

THE
CHURCH MISSIONARY
INTELLIGENCER,
A MONTHLY JOURNAL
OF
MISSIONARY INFORMATION.
VOL. VIII. NEW SERIES.



“THEIR LINE IS GONE OUT THROUGH ALL THE EARTH, AND THEIR
WORDS TO THE END OF THE WORLD.”—*PSALM* xix. 4.

LONDON:
CHURCH MISSIONARY HOUSE, SALISBURY SQUARE;
SEELEY, JACKSON, AND HALLIDAY, FLEET STREET;
HATCHARD AND CO., PICCADILLY;
AND J. NISBET AND CO., BERNERS STREET.

—
1872.

CONTENTS.

THE BÂBS.

	Page
Spread of the Gospel leaven—Rise of Heresies	161, 162
Agency of the leaven on the Bâby Movement in Persia	163
Sketch of the Religious situation of Persia	164, 165
Missionary effort for Persia	165
Appearance of Mirza Aly Mohammed, founder of the Bâbs, in 1843—His inter- view with the Shah	166, 167
Siege of the Bâby stronghold in Mazenderan—Spread of the Sect	168, 169
Capture and Execution of the Bâb	169
Election of a New Leader—Further Arrests and Executions	170
Account of the Bâby Creed	171, 172
The "Scheme" of Bâbyism.	172, 173
Uses of such systems as Bâbyism upon false religions	174
Concluding Remarks	175

FAMINE IN PERSIA.

Introductory Remarks	46, 47
Letter of Rev. Robert Bruce, Ispahan, September 29, 1871	47, 48
REPORT OF PERSIAN FAMINE-RELIEF COMMITTEE, DJULFA, ISPAHAN	255, 256

RECENT FAMINE IN PERSIA.

Termination of the Famine—Devastations made by it	314, 315
Peculiar Position of the Society's representatives in Persia	315, 316
Letter of Rev. G. M. Gordon, Shiraz, April, 1872	316—320

ON MAHOMET AND MAHOMETANISM.

Davenport's "Apology for Mahomet," &c.	193, 194
Extracts from Sir W. Muir's Life of Mahomet	195, 196
Davenport's Remarks on Mahometan Toleration replied to	196, 197
Evil Results of Mahometan Success	197, 198
Present Aspect and Conditions of Islamism—	
Arabia	198, 199
Persia, Turkey, India	200, 201
Sketch of the Progress of Wahabeeism in the Mahometan World	201, 202
The Wahabee Question, as it affects us in India, considered	203, 204
"Mahometan Proselytism"—Does it Exist?	204—206
The Mahometan Element in India still a Hopeful Field for the Missionary	207

HERR JOSENHANS ON MISSIONARY PROSPECTS.

Address of Herr Josenhans, Inspector of the Mission House at Basle	350, 351
------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------

THE BÂBYS.

ANOTHER parable spake Jesus unto them, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened." Under this homely figure our blessed Lord indicated, in a manner plain to the commonest understanding, the peculiar mode and manner in which the doctrine which He came to impart and to render efficacious by His sufferings and death, would operate upon the masses with whom it was to come into contact. In itself, to all outward seeming, a sour, worthless and contemptible thing, yet its silent, secret influence would be irresistible, and finally result in the conversion of all around it from disjointed particles into one harmonious and homogeneous whole. The one requisite for this result is time. This time, however, is not to be measured by our years, and months and days, still less by our fancies and impatience. It is as true now as it was on the eve of the Ascension, that to every curious and forward inquiry the voice of Jesus says, "It is not for you to know the hours or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power." But still it is permitted to us to watch the progress of this leavening power: we can trace its gradual but certain operation. The whole history of mankind testifies to the efficacy of the Gospel leaven when contact is admitted. It is true that the results are often astonishing, contrary to our preconceived notions, apparently not producing those immediate consequences which we conceive ought to be produced. Nevertheless, if we would duly remember that we are not masters of the whole counsels of God, and that He has His own mysterious manner of working out His own ends, we might perhaps be satisfied with contemplating the efficacy of the agent, and so be led to feel that it is and must be the great power of God influencing the hearts and understandings of men according to His sovereign will.

Some reference to the history of the Church of Christ, as well as to that of bodies most hostile and antagonistic to it, will serve to elucidate this proposition. Indeed it would be quite justifiable to look further back, and to notice the efficacy of that doctrine which had for ages been the peculiar deposit of the Jews, and of which they had been for ages the jealous guardians. It would be almost impossible, from the peculiarly secret working of Jewish doctrine, disseminated by a race eminently unpopular, usually slaves not masters, ever adequately to declare what part the teaching of the Jew had in the subversion of the various idolatries which filled Asia Minor, Greece, and Rome itself. The agents were contemptible; but we feel, rather than we know, that they were influential. Contrary to his previous habits and prejudices about the time of our Lord's advent, the Jew was a busy proselytizer; the leaven, too, which he hid in the minds of multitudes had properties in common with that more potent principle which the Apostles of Christ communicated to the hearts of men. This helps materially to account for the ready reception and the marvellous activity of the Christian leaven: if there had not been, as we have good reason for believing there was, previous preparedness, and a certain readiness to yield to its influence, it might have acted as powerfully, but not so rapidly. We have no reliable evidence that miraculous power was other than circumscribed in its range and limited in its duration, probably extending little beyond what was granted to those who were first endued with such extraordinary gifts. The testimony of our Lord Himself is plain, that it was rather as a witness to the power of those whom He sent forth than as an efficacious instrument of conversion, that this power was for a season granted. Putting a very extreme case, he says, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Upon Oriental minds especially, which do

not view miraculous agency as we view it, namely, as the direct interposition of God suspending or abrogating His own laws for some adequate object, but rather as an influence which men may, by various means, mostly occult, procure and exercise for the prosecution of their own ends and purposes, miracles, although calculated to arrest attention, would not readily exercise that converting power which we are disposed to ascribe to them. Be this, however, as it may, we know that when the Gospel leaven was first hid by the Apostles, its influence permeated rapidly, subduing those with whom it came into contact, and becoming so predominant that masses preferred Christianity to the exclusion and rejection of their former modes of belief. Results followed direct and marvellous; so disproportionate to the means by which they were achieved, that Divine interference was a necessary and rational explanation of what was to be witnessed in so many quarters, and upon so extensive a scale. We cannot, however, concern ourselves with these direct and patent triumphs of the Gospel. Our object rather is to show how its efficacy wrought when it was apparently but one element, and that a feeble one, deprived of much of its original value by reason of corruption, and therefore producing results not in accordance with our views and wishes, yet nevertheless still preserving some measure of vitality widened by astonishing results. Partly from the extent to which itself was leavened with extraneous matter, and so enfeebled in its efficacy, partly from the extreme corruption of the natures in which it was embedded, monstrous heresies have at times been the first product from it, leading men apparently far from the kingdom of heaven and the true doctrine of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. Yet however strange and uncongenial the product has been, it is impossible to deny what has caused it, namely, contact with Christianity in some shape or form, perhaps corrupt, perhaps infinitesimally small. If our space permitted, it would be curious to trace this history of this Gospel leaven in the many fearful heresies and wild delusions which have at various times overspread the world, and succeeded to the ancient superstitions and idolatries which had been absorbed and transmuted from their original nature.

To take one notable instance from the past, what was the origin of Mohammedanism? We cannot doubt that many of the materials out of which this creed was formed existed previous to the birth of Mohammed. In the midst of all the corruptions of Sabæanism there were unquestionably enshrined in the hearts of many Arabs aspirations after the worship of the one God, whom in times past their ancestors had worshipped. The cruel idolatries practised, the superstitious observances enjoined, probably had in secret revolted many besides him who claimed to be the prophet of God, but no effort was made to revolt against the superstitions which enthralled the souls of men. It is beyond a doubt that when Mohammed was brooding over such thoughts both Judaism and Christianity exercised an influence upon him, and from them a considerable portion of his creed was derived. In Arabia, Jews abounded, both in the cities and the tents, and Christians had penetrated among them also. Islamism, according to the declaration of Mohammed, was no new religion; it was but a restoration to the original purity of the ancient religion taught and practised by the prophets, Adam, Abraham, Moses, David, and Jesus. His object apparently was to purify the religion of the Arabs, and to carry them back to the creed professed by their ancestors in the days of old—a creed identical with the earliest traditions of men when first departing from the knowledge of God. But from what sources did he obtain the leaven which he hid in the new creed which he gave to his followers, or, if we may believe him, in the old creed which he sought to reestablish? Most assuredly his Judaism was not that of the Bible, and probably he never looked upon its pages. He never, it may be, had even an opportunity of consulting the Torah, but gathered out of the

Gemara or Talmud, or rather out of what his informants told him was contained in these repositories of Jewish traditions, the fables with which he filled the Koran. So, too, with Christianity. Whenever Mohammed cites the New Testament he cites it incorrectly; not, we may suppose, intentionally, but because apocryphal gospels which swarmed in the Eastern Churches, and which were fabricated by heresiarchs to substantiate their errors, were the only sources of information to which he had access. It was this most weak and corrupted leaven which reached Mohammed, yet, deprived of well nigh all its quickening and transforming power, it was effectual to the overthrow of Sabæaniam, and to the substitution for it or the restoration, in its stead, of a purer and more rational faith. With such imperfect material such mighty results were wrought: the Word of God, even so debased, could not lose all its intrinsic efficacy. Had the Old Testament and the New Testament, instead of incoherent and fragmentary notions derived from the Gemara and the Talmud, and the foolish legends foisted upon Christianity, been the sources of Mohammed's inspiration, what might have been the results when working in that mighty mind?

What occurred in the past is occurring in the present. It is notorious, for instance, how the Taiping movement in China and Brahmoism in India have owed their existence to the Gospel leaven. Its agency may be disclaimed, but cannot be denied with truth and justice. Whatever good was in either of these systems is due to its energy; the evil to the imperfect appreciation of it, and the struggle of human corruption against its beneficent influence. We should, moreover, in the early stages of any religious movement, not feel surprise that ferment should arise from the infusion of leaven. Our blessed Lord Himself prepared us for this: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Despite several stern reminders when faith has been vanishing away, and love has grown cold, after a thousand years' enjoyment of the blessings of Christianity, we are apt to lose sight of the struggles which it cost to introduce Christianity amongst ourselves when first the leaven was hid in our midst.

In our present article we propose drawing attention to one remarkable instance of the agency of this Gospel leaven, to which we called attention in our Number for November, 1871, but which seems to deserve more careful examination; it is in itself most curious, both in the singular results which have hitherto accrued, and also for the strange revelation it makes of the present condition of Mohammedanism in one of its most important branches. It is a moot point whether Islamism is at present experiencing a revival, or is in the throes and convulsions of death. There are some indications which would lead us to the first conclusion, but the rise of the formidable sect in Persia, whose designation heads our article, would rather point the other way, at any rate in the countries where it has taken such deep root. We think it will hardly be possible, after fairly considering the facts we propose alleging, to doubt that, in Persia, Mohammedanism has been extensively honeycombed, and that the allegiance paid to it is more superficial than hearty. For most of the facts we bring forward we are indebted to a most interesting work by a Frenchman, M. le Comte de Gobineau.* He himself is, like so many others of the more intelligent of his nation, a Voltairean, and has scant sympathy with any form of Christianity. He does not deny that there has been Gospel leaven in the Bâby movement, but extenuates its power; and it is necessary, therefore, to supplement

* *Les religions et les philosophies dans l'Asie centrale*, par M. le Comte de Gobineau. Paris, Didier, 1836.

from other sources his very meagre allusions to this portion of the case. In our volume for 1870 there is an interesting account of the geography of Persia, and some description of the races by which it was peopled. We need not, therefore, reproduce such details, but as so much attention has recently been directed to Persia, it may not be inconvenient to add a few remarks on some notable events in an earlier history. It was in the year 436 that the celebrated battle of Cadesia was fought which overthrew the Sassanian dynasty and the religion of Zoroaster, establishing in their room the Mohammedan rule and faith. "The decisive battle of Nehavind, styled by the Arabs "the victory of victories," completed the subjugation of the country. We can hardly think with Gibbon that "the national religion was eradicated by the Mohammedans." It is unquestionable that the profession of Mohammedanism was very general, but the learned historian himself admits that Magianism still to a limited extent survived, and it has probably ever had secret adherents, so the Jews and Moors in Spain managed to combine reverence for their ancient faith with outward profession of Christianity. From the very outset of Mohammedan rule the sectaries of Ali, the Shiites* have possessed the empire of Persia. It is, however, a most interesting question how this came to pass. M. de Gobineau recognizes in it a political and religious revolt against Arab dominion and Arab creed, even while submission was professed to both. The feudal chiefs, the ancient priesthood of the Magi, all who were animated with patriotic sentiments, though unable to shake off the Mussulman yoke, took advantage of the divisions existing among their conquerors, rallied around the standard of Ali and his successors, thus destroying the unity of the Khalifat, and gradually created a formidable and deadly schism, under cover of which much of ancient practice and profession gradually found admission, so that to a considerable extent, though not in name, yet in reality, the ancient religion of the Sassanides once more recovered its hold upon the body of the nation. While the utmost deference was paid professedly to the Prophet and to the Koran, all real power and all real salvation flowed through the Imams. Instead of Ormuzd and Ahriman there were Ali and the Imams in perpetual contention with Sheytan. The names are different, the doctrine is identical. It is no wonder that such tenets are an abomination to the more orthodox Sunnites, and that the two parties are in perpetual contention. Shiism is now a days in Persia split into minor sects and sub-divisions, the chief of which are the Akhbarys, the Mouschkhedys, and the Sheykhys. The Akhbarys, who are mostly of the middle class, in addition to the precepts of the Koran, accept as binding any tradition ascribed to Ali or the eleven Imams who succeeded him. These may be often conflicting, and may in reality be derived from sources altogether foreign to Islamism. Under the influence of this teaching they deny the resurrection of the body and the reality of the Day of Judgment. The Sheykhys, on the contrary, who are the more learned, and among whom are to be found the most able of the clergy, are violently opposed to the indiscriminate reception of traditions, while still being fanatical Shiites. The Mouschkhedys hold an intermediate position: in theory they accord with the Sheykhys, in practice very much with the Akhbarys: they are chiefly recruited among high civilians, lawyers, and men of such condition. Besides these three great sects, all of which most Persians, at some period or other of their lives, have belonged to, passing from one to another, there are an infinite number of other sects which must be passed over without notice. It would be impossible, however, so to deal with Soofyism. It is not very easy to

* Shiite, like our Whig and Tory, is a term of reproach: it is formed from the term Shiyar, which signifies properly a scandalous, reprobate sect. Another explanation, however, has been offered, which would make it almost identical with Protestant.

characterize this very briefly, but it may perhaps be best described as religious sentimentalism and perfect egotism, caring nothing for home or country, centering all happiness in self alone. Its esoteric doctrine, as held by the most profoundly initiated in its mysteries, is Pantheism. The practice of Ketmân (religious reserve) is as systematically practised among the Soofys as it is among our Tractarians,* or Ritualists; or, still more systematically, by the Jesuits in the Church of Rome. While professedly holding most emphatically the doctrine of the Divine Unity, the tenet of the Soofy is "God is I," while to all outward appearance he is a Mussulman of the most irreproachable type. All Soofies, however, are not equally enlightened, and, as regards multitudes of them, M. de Gobineau is probably not far wrong when he says that "quietism, bang, opium and drunkenness to stupefaction," constitute the creed and practice of the Soofy. We may remark as we pass along, that, especially through the influence of Soofyism in conjunction with other causes, most brutal drunkenness is a conspicuous vice in central Asia. In Persia, priests, princes, philosophers, ladies of the highest rank, spend whole nights in drunken orgies, despite all the prohibitions of the Koran. In some respects Soofyism has features similar to those of Buddhism, but in its abject sensuality and profound indifference to all external things it would seem hardly fair to the latter creed to institute a comparison between them. We may add to the foregoing sects a number of Freethinkers whose creed is negative; who have been unsettled by contact with European nations, but have adopted nothing from them. M. de Gobineau, to supply this deficiency, has furnished them with Descartes, and thinks that Spinoza and Hegel would be useful guides. We imagine that there is a safer and a wiser of whom some knowledge has been given to Persia by the circulation of the Word of God.

We have thought it advisable to furnish this brief sketch of the religious situation in Persia, but, before proceeding to an account of Bâbyism, must advert to the efforts made to remedy the deplorable spiritual anarchy of the country, and to hide in its midst that Gospel leaven which can alone convert and change it into what shall be a glory and a praise unto the Lord. The first attempt made was by the Moravians, who sent two of their Missionaries, in the middle of the last century, to see if there was access for the Gospel, but they soon returned, and the Mission was given up. It was at the beginning of this century that, next in order, Henry Martyn visited Persia, and drew the attention of the learned to the pure doctrines of Christianity. His name is still fragrant in Shiraz and Tabriz, and inquiry is still made after the man of God and his religion. The next effort was made from Scotland by a Mission settled at Astrachan, with a view of extending itself to Persia: it was given up chiefly through the intrigues of the Russian clergy, but not until the Old Testament had been translated into Persian, and disseminated throughout the country. Subsequent efforts were made by the Basle Missionary Society, which had to be given up; and still more recently energetic endeavours have been put forth by the Americans, chiefly among the Nestorians in Persia, in the hope that converts from among them may be the means of ultimately dispelling the darkness which prevails throughout the land. It will be seen that, giving the utmost meed of praise to the various Christian Churches that time after time have striven to fulfil Christ's command to Persia, there has been little or rather no introduction of the truth by direct preaching among the masses, and that many earnest endeavours have hitherto proved unavailing. Very small and very fragmentary has been the portion of Gospel leaven hid in the midst of the myriads of Persia. And what has hitherto been the direct result? A few, like

* Cf. "Tracts for the Times," No. 80.

Mohamamed Rahim, of whom so touching an account is given in connexion with Henry Martyn's visit, have come like Nicodemus to Jesus by night, and we would fain hope that here and there, as Martyn wrote in the New Testament he gave to him, there has been joy in heaven over more than one sinner that repented; but very few there are, we fear, who would answer as he did. "Are you a sincere Mohammedan?" "No." "You are not indeed a sceptic nor a freethinker?" "No, indeed I am not." "What are you then, are you a Christian?" "I am."

What, however, have been indirect results? The efforts have been strenuous to shut out the Gospel, and apparently successful. Still there has been a spiritual famine in the land, and an earnest craving for more substantial and satisfying doctrine than the various systems we have passed in review can supply. Soofeism has been openly arraigned as insufficient and enervating. Islam has been charged with being too confined, even under all the varying forms in which it is presented by Shiism. Something else is wanted. What? Throughout central Asia, in Persia, in some parts of India, and of Tartary in Asia, in the neighbourhood of Bagdad there has been for years religious excitement which has grown up and still continues to pervade the countries with anxious and unsatisfied longings for something which shall fill the aching void in their souls, and give them substance instead of shadow. It was, then, in the year 1843, that there was in Shiraz a youth, then scarcely nineteen, named Mirza Ali Mohammed, singularly devout and scrupulous in the fulfilment of all the punctilios of his creed. He was, moreover, of a bold and inquisitive turn of mind. There is no doubt that, in the providence of God, he was led to read the Gospels circulated by Protestant Missionaries: he conferred, moreover, with Jewish doctors, studied the doctrines of the Magi, and did not shrink from the pursuit of occult arts and sciences. At a very early age he made the pilgrimage to Mecca, but the scenes he witnessed, probably very similar to those which have shocked Luther and so many since him at Rome, finally detached Mirza Ali from Mohammedanism, and led him to aspire to become the founder of a new and better religion. It is impossible to fail being struck with the exact analogy between the early career of this young man and of the Prophet himself. It was at the very foot of the Kaaba that Mirza Aly gathered his first disciples. On his return from Mecca he made his way to Bagdad and thence to Cufa, where Aly was assassinated, and in the ruinous mosque where Abdarrahan smote the "lion of God," Mirza Aly underwent sore spiritual conflicts, and was tempted of the evil one out of the right way. On his return to Shiraz he published an account of his pilgrimage, and a commentary on the Sura of the Koran, entitled "Joseph." Soon he began to preach; and while professing veneration for the doctrines of Islam, declaimed so fiercely against the vices of the Mollahs, that long after his hearers spoke of them with a shudder, and all Persia rang with his fame. Soon he gathered a company around him, and then assumed his first religious title. He declared himself to be the Bâb, the Door by whom alone it was possible to arrive at the knowledge of God. Henceforth he was generally known by no other name, though by his followers he was called Hezret-e-Ala, or "Sublime Highness." Such virulent attacks elicited the hostility of the Mollahs, and complaints were sent to Teheran. The Bâb, too, sent a rejoinder, and solicited permission to come, with his chief disciples, and in a conference with the Mollahs in the presence of the Sovereign expose their unworthiness. These conflicting appeals caused great embarrassment at the Court. The prime minister was disposed to encourage the notion of a conference, but was eventually dissuaded, and orders were sent to Shiraz to stop the preaching of the Bâb, who was to confine himself to the house until further orders. To this he submitted, but the dwelling was thronged

with fresh disciples. It was at this point that he took a further step in advance, and from being "the Door," proclaimed himself as "the Point;" that is to say, the origin of truth, a divine manifestation, and almighty. The title of Bâb was then conferred upon a priest from Khorassan, named Moulla-Houssein-Boushrewyéh, one of the eighteen apostles elected by the faithful from among themselves. He was an able and intelligent man, and was sent forth as the first Missionary to preach among his own people and in Irak the doctrines of Bâbyism. He first preached in Ispahan, and thence made his way to Teheran, where he was admitted to interviews with the Shah and his prime minister. In them he earnestly pressed upon the monarch and his favourite the importance of religious reform, and of founding a new religion which should comprise Mohammedans, Christians, and Jews. The preacher met with much acceptance among all classes of society in Teheran, but could prevail nothing with the Shah. He was driven forth from the capital, but was not otherwise ill-treated. Meantime the Bâb had sent forth two other Missionaries—one a man, Hadji-Mohammed Aly Balfouroushy, and the other a very remarkable woman, surnamed Gourret-oul-ayn, or the "Consolation of the Eyes." She had heard of the preaching of the Bâb, and began a correspondence with him. Soon afterwards she appeared in public without her veil. Her relatives strove in vain to moderate her zeal: in doing so her father-in-law lost his life. At length she quitted her family, and became an apostle of the Bâb. It should be added, that she was universally admitted to be a woman of irreproachable virtue. By this agency all Persia was traversed, and the new doctrine preached everywhere. In the course of their journeyings Moulla Houssein was arrested, but escaped from captivity during a mutiny, and made his way to Meshed. Finding no protection there against the Mollahs of that holy city from the insurgents the hitherto pacific Missionary changed his course of action, and gathered a band around him. Many flocked to him, but he would still have avoided conflict. Such, however, was the enthusiasm of his followers, that a skirmish took place, in which the Bâbys were worsted. The consequences might have been serious, but in the midst of the confusion a grave incident changed the current of all men's thoughts. News arrived that the Shah was dead. The intelligence came at a critical moment for Moulla Houssein and his followers, for they now became a party in the midst of parties and factions, and they might become a power. Quitting Khorassan, Moulla Houssein made a hasty march into Mazenderan, where, in a village called Bedesht, he effected a junction with several chief leaders of the sect. Chief in dignity was Mirza Jahya, a youth of fifteen, who subsequently became the successor of the Bâb, Hadji-Mohammed Aly Balfouroushy, Gourret-oul-ayn, with a large retinue of zealous followers. This convention may be considered as the first council held by the sect. It was on this occasion that Gourret-oul-ayn preached a most memorable sermon in a place adjoining the village. M. de Gobineau, with much justice, compares the scene to a conventicle of Scotch Covenanters. We cannot undertake to describe the quarrels and conflicts which ensued with the authorities and Mollahs in Mazenderan. Eventually Moulla Houssein established himself in a strong spot, which he fortified, provisioned, and garrisoned with 2,000 adherents. From this centre preachers went forth, not now preachers only of religion, but of religion mingled with politics, in which proclamation was made that the reign of Bâbyism was about to begin, and that all mankind would be subject to them in the course of the ensuing year. Stimulated by letters from the Bâb, the soldiers looked forward to the speedy conquest of Mazenderan, a glorious march on Rey, a mighty battle, and a deep ditch dug in a mountain near Teheran, to contain the 10,000 Mussulmen who would be slain.

Meanwhile the Shah and the new prime minister began to find time to attend to

the affairs of Mazenderan. The nobles, who had come to pay their court to his Majesty, were charged, as they took their leave, to put an end to the disturbances. Their efforts were, however, in vain. One of the princes was sent from Teheran, as lieutenant for the king, to attack the stronghold of the Bâbys, but his army was ignominiously routed in a night attack by 300 of Moulla Houssein's men. Again, M. de Gobineau compares this to "the sword of the Lord and Gideon." A fresh army was raised, but before it could be fairly set in motion a local chieftain, Abbas-Kouly-Khan-Laredjany, who had been summoned to bring his contingent, instead of joining the royal army, went straight at the head of his men and besieged the stronghold of Moulla Houssein. Again a night surprise was attempted by the Bâbys, which was once more successful; but a heavy loss was sustained by the death of their energetic leader, Moulla Houssein, who was shot in the *melée*. He is an important personage in Bâbyism, as he first embarked what had been hitherto a religious sect in a career of politics and war. Soon afterwards the Shahzadeh, at the head of his fresh army, reached the stronghold and proceeded to blockade it. A wall of circumvallation was drawn round it, and there was in the nineteenth century a reproduction of what the readers of Thucydides or Livy will be familiar with. For more than four months the siege lasted: some few made their escape through the camp of the enemy; some few became traitors. The survivors were reduced to eating the leather of their girdles and their scabbards; they had fed on grass and on the bark of trees; and even dug up and devoured the horse of Moulla Houssein, which had been buried with his master. Such was the dread they inspired, that they were deemed supernatural, and as, in Scotland, balls of silver were fired at Claverhouse, so, by a similar curious superstition, gold bullets were used by one man against the Bâbys. Finally 200 haggard men and women surrendered on promise of their lives being saved. The promise was not kept, and they all perished, with Hadjy Mohammed Aly at their head. For the moment Bâbyism was crushed in the Mazenderan, but it existed in full vigour in Khorassan. Gourret-oul-ayn had disappeared from Mazenderan, but, as was well known to her partisans, was concealing herself in Teheran. Hardly had the stronghold of Sheykh Tebersy fallen before the insurrection broke out again in Zendjan, the capital of the small province of Khamseh. In this city a Bâby government was set up, and a fierce fighting took place in the narrow streets. Barricades were raised, mines were dug, houses were loop-holed and turned into fortresses. The slaughter was fearful. Orders had come from Teheran to spare none, and the Bâbys, on their side, were guilty of horrible cruelty to their prisoners. Finally the insurgents were compelled to capitulate, and were, with few exceptions, put to death, despite the terms of capitulation. Some few of the chief prisoners were reserved, and carried to Teheran. Three of the principal men were condemned to die by having their veins opened, and in their last agonies prophesied that the prime minister would shortly perish by the same mode of death. M. Gobineau does not vouch for the prediction, but does for the fact that the Emir Nizam did so perish.

We now come to a very interesting period in the history of Bâbyism. Through the zealous efforts of the apostles of the creed, Persia was filled with its partisans. Not only speculative minds had been captivated by the doctrines propounded, but, inflamed by the recent exploits of the Bâbys, multitudes, like those who separated themselves unto David into the hold of the wilderness, men of might and men of war, fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as roes upon the mountains," swelled the ranks of the new religionists. It became therefore necessary to lay the axe to the root of the tree, and the Bâb, who had been so long, like Paul, dwelling in a kind of imprisonment in his own hired house, was conveyed to Fort Tjihrig, in the province of Ghylan, on the Cas-

pian. He had taken no active part in the insurrection, but, not unnaturally, the Nazim thought that if he were got rid of the whole affair would die out. Accordingly he was brought from Tjihrig, where he had been in confinement for eighteen months, to Tebriz, with two companions, Syud Houssein and Moulla Mohammed Aly. On his arrival an assembly was held, and the Bâb was summoned to defend his doctrines. We need not dwell upon details when the conclusion was foregone. The Bâb and his disciples were sentenced to death. The next day they were led forth chained through the streets and bazaars, and were finally conducted to the house of Hadjy Mirza Bagher, where, according to the Mussulman account, the Bâb renounced his creed, and with tears pleaded for mercy. They were then dragged to another doctor's, being beaten and buffeted as they passed along. There the sentence of death was formally communicated to him. It was as they were quitting this house that Syud Houssein fell at the Bâb's feet and confessed that he could hold out no longer. He was raised up like a drunken man, and was told that if he cursed the Bâb he would be pardoned. He cursed the Bâb. He was told that if he spat in his face he would be set at liberty. He spat in the Bâb's face. He was let loose, and when the procession had swept past he ran up and fled to Teheran. Encouraged by success, the executioners sent for the young wife and little children of Mirza Mohammed, but he was insensible to their tears and supplications. Finally, at sunset, the two prisoners were brought to the city wall, and hung over it by cords under their arms, so as to be a few feet from the ground. A company of Christian soldiers were then ordered to advance. While they were hanging, the Mirza was heard saying to the Bâb, "Master, are you satisfied with me?" At this moment the soldiers fired. The disciple was killed instantaneously, but a ball cut the cord which suspended the Bâb. He staggered to his feet, and took refuge in a guard house. It is supposed that had he instead cast himself among the throng, there would have been a general insurrection in Tebriz, and the Kadjar* dynasty might have been overthrown. As it was, when the soldiers recovered from their astonishment, the Bâb was pursued and slain. His body was dragged for several days through the streets of the city, and finally cast out to the beasts of the field. At the time of his death he was hardly twenty-seven years of age. His death, however, so far from extinguishing Bâbyism, was only the signal for fresh disturbances, and for more formidable insurrection against the constituted authorities in Church and State.

In tracing the history of Bâbyism so far, we see manifest indications that the original intention of the founder was simply to bring about a much needed religious reform and revival of religion. There were no political aims and no desire to bring about a dynastic revolution. The first interference of the temporal power was submitted to, and to the last moment of his career the first Bâb, absorbed in religious reveries, never took any part in public affairs. He consented to the acts of his adherents, rather than promoted and encouraged them. But that which he did not inaugurate was set on foot by his adherents during his lifetime, and persevered in after his death. Bitter hostility against the reigning family filled their souls, and on the plea that the Bâb, as a Syud, inherited all the prerogatives of the race of Ali, and had the blood of Yezdidjird in his veins, he was viewed by them as a successor of the Imams, and a rightful heir to the throne of Persia. The martyrdom of their chief was hence the signal for the outburst of active hostility. There was a call upon them to avenge his death. The chiefs of the party gathered from all quarters, and elected a youth of sixteen years of age, Mirza Yahya, of whom mention has already been made, as their chief. He assumed the title of Hezrete-e-Ezel, "Eternal Highness." Im-

* The Kadjar dynasty has ruled in Persia about eighty years.

mediately after his election, Mirza Yahya quitted Teheran, and passed from town to town, calming the spirits of his followers, and discouraging any premature attempt at insurrection. The authorities sought in vain to arrest him. Finally, to escape pursuit, he withdrew to Bagdad in 1852. About this time a sinister rumour was circulated in the bazaars of the capital that the end of the month Sharval would be fatal to the king, who was then at his country palace of Niaveran. While sitting in his garden he saw three labourers, apparently fainting under the heat of the sun. Taking compassion on them, he sent them some of the water melons he was eating. They were three Bâbys, to whom the task of murdering him had been assigned. Smitten with a sense of his kindness, they desisted from their attempt, and allowed three days to intervene before they renewed it. They then, as he was riding, seized the bridle of his horse, and fired at him, wounding him slightly. One of the assassins was immediately cut down; the others were arrested. It was discovered at once that they were Bâbys, and measures were promptly taken to secure as many as possible of the leaders of the sect. About forty were arrested in Teheran by the activity of the police, and were examined together with the two assassins, but little information was to be procured from them. It will give some idea of the extensive ramifications of Bâbyism through all ranks and classes of society if we detail the measures thought necessary in dealing with this conspiracy. The most cruel severity would have been the natural course, and no pains would have been spared to exterminate all even supposed to be concerned in it. It was resolved, however, not to prosecute extensive inquiry, and to treat with clemency those who would abjure their profession. Those who had been arrested and would not renounce Bâbyism must certainly be put to death, but the risk and responsibility must not be undertaken by the king, the victims were to be distributed among the different grandees and public bodies. Zeal and attachment for the royal dynasty would be shown by the severity exercised, and those who exercised it would thereby give most unmistakeable assurance that they had no complicity with Bâbyism.

Among the prisoners was Gourret-oul-ayn. The influence of her beauty and her eloquence captivated her captors. Her life was promised to her on the simple condition of renouncing Bâbyism. With the prospect of being burned at the stake she resolutely refused. She was burned, and her ashes were scattered to the winds: with equal joyful assurance all the other prisoners met the cruel death prepared for them, with their latest breath invoking blessings on his Sublime Highness and the martyrs and apostles of their creed. Men, women, and children, with their bodies cut and lacerated, and burning matches fastened in their wounds, passed in long procession through the streets of Teheran, chanting in their agonies as they made their way to the place of execution, "Verily we come from God, and are returning to Him: verily we belong to God, and are returning to Him." Among those who perished with more than ordinary joy and enthusiasm was Syud Houssein, who had denied and reviled his master on his way to death. It is said that this display of courage and fidelity in the agonies of martyrdom filled the ranks of Bâbyism with secret adherents. There is reason to believe that the cause has made immense progress since the period of the events we have been relating. A calculation was made some time ago, but we cannot vouch for its accuracy, that out of a population of 80,000 in Teheran 5,000 were Bâbys, and those were of the classes most distinguished and enlightened, and occupying most important posts. To outward appearance, however, Bâbyism is extinct.

It is now, however, necessary to give some account of the creed professed by the sectaries whose history we have hitherto been narrating. For this materials abound, but they are not very accessible or very intelligible. The literature of the Bâbys is a secret literature entailing danger on the possessor of it, and, to obviate that danger,

is expressed in terms studiously enigmatical. The most important document probably is one put forth in 1848 by the Bâb, entitled "Binyan," or "The Exposition," containing all necessary knowledge. It is a compendium of the dogmas of the new creed. This Binyan was published first in Arabic, afterwards, in a more enlarged form, in Persia. Another work held in high esteem by the Bâbys is the "Book of Light," a mystical work of considerable extent. There is also another book written by a female devotee which is very much prized.

As to doctrine, the formula in which the nature of God is expressed is substantially the same as that in use among the Mohammedans, but the idea presented to the Bâby is quite different. It simply establishes the position, that out of God there is no God; that there are not two Divine powers strangers to one another. God is in His essence the Creator, because He is the Life. In order to create, He uses, in the language of the Bâbys, seven letters or words: the Arabic expression is *harouf*. These seven letters are, force, power, will, action, condescension, glory, and revelation. We should term these attributes of God. These letters or words, or attributes, are supposed to have life in themselves. These seven attributes, in creating the actual universe, have manifested the truth of the axiom, that "God is the primitive unity from which emanates graduated unity. God is that unity which can at His own pleasure increase or diminish the employment of His attributes without their being impaired, and this is His especial prerogative. Emanations from God cannot exercise any emanation from themselves without impeachment, diminution, and destruction. This is the essential distinction between God and a creature. Nevertheless, the creature is not entirely separated from God, from whom it proceeds, for "there is nothing outside Him;" and God Himself exclaims, "Verily, O my creature, thou art I;" and so, again, "Verily, I am the Truth, and there is nothing outside Me (in appearance) but creation." So that all that exists, all that has shape and name, is in God, proceeding from Him, inferior to Him, less gifted, less mighty, less complete; but this is a mere accident in time and space, for in the day of judgment "all things will be destroyed except the Divine nature. So that all which is defective, resulting from emanation, from separation, however temporarily, from the pure nature of God—and herein is the origin of all evil in the world—will disappear, and God will withdraw unto Himself all that belongs to Him. It is very noticeable that in this definition the Bâb differs materially from the general tone of Gnosticism, and indeed from almost all Oriental philosophy: he does not make matter chargeable with evil. His creed is a species of Pantheism, but not altogether identical with other views of it. Another remarkable feature in Bâbyism is the use and import of numbers. 19 is held to be the numerical expression of God. It is formed in this way: beyond and above the number 7, which represents the creative forces, is to be placed the word *hyy*, "living." Now, the numerical value of *h* is 8 and that of 7 is 10: by prefixing 1 for the term *ahyy*, "that which gives life," we have 19. It has some relation to the word *wahed*, which in the Koran is used for "the only one that is God:" the numerical value of this is 19. We cannot undertake to follow this out, but the general result is, that the base of all organizations which we meet with in the world is 19. For instance, in Bâbyism the year consists of 19 months, each month of 19 days, each day of 19 hours, each hour of 19 minutes; and so on, not only weights and measures, but law and religion are so regulated. Over each college of priests one, as the Point, presides over 18 others. In relation to those who have preceded him, the Bâb does not claim any essential superiority: Moses, David, Jesus, Mohammed, all were prophets, and carried humanity onwards. The Bâb carries men further; there is therefore no need to take any heed of those who have gone before, or to pay them any

honour: it would be only an incumbrance to progress. Another important consideration is, that the Bâb himself is not alone the prophet or prophecy: he is part of a complete unity, consisting of 19 personal manifestations: he is the Point, but he is not the whole manifestation. When it is borne in mind that many of his principal followers never at any period beheld him, and that at the most important deliberations which have influenced the sect he was never present, we shall the less marvel at this. His chief followers, like himself, are supposed to have emanated from God. As there is no superiority or inferiority in the Divine nature, they are, therefore, essentially equal with him; but as their functions are less important, he is the Point. When he suffered martyrdom, one of his followers was clothed with his functions, and the unity still had its Point. There is, again, another interesting feature that requires notice, and that is, that the Bâb strongly asserts that he is only a forerunner. In accordance with this, the Bâb has only composed 11 of the 19 divisions of which the Biyyan is to consist. He has abolished the duty of turning towards the Kibla or towards Jerusalem, but he has substituted no fresh Kibla; this the New Revealer will appoint. This great unknown is termed by him, "He whom God will manifest." Some Bâbys imagine that His Eternal Highness is the person intended: if it be so, the day of judgment would be at hand. But upon this point there is a difference of opinion among them. At the last judgment—for at the epoch of each revelation there has been supposed to be a judgment—"He whom God will manifest" will congratulate all holy men of past dispensations upon their labours and attainments in holiness. He will then reveal to them further truth, and they will be absorbed into the Deity living in Him, sharing in all His perfection, in point of fact, it will be Him. The wicked will be annihilated; all nature will share the lot of humanity; what is good and pure will return to the Divine essence; what is evil will suffer annihilation.

If from doctrine we turn to the scheme of Bâbyism, it is as follows:—There are to be kings, and clergy formed into colleges of priests, consisting each of nineteen members. Holy places are to be erected upon the spot where martyrs have fallen, and in large towns each house is to have its oratory. All these are to be furnished as sumptuously as possible; singing and instrumental music are to be employed in public worship, and male believers are to wear an amulet in the form of a star with rays, on which are to be inscribed the names of God: women are to have simular amulets in the shape of a circle. In all the enactments we have just been noticing there are indications of a return to the old Aramæan superstitions condemned alike by Christianity and Mohammedanism. In the event of Bâbyism ever becoming the ruling power all who would not conform would be deprived of their property, but their lives would be spared. As regards prayer the Bâbys only pray on set and solemn occasions; they discard the notion of legal impurity. Almsgiving is encouraged, but mendicity is discouraged by the most stringent regulations—a regulation at complete variance with all Oriental nations. Luxury of dress is sanctioned. Marriage is held to be highly laudable; a second wife is barely allowed, but concubinage is strictly prohibited; divorce is forbidden, and the usage of the veil is to be discontinued. Women are to be invited to banquets as well as men. Very thoughtful and tender regulations are prescribed for the training of children. Contrary to Oriental custom, the Bâbys are to sit on chairs and sofas, and to shave the beard. The use of arrack and opium, and intoxicating drugs, are interdicted, and the Bâbys are neither to buy or sell them. In many of the Bab's regulations traces are perceptible of the leaven of the Gospel, however slight its influence hitherto has been. Bâbys, when the Gospels have been read to them, have expressed astonishment at the similarity of many precepts in them with those of their own creed. The foregoing is, after all, but an imperfect, though we hope, a sufficient

account of some of the most noticeable doctrines and practices of the Bâbys not so much as they are, but rather as they would be if they had the power to display themselves freely. When we bear in mind that this formidable sect has sprung from the preaching of a friendless youth, and that in the space of five years (from 1847 to 1852) it spread as though it were handed on by the fiery cross through a country which has neither carriage-roads nor rail-roads, which has neither newspapers nor pamphlets in circulation, the mere fact of Bâbyism is a phenomenon deserving the serious consideration of all interested in religious movement. When, moreover, it has, as we see, gathered into its ranks such multitudes, and convulsed the nation to its centre, so potent an agency deserves at least to be recorded. It is a factor to be taken into account in all considerations relating to the evangelization of Persia and the condition of Mohammedanism.

In reviewing the condition of Mohammedanism generally, so far as it has passed under our notice, it would be hard to imagine that in the condition of the Shiites generally there is much indication of progress or vitality. Probably few would be disposed to dissent from the verdict passed upon them by Mr. Palgrave, namely, that "to idolize Alee and his race, and to wallow in the swine trough of sensuality, is the *dernier mot* and turning-point of Shiya'ee doctrine and practice." Such is assuredly not an unfair estimate of this important section of the Mohammedans. Bâbyism was a reform, but not in the interest of the creed of the Prophet, nor could a false creed mend a false creed, so as to communicate to it that righteousness which exalteth a nation. But the whole movement was most hostile, and, so far as its power extends, is subversive of Islamism. For the time being it has been subdued by superior force, and the malady has been driven inwards upon the nation, where it is devouring in secret. But it is hard to imagine that with such a malignant disease gnawing upon its vitals Shiite Mohammedanism can have any aggressive power. Its utmost efforts and most ceaseless vigilance has to be exercised in repressing insurrection against itself: whatever vitality it exhibits must be that of fear and desperation. It is a more difficult matter rightly to appreciate the influence of Bâbyism with reference to the evangelization of Persia. There is no question that in itself it is an attempt at a return to a purer creed, but we can hardly venture to say that is even a feeling after God, if haply they could find Him, if by God we are really to understand the God presented to us in the revelation of the Bible. On the contrary, there is too much reason to apprehend that it has not gone much beyond those primitive departures from God which, in the course of time, filled the world with false ideas of God, and evidently with foul idolatries. It is a return, but not a return far enough, nor a return by the right road: there is too large an admixture of man, and too manifest an effort to exalt him to a level with God. Many incoherencies might be pardoned if through them all there were distinctly perceptible, clear, and accurate perceptions of who and what God is, and what are the relations of man to Him. But we fail in discovering them, nor could they be perceptible where there is a rejection, or, to be more precise, a complete obscuration of Him who is the way, the truth, and the life, and where there is manifestly no effort to obtain the help of the Holy Spirit of God, but man leans to his own understanding. While there are indications of an acquaintance with the doctrines of Christian revelation, and there has been an effort to get rid of some gross and degrading ideas of the essential nature of God which we may trace to such acquaintance, the result is still very imperfect and unsatisfactory.

Prejudiced as the guide is whom we have been following against Christianity, and contemptuous as are his allusions to Christian effort in Persia, it is clear, even from his unwilling admissions, that there has been dissemination of the truth in Persia,

and that the leaders of the Bâbys have had access to it. But it is equally clear that they have been unwilling to receive it fully, and to incorporate it thoroughly into their system. Very little of the true leaven has been hid in their meal, and although there is not in Bâbyism the hostility prevailing against Christianity which exists against Islamism, there is but little sympathy with it. Gospel truth has had a certain influence, but as may be seen in Brahmoism, and to some extent in Taipingism, it has rather thrown men back upon what they conceive to be most excellent in their own systems than it has yet brought them to the feet of Jesus. It is very curious, by the way, to notice throughout the East this remarkable disposition at the present time to return to primæval creeds since Christianity has been preached and disseminated in these countries. Even the return to Shintooism in Japan, before which Buddhism is waning and gradually losing its hold upon the people, is an indication of this tendency.

We think the utmost that can be said of such religious movements is, that, in the mysterious providence of God, they have their use in loosening and breaking up the systems of false doctrines in which for centuries the nations have been spell-bound. The element of Christianity that permeates them no doubt has exercised, and will exercise, some living influence, although not at present apparently sufficient to counteract what man has so unscrupulously mixed up with it. Men set free from ancient hereditary prejudices, with all the powerful associations attaching to them, may hereafter be more ready to receive the truth. But for the present the introduction of these new religious elements seems rather to present an obstacle to the spread of Christianity. Those who were restless and dissatisfied with their ancient superstitions have something more specious, more rational, more attractive presented in the room of them. It is, however, but the substitution of one falsehood for another. Still they have got what they imagine to be something instead of nothing: for the time they are soothed and pacified. Awakened religious enthusiasm and aspirations after holiness in Persia have been expending themselves upon the Bâb, and the mysteries which he propounded. The current of feeling has been forcibly turned awry in this particular direction; other religious systems, Christianity included, are comparatively unheeded. In another way we think Bâbyism, although in this respect unintentionally, may be a hindrance to the Gospel, certainly to any open and honest profession of it. After the fierce struggle which there has been to put down Bâbyism, and the dangers with which it has menaced the throne and all civil and religious authority, there must be the most jealous watchfulness and resolute determination on the part of the authorities to repress forcibly all that savours of proselytism from the established religion of the country. Whatever efforts, therefore, are made to propagate Christianity must be secret efforts, attended with serious risk to all concerned, as Mr. Bruce informs us; embracing Christianity is a capital crime in Persia. This might be comparatively of little moment, but the Christianity which cannot be set on a hill, and has to be hid under a bushel, seems to be an article of very doubtful value. Where there is not a fair probability that toleration may be so far extended as to ensure reasonable safety of life for the convert to Christianity, there is not, in the providence of God, an open door set before the Church of Christ. At present the only prospect for the convert would seem to be flight to another land; his change of creed, if avowed, would be his death warrant. Even if the Shah were willing to grant an edict of toleration, it does not follow that he could restrain the fanaticism of the clergy. There is in Persia a mighty and independent spiritual power, as well as a temporal. The two are often in conflict, but in such a case combine against the innovator. For this, in some measure, Bâbyism must be accountable over and above the stern policy with which the followers of Islam have ever treated those who have proved renegades to the

teaching of the Prophet.' What Brahmoism is in India, Bâbyism is in Persia—a fresh and inconvenient, but, we believe, not an insuperable obstacle to Christianity; with, however, the additional difficulty of the terror and hostility which it has excited in the minds of those who sway the dynasties of the land.

We cannot conclude this article without remarking how difficult, and perhaps dangerous, it would be to count on favourable results from recent Christian effort in ministering to the necessities of the famine-stricken population of the land. It has been a manifest duty to alleviate this distress, and we rejoice in thinking that, however imperfectly, yet still there has been deliberate effort made to display the love and sympathy which Christianity exhibits for suffering. With, however, the utmost care and vigilance, which we know has been exercised to distinguish and keep apart the work of conversion from the relief of bodily suffering, it is not easy for the most jealous watchfulness to estimate aright, in such a crisis, how far inferior motives may actuate those who profess to be inquirers after Christianity. Our blessed Lord Himself, when the people came seeking him, said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled." Would it be marvellous if multitudes, in such a fearful time of visitation as that which has overtaken Persia, should crowd around the Missionary, and, if he were willing to take advantage of their necessities, be ready to submit at least to a patient listening to his teaching? We notice with much satisfaction, in a recent communication from Mr. Bruce, what strenuous efforts he has made to keep asunder the temporal and the spiritual ministrations; but we doubt whether any one, until more favourable seasons return, can rightly estimate the present attitude of the Persians towards Christianity, or whether the sympathy manifested for their afflictions may have really tended to dispose their hearts to any favourable reception of the truth as it is in Jesus. Meanwhile, so far as we are aware, there has not been the slightest relaxation on the part of the authorities of their suspicious and jealous attitude, however careless and supine they have been amidst the distresses of their subjects. Despite the assertions of M. Gobineau as to the security with which those who are deemed heretics may live in Persia, and how vain the efforts of Mollahs are to obtain the intervention of the secular arm, we think we are not wrong in asserting that prompt and rigorous punishment would be the result of an avowal of Christianity. To the sufferers it would be matter of indifference whether it was the law of the Koran, the law of the land, or the tyranny of despotic power jealous of foreign creeds which wrought havoc among them. To the victims of the Inquisition it must have been a superfluous refinement of cruelty to inform them that the Church of Rome had no share in the agonies which they were called upon to endure.

It is plainly impossible for the Christian not to feel even more sympathy for the spiritual condition of Persia which is manifestly a state of chaos and anarchy, on which the Spirit of God can hardly be said to have moved, than even on its material destitution; but it is easier to recognize the existence of the evil, than to provide the remedy where so many, and such hostile influence are arrayed against the diffusion of the truth as it is in Jesus. We will fain hope that ere long He who has the key of David upon his shoulders will open that which is now closed, and no man shall shut. We wish we could form the favourable estimate of Bâbyism, which was put forward by Dr. Chaplin in his letter to the "Times" last year; but we think he has overrated the extent to which Christianity has leavened the system as much, and perhaps more so than M. de Gobineau has underrated it. We need further information, and fresh light before we can pronounce a favourable judgment, unless we suffer our wishes to be fathers to our thoughts.