

sengers who could move no faster than horses and mules, camels and dromedaries could carry them. And yet, through all those 127 provinces that decree was actually published upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month Adar ! Throughout that wide domain, to every Persian subject, that message of the king was thus borne *in less than nine months !*

More than eighteen hundred and fifty years ago the King of kings issued a decree of salvation and bade His disciples bear the Word of life to every creature in all this world's vast empire. And now, after waiting with divine patience for nearly nineteen centuries, He sees *three-fourths of the human race* yet without the knowledge of the good news of grace ! It is plain without argument that the Church of Christ has never yet, in any proper sense, *attempted* to solve this practical problem. When Dr. Duff declared that as yet we have been only "playing at missions," he meant that this world-wide work has never been seriously conducted as the enterprise of the Church. We have not yet felt that the King's command is urgent and the King's business requireth haste. Were true, sound, sensible, practical business principles applied to this problem, no hindrance would be huge enough even to *delay* the prosecution of the work solemnly committed to the Church of Christ. And once more we record our solemn conviction that, with thorough organization, sanctified resolve and practical co-operation throughout the Church, the gospel may be preached as a witness, not only among all nations, but to every living creature, *within the lifetime of the present generation, or even before the present century closes.*

In affirming this conviction we do not forget the wide extent of territory yet to be covered with gospel effort. There are unoccupied provinces, absolutely without a single missionary or mission station. Kurdistan with 3,000,000 ; Afghanistan with 8,000,000 ; Anam with 30,000,000 ; Africa, north of the Equator and west of the Nile basin, with 50,000,000 more ; Thibet and Mongolia, virtually left to the dominion of the grand Lama ; Arabia, over whose whole extent floats the green flag of the False Prophet ;—these are some of the territories yet to be taken possession of in the name of Christ. A few years since Mr. Stevenson, of the China Inland Mission, went from Bhamo, in Upper Burmah, to Chungking in Suen, China, a distance of over 1,000 miles, and for 500 miles north and south of his line of travel, only one station, Kwei-Yang, then existed ! Stanley in Africa, journeying from the Great Lakes in the east to the rapids of the Congo, found not one native Christian in 7,000 miles of travel.

Even countries nominally fields of mission labor are not *occupied*. Siam, with eight or ten millions of impressible people, whose King, Chulalongkorn, is the most intelligent and progressive ruler in Asia, and the active, generous friend and patron of the missionaries, has a few Baptists working among resident Chinese in Bangkok, and less