

THE CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN.

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THE PROSPECTS OF ASIA MINOR.

THE following questions have recently been asked by a leading minister in the Church at home: I. Is the British Protectorate to accomplish anything for the good of the people of Turkey? II. Is Palestine going to be colonised? III. What are the colleges, schools, and philanthropic establishments throughout Turkey doing for the good of the people?

I.

The first question is hard to answer. The writer was one of the most sanguine believers in good to come from the Anglo-Turkish Treaty, and gave expression to this belief both in private and in public in the years 1878 and 1879. The Turkish Government at that time had found itself prostrate at the feet of Russia, and, for the third time in its history, was rescued from utter destruction by the interference of the British Government. British statesmen, British diplomatists and officials everywhere had the confidence of the Turkish Government and people. England demanded reform as the condition of her friendship, and Turkey, under the pressure of such distress, political and financial, as she had never felt before, was only too ready to promise radical and universal reforms throughout the empire.

These reforms were to be in connection with the judiciary system, the collection of taxes, the police, and the admission into the army of the Christians of the empire. British officers were to be invited to organise the gendarmerie, the Indian system of taxation was to be introduced, British judges were to sit in the courts of appeal, and the depressed and oppressed Christians were to enjoy the privileges of military office and service.

Three years have passed. The Turkish parliament, whose short career interested Europe, has been forgotten. British officers have been gradually discharged from the Ottoman service, and German officers are being appointed either to fill their places, or to occupy different positions. The old oppressive system of tithing continues. The courts of justice are in nearly the same condition as before the

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Russo-Turkish War, with this modification, that the office known in America as "Prosecuting Attorney," and here called "Muddai Amûmi," has been introduced into many of them. Nothing is heard now of British judges nor of the Indian system of taxation. Christians have *not* been admitted into the army, and the Turkish military schools for training officers, though nominally open to all, are, as far as I can ascertain, filled with none but Mohammedan pupils.

The European journals have been filled of late with statements of the "new departure" of the Ottoman Government, in insisting upon the Khalifate rights of the Osmanli Sultan, and his spiritual sovereignty over the whole Mohammedan world.

There must be something in the general belief on this subject. I observe that the Arabic Mohammedan journals now speak of Abdul Hamed as "the Khalif," instead of "the Sultan," and there is an evident disposition to make what remains of the Turkish Empire as compactly Mohammedan as possible.

The questions with regard to this new phase of affairs are so delicate that I do not deem it wise to enter upon them in detail.

It is only just, however, to state that there is no evidence in Syria and Palestine to justify the belief that Christians, as such, are being persecuted or oppressed by the ruling powers.

The Turkish authorities are in many cases disposed to treat all men alike, as far as they can under existing laws. And in this city of Beirut, where the Muslim population number only one-third, and the Christians two-thirds, there is no reason for complaint. The officers of the municipality are elected by the people, and the majority are Christians, though the president is a Muslim, being appointed by the Mutserrif, a Turkish Pasha.

There is here a fair degree of religious liberty. A Muslim convert to Christianity, who has lately been publicly admitted to the Beirut Church, was present in the city council afterwards, when the presiding officer, Bedea Effendi, said to him, "Are you, then, a Protestant Christian?" "Yes." "Where, then, is your Bible?" "Here it is," said the youth. "Let us hear it," said the Effendi. He opened it at the first chapter of John's Gospel, and read it through, with comments, the whole crowd of Muslims and others keeping silence. The Effendi then remarked, "You are quite a disputant for your faith!" "Yes," said he, "I read in the Koran, in the fifth sura, the following words: 'Oh, ye people of the Book! ye are not grounded upon anything, until ye set up (observe) the Tourat and the Gospel, and that which hath been revealed unto you from your Lord.' So I have read the Gospel, and found Jesus Christ to be my Lord and Saviour; and now I am grounded on something!" The Effendi told him to go in peace.

There are not, however, many cities in the empire where such liberty could be enjoyed by a convert from the faith of Islam, because in Beirut, but in few others, education and Christian teaching, preaching, and

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printing have had a gradual leavening influence on the popular mind, making the leading men of all sects ashamed of such a thing as open persecution.

The British Protectorate, as such, hardly exists to-day. Cyprus still remains in the hands of England, and will probably so remain while the Ottoman Government continues.

As a military strategic point in the event of Russian aggression on Ottoman territory, it could hardly be abandoned by England. But to the outward observer this territorial or insular acquisition is about all that remains of the once promising protectorate. England may have far more influence than she appears to possess, but the general impression seems to be that the German star is in the ascendant.

Yet, whatever may be the policy and the preference of Turkish *officials*, there can be no question that the people of Syria and of Turkey at large, have more confidence in the honesty, integrity, and sincerity of the English people and Government than in any other. Whatever may be done or not done by the British Protectorate, the influence of the English name, Anglo-Saxon veracity, and the Protestant religion is evidently on the increase in every part of the East.

In all questions occasioning public anxiety, the *English Journals* are those to which men turn for reliable news. Protestantism stands as the synonym for two things: the English people, and personal and commercial integrity. This moral "protectorate" is wielding a mighty influence in Turkey to-day. Lord Dufferin is respected by Turkish officials everywhere, and by the people who are so fortunate to know of his high personal character, as the people of Syria are, from his residence here as British Commissioner after the massacre of 1860. The British consuls throughout the empire are, as a rule, men of high character, and in sympathy with every movement and every institution designed to elevate and benefit the people. They are generally Christian men, whose personal example is a blessing to the community in which they reside. Accordingly, while we must reluctantly admit that the reforms, so confidently anticipated as a result of the British protectorate, have not yet been even begun, we can take great comfort in the fact, that the agencies which are preparing the way for the highest style of reform, the moral and spiritual reformation of the empire, are at work with more present efficiency, and a better prospect of ultimate success than at any previous time.

II.

The second question, "Is Palestine going to be colonised?" may be answered without great difficulty. We take it for granted that the question refers to its being colonised by the *Jews*. In this aspect of the case we should say decidedly, No. There is no *present* prospect of a Jewish occupation of Palestine.

Three things must be secured in order to insure the success of a colony—viz., the permission of the Government, colonists, and a

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place to live in. None of these "necessary things" has yet been secured.

The Turkish Government is fixed in its determination to prevent anything like organised colonisation by non-Mohammedan communities in any part of Syria or Palestine. It replied to the Roumanian Jews that they might come to Turkey, and be welcome, provided—1st, that they would become *bona fide* Turkish subjects; and 2nd, that they would not settle in either Syria or Palestine.

The Sultan wishes to fill up the waste places of this land with true Mohammedans, such as can be found among the Circassians, Tartars, Lazis, and Bulgarian Turks; but a consolidated Jewish colony he would naturally regard as forming a new centre for some future Bulgarian or Armenian question, which he has no room for at present. The Constantinople journals have stated plainly that the Sultan will not allow the germs of a Jewish kingdom to be planted in Palestine. But even were the Sultan willing, it is more than doubtful whether any considerable colony could obtain a footing in Palestine without serious collision with the existing population, unless they bought the land of the people at an enormous cost.

The Circassians east of the Jordan, who have been located in the ruins of Jerash and other old ruined cities, hardly venture outside their narrow limits, through fear of being picked off by the Bedawin muskets. The established German colonies at Jaffa and Haifa only maintain themselves by the strictest economy, and cannot be claimed to be successful in the sense in which Anglo-Saxon colonies are successful in America and Australia. It is doubtful whether even these hard-working and tough Teutonic religious enthusiasts can hold out another decade under a Turkish *regime* and a Syrian sky.

The United States Consul of Jerusalem informs me that the Jewish model farm near Jaffa is financially a failure, and is drawing on its capital to keep out of bankruptcy. The newspaper stories of great Jewish colonies pouring into Palestine, and buying up hundreds of thousands of acres of land are mere fabrications. The Rothschilds annually "mortgage and foreclose upon the Holy Land," according to the newspapers; but the old Muslim, Bedouin, Greek, and Latin owners continue in possession, and there is no sign of an attempt to dispossess them. The attention of Europe and America has just been drawn anew to plans for forming Jewish colonies in Palestine, by the persecution of Jews in Russia. Mr. Oliphant thinks that the funds raised for their relief can be wisely appropriated to aiding in their emigration to eastern Palestine. But as long as the Turkish Government continues in its present mood, they cannot obtain permission to settle in the land of their fathers. Should they come one family at a time, and buy property gradually, they might possibly succeed. By Turkish law, foreigners have now the right to buy and hold property in Turkey; but should a Jew now attempt, *as a foreigner*, to buy land in Palestine,

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he would be required to become a Turkish subject first of all. If the authorities suspected, however, that he belonged to a colony or large body of immigrants, he would not, probably, be allowed to purchase at all. This we infer from the openly-published statements of the Turkish official organs in Constantinople. Any attempt to colonise must first obtain the consent of the Sultan. This has not yet been obtained.

On the other hand, the tide of Jewish emigration seems turning to the Western Continent ; and if the Jews are as shrewd in the selection of a home for their families as they are in the transaction of financial business, they will not long hesitate between such a land as Palestine and such a country as the United States.

The old and infirm, the pauperised wards of European Israelitish societies will continue to come to Jerusalem, to be fed out of the Rabbis' fund, and die in the city of David. This number may increase. Wealthy Jews like Sir Moses Montefiore may continue to erect structures for the comfort and convenience of the Jews in Jerusalem. But the time when Hebron and Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jericho, and the border towns of the Sea of Galilee will again be Jewish cities ; when the farms, now occupied for centuries by Muslim and Arab fellahin, will be tilled by Jewish farmers like Boaz and Elisha ; and when the hills will resound with the songs of Jewish "herdsmen of Tekoa" and shepherds of Bethlehem, seems as far distant now as at any time since the days of Julian the Apostate.

The Jews of Aleppo, Damascus, Beirut, Safed, Tiberias, and Jerusalem—many of those in the two former cities belonging to families of very great antiquity—are none of them, as far as I can ascertain, engaged in agricultural pursuits. Jews from Constantinople, Aleppo, and Damascus, with others from Europe, have come to Beirut during the past twenty years, built houses, and entered into business ; but none are farmers. They are bankers, money-lenders, importers, dealers in clothing, new and old, and artisans ; but the soil seems to be the object of their repugnance.

Is it not the Divine plan that they should thus keep aloof from the stable occupation of tilling the soil, in order that they may continue to be strangers and wanderers in every kingdom under heaven ?

III.

The third question has reference to the "colleges, schools, and philanthropic establishments in Turkey." We cannot speak definitely of Turkey at large ; but having just completed, at considerable expense of time and labour, an official report of the missionary, educational, and medical mission operations in Syria and Palestine, we select some of its figures, in order to give the readers of this journal a correct view of the agencies at work in the lands of the Bible.

From this it appears that there are some twenty-three foreign societies and committees engaged in evangelistic and educational work

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in Syria and Palestine, employing 81 male and 110 female missionary labourers. They employ 581 native teachers, preachers, and helpers; occupy 140 preaching stations; have 26 organised churches, 39 church edifices, 1693 communicants, and 6311 enrolled Protestants. 209 persons were received to the Churches during the past year (1881), of whom 130 were received to the Churches under the care of the American Presbyterian Mission.

The whole number of schools, including college, female seminaries, boys' high schools, theological schools, and common schools is 302, with a total of 14,624 pupils, of whom 7475 are male, and 7149 female pupils. Although the number of societies is apparently great for so limited a territory, yet *five* of these societies have 11,238 of the 14,624 pupils under instruction, and only *eight* of them report having organised churches and communicants.

Sixteen of the missionary operations are purely educational, some of them having no more than thirty, forty, or fifty pupils under instruction. Eight of the educational missions are under the sole management of English ladies. Two-thirds of the nominal Protestants, and five-eighths of the communicants are in connection with the American Presbyterian Mission. Eight of the societies, comprising the great majority of the Church members and pupils, are of the different branches of the Presbyterian Church, six are Episcopal, and several non-denominational. Four only are American, the rest being British and German. The Friends (English and American) have ten schools, with 300 pupils in Mount Lebanon, besides schools in Palestine.

The medical missionary agencies number twelve, with fifteen physicians, and twenty-four nurses; and the number of indoor patients cared for in 1881 was 1805, while the out-door or polyclinical patients numbered 80,432.

These medical missions are located in Beirut, Nazareth, Jerusalem, Jaffa, Gaza, Antioch, and Mount Lebanon. The physicians are American, English, German, Armenian, and native Syrian. The most thoroughly equipped medical work is probably that conducted in Beirut at the "Johanniter Hospital," founded by the Order of Knights of St. John, in Berlin, in 1860, the year of the Syrian massacres. The nurses are the trained and cultivated deaconesses of Kaiserswerth, and the physicians are Drs. Van Dyck, Post, and Wortabet, of the Syrian Protestant College. Last year it received 539 indoor patients, and attended 9874 patients in the Polyclinique.

An almost incalculable amount of human misery is annually relieved by these various medical missionary institutions. Mohammedans, Druzes, Jews, Nusairiyeh, Metawileh, Maronites, Greeks, and other sects come to these missionary physicians, receive healing for the body, have their eye-sight restored, tumours removed, club-feet straightened, cross-eyes corrected, painful internal and external maladies completely cured; and after hearing the Word of God read and prayer offered by

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their benefactors, return home with grateful feelings and new ideas of the religion which prompts men and women thus freely to give of their time and strength for the relief of the stranger and the sufferer. In a land like this which is overrun and cursed with a horde of medical quacks, such skilful and conscientious treatment of disease is gratefully appreciated.

Among the facts brought out by the recent statistics, one is that in the city of Beirut, which, twenty-five years ago, had hardly a hundred children at school among all the sects, there are now 11,000 children at school in a population of 80,000. Three thousand of these children are in Protestant schools, and 8000 in the schools of other sects. The orthodox Greeks have 1473 ; the Maronites, 1000 ; the Jesuits, 1250 ; Papal Greeks, 400 ; Sisters of Charity, 1320 ; Mohammedans, 1570 ; and Jews, 315.

It is a striking fact that, of the 11,187 children at school in Beirut, 5921 are girls, and only 5468 are boys. This great advance in female education is most gratifying and hopeful for the future. When the American missionaries first came to Syria, it is doubtful whether there were twenty females out of a population of two millions who could read. In all Syria and Palestine, as stated above, there are now 7149 girls at school in Protestant boarding and day-schools, and 7475 boys, making 14,624 children in Protestant schools.

The oldest schools for girls in Syria are those founded by the American Mission ; but there are now various other societies engaged in the same work with no little success. The American Female Seminary in Beirut under the care of three American ladies and a corps of native Syrian assistants, aims to give as high and complete an education as is demanded by the daughters of Syria. Of its fifty boarders, about four-fifths *pay their own board and tuition*, and the remaining fifth pay a portion of the expense. The success of this school in enforcing the paying principle is most laudable and hopeful for the future. The American Female Seminaries in Sidon and Tripoli have more than a hundred girls under instruction.

The British Syrian Schools, founded in 1860 by the late Mrs. Bowen Thompson, are now a most important factor in the work of progress. Beginning with a few widows and orphans after the massacre of 1860, the work has now grown until it comprises 17 foreign labourers, 97 teachers, 24 Bible women, 452 male pupils, and 2878 female pupils. I can testify, from an observation of more than twenty years of its schools in Beirut, and more especially the Training Institution, that the instruction is sound, thorough, and eminently Biblical and evangelical. It is now under the care of a committee in London, with the local superintendence of Mrs. A. M. Mott and her sisters, who carry out the plans and wishes of their sister, Mrs. Thompson.

The German Deaconesses of Kaiserswerth, whose praises I need not here repeat, so familiar is their admirable work in Europe and parts of America, carry on three departments of work in Beirut and Jerusalem—

viz., the Orphan Houses in both cities, hospital nursing in both, and a boarding-school for European children in Beirut. For twenty-two years (since the massacres of 1860) they have been engaged in their self-denying work, and have accomplished vast good in this land. The Romish Sisters of Charity no longer hold the monopoly of self-denying devoted effort for the orphan and widow, the poor, diseased, and outcast. In this priest-ridden land it is refreshing to see a Protestant sisterhood, without the slavish vows of the Sisters of Charity, doing as good, if not better work, and occupying the position of Christian women in society. Multitudes in Syria and Palestine will rise up and call them blessed.

The Church Missionary Society in Palestine is doing a genuine missionary work, aiming, as are the Presbyterian missions in Syria and Egypt, at the planting and training of a self-supporting native Evangelical Church. Its working force consists of 10 male and 10 female foreign missionaries, 37 native preachers, teachers, and catechists, 4 ordained natives, 25 preaching stations, 5 churches with 214 members, average congregations of 1500, with 45 schools and 1142 pupils. Their field extends from Gaza to Carmel, and from the Mediterranean to Moab.

In the matter of self-support of the native Churches, the difficulty increases as you approach Jerusalem, and our brethren have to contend with the "pauperised" spirit, alluded to in our previous article, in its most intensified form. In this trial they need, as do all missionaries in this part of the Turkish empire, the prayers and sympathies of the Church universal. Jerusalem has not only communities of Jews, Latins, Greeks, Armenians, Copts, and Muslims living on charity, but is annually afflicted with an invasion of semi-delirious fanatics and enthusiasts from western lands, who bring Christianity into contempt, and fill the hearts of all sober-minded and sincere Christian labourers with sorrow.

The Syrian Protestant College is well known to many of your readers. It was founded to lead and control the higher education of the country in the interests of a pure Christianity. From the year of its founding until now, it has grown steadily in numbers and the thoroughness of its course of instruction. In 1875 it had 76 pupils; in 1881 it had 152, and now it has about 160. It has ten foreign and five native instructors. The president is Rev. Dr. D. Bliss, for twenty-six years connected with the mission and college. With him are associated as professors Rev. Dr. Van Dyck, the translator of the Bible into the Arabic language, and author of numerous Arabic works, who is not only connected with the Syrian mission as a missionary preacher and editor, but holds the Chair of the Theory and Practice of Medicine, and is Director of the Astronomical and Meteorological Observatory; Rev. Dr. Wortabet, Professor of Anatomy and Physiology; Rev. Dr. Post, Professor of Surgery and Botany; Rev. Dr. Lewis, Professor of Chemistry and Geology; Rev. H. Porter, Professor of Metaphysics, Logic, and History. Drs. Brystocke and W. T. Van Dyck are lecturers in the medical

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department. The three departments, academical, medical, and preparatory, are now well organised and manned, needing only further endowments and scholarships to insure the highest success in the future. The whole number of graduates since 1870 is 127, of whom 54 were from the medical department.

The question as to the bearing of the higher collegiate education upon the cause of Evangelical religion on missionary ground is sometimes raised, but where this higher education is founded upon the Bible, and the training of the youth is thoroughly a religious training, as it is in the Syrian Protestant College, there should be no room for reasonable doubt. This college was founded upon the Bible. The Bible is a text-book for all of the preparatory and academical classes. Attendance upon prayers and upon Divine service on the Lord's day is obligatory upon all, Christians, Druzes, and Mohammedans. The Gospel is taught and preached in all fidelity, and its fundamental doctrines are presented to every young man under instruction.

The college was founded to prevent the passing of the higher education of Syria and Palestine into the hands of the Jesuits, and experience has proved that it was founded not a whit too soon. The efforts now put forth by the Jesuits to seize upon this mighty lever of influence in Turkey are almost unparalleled. From the Black Sea to Suez, and from the Mediterranean to the Tigris, they are buying land, erecting buildings, opening schools, and using their well-known Jesuitical machinery for thwarting the progress of Protestant Christianity. They must be resisted by the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and that Word must be put into the hands of workmen who need not to be ashamed, who are trained in sound Christian learning, who can preach the Gospel and explain it to the rising generation of Oriental youth, who can hold their own in the new age of intellectual life and activity, and command the respect of the learned and refined, while they win the love and confidence of all. The Jesuits have already been forced to print and distribute a new translation of the whole Bible in the Arabic language; it is a good translation, and one which we sincerely hope will be widely distributed and read. They are now about to open a Medical College in opposition to that of the Syrian Protestant College. Such concessions will only help the cause of popular enlightenment, and the Syrian Protestant College will see to it, that as long as the Jesuits profess to educate Syrian youths, they shall be obliged to give them something more than the superficial course to which they have been accustomed. Let the Churches at home, interested in the future of this land, support this and similar institutions by their contributions and their prayers.

The Theological Seminary of the American Mission is about to be provided with a suitable building for the training of a native ministry for the Syrian Church. In this the Mission and the College are in entire sympathy. However important it may be to train physicians, editors,

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merchants, lawyers, and business men for Syria, we all believe that the training of a corps of native pastors and evangelists is of paramount importance. Keeping this steadily in view, in the constant intercourse between Mission and College in the course of instruction, in the counsel given to Christian young men by their instructors, and in the selection of pious youth as candidates for college bursaries or scholarships, the naturally diverting and distracting influence of a high literary training will, it is believed, be reduced to a minimum, and the ranks of the ministry be filled with the best available material in the land.

In no one department of Christian effort is there a more gratifying report for the year 1881, than in that of Bible distribution.

Rev. Dr. J. G. Bliss, agent of the American Society for Turkey, Egypt, and Greece, has kindly given me a table of the Bible work of the American and British and Foreign Bible Societies for 1881, which I here append :—

	American Bible Society.	British and Foreign Bible Society.	TOTAL.
In Armenian,	6,712	4,242	10,954
„ Turkish,	1,959	3,336	5,275
„ Greek,	10,429	17,584	28,013
„ Bulgarian,	9,789	8,714	18,503
To Jews,	1,073	2,796	3,869
„ Arabic,	12,126	4,032	16,158
„ Persians (in Turkey),	31	48	79
„ Nestorians „	17	5	22
„ Albanians „	14	723	737
„ English, French, and other European languages,	975	7,167	8,142
	43,146	49,759	91,796

When it is remembered that the great bulk of the Scriptures are sold, it will be seen that a work of great importance and extent has been done.

The American Bible Society aim more at the sale of the *whole* Bible or New Testament, while the British and Foreign Bible Society print and sell more copies of *single gospels* in all languages, as will appear from the following table :—

	Bibles.	Testaments.	Portions.
Sold by the American Bible Society,	6973	17,772	18,402
Sold by the British and Foreign Bible Society,	4822	12,670	31,358
	<u>11,795</u>	<u>30,442</u>	<u>49,760</u>

In the above tables there is no report for the American Bible Society from Marsovan, Cesarea, Aintab, Marash, and Mardin. As there are large Protestant churches and communities in these places,

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the figures will no doubt be considerably enlarged when their reports are completed.

It would have given me pleasure to speak in some detail of the work being done by the Lebanon Schools' Committee, under the care of W. Carslaw, M.D. ; of the Church of Scotland's Jewish Schools in Beirut ; of Miss Taylor's Muslim Girls' Training School in Beirut ; of the schools of the "Society for Promoting Female Education in the East," in Shemlan, Nazareth, and Bethlehem ; of the Irish Presbyterian Mission in Damascus among Mohammedans, Jews, and nominal Christians ; of the Reformed Presbyterian Mission in Latakiah, where a most admirable work is being done for the Pagan Nusairiyeh of the mountains, between the ancient Arvad and Antioch ; as well as of the other missionary agencies at work in different parts of the land. But the limits of this paper are exhausted, and I must content myself with expressing my deep interest in all these branches of the Lord's work in the East, and the gratification we all feel in the spirit of Christian sympathy and fraternal comity manifested by the representatives of the various societies towards each other. It is one work ; and nowhere do denominational lines and distinctions come so near to the vanishing point as on missionary ground. There is every reason why we should see eye to eye, and be one in co-operation and sympathy, in aims and plans, as we are one in our common faith in a common Saviour. There is every reason why the different branches of the Presbyterian Church, which are so largely represented in Syria, should see to it that their work is well sustained in the future.

BEIRUT.

HENRY H. JESSUP.

PRESBYTERIAN LONDON (1643-1648).

TO speak of Presbyterian London is to use no exaggerated language. Strange as it may sound in modern ears, it describes exactly what London became under the Long Parliament. From the meeting of the Westminster Assembly in July, 1643, and the public adoption of the Solemn League and Covenant in September of that same year, London grew intensely Presbyterian in its sympathies, although Presbyterial worship and order did not come fully into operation over the city and suburbs till August, 1646. All classes seemed under a Presbyterian spell, or frenzy, as the cavaliers reckoned it. Traditionally Puritan in temper, London struggled for and welcomed the new religious establishment. Presbyterian Puritanism may have lingered longer in Lancashire, but in London it achieved its earliest triumph and its highest renown. "All the Puritans of later days refer with pride," says Marsden ("Later Puritans," p. 109), "to London in the Civil War ; and their boast is not unreasonable. No European metropolis has ever displayed a higher