them; but, evidently, this will not always be possible. On the one hand, they will never dare to inflict the death penalty again, for that would be to violate their own solemn pledge, given at a time when their very existence as a nation was in the hands of the Christian powers. On the other hand they will fear their own fanatical people, who will insist that they must either adhere faithfully to the Koran or abandon it altogether.

Meanwhile, we have some facts which show the way the tide is turning. When Vely Pasha entered upon his office as Governor of India, he brought forward, it is said, before the Medjlis (Council) a copy of the Bible and of the Koran, and declared—"In discharging the duties of my office I shall know no difference between these two books. An oath upon the one shall be just as sacred as the other."

Several Mussulmans in Candia, whose fathers were Greeks, have since embraced the Christian religion, and he has protected them, although in doing this he has given great umbrage to the fanatical of his sect.

Recently an Armenian young man, in Broosa, became a Protestant, and according to usage, the brethren took his name to the Medjlis of the place, to have it inscribed on the Protestant list. A member of the Council said they must first speak with the Armenian Bishop on the subject. "No," said the Pasha (Suolyman Pasha) who presided, "Even Turks become Protestants now a-days, and nobody says a word;

why should it be necessary to go to these Armenians?" The young man was immediately enrolled.

It is my painful duty, however, now to announce a fact of recent occurrence, on the other side of one question. For some months past, a young Mussulman Captain here, in Constantinople, has been studying very seriously the word of God. God seemed to open his mind to receive the truth, and a more interesting and promising case we have rarely seen. It is now Ramadan with the Turks, when, as you are aware from sunrise to sunset, for a whole month, their religion requires them to eat absolutely nothing. This fast our young friend thought it his duty not to observe. It was also noticed that on every Sunday he went away somewhere, and it now appears that he was watched, and seen to go to the Protestant place of worship. Some of the bigoted Mussulmans of the place immediately complained to his commanding officer, who, two days ago, had him put in prison, where he still remains. Efforts are being made to get him released to-day, and I trust they will be successful. I understand that the Pasha who gave the order is himself really no Mussulman, but he feared not to yield to the bigoted Turks around him. Our fervent prayer is, that God may strengthen the faith of that young "centurion" (for that is exactly his title) by this trial, and fit him for great usefulness among his own people. I trust that our Christian friends in Britain and America will join us most earnestly in supplicating the blessing of the Divine Spirit upon all the different races of people in this land.—*Irish Presbyterian*.

A REMARKABLE MISSIONARY WORK AT SAN-POH, CHINA.

The Rev. J. L. Nevins, of the Ningpo Mission, sends us the following accounts, which will be read with interest:

NINGPO, Feb. 27, 1857.

We informed you in our last monthly letter of a missionary work just begun by native Christians connected with our Church, in the region of San-poh, about forty miles North-West from Ningpo. We are very happy to state that God seems to be blessing this effort, and crowning it with almost unexpected success.

Not quite a month since, Zia, who is permanently stationed there as a native assistant, returned to his labors, after having passed the China New Year at Ningpo, accompanied by two others of our church members. Zia had met with encouragement before, but not of a very marked or unusual character. On the arrival of our three native brethren, they observed an unusual degree of interest manifested by the people, which seemed to increase daily. Neighbours and persons from a distance of two or three miles gathered together to listen to the new doctrines, and generally remained attentive listeners, unwilling to disperse until after midnight. The native assistants were laboriously employed night and day, in talking with the people, both in their own hired house, which was found to be too strait for them, and in other places to which they were invited by those who became acquainted with them. The word preached seemed to be accompanied with power, and affected the hearts of the people as we have not seen them affected here before. By the last accounts, received nearly two weeks since, about thirty, exclusive of women, and children, seemed to be interested inquirers. Of these about ten profess faith in Christ, and a determination to follow him through evil and through good report. Of these ten, three, who are said to be a fair sample of the whole, have visited Ningpo, and the amount and clearness of their Christian knowledge, considering the time during which they have acquired it, has surprised us. It is particularly encouraging to notice, that their