

In considering the attitude of Moslem governments to Christian missions, our remarks will have reference chiefly to the attitude of Central Asian governments, and specially of Afghanistan.

We shall be led to wrong conclusions if we think of Afghanistan only as an isolated Moslem government with, at the most, a population of five million people. Its significance is great because of its geographical position in the heart of Central Asia, which subjects it to the reflex influence of a far-reaching Mohammedan population on all sides. It is the core and homogeneous centre of a great extended area of contiguous countries, Moslem in belief, whether or not under influences or governments of other nationalities, Turkestan, Persia, Baluchistan, Chitral, Kashmir, etc., so that Afghanistan represents what is to them the ideal spectacle of an orthodox Moslem ruler, free and independent ruling over Moslem subjects, standing as a model for other countries. It must be remembered that at present "No power has any right to interfere in its administration, although it is obvious that certain contingencies might alter its position in this respect. The government of Afghanistan owes no national debt, nor any war indemnity, and the Emir is not hampered by any capitulations with foreign governments." To the faithful, Afghanistan has much the same theological position and prestige in the East as Turkey in the West, and the Emir of Afghanistan is supported in the aloofness of his relations with Christian rulers, whether England on the one hand or Russia on the other, by the unanimous sentiment of races that people the vast areas of Central Asia surrounding his country. Further, the universal approval of his co-religionists in countries that are under foreign rule tends to strengthen him in the continuance of this policy. The Mohammedan centres on the east—Kashgar, Yarkand, and Khotan—may