

In Africa, the large island of Madagascar has been placed under the rule of a king who has long been known and proved to be a patron of Christianity. The first reports which announced this important event to the Christian Churches of Europe and America, brought also the painful rumor that the new king was entirely under French influence, and had become a Roman Catholic; but this story was shewn to be an invention of the French press. It was on the contrary, ascertained that the king has been in correspondence with Rev. Mr. Ellis, the veteran Protestant missionary in Madagascar, who, on the invitation of the king, has returned to that island, and there is hope that Radama may soon avow himself a Protestant Christian. There is, at least, no doubt that Protestant missionaries will henceforth have the fullest liberty of preaching the Gospel throughout Madagascar, and of establishing churches and schools.

Another distinguished missionary, Dr. Krapf, has returned to Abyssinia, a country hitherto but nominally Christian, and cut off from all intercourse with other Christian churches and countries, but whose present king aids, as much as is in his power, the evangelic labors of the Protestant missionaries. The hope of soon seeing this entire country converted into a Protestant nation, was never so well founded as at present. In western Africa, the Church of England has established a missionary bishopric, the first bishop of which, Dr. Mackenzie, has entered upon his work, and explored the field assigned to him, in company with Dr. Livingstone. In southern Africa, the Dutch Reformed Church, one of the oldest Protestant churches in Africa, is awakening to new life. The scheme of the German Missionary Society of Hermannsburg to work for the Christianization of Africa by the establishment of Christian colonies is still pursued with great zeal and success. This field will also be benefitted by the incipient missionary operations of the Scandinavians, who will extend their mission among the Zulus, and may soon take up other fields in South-Africa. Some of the missions in Liberia and Monrovia have suffered by the American war, but the progress of this new Christian commonwealth has been uninterrupted.

In China, neither the Imperial Government nor the insurgents now obstruct the preaching of the Gospel. The mission field has been somewhat extended, and soon the first Protestant mission will be permanently established at Peking; but still many large provinces, containing millions of inhabitants, remain unoccupied, and invite greater exertions and better concert of action by the missionary boards of the Christian churches. In Japan, the Christian missionaries have secured the right of circulating the Bible and other Christian books, and have availed themselves of it with great zeal. In Farther-India, the king of Siam has invited the Protestant missionaries to build a church in his capital; and the king of Laos has invited them to establish a mission among his people. In Cochinchina, the French have taken permanent possession of a part of the territory, but the Roman Catholic journals lament that the government seems to be more intent on establishing its power than on putting a stop to the still continuing persecution of the native Christians. The Christianization of the Karens, under the instruction of American and native teachers of the Baptist denomination, is approaching completion, and that of the Shans, another numerous tribe, has been commenced. In India, the decay of paganism is rapidly progressing. Some of the missionary societies are complaining of want of success, but the labors of others, especially those of the Methodist Episcopal Church, have greatly prospered. In addition to the large number of American missionaries already in India, the Evangelical Association intends to send there her first foreign missionaries early this year. In Central Asia the Moravians keep up their interesting mission in Thibet. In the North, Russia is extending her territory, and the increase of her pagan subjects awakens a missionary spirit in the petrified State Church, which has this year sent the first missionary bishop to China. In Turkey, the missions have recovered from the blow which they have received by the war between the Druses and Maronites, and are now reported to be as prosperous as ever.