

RELATION OF THE PROTESTANT MISSIONARY EFFORT TO THE NESTORIAN CHURCH.*

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It is generally known that the purpose of Protestant missionaries among the Nestorians was at first to reform the old church, or rather to revive spiritual life within that body. Various causes prevented the realization of this effort in the manner and to the extent anticipated, and the missionaries have striven to establish an evangelical church, scriptural in constitution and spiritual in life. The change has been gradual, not sudden, and the relation of the old and the reformed Churchmen has never been that of bitter hostility, except in individual cases. The old Church is the mother Church, and the history and traditions of the past are rightly cherished by all. Within the last ten years a new force has come into the field, which is doing much to rear a wall of partition and to excommunicate and place reformed Christians under the ban. The old Church is persistently warned against the errors and schism of Protestant heresy by the members of the mission of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Just as far as possible, directly and indirectly, by precept and by example, in sermons, in teaching, through Nestorian ecclesiastics, the old Church is being fortified against Protestant influences. This is simply a statement of fact based on daily increasing evidence.

What right Anglicans have to pose as the exponents of Nestorianism or Englishmen to represent the long descent of Assyrian Christianity is not easy to comprehend. They are unable to commune in the Nestorian Church, for ake is, from the High Church point of view, the most venerable schismatic in Christendom, and yet forsooth they offer themselves as her staunch defenders. Our right to preach the Gospel of repentance and life to those who call themselves Syrian Christians and our duty to do so are based on the great command, not only to baptize, but also to teach men to do.

I shall attempt briefly to discuss the question before us, viewing successively the old Church itself, the Reformed Church, and the Protestant missionaries from abroad.

I. *The Old Church.*

The theology of this ancient Church of the East is, of course, Nicene, with the addition of the Nestorian definition of the relation between the human and Divine natures in the incarnate Son of God. Definite and logical development has not gone much farther, due partly to the character of the Syriac mind, impulsive in initiative and often vigorous in execution, but not constructive of either theological or ecclesiastical system. Another reason, perhaps the principal one, is that the vital conflict of this church

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