



CHRISTIANS TO THE LIONS.

held by Christians' themselves, viz.: that it has come to us direct from God Himself; has ever been given. Its leading characteristics in early days were, on the one hand, its power to resist persecution, with a readiness to die in defence of its claims which forms no parallel in history, and on the other its marvellous ability in the way of propagating its own principles. The illustration of "Christians to the lions" brings to us thoughts of dark and barbarous days, when tender maidens with that holy, yet sorrowful calm upon the face which we see so well represented in the picture, were torn limb from limb by savage beasts to afford diversion to a blood-thirsty Roman crowd. Such was civilization without Christianity. Oh! those holy martyrs, who loved Christ with a genuine love, what do we not owe to them! Their blood gave a reality to the new religion which forced itself upon the convictions of hundreds who witnessed their unsurpassed constancy and cheerful triumph over death. Early Christianity was all missionary. Its cry was:

"Tell it out among the people that the Lord is King."

benefit of humanity, a power was quietly growing among a people who could raise no such buildings or monuments in stone, but a power which had within it the seed of future growth and development destined to shine the brighter as the world should grow the older. Those people were the Jews, and that power was the Holy Scriptures. Silently that power grew, and as it grew gathered strength—strength compared with which the ancient structures of Egypt, however surprising, are as nothing.

But the panorama changes, and a new power appears upon the scene. It is the Christian religion. Yet, though it is a new power, yet it is based upon those Holy Scriptures which, growing so silently, and preserved so marvellously, came forward, through Christ, to assert themselves as the undoubted product of inspiration. Historically speaking, the Christian religion is a phenomenon for which no adequate reason, apart from that

this constant martyrdom of the faithful give to those who preached Christ in those early days! What life, what power as it has descended to us! The sphinxes of Egypt cause no emotion. They are as cold and hard as the stone of which they are made; but a picture of early martyrdom at once stirs the heart and makes us feel that our energies should never slacken till the holy words of Christ are known among all people.

Once more the panorama changes. A new preacher appears before us. It is the Mohammedan, preaching the Koran, that fiery book which Mohammed pretended to say had been revealed to him from heaven itself. It is interesting to read the rise and progress of Mohammedanism, but how different is it from the rise and progress of Christianity! It is not by the quiet influence of love and martyrdom, but by the fiery impetuosity of wild Arabian tribes, "whose flaming swords and fierce unquenchable valor conquered an empire greater