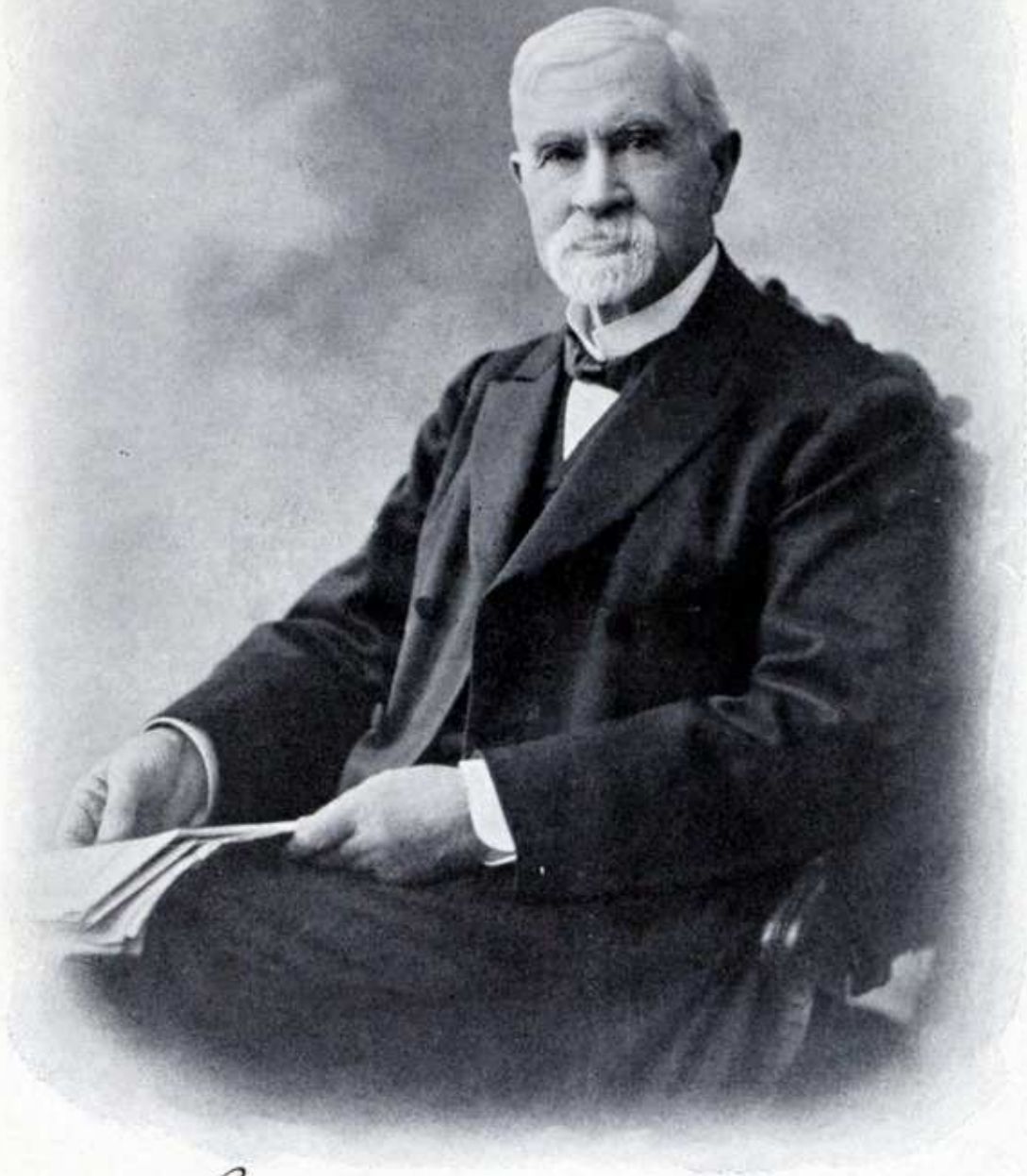


THE
Kingdom
OF
GOD

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.



Sincerely Yours
Joseph K. Greene

Smyrna, Feb. 22, 1859

The Kingdom of God.

SERMON

PREACHED BY

Rev. JOSEPH K. GREENE D.D.

AT THE

BIBLE HOUSE

Constantinople, Oct. 14, 1909.

**“First the blade, then the ear, then the
full corn in the ear”.**

The Kingdom of God.

Mark IV: 28.

The theme to which your attention is invited is the Kingdom of God on earth.

The absolute sovereignty and power of God are made manifest in all the works of creation. Our little planet, the earth, however, seems to have been chosen by the infinite Lord of the universe to be the theatre for the perfect manifestation of his glorious moral and spiritual nature. To this end God peopled the earth with a race of intelligent beings, and endowed them with free will and with moral and spiritual characteristics like to those of their Maker. By the will of God man, thus fashioned, was subjected to trial through the intervention of a Tempter, superior in might to man but subject to God. Thus endowed, "sufficient to have stood but free to fall", man was deceived by the Tempter and sinned. Inheriting henceforth a bias to evil, feeble and finite, man became an object of contention between two mighty forces, the one Divine, the other Satanic, the one seeking to save, the other to destroy. The history of man, therefore, is the story of redemption, and this story reveals to the

universe the wondrous richness and greatness of God's love, even as the material universe reveals his wisdom and might. And surely it were well worth while to create a world, if by the creation and redemption of man the wondrous love and goodness of almighty God could be made known to all intelligent beings.

Now the kingdom of God on earth, which has for its object the redemption of man, was ushered in at the very gate of Eden. Then and there it was declared that, in due time, Christ, the seed of the woman, should crush the Serpent's head. This remarkable declaration was both the first Gospel message and the first announcement of the great world-conflict between good and evil; a conflict which began with the entrance of sin into the world, and is to end in the final triumph of the Messiah. Earth is the theatre of this conflict; man, whom God created in his own image, is the object of contention, and both heaven and hell watch the progress of the conflict and await the issue. Praise be to God for the assurance that redeeming grace is to triumph, and that the infinite love of God, as witnessed in man's redemption, is to be the theme of heaven's song and praise forever and ever.

Let us now briefly note the general progress of the Kingdom of God and its special progress in Turkey in recent years.

To the antediluvian world the mercy of God

to man and his purpose to save were made known in such a way as to develop such characters as Seth, Enoch and Noah. This gracious purpose of God was further manifested by the choice of Abraham and his descendants; by the spiritual development of Israel during a period of some two thousand years; by the giving of the law and the establishment of the sacrificial system; by symbol and song, by precept and prophesy. Finally, it was revealed, through the prophet Daniel, that at such and such a time the God of heaven would set up a kingdom which should never be destroyed; a kingdom which was likened to a stone, cut out of the mountain without hands and possessed of irresistible power; a kingdom which should embrace all the saints of the Most High, gathered from under the whole heaven.

This kingdom of God our Lord Jesus Christ proclaimed at the beginning of his public ministry. He, the seed of the woman, found in fashion as a man, then stood forth both to define and to advance this kingdom. His authority as the Messianic Head of the kingdom he proved by many mighty works; the characteristics of the kingdom and the method of its coming he explained by parables of matchless simplicity and wisdom; the foundation of the kingdom he laid in his own precious blood; the triumph of the kingdom he assured when he rose victorious over death and ascended to heaven. For the furtherance of

the kingdom after his ascension, moreover, our Lord gave to his disciples apostolic power to gather Christian believers into organized bodies, called churches, and to ordain over the churches tried men, able to instruct and lead. In carrying out the purpose of our Lord, the mission of the church was to witness to the life, the character and the work of Christ; to make known the good news of salvation; to send Gospel messengers to the ends of the earth. To this great and glorious service the humble believers in Christ, beginning with the apostles, addressed themselves with zeal and self-denial. So great was their love to Christ and to their fellow-men; so perfectly did they witness in their own persons to the transforming power of the Divine message with which they were entrusted; and so efficiently did the Spirit of God confirm the word as spoken by believers of every age and station, that the early Christians, in a period of three hundred years, in despite of poverty and of every form of persecution which the wit and power of heathen Rome could devise, won for Christ some ten millions of souls. Moreover, the church of Christ, praise to the grace of God, has never lost its witnessing power, and, in consequence, one third of the world's inhabitants is to day accounted Christian, at least in name.

But how, it may well be asked, how shall it be explained that some 1900 years after our

Lord said to his disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature", there are still a thousand million of souls on earth who are non-Christian, the most of whom have never even heard the name of Christ? Hundreds of millions of heathen are still sunk in the grossest ignorance and superstition, the victims of want, misery and cruelty, on whom no ray from heaven shines to cheer either the present life or the future. Besides these heathen more than two hundred millions of Mohammedans, and other millions of people, like the Japanese, civilized but non-Christian, are without the saving knowledge of Christ. Now, whose is the fault that the Gospel of the blessed God has failed to reach these millions? While full credit is due to men like Augustin in England, Patrick in Ireland, Columba in Scotland, Boniface in Germany, Anschar in Denmark, Ulfilas among the Goths, Cyril and Methodius among the Bulgarians and Slavs, and many others, who labored with great zeal and self-denial to teach the Papal form of Christianity to the nations of Western, Northern and Eastern Europe, there is at the same time no question that, from the time of Pope Gregory First (died in A.D. 604) to the beginning of the 16th century, the great mass of the members of both the Western and the Eastern churches were unfaithful to their spiritual trust; they apprehended neither God's eternal plan to save, as made known in Scripture, nor their

own calling; hence, with rare exceptions, they did not share in the work of advancing the kingdom of God on earth, and either ignored, or were indifferent to, the voice of the Master.

But how, it may again well be asked, how can it be explained that for a thousand years the church of Christ failed fittingly to apprehend its high calling and worthily to labor for the extension of the kingdom of God? No doubt the prime reason is to be found in the fact that, after the lapse of the first three centuries, with the steady growth of ecclesiasticism, the personal responsibility of all believers to make known the good news of salvation and seek the conversion of men ceased to be recognized by the great mass of Christians; the salvation of men, or the cure of souls, as it was called, became a clerical function; the duty of every individual Christian to labor for the furtherance of the kingdom of God was forgotten or ignored; not immediate repentance and direct confession to God in prayer, but confession to the priest and the performance of works of penance became the sinner's duty; the idea that the soul is saved by simple faith and direct submission to Christ was superseded by the idea that salvation is to be had only through the sacraments administered by the clergy; in short, the clergy had in their hands the means of salvation, and to them the laity must resort in order to be saved. The priest, re-invested

with a sacrificial office, took the place of the Gospel minister, and the church, that is to say, the hierarchy, intervened between Christ and the sinner. Thus the plan of salvation, as set forth by our Lord Jesus Christ, was superseded and overthrown. As a matter of course, when the idea of the Christian's responsibility for his own salvation and his duty to cultivate his own spiritual life disappeared, he naturally forgot or ignored his personal responsibility for the souls of others. Hence to the clergy was left the work of advancing the kingdom of God, and the clergy without the laity miserably failed. Here, in brief, we have the reason why on this little planet of ours there are today a thousand million of men who know not the Saviour of the world. The doctrine of salvation through priestly intervention brought spiritual deadness to the church, and a dead church left the world in its sins.

The great object of the reformation of the 16th century was to break down the sacerdotal barrier, and bring the sinner into direct touch with his Saviour. The reformation restored the evangelical doctrine that the individual is forgiven and sanctified, not through priestly mediation and sacramental agency, but by simple faith in Christ. The Christian once more stood forth as responsible, not to man, but to God alone in the concerns of his soul. Then followed in Europe and, subsequently, in America not only the revival of

personal and practical piety, but also a new sense of the personal responsibility of all Christians for the extension of Christ's kingdom.

This newly awakened sense of the responsibility of Christians to preach the Gospel to every creature ultimately led to missionary activity in England and on the continent of Europe; it led also to the formation of the American Board of Missions and to the sending of missionaries, not only to India and China and Africa and the Islands of the Sea, but also to the ancient Bible Lands. There was naturally among American Christians a special and a great desire that the churches in these Bible Lands should be revived, and should, as ambassadors of Christ, apprehend their vocation and recognize themselves as under obligation to communicate the Gospel message to the Jews and Mohammedans of the East. The ancient churches, found within the limits of the Ottoman Empire, were clearly the successors of the apostolic churches, and to them it was due that the very name of Christianity had not perished in these Eastern lands. In these lands had assembled the first great and universally accepted councils of the ecumenical church. Here had been fought by the fathers of the church great battles for the truth, and here countless martyrs had laid down their lives as witnesses for Christ. In the lapse of ages, however, great changes had taken place in the churches of the East as in

those of the West, and in the Eastern as well as in the Western churches the doctrine of salvation through the offices and sacraments of the church was universally accepted. The consequence was that among both clergy and laity moral and spiritual life fell to a low ebb, and the witness of the Eastern churches to the truth of Christianity had, substantially, no influence beyond the limits of their own fold; had, in fact, in a period of 400 years, so far as history informs us, failed to convert even a man from among the great non-Christian population of the Turkish Empire. What a terrible failure thus to come short of the great object for which the Christian church was organized!

The reformation of the 16th century, which had such a mighty influence in Europe, Great Britain and America, was almost unknown among Oriental Christians, and a spiritual reformation attracted little attention among those who were engaged in a life and death struggle for the maintenance of their national existence. Their gracious Lord and Master, however, had not forgotten these ancient churches, and soon after the first quarter of the 19th century the time of merciful visitation had come. It is a cause of rejoicing to Americans that, in the good providence of God, the Christians of the New World were among the first to listen to the Macedonian call. Naturally the attention of American Christians

was first directed to what were known as Bible Lands, and the first mission of the American Board in these lands was established in Palestine in 1819. From that time to the present American missionaries have been the principal foreign Christian workers in Egypt, Palestine, Asia Minor and European Turkey, and the total number of such workers, male and female, including the missionaries of three American Societies, has exceeded five hundred.

Now, in the attempt of the American missionaries to advance the Kingdom of God in these Eastern lands, what have been the chief characteristics of the work?

First of all, the aim of the missionaries has been to carry forward the work by spiritual means.

Christ said to the Roman governor, "My kingdom is not of this world". He affirmed that he had no purpose to establish his kingdom by political power. He acknowledged that he was a king, but declared that he had come into the world that he might bear witness to the truth. Well would it have been if the followers of Christ in all ages had learned from hence that Christ contemplated no exercise of temporal power, no union of church and state, and no use of any means for the establishment of his kingdom save witnessing to the truth, that is to say, save means which are moral and spiritual. Christ compels no man's adherence. His kingdom is a kingdom

of truth and love, founded on persuasion and cordial acceptance.

It is a happy circumstance that even in despotic Turkey under the old regime,—the field where political intrigue has had full play, the land on which for long years neighboring powers have preyed, and on which they still cast covetous eyes,—that even here American missionaries have never been accused of mixing with political affairs or of appealing to political influence

As has happened to missionaries in other fields, so here the spiritual aim of the missionaries and their unselfish purpose were not at first understood. To Oriental Christians, as well as to the non-Christian population, it seemed impossible that missionaries could have left native land and home and friends, and could have subjected themselves to the trials and dangers of an abode in a foreign land, save for some political purpose or for the hope of personal gain. Time and personal intercourse have fortunately dissipated suspicions and corrected misunderstandings, and men have seen that missionaries avoid politics and appeal to no expectation of worldly advantage either in the form of political protection or secular employment or pecuniary gain. The weapons of their warfare are not carnal; on the contrary, their only weapon has been the truth of God;—truth addressed to the minds and hearts and consciences of intelligent and responsible

men. And, as in other lands, so in Turkey; the truth of God, as contained in the inspired Word, has not been ineffectual, for in the experience of many thousands of men and women, by the miracle of renewed lives and by the development of Christian character, the Gospel message has been shown to be the power of God.

At the same time we are bound to confess that the attempt to advance the kingdom of God in Turkey has been carried forward with much imperfection, and with many hindrances, external and internal. It is one of the wonders of God's plan that in establishing his spiritual kingdom on earth he was pleased to make use of human agents. Addressing his humble and very partially sanctified followers Christ said, "Ye are my witnesses," "Ye are the salt of the earth", "Ye are the light of the world". As in the natural, so in the spiritual, husbandry, man is an essential part of God's plan. By the use of moral means man is to persuade and win his fellow-man, and thus, while the efficiency is of God, and the glory belongs to him alone, man is honored as God's co-worker. Though God's human agents are in themselves but earthen vessels, frail and powerless, many of them, like Moses and Paul, Chrysostom and Bernard, Luther and Livingstone, through Divine guidance and co-operation, have accomplished wonders, and shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

The foreign agents employed by God in bringing about a spiritual reformation in Turkey have at least not been behind their fellow-missionaries in other lands, and have had no need in any special sense to make confession of ill-desert and inefficiency. At the same time they themselves would be the first humbly to acknowledge that the spiritual work, wrought through them, would have been far more pervasive and powerful, had their vision of God been more clear, their hold on God more firm, their apprehension of the great work committed to their hands more worthy and complete, and their zeal more truly such as the great cause demanded. Had their consecration been like that of Paul, their spiritual harvest would, no doubt, have been like his.

If such be the confession of the early foreign agents, doubtless their native fellow-workers would heartily join in like confession. Almost all of the native fellow-ministers of the early missionaries now rest from their labors, and both the gracious influence of their works and their reward do follow them. Yet in recalling their earthly service, they cannot have failed to perceive and deplore that they sometimes forgot the one great aim of their spiritual service; that sometimes, through the lack of hearty co-operation and by reason of the heat of controversy, great and precious opportunities for spiritual work were lost, and that

by reason of the lack of fitting pastoral guidance and training and instruction some at least of the existing evangelical churches have a comparatively feeble grasp of evangelical doctrine, are weak in organization and lack zeal in witnessing for Christ

Our Lord and Master, seeing the end from the beginning, and knowing full well all the circumstances attending the establishment of his kingdom on earth, taught his disciples not only that much precious seed would be lost by being sown by the way-side, or on rocky places, or among thorns, but also that tares would spring up among the wheat. And so it has been in Turkey. Maybe these tares, though very injurious to the body of Christ, have had, like the deceitful darnel, so great resemblance to the true wheat, that the separation before the final harvest has been found impossible; maybe the tares have been the varied forms of opposition which have arisen from hostile ecclesiastics and family relatives who knew not what they did; or maybe the tares have been the snares, trials and temptations which have come from the world, the flesh and the devil. At any rate, as in the time of Christ and the apostles, so in the history of the missionary work in Turkey, many are they who, for lack of understanding or by reason of trial, have been offended and have gone back; many also are they who, for lack of inward spiritual growth and by reason of a life which bore

little or no spiritual fruit, have failed to strengthen the church of Christ. The church in all ages has conquered its external enemies; its chief trial has always come from within.

Secondly, the advance of the Kingdom of God in Turkey through missionary instrumentality has been slow and largely without observation.

The husbandman makes ready the ground and at the proper time casts in the seed. By its own vitality the seed germinates and grows. The Divine husbandman knows all the secrets of its growth, but the human husbandman neither understands those secrets nor can he help the seed to sprout and grow; his service is limited to planting the seed, protecting the field and gathering the harvest. The great harvest gathering, indeed, is at the end of the world, and in this harvest the reapers are the angels; but there is an ingathering of souls into the garner of Christ on earth, and here the instrument of the ingathering is the Christian husbandman, whom Christ employs not only to sow the seed, but also to reap and gather in the fruit. Fathers and mothers in their homes, teachers in their schools, Christian artisans in their shops, Christian merchants in their stores, and ministers in the churches first sow the seed, then for a while lose sight of it, and then again see it germinate and mature, and at last with infinite joy and praise bring into the garner the ripened sheaves.

Our Lord himself, speaking not only of the natural, but also of the spiritual, application of the parable, said, "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear". Sometimes indeed, by wondrous grace, the spiritual sowing and reaping seem almost simultaneous, as in the case of the penitent thief, but usually the spiritual, as well as the natural, growth requires time.

Such is preeminently the case when the Christian missionary carries the Gospel seed to the heathen of Africa, India, China and the Islands of the Sea. In dealing with minds without a vestige of spiritual knowledge, where there is indeed not even a name for God, where superstition reigns supreme, where there is either no written language or no words to express spiritual thoughts; under such circumstances missionaries have been obliged to labor on for years and years, with almost a Divine patience, before bringing into the garner the first ripened sheaf. Among Jews and Mohammedans also the missionary meets with superstitions, false doctrines and prejudices which are almost invincible.

Happily the missionaries laboring among the adherents of the ancient Eastern churches have had to do with peoples professedly Christian, with whom they have had much in common; hence the aim of the missionaries in Turkey from the beginning has been to get the Gospel leaven into the Oriental mass; not to divide and weaken

the Eastern churches, but to edify and strengthen them; not to preach a new Gospel, but to bring to remembrance the teachings of the old Gospel; not specifically to denounce false doctrines and unscriptural practices, but to re-announce and re-state the simple doctrine of salvation as taught by Christ and his apostles. In short, the supreme object of the missionaries has been to revive the Eastern churches, to quicken their spiritual life, and so to help them, as witnesses and ambassadors of Christ, to make known to the non-Christian peoples surrounding them that simple Gospel message which Christ committed to their care. In attempting this great work the missionaries have claimed for themselves no spiritual authority and no superior gifts or powers of persuasion, but have wished humbly, modestly, gratefully to testify to others touching the hope of salvation of which by the mercy of God they themselves have become possessed, — a hope which purifies the heart, sweetens the home, fortifies against temptation, brings joy in life and comfort in death. In this work the one great, encouraging fact has been that the Eastern churches already had in hand the Gospel seed, which is the Word of God; at the same time the distressing fact has been that the Bible, read in the churches in the ancient languages alone, has been to the people a sealed book. The first cause of rejoicing in this work, therefore, is that, with the aid of able

native scholars, the entire Bible has been translated into all the leading languages of the people of Turkey, and so, not only by preaching, but also by the printed Word, God's precious message of salvation has been made accessible to Armenians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Turks and Arabs. In the good providence of God the first Americans who were privileged to sow the Gospel seed in Turkey were men and women of godly lives, of rare ability, of great patience, of good judgment and of courage; men and women whom neither fire nor plague, neither political opposition nor religious persecution could daunt or dishearten. Yet here also, as in other lands, time was needed, both for the spiritual sowing and for the growth of the seed. Several young Armenians were the first persons to receive the Gospel seed into their hearts, but in Constantinople and vicinity a period of fifteen years was necessary before the fruit of the seed sown was sufficiently ripened to be gathered into the garner of an evangelical church.

But why, it will at once be asked, why were not these first ripened sheaves of the Gospel sowing left within the garner of the national church? The reason surely was, not that the missionaries purposed or desired the organization of a separate body, nor that those Armenians, who had been enlightened by the study of God's Word and had embraced evangelical views, desired to leave the mother church; no, the reason

was that the mother, strange to say, repudiated her own children; that no toleration was shown to men who adhered to the simple doctrines of the Gospel; that in fact the men of enlightened views were cast out of the national church with bitterness and anathema, and a separate organization afforded the only means whereby they could worship God according to the dictates of an enlightened conscience, and could bear witness before their countrymen to the truth as it is in Jesus. Thanks to God that, in the course of years, through the wide circulation of the vernacular Scriptures and of evangelical books and periodicals and by reason of the testimony and influence of the growing evangelical body, prejudice and the spirit of persecution have been largely done away; that many of the clergy and many more lay members of the national church acknowledge the truth of the evangelical doctrine, and that the attitude of the national church itself towards men of evangelical views has largely changed. At the same time the sacerdotal and sacramentarian system of the Armenian church, as well as of the Greek and Catholic churches, has not changed, and so long as this system continues, the need of a separate evangelical church will remain. A strong evangelical body, conscious of its mission, with the courage of its convictions, actuated by the friendliest sentiment towards other churches, whether Armenian, Greek or Catholic, yet faithful

at the same time to Gospel truth;—such a body, as in the past, so in the future, and increasingly so as the years roll on, will command the respect of the Oriental churches, and slowly and surely, openly and secretly, directly and indirectly, will contribute to their enlightenment and reformation. In past years Christ has had need of witnesses to the great doctrine of salvation by faith without the instrumentality of either sacrament or clergy. Would that witnesses to this doctrine could have remained and testified within the pale of the national churches, had this been possible without hypocrisy and without the loss of their own spiritual life; but in the history of Christianity national churches have been reformed, not by their clergy, but by the enlightenment and testimony of individual members, and such members, at the outset, in every case so far as we are informed, have been obliged to bear witness to God's truth, not within, but without, the pale of the national church. In Turkey questions touching the spiritual welfare of the church have been greatly complicated by the mingling of national aspirations with religious aims, and people have been slow to realize that men of different religious views can be equally patriotic and zealous in defending and strengthening their national existence. Indeed in only a few countries have men been found so enlightened and so tolerant as heartily and unitedly to contend for their na-

tional existence without regard to the religious convictions or forms of worship of their fellow-countrymen.

May God hasten the time when, under a free and constitutional government, the national existence of the different races of Turkey may no longer be endangered, and when Gregorian, Catholic and Protestant Armenians, Orthodox and Protestant Greeks, Mohammedan and Christian Turks, each enjoying full liberty of conscience, may labor unitedly, with equal sincerity and zeal, both to maintain their national identity and to advance the interests of their common country. Then will the people of Turkey realize what real religious liberty is; then will the question of religious obligation and religious belief be left to the decision of the individual soul, and then will men of every nationality unite with heart and strength to maintain the union and promote the progress of the common state. This happy realization of a free church in a free state may still be far away; but the idea is the legitimate outcome of Gospel teachings; in fact the sowing of Gospel seed broadcast in Turkey during the past eighty years has greatly helped to realize the desired end, and the great mission of the 140 evangelical churches now found in Asia Minor and European Turkey, with over 16,000 members and 54,000 adherents, is to continue to sow the Gospel seed.

Or, is it true, as some have thought, that the evangelical church of Turkey, as a whole, has reached the limit of its extension? Has it no further duty to discharge in behalf of the ancient churches and in behalf of the great non-Christian population of the land? Has the Gospel message, embodied in thousands of evangelical Christians and exemplified in their lives, lost its power? God forbid! In fact, the evangelical church in Turkey has hardly begun to realize its great vocation. To be sure, its first and most imperative duty is to maintain and strengthen its own spiritual life; but this it can do only by unselfish and devoted labor for the spiritual good of others. Shut up to itself and living for itself, the evangelical church will surely die, but if it spends and is spent for others, it will surely live. The Divine promise, and the law of the Spirit, is that he that watereth shall be watered, and the Divine judgment, and, at the same time, the testimony of experience, is, that he that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly. Even our blessed Lord, referring no doubt to his own death, said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit". In very fact the evangelical Christians of Turkey are both the first fruits of the Gospel sowing and the seed for a more glorious harvest. The work of extending the kingdom of God in Turkey is theirs by a Divine

commission. No church has been reformed and no nation has been converted by foreigners. Missionaries may be the messengers of God to bring in the light and to give the first and the necessary impulse, but every church must be reformed and every nation must be converted and elevated by its own children. The Christian is indeed called to work first for his own family, his own neighborhood, his own countrymen, but he must not confine his efforts to his own people, and must learn that his sympathies should be as wide as those of his Lord and Master. And what doors of approach to all the people of Turkey God in his wonderful providence has opened! Even now there are thousands of children and youth in our common schools and high schools and colleges, and tens of thousands of men and women, of every nationality in Turkey, in whom the good seed of the Gospel has taken root and is silently growing. Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest. Happy the teachers and preachers, and thrice happy those evangelical brethren and sisters, who discern the signs of the times, and seize the opportunity and share in the work of garnering fruit for God!

Thirdly, let us rejoice that, whatever hindrances it may meet from without and from within, the Kingdom of God looks forward to an ultimate and glorious victory.

Though small as a grain of mustard seed in the beginning, this kingdom shall at length fill the whole earth. Referring, possibly, to his own humble birth and condition and to his few unlearned Galilean disciples, how modestly does our Lord himself represent the rise of his Messianic kingdom! With what Divine assurance, however, does he foretell the glorious end! He knew God's heart of love and the eternal purpose of God to redeem a lost race; he understood the woes and wants of men; he apprehended the power of atoning grace to renew and save mankind. We, too, know the story of Christ's redemptive work for nineteen hundred years. Surely the Gospel, which has won the love and confidence of many of the greatest minds of the past centuries; which in both ancient and modern times has raised the most degraded tribes from heathenism; which has transformed and elevated the foremost nations of the earth; which has withstood all the assaults of its enemies, and, today, appeals with ever fresh and irresistible power to the hearts of men; — surely this Gospel, re-enforced by the power of the Holy Spirit, is all-sufficient to conquer and save the world! The story of modern missions in Asia, Africa, and the Islands of the Sea clearly attests the abiding power of the dear old Gospel. In Turkey also, in despite of clerical, national and family opposition, the evangelical doctrine has won a large

acceptance; a simple trust in Christ has had power to renew and beautify individual lives and character, and fit men both for a happy service here and for a triumphant death; at large expense and with much sacrifice evangelical worship has been maintained and a pure evangelical faith has been transmitted through three generations;—these are facts which attest the reality and the power of the Gospel in these Eastern lands.

In the brief period of fifty years, in the four Turkey missions, the evangelical churches increased from 40 to 140, including 17 Greek and 19 Bulgarian churches; the number of church members increased from 1,277 to 15,748; registered Protestants increased from some 7,000 to 54,000; native fellow-workers increased from 156 to 1,082; the gifts for public worship, education and benevolence increased from some \$ 4,000 in a year to \$ 128,273; fifty years ago there was but one boarding school for boys and one for girls in all Turkey, now the boarding and high schools for boys and girls number 52; then there was not one college connected with our Turkey missions, now there are eight, not including Robert College, which surely is one of the fruits of missionary work; then the pupils in the common schools numbered 2,742, now the pupils in all schools number 23,115, of whom 4,600 are in high schools and colleges; then there was no hospital connected with our missions, now there

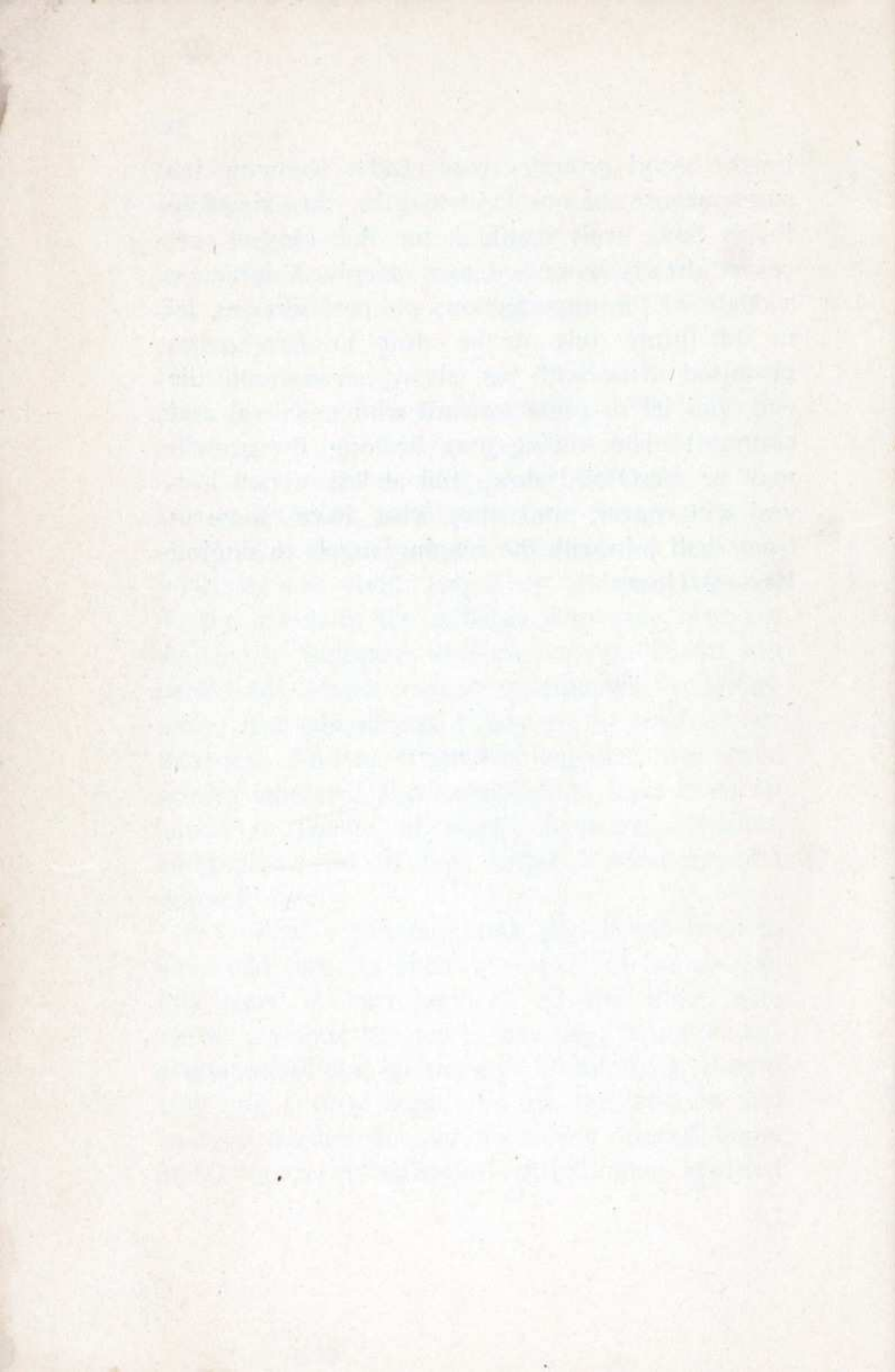
are seven, in which from year to year some 40,000 patients, of every race, receive treatment; then our mission publications were few, now, including both educational and religious books and periodicals, they average some 10,000,000 pages a year.

This summary statement indicates some of the manifest and manifold results of fifty years of missionary labor, but the general influence of the work on both the clergy and the laity of the Eastern churches, on the male and female patients, of all races, who have been healed in our hospitals, on the youth taught in our schools, and on the minds of the millions who have read the vernacular Scriptures and the mission books and periodicals;—such a mass of influence, religious, moral and educational, is beyond the reach of our statistics. And let it not be forgotten that these results, tabulated and untabulated, have been attained in despite of wars, massacres, famines, emigrations and all the varied hindrances of a despotic rule.

O what a privilege and joy it has been to have had part in such a work! O for another fifty years in such service! O that those who are to continue the work may have a higher appreciation of the missionary vocation, a deeper faith and a surer hope, and all the wisdom and courage needed to enter the newly opened doors and improve the enlarged opportunities afforded

by the good providence of God! Knowing the sure purpose of our God to give the kingdom to his Son; truly thankful for the Gospel successes already witnessed and deeply humble on account of the imperfections of past services, let us still firmly rely on the dear Lord who has promised to be with us alway, even unto the end, and let us press forward with new zeal and courage! The sowing may be long, the growth may be secret and slow, but at last a rich harvest will appear, and they who have sown in tears shall join with the reaping angels in singing Harvest Home!





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