

A MOHAMMEDAN BAPTIZED IN PERSIA.

From the Agent of the American Bible Society, Constantinople, in the Levant

DEAR SIR :—Recent letters from Persia speak of the baptism of a Moham^{medan} in one of the cities in the heart of that empire. Very few particulars are given. We know, however, that he was one of those whom our colporteurs met in the early part of 1868, as they passed on their Bible tour through the districts of Hamadan, Teheran, and Ispahan.

Besides the general interest that must attach to this first baptism in Persia of a convert from Islam, it has special interest in connection with our Bible work. So far as the colporteurs learned from him, his first knowledge of Christ was almost wholly from his study of a borrowed copy of the New Testament. No missionary had seen him. No native Christian had given him instruction; but "The word of God was quick and powerful." By the diligent study of that word alone without note or comment, and without even the practical exemplification of its principles before him, he was persuaded of the truth of the religion inculcated by Christ. From that time, it would seem, the demands of Islamism upon him were more or less disregarded; but to publicly disown the religion of his fathers and embrace a new faith was not an easy thing in the heart of such an empire as Persia. Prompted by his new convictions he sought those who receive the Scriptures as from God, that he might from them learn more fully of this way so new to him. Among the Jews he formed acquaintance with the teachings of Moses and the prophets, but no knowledge of the Messiah of the New Testament. Conversing with the priests and bishops of the Armenian church, he found them more ignorant even than himself of the wonderful God-man of the Gospel. The Papists, too, gave him no help in his search after a Christian life based upon the doctrines of the cross. Neither among Jews, Armenians, nor Papists, did he find that religion which accords with the word of God.

When, therefore, the two colporteurs from Oroomiah visited the city where his home was, holding up the word of life for the reception of all, they attracted his attention and that of his friends. Seeking them in their resting place, in one of the khans of the city, he found them men of prayer, men of the New Testament. In their report sent you September 4th. 1868, speaking of this man and his friends the colporteurs say: "Our conversations with them were prolonged and interesting. Together we read the New Testament. We prayed with them, and they seem cordially to accept the Gospel as we are able to explain it to them. They are well read in the Scriptures and are intelligent men, fully persuaded that their own religion is false." One of these Mussulmen is a man of learning, and has indoctrinated many in his own belief in the Gospel, some of whom were subsequently baptized in India. He himself desired baptism that he might be numbered among the people of God. Let us hope and pray that this brother may be protected from the violence of all who oppose the spread of divine truth in that dark land, and that through his instrumentality many other sons of Islam may find the way of life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE BIBLE PRIZED.

A large number of the books published by the American Bible Society are distributed every year through the agency of the American Sunday School Union. A missionary in Minnesota gives the following incident:

One week ago, last Sabbath, a man came to our house just as I was preparing to start to visit a Sunday school in the country. With deep distress depicted on his face, at the door he thus addressed me: "Mister, I came up town to-day to see if I could get a Bible. I went to the drug store (where