

people in all of these countries way beyond anything that they had known before. But during the middle Ages from the Christians, the Moham. took over the old classical literature and it became the center of the knowledge of a certain amount of Greek philosophy and of Greek science and from the viewpoint of science and of literature and of philosophy in the Middle Ages, it was far ahead of the Christian area of Europe and the study of the history during those periods is a very interesting history but not particularly connected with our subject of church history. The thing that I am most interested in in this ~~6th~~ 7th century is having you get a realization of how, you might say like a forest fire, here is the forest standing and you can walk here or there or the other place and you can go here and there without difficulty, and then all of a sudden a little spark starts and before you know what has happened it has spread in all directions and the flames shoot up here and there and the whole thing is covered over and black within a comparatively short time. Well, that is the way it went. It was almost unbelievable the speed. It started down here in central Arabia, this movement spread through the whole great area of Arabia and an area at least as large as the U.S. this side of the Mississippi and spread through that whole area and then spread from there to several other areas equally as large and much larger and within a period of about 50 years, practically all of the Asiatic section of the Eastern empire was conquered and they were at the very gates of Constantinople, driven back from Consta. in the great attack toward the end of the century driven back at another attack at the beginning of the following century, Con. resisted them for 700 years, before they took it, 700 more years it remained a great center of Christian civilization, Constantinople, but the Asiatic empire was cut down to almost nothing and came down into Egypt and conquered that great and fertile and luxurious country, a section in which Christian life was at a high ebb in many ways, it was completely conquered by Islam and it went across North Africa, wiped out what remained, practically of the North African church, though the North African church had been in