

World of Missions.

The Entrance of Christianity into Russia.

It should always be borne in mind that Russia never knew the Gospel in its purity, and that all it was able to borrow from Constantinople was a corrupt eighth century system in which "the simplicity that is in Christ" had long been hidden by ecclesiastical and ceremonial adaptations from heathendom; in which theory and symbol had taken the place of practice and deed; in which facts were lost in figures. Little wonder then, that it has hardly known that reversion to type, the purifying influence of spiritual revivals which have been the striking feature of Western Christendom. Such experiences are only rendered possible by study of the Word of God, and by the claiming of His promises of spiritual power, and churches in which lack of education or books renders this impossible can not rise above their received ideals. A Russian who attends the celebration of the Lord's Supper at least once a year, who employs a priest also for such births or deaths or marriages as happen in his family, and shows due respect to churches and icons, may live what life he likes, and hold what views he likes, and he will always be considered a satisfactory "orthodox" Christian.* Heterodoxy in Russia means holding the fingers in certain positions while making the sign of the Cross, spelling the name of Jesus according to the reformed system, neglect of prescribed rigorous fasts,† and otherwise departing from certain matters of immaterial form. The missionaries of the Russian Church, to be found among the aborigines of Northwest Russia and Siberia, in Japan and China, etc., demand neither conviction nor religious knowledge from their proselytes. Baptism is considered the only essential, and a strict observance of fasts is not at first imposed. Where necessary the "convert" is presented with a shirt and an icon. No pious Russian passes or espies a church or icon without bowing, removing his cap, and crossing himself repeatedly, and this may be seen on the streets, in the tram-cars, and in offices and homes where an icon hangs in the corner of every room, often with a lighted lamp before it. These icons are archaic Byzantine pictures—often almost too dark for the features to be recognizable—of faces, hands, in their normal positions with regard to one another, showing through holes cut to fit in gold, silver, or gilt plaques, on which the costume and halo appear in relief, altogether a most incongruous production. The features most frequently represent the Saviour or the Madonna, but a whole host of angels and saints are likewise so honored, notably the popular St. Michael, "the wonder-worker.

In the churches, as in those of the Romanists, may also be seen so-called representations of the Father and the Spirit. Many of these pictures are believed to have been "not made by hands," like the Virgins of Saragossa and elsewhere; others being portraits of Christ by Luke and John, while few of any note lack records of miraculous powers. Such may be seen hung round with models of the organs or limbs which are said

to have been cured—a widespread custom in many lands. In battle the original or copies are carried forth, and in many cathedrals assortments on brazen flags are always ready to hand. The "Iberian Madonna," whose chapel close by one of the inner gates of Moscow, is the first place visited by the Emperor on reaching the city, and having a great reputation for healing, is carried round the city daily to the houses of such sick folk as can afford the price, a copy in its place being worshipped the while. Funerals may also be seen proceeded by men bearing icons in silken cloths. Occasionally icons of the "Mother of God"—as Mary is popularly styled here—are taken to visit one another, exactly as if endowed with personality. Peasants not infrequently call their icons what they really are, their "god"—in Russian, "bogies." Only those who have seen the worship of idols in other lands can realize the veneration in which these pictures are held, in all respects the same as among the Hindus, the explanations of whose educated members are identical with those of educated Russians.

At Ekaterineburg, on the borders of Siberia, I saw a large one from Mount Athos in Greece—the stronghold of Greek church monasteries—which was making a collecting tour of the country, sanctioned by the "Holy Synod," in charge of a party of priests, in a second class railway carriage. I was assured that it was one of those "not made by hands," though a joiner had been employed to repair its wooden frame, had lost one of his legs for using it disrespectfully, notwithstanding that it was accredited with healing powers. For some days it had been worshipped by crowds in one of the local churches, and a multitude had accompanied it to the station, where a special service was performed on putting it into its carriage. In St. Petersburg the wayside chapel of a picture of the "Mater Dolorosa" was recently struck by lightning, and one of the adjacent collecting boxes being shattered, a copper coin was discovered adhering to the pictures breast. This having been construed as a sign of God's displeasure at the neglect of the chapel, and as an indication of what was dear to the Virgin's heart, a stir was made to collect more coins, and now a stately church is being built on the spot. As the crowded tram-cars pass the people cross themselves and throw coins on the pavement, to be gathered up by men in uniform provided by the church authorities. When the really heathen tribes who still exist in Russia are in trouble, they as readily pray to the local Madonna as to their own fetishes, and when any of them embrace the Russian religion and find the fasts hard, they have been recorded to turn the face of the icon to the wall, while they ate their meat behind its back.—Meekin in the *Missionary Review of the World*.

Dr. Josiah Strong asks: "What are churches for but to make missionaries? What is education for but to train them? What is commerce for but to carry them? What is money for but to send them? What is life itself for but to fulfill the purpose of foreign missions, enthroning Jesus Christ in the hearts of men?"

Statistics compiled by the British and American missionary authorities at Shanghai show that the number of massacred missionaries amounts to 28 men, 40 women, and 25 children. In addition to those about whose fate no certainty exists, there are missing 56 men, 50 women, and 19 children. It is hoped that some of these way yet reach Shanghai.

Saved Their Boy.

He Had Been Sick And Ailing From Infancy.

As He Grew Older His Trouble Seemed to Increase And His Parents Thought Him Doomed to an Invalid's Life—Dr. Williams' Pink Pills Cured Him When Hope Had Almost Departed.

From the Post, Thorold, Ont.

Mr. James Dabauld and wife are two of the best known residents of the town of Thorold, where they have passed many years. In their family they have a little son, who, although but ten years of age, has experienced much affliction, and his parents expended many a dollar in the search for his renewed health—all in vain, however, until Dr. Williams' Pink Pills were brought into use. A Post reporter hearing of the cure called at Mr. Dabauld's cosy home and received full particulars from Mrs. Dabauld. "I am pleased," said Mrs. Dabauld, "to have the public made aware of the facts of my boy's case if it is likely to help some other sufferer. Charley is now ten years of age. In infancy he was a delicate child, but from four to seven he scarcely passed a well day. At four years of age he began to complain of frequent headaches, which later became almost continuous, and soon symptoms of general debility developed. His appetite was poor and he grew pale and emaciated, and the least exertion caused a severe palpitation and fluttering of the heart, and dizziness. At times there was considerable derangement of his stomach; a blueness of the lips and a shortness of breath. He would often lie awake at night and rise in the morning haggard and unrefreshed. During his illness he was treated by two doctors. Both differed in the diagnosis of his case. One said it was catarrh of the stomach, and while his treatment was persisted in there was no improvement. The second also attended him for some time with no better results. Some time after my attention was attracted by my aunt to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and about September, 1887, I procured the pills and he began taking them. We had long before come to the conclusion he would be an invalid for life, but believing it a duty I owed to my child to procure all means of relief, I was determined to give Dr. Williams' Pink Pills a fair trial. The good effects of the first box was apparent, and five boxes were used, which were taken in about six months' time, when he was strong and well, and could attend school and play and frolic as other healthy boys do. As every symptom of his old trouble has vanished, I consider his cure complete. The pills have certainly done him a world of good, as nearly three years have since passed away and he has not seen a sick day in that length of time. I shall ever feel that we owe our boy's health to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and believe that their prompt use would relieve much suffering."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are just as valuable in the case of children as with adults, and puny little ones would soon thrive and grow fat under this treatment, which has no equal for building up the blood and giving renewed strength to brain, body and nerves. Sold by all dealers or sent postpaid at 50c. a box or six boxes for \$2.50, by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont. Do not be persuaded to try something else said to be "just as good."

In the Norwegian mission in Madagascar, in 1898, there were 4,230 baptisms.

*Fasting for a day, confession, and absolution are, however, necessary to obtain permission to receive the Sacrament.

†The Russian fasts are:—Seven weeks in Lent, two or three weeks in June; from the beginning of November till Christmas, besides all Wednesdays and Fridays. Not only meat but even eggs and milk are prohibited, and one of the Protestant churches, the Molokani, or milk-drinkers, derives its nickname from the disregard of this penance.