

any real reform or prosperity in Persia. On the other hand, some admit that the country will never prosper while that religion prevails. I doubt not there are thousands of nominal Moslems who are rationalists or have gone out of Islam into some other sect or else hold no definite religious views at all. Many of them have been to Russia, France, England, and even some to America and have seen the progress of Western countries under the sway of nominal Christianity. Commercial intercourse with the outside world has shown the Persians that Christian nations have much that is good which no Mohammedan country ever can possess.

The political changes above narrated are of course professedly the demands of the people for political liberty, and although it is quite true that the movement is being managed by a very small part of Persia's people, it is sweeping the whole country before it. And while professedly political, it is also promoting, though perhaps incidentally, every kind of liberty, including that which is religious and that which goes beyond liberty and should be called license. In a word, the effect of these political changes on Islam is tending to break the fanatical power of that religion.

In attempting to speak of the outlook for Christian missions we take up a subject extremely delicate and largely speculative. The work of Christian missions in Persia was probably never held up to keener criticism, and at least some of it probably never enjoyed higher favour with the best Persians than at present. There never was a time when greater caution and wisdom were called for on the part of Christian missionaries than at the present. It should be our constant endeavour to make our work and influence commend themselves to the Persians, convincing them that the work we are doing here is of vital value and benefit to them. Every