

A PEEP INTO THE "CRISIS OF MISSIONS."

BY MRS. MACHOUGALL IN THE NEW ENGLAND PRESBYTERIAN.

"I have attempted though very imperfectly, to cull a few thoughts from these fascinating pages, hoping that they may tempt you to gather the whole, so by a thorough reading of the "Crisis of Missions," the information gained will more than pay you for the time spent.

In 1793 the first modern foreign missionary, a pious cobbler, William Carey, started out from England. Missionaries were a novelty in those days, and were terribly persecuted. Now the law is a kind friend in protecting them from all injury.

When the nineteenth century began, one could hardly reach the heathen. There was the great Wall of China, the ports of Japan were closed, the English power in India was very hostile to missionary effort, one could not get into Africa, and the islands spread over the ocean were full of creatures, who were so ferocious as to eat their fellow-beings. The Moslems were bigots. The Christianity in papal lands was only a name, and the Bible was not allowed to be circulated. Women were despised and shut up in harems. Those who knew nothing of the gospel were like wild beasts and demons, and those who called themselves Christians, considered it a crime against God to embrace any other belief than their own and their pride and greatness were further obstacles of approach. There were hatred and indifference towards missionary effort, owing to the sins and immoralities in the church at home.

TO-DAY,

all these barriers are down. The word of God has two hundred and fifty languages and dialects for its universal diffusion over the earth. India is full of missionary stations. Turkey has many church spires pointing to heaven. Syrian men and women are being educated in Christian schools, and the Bible has a large circulation throughout the world. Japan is becoming civilized, Africa accessible to travellers, cannibals are but little known, and the Papal lands are sending out invitations to Christians to come and work there.

INDIA

seemed almost impenetrable. Inside

were 200,000,000 Brahmins and Mohammedans, who were deadly enemies to religion, and social caste was a great barrier. To-day, the education of women is progressing rapidly. Brahminism is dying. Railroads are breaking up the distinctions in social standing, for all classes ride together in the cars. The native Christian population has increased twenty fold in half a century. Now, to be a Christian in India is to be respected. The graves of six hundred missionaries in that country will reap a rich harvest of souls, sixty thousand heathen became Christians in one year. Wonderful changes!

SIAM

has a population of 8,000,000. This is a very interesting country. The vegetation is beautiful, and the animal kingdom varied. All of the sacred literature is written on long strips of palm leaf. The principal works comprise 4,000 volumes. Buddhism is the people's religion. One temple erected to Buddha cost \$800,000 and contains 900 images of the god, one of them, 158 feet long is inlaid with pearl and overlaid with gold.

There are only twenty seven missionaries among the Siamese. The king is kind to missionaries, also a donor. The preaching, teaching, press and medical mission are four agencies to convert Siam to Christ. When the young king lost his wife he borrowed a Bible from one of the missionaries, because there was nothing in Buddhism to give him any comfort. Access to the harems was first made in 1851, when the thirty wives and royal sisters of the king were taught.

CHINA'S

population is 500,000,000. These "Oriental Yankees" are industrious, sparing, polite, ingenious and extremely proud of their antiquity. Almost all of the inventions date back to China, and public honors are based upon skilful brain labor. China is surrounded by its famous wall, 1,500 miles long, and from fifteen to thirty feet high. It is wide enough for six horsemen to ride abreast.

The famous treaty of Tientsin in 1858, gave missions an access to this wonderful country. Chinamen are gamblers, opium eaters and drunkards. Women are abused. In forty of the Chinese towns two-fifths of all the girl babies were either drowned or buried alive. The language is very difficult to learn.