

among them that is not eagerly missionary in spirit and practice. Generally it is this very propagandist zeal of theirs which gets them so often into trouble, for no orthodox Russian is allowed to leave the Greek Church without being liable to transportation to Siberia, and the same terrible punishment is likewise meted out to any sectarian who either attempts to or succeeds in perverting any member of the Orthodox Church. These drastic punishments, however, have never deterred enthusiastic propagandists anywhere, and the result in Russia agrees with universal experience, that danger lends attraction to the missionary's work, and that a martyr's crown is often a far greater inducement to work than the prospect of full money-bags and an easy old age.

I am often asked, apart from the Stundists and other Russian sects professing what is known as Protestant doctrine, is there any vital evangelical force at work among the numerous millions of the other heretical bodies? I believe there is. To too great an extent the leaders of the Old Believers, the most numerous of these sects, are taken up with the empty points of ritual which divide them from orthodoxy, their minds are too full of an antipathy almost absurd in its strength to anything modern or that deflects in any way from the methods of their fathers, but their very isolation, and the fact that they give their minds to the consideration of sacred subjects, are evangelical forces of the strongest character. Many of them will not take a New Testament or other religious book in their hands if it is written in modern Russ. They deem it profane to quote Scripture in any language other than the ancient Slavonic, but this very conservatism of theirs has forced them to pay attention to the Scriptures, and to learn by heart whole chapters of the Bible, which are handed down orally from father to son, from generation to generation. One of the most affecting services I ever attended was in the little hut of one of these sectaries. Before retiring for the night my host and his wife stood in the middle of the room and recited psalm after psalm, passage after passage, without an error so far as I could judge. Neither of them could read, and their parents and grandparents before them were equally illiterate. After careful study of these, the more ancient of the sectaries, I am led to believe that the vital principles of religion are slowly and steadily finding their way among them, and that there seems to be some slight softening of the asperities which used to mark their dealings with those who were not their co-religionists.

But in addition to the hostile attitude of sect toward sect and of orthodoxy toward heresy, there is another far more fatal obstacle to the uninterrupted course of evangelical truth in Russia. I refer to the influences which centre in the great lay *procureur* of the Holy Synod, M. Constantine Pobedanostseff. This able man, notwithstanding a temporary eclipse at the accession of the present Czar, is still the most powerful statesman in Russia. He is thoroughly sincere in his notion that the welfare of the empire depends upon the intimate connection of Church and State, and so