

Suggested Programme.

SUBJECT: OUR BOARD OF MANAGEMENT, OFFICERS
AND COMMITTEES.

HYMN.

PRAYER.

READING OF SCRIPTURES—Rom. xii. and xiii., 1-8.

HYMN.

- I. Address by the pastor or someone competent (a) Explaining how the members of the General Board of Missions are elected; (b) How the Board is governed; (c) Also how the Executive Committee is appointed; (d) Mentioning the different officers and their duties.
- II. Explain the relation of the W. M. S. to the General Missionary Society.
- III. Show that the General Board of Missions rejoices in the missionary work of our Leagues, and is anxious that a united effort be made to strengthen and extend the missionary work of the Church. See *Christian Guardian*, Oct. 7, 1896, or "Pray, Study, Give," page 40.
- IV. Explain the duties of (a) the Conference Missionary Vice-Pres. of the E. L.; (b) District Missionary Vice-Pres. of the E. L.; (c) the Local Missionary Vice-Pres. of the E. L., and the Missionary Committee of the E. L. See "Pray, Study, Give," page 17, for plan of work.

Missionary Achievements of the Victorian Era.

Alexandrina Victoria came into the succession to the throne in 1837, and was crowned June 28th, 1838. During these sixty years greater changes have taken place than in all the previous centuries of written history; and particularly on the Mission field of the world the change has been more than an evolution—a revolution. No brief treatment of such a stupendous theme can do it justice. Volumes have been written, and will yet be, on the subject. All we can do is to indicate a few of the directions in which this amazing development has taken place, constituting the Miracle of the Ages.

It is scarcely too much to say that nearly all the *great openings of the world field* have been providentially made within this period. More than this, and most amazing of all, within the short period of two years (1856-1858) most of these wide doors were thrown open.

INDIA.—The Gibraltar of heathenism—had been nominally unlocked to missionary labor for many years when Queen Victoria took her seat, but the British East India Company was by no means friendly to missions; and not until 1858, when its powers and possessions passed over to the English Crown, did the real epoch of Indian missions begin. But what a marvel of Providence, that the foremost Protestant power of all Europe, the Christian Empire of the world, should have become the King's forerunner, to prepare His way in that Hindu peninsula which is a world in itself! Think of Britain, strangely introduced there to literally build roads, set up courts of justice, erect Christian colleges, plant printing presses, and arrange and adjust all the complicated machinery of preparation for India's evangelization!

The era of *woman's emancipation* in the East Indies appropriately synchronizes with the Victorian Era. It was

in the Coronation year, 1838, that Dr. David Abbel returned to Canton, after his noble appeal to the Christian women of Britain in behalf of their Oriental sisters who were shut up in zenanas, harems and seraglios, and unreachable by existing missionary methods.

BURMAH's first convert was gathered ten years before Victoria's reign began; but it was when she had been on the throne for just forty years that the Jubilee gathering of 1878 consecrated the Kho-Thai-Byu Memorial Hall, which represented forty thousand Karen disciples, half of whom were still living. And, now, at the close of these sixty years, the transformation of these Karen villages is one of the miracles of missions, reproducing the wonders of apostolic times.

SIAM has had Protestant missions since the same year as Kho-Thai-Byu's conversion; but, again, we must look further on for any real rooting of missions there. It was when Victoria began her reign that the *first Church of Chinese disciples in all Asia* had been formed under Dr. Dean among the resident Chinese in Bangkok; and it was in 1851 that the death of the then reigning king, who bitterly opposed missions, and the succession of Maha-Mong-Kut, their friend and patron, the most progressive and liberal sovereign in all Asia, turned the scale.

Turning to the "Walled Kingdom," we must fix 1842 and 1858 as the conspicuous years of breaches in China's wall of exclusion. In the former year five treaty ports were opened to foreigners, and the island of Hong Kong was ceded to the British; but sixteen years later four more ports were opened to foreign ships, foreign travel was permitted, and Christianity was tolerated by imperial decree. All these developments, of course, belong to the Victorian era.

JAPAN's long closed sea-gates were unbarred in 1853-4 to America, and soon after to Britain, Russia, and Holland. The rapidity of the revolutions in the Sunrise Kingdom distance anything else in the past ages, or even in our own epoch of marvels. A people, before almost unknown, has sprung at a leap into a formidable military and naval power, and taken rank amongst the most progressive nations of the world; and in all these changes Christianity has been the dominant factor, and all are triumphs of the Victorian era.

KOREA remained the hermit nation until, in 1882, God used medical missions as the key to unlock its doors to the Gospel. Dr. Allen, by a strange accident—to human eyes, a strange Providence, as disciples see it—became installed as court physician, and the king built a "house of civilized virtue"—a government hospital under the care of this Presbyterian missionary. And now Korea's valleys are being penetrated by Gospel messengers.

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE issued the famous *Hatt-i-sherif*, or edict of toleration, in 1856. In 1878 Asiatic Turkey came under a British protectorate, and a "defensive alliance" was formed between the two nations. Turkey is treacherous and tricky, and Christian missions have had no real encouragement or even recognition. Even the edict of toleration has been a dead letter. But missions have gone on notwithstanding, conquering and to conquer.

AS TO THE DARK CONTINENT, it has been *unveiled* within the limits of the Victorian era. To that period belongs the career of that missionary general and explorer, David Livingstone, who went to Africa in 1841, and died in 1873. To this period belongs the thousand days of Stanley's trans-continental march, from Zanzibar to the mouth of the Kongo; and the whole establishment of the major part