

and the distinct alphabets of those countries, many of which are very elaborate, outnumber all others in the world. Some forty different alphabets or syllabic systems, each having from 250 to 500 combinations, are used to represent the sounds of 150 languages, and more than 10,000 different signs and types have been elaborated from the original alphabet to represent the fifty simple sounds—all that the combined Indian vernaculars contain. As these simple sounds can not all be represented by the 26 letters of the English alphabet, 24 letters of the English phonetic alphabet are captured and made to do service in this new English phonetic alphabet; and we then have one simple alphabet taking the places of forty or more, and becoming available as the written language of 200,000,000 people who have no written alphabet, because they don't know just how to use one. —*The Bombay Guardian*.

Jerusalem.—A German newspaper, published in Palestine, states that the city of Jerusalem is growing in size and population at a remarkable rate. Its growth is the more surprising because neither its situation nor its trade is favorable to a rapid increase; it lies among a not very fertile group of mountains; it has next to no commerce, and it has no manufactures. Nevertheless, new buildings are rising daily; churches, gardens and institutes of various kinds are filling up the formerly desolate neighborhood to the distance of half an hour's walk beyond the old limits of the city. The Jews are to the front as builders. Their houses spring out of the ground like mushrooms, uniform, ugly, one-storied, plentifully supplied with windows, but with no manner of adornment. The Rothschilds have completed a new hospital. Close beside it there is a new Abyssinian church. The Russians are also great builders. They have erected a new church, consulate, lodging-houses for pilgrims of the Orthodox national churches, and a hospital. Near to the Russian group stands the "German House" for German Roman Catholics, from whose top the German and the Papal flag float side by side. The Russians have also built a high tower upon the Mount of Olives, from whose summit the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea can both be seen. The Greeks and Armenians are also busy builders, but they provide for the bodily rather than the religious demands of the pilgrims. The former build cafés and bazaars and the latter set up shops.

Mohammedanism.—Dr. Post, in an address on "Islam in Western Asia and Africa," says the Eastern, or, as he maintains, the Southern question, instead of being 200 is nearly 4,000 years old. The reverence of Islam's followers for name is marked, God's and the secret of the power of Mohammedanism consists in a tenacious holding on to one God. There are in the Koran many Christian doctrines and ideas, but

it is pre-eminently Unitarian; one God, with the human admixture, Mohammed, God's great prophet. Islam has its strength and its weakness; has had its prosperous and adverse days. Among Mohammedans it is a matter of surprise that in Christian lands all are not Christians. In their communities all are looked upon as Islamites. No greater insult can be offered one of them than to say that he has no religion. If one of them swears by his religion and his life, it is regarded as the end of all controversy. The prevailing and educating idea is that every man has a religion. The Mohammedans also insist upon the religious head being the political head, and cannot understand the Protestant theory of the separation of the state and the church. As to the question whether Christianity is spreading faster in Africa than Islam, Dr. Post concedes to Islam a greater rapidity of advance, but holds that it is due, not to the better adaptation of Islam to the negro populations, but because Christian nations have not fully exerted themselves, and also to the existence of those restraining and hindering forces—the liquor traffic and gunpowder. Let these destructive agencies cease and missionaries be sent in sufficient numbers, and Christianity would prove its conquering power and leave her rival far in the background. Dr. Post deprecates the injurious effects of Christian divisions, and pleads for unity of spirit and co-operation on the part of the Church of Jesus Christ, particularly in missionary enterprises and in heathen lands.

Spain.—A Bonfire of Bibles. The Madrid correspondent of the *Daily News* writes: "The Liberal Government tries in vain to enforce the spirit of toleration among the authorities and subjects of his Catholic Majesty. Very recently in Biscay an agent of the Bible Society was attacked and insulted by twenty young Catholic students led by a Jesuit father who excited the lads to take possession of, tear up, and make a pious bonfire of the Bibles, Testaments, and tracts. The Spanish judges after carefully investigating the case declined to send the offenders before the tribunal for the assault and the destruction of the property of the Foreign Bible Society. The students and not the Jesuit father, who was the principle instigator of the outrage, will have to appear before the municipal magistrate, who can only inflict a fine and a few days' arrest even if they are convicted. While this treatment is meted out to foreigners and Protestants, the Spanish courts of justice send journalists to penal servitude for criticising the State religion."

Syria.—H. H. Jessup, D. D., of Beirut, writes, that 46 young men have just completed their course of training in the various educational institutions of that city in connection with our church. Six young men were graduated from the theological seminary, well-equipped for the work of the ministry. Twelve received their diplomas from the college proper, 6 from the medical college, 1 from the department of pharmacy, and 21 completed the course