

have been interpreted by some people as indicating a hopeful tendency towards religious freedom. Meanwhile religious liberty has never been granted, and now and again there are outbursts of Mohammedan fanaticism against the Babis or the Jews or others. At present there is nothing tangible on which to base a definite hope or probability of official religious freedom, yet it is a fact that at least in some parts of Persia there is a considerable degree of religious laxity as compared with the strict Mohammedanism enjoined by the Koran.

But it should be said in this connection that while there is a loud demand for education, as instanced by the Women's Educational Movement, and they seem to think that education is the sure remedy for all Persia's difficulties, yet there is no popular demand for Christianity as such, they only desiring those results of Christianity which might be covered by the expression "modern civilization," provided they can get these benefits without the Christian religion itself.

During the last half century Babism or Bahaism has gained thousands of followers in Persia. In the early years of these sects the movement was carried on in strict secrecy for fear of persecution from the orthodox Moslems. During the last few years the Babis and Bahais have become bold and more or less open in advocating their doctrines. Some few foreigners have come into the country professing to be Babis or Bahais and have openly joined themselves to the movement. Largely the feeling prevails that with the new liberty which has come to exist with regard to many other things these religionists may also come in for a degree of protection from persecution.

Many Moslems openly admit that Islam is in a very retrograde condition. Some of the best of them advocate return to the teaching of the Koran before there can be