

and images of Buddha. More than half the men in the kingdom have spent some years at least in the priesthood. Not a household but has furnished one or more sons to the monastery; not a woman but contributes to the daily support of the priests, and spends her treasured coins for gold leaf to make the idols splendid. It has not been enough to supply cities and villages with temples more plentifully than those of our own land are with churches; the very hilltops must be crowned with pagodas and splendid flights of stairs built to make access to them easy; the caverns of the mountains must be sought out and turned into temples for Lord Gautama. No nation under heaven can better than these Siamese Buddhists sympathize with Paul as he catalogues his grounds of confidence in the flesh, and his works of righteousness which he had done; and none knows better what it costs to say with him, what every one must say who becomes a Christian, "But what things were gain to me, these I counted loss for Christ."

HELPS.

1. *Religious Toleration.*—But over against these hindrances to the progress of missions in Siam and Laos there are some helps that do not exist, or do not exist to the same extent, in other fields. And, first, there is entire religious toleration, and that by law. The very prince whose views were quoted above began the interview in which he gave utterance to them by informing his missionary callers that he had just returned from a visit to Lakawn, a principal city of the Laos provinces, and that while there he had purchased and now wished to present to the mission a site for a mission station in that place. The same man afterward paid to the writer as mission treasurer the sum of two thousand rupees, a gift from his royal brother for the purpose of erecting a dispensary in this same city of Lakawn; and it was just this encouragement and help from the highest in the land that led to the establishment there of what has since become a flourishing station, with churches, schools, and hospital. And this only illustrates what for many years has been the attitude of the ruling classes toward the efforts of the missionaries on their educational and medical sides. There are few incidents of modern missions that more strikingly exhibit the providential guidance of God than the oft-told story which reveals to us the fountain-head of this tolerance in the influence of a missionary over the future King of Siam, then a refugee in a Buddhist monastery from the hatred of a usurper. It is because in 1845 Rev. Jesse Caswell became tutor to Prince Chow Ta Mongkut, that from the time of the latter's accession to the throne, six years later, the missionaries have enjoyed increasing liberty to preach and teach, acquire property, open schools and hospitals, and make converts. The one serious exception occurred in 1869, when the then King of Chiang Mai (the most important of the Laos provinces) put two native Christians to death. But the persecutor's hand was stayed by his own death, and in 1878 the King of Siam issued his proclamation of