

the progress of the outside world, to which, with the exception of China, her doors were absolutely closed; but the messengers of the Gospel, who were waiting to enter China when that should become possible, who reached her shores in Chinese junks, succeeded in so impressing the people and their rulers that in due time treaties were willingly entered into with their governments, and Siam was opened up. Then there came to the throne a king who, while a Buddhist priest had sought a missionary for a tutor, and had proved no unapt scholar, under whose rule the old order fell, and Siam entered the race of nations. She has yet far to go to take her place among the foremost, but she has made rapid strides, and is distanced only by Japan among the nations of the farther East. That her progress has not been what it might have been can only be attributed to an increased experience of Western ways and Western men, who do not commend themselves as men who love dollars and hate the natives. It is the same old story here as in every newly opened country, the greatest obstacle to the spread of the Gospel is the example set by men of the nationalities with which the name Christian has unfortunately become identified—men who cannot sufficiently run down the missions and missionaries, whose presence casts reflections on the lives they waste on wine and women and wagers. I feel that as an independent resident abroad I both can and must say what the missionaries do not often care to, much as I deplore the facts. Exceptions to the rule there are indeed, and mission work owes more to them than folks at home imagine. The really Christian man of business or the official wields an influence quite distinct from that of missionaries.

Mission work in Siam is practically in the hands of the American Presbyterians, who maintain a considerable force in Bangkok, and have a most important work some distance up country in the tributary State of Cheung Mai,

as well as at one or two stations nearer the Gulf of Siam. To a great extent their work has been educational, and by no means one of the least important results of it was the request, many years ago, for one of their number to assume the direction of the schools which the government was then establishing. Hospitals have also held a prominent place in their operations, so that most of their men are styled doctors by the natives. Street preaching and colportage are likewise employed with success, however meager the immediately apparent results may seem. In several places a very real work is being done by independent workers from among the brethren, and I had the pleasure to meet with one good Christian doctor adding mission preaching to the labors of a private practice. The Roman Catholics are hard at work in many parts, and that with apparent good success, for the natives see no great difference in calling the goddess of mercy Mary, and in changing one set of priests and rites and superstitions for another. The Romanists are not, however, liked, and make but poor headway among the Siamese themselves, tho the self-denying and devoted lives led by many of their missionaries place them in great esteem personally. Their popular name is "Big-foot people," by one native explained to me as having reference to their custom of kissing the toe of the Pope, and by another as indicative of the way in which they tread down the people, for in Siam the foot is considered the most unworthy member. One of their methods is to make settlements of converts, acquiring the land, and making it unpleasant for all but their own people, or those who are willing to join them. They also mingle in political and legal questions when these serve their purposes, thus getting into very bad odor. Wherever they are they erect fine churches, a necessity in a creed in which the ceremonial plays so important a part.

The favor with which the Protestant