

Chamber of Deputies has scarcely wavered since the day of opening.<sup>1</sup>

Thus an extraordinary situation exists. The attitude of the government upon any vital question is largely determined by the dictates of a committee outside of the government and backed by the best part of the army.

What then of the attitude of this committee? At present the leaders are so absorbed in political affairs and in the military strategy by which their difficult position is held that they are giving little attention to religious matters. Some have even denounced religion as being the cause of divisions in the nation. But they are not directly opposed to Christian missions so long as public feeling and fanaticism are not aroused. Their instincts are so intensely political that they resent any movement which weakens Islam. This is not in most cases from religious faith, but from the instinct that Islam is the strongest available bond for national unification and for defense against foreign aggression.

If Christian missions could be demonstrated to them to be an advantage to the nation and a means of unification and progress, these "Young Turks" would waive traditional Mohammedan objections. But they are far from the field of faith and theology. They are bent upon political and economic reorganization. A considerable proportion of these "Young Turks" are at heart agnostics, somewhat influenced by French writers, but more influenced by the corrupt condition of Islam.

It is impossible to forecast the future. Meanwhile the history of the early Church furnishes inspiring and suggestive studies. It does not seem likely that the present Ottoman government will vouchsafe real religious liberty.

<sup>1</sup> Yet the "Young Turks" are involved in an intense struggle to keep in check the reactionary forces and in several conspicuous instances they have been obliged to compromise.