

ing on the work of the British Bible Society, though the workers have been compelled to exercise much tact, patience, and forbearance. The spiritual harvest is indeed plentiful. Denied the liberties enjoyed by all civilized people, the Russians thirst for the better liberty of the sons of God.

A clergyman of the Russian Orthodox Church recently wrote to a Moscow paper, saying that the rigorously suppressive laws lately promulgated against the Stundist sectarians are not only unsuccessful, but would actually appear to have given a renewed impetus both to the open and to the clandestine spread of the schism; while the best efforts of the special missionaries appointed to counteract the teaching of Stundism, and to reattach the Orthodox apostates to that creed, have been absolutely fruitless. The most lamentable feature of this propaganda, says the clerical writer, is its evident progress among the intelligent class of Russians who have practically abandoned the State Church, or who attend the Church service once or twice a year as a mere habit. It is also to this growing public inclination toward Stundism that the writer attributes the difficulty of getting the majority of the ordinary magistracy to convict the Stundist propagandists, and for the same reason large employers ignore the legal injunctions laid upon them with regard to the exclusion of Stundist workpeople of both sexes.

This writer makes a significant admission when he candidly avows that a large number of intelligent and educated people who are gradually adopting the Stundist creed would otherwise become freethinkers. Unlike many other Russian sectarians, the Stundists, whose religious tenets very closely resemble those of the Baptists, do not proselytize, and hence the police authorities find it difficult to convict them. It is by the force of example only, by their exemplary lives, their high-toned morality, sobriety, industry, thrift, and honest dealings that they at

tach the adherence and cohesion of their orthodox neighbors. Their bitterest opponents in the State Church cannot deny these many virtues of the "heretics," nor can they, if they bear truthful evidence, decline to acknowledge the reclaimed lives and material prosperity of the many thousands of ignorant, intemperate, and degraded peasants who have voluntarily adopted the Stundist teaching and copied the manners and morals of the sectarians. There are no more conscientiously law-abiding subjects in the Tsar's dominions.

With the exception of part of Turkestan, *Siberia*,\* or Asiatic Russia, comprises the whole of Asia lying north of the Chinese Empire, Afghanistan, and Persia (area 4,833,496 square miles larger than Europe).

The greater part of this "land of exile" consists of monotonous lowlands stretching away to the horizon "like a limitless ocean plain." But toward the east rises a vast tableland, the "Great Divide" (i.e., between the Arctic and Pacific oceans), connected with which are the Yrblonovoi, or "Apple Mountains," and other ranges. In the southwest is the famous mining district of the Little Altai Mountains.

To the north are the extensive *Tundra* swamps, covered with snow eight months of the year under dull, leaden skies, the long nights now and then relieved by magnificent Northern Lights. The nomadic tribes dwelling here depend on the reindeer for their existence.

South of the *Tundra* is a forest zone, or *Taiga*, reaching almost uninterruptedly across the continent. The noted Siberian pine is conspicuous, and berry-producing bushes are abundant, supplying food for man and beast, quantities of berries being preserved for winter use.

The water system of Siberia is the most extensive, but least serviceable of

\*These notes on Siberia are taken from the *Regions Beyond*.

† All Asiatic Russia comprises 6,500,000 square miles.