

8. The supernatural ordering of human lives, and the limitations of them when God's purpose is accomplished.

9. The evidences of a divine strategy extending through the ages and embracing the whole world.

10. The turning of the crises of the kingdom in answer to prayer, and in a marked order of development.

11. The development of new agencies, organizations and instrumentalities at the precise hour of need.

12. The prophetic element in all these divine plans, making these developments not an evolution but a revolution.

Such are a few of these signs of the supernatural mind and hand in the history of missions. Let us briefly advert to some of them.

1. The progress of missions would have been impossible without the intervention of a higher power. When, a century ago, the Church as a body took up the work of evangelizing the world, ten great obstacles stood in her way, to human view insurmountable. They may be classed under four heads : obstacles to approach, obstacles to intercourse, obstacles to impression, obstacles to action.

The world seemed locked against the Church, and the Church seemed indifferent to the condition of the world. Converts were punished with death ; missionaries were martyrs ; woman was shut up in harems ; some races seemed too high, others too low, to be reached by the gospel. Now all these obstacles are down. Who has done it ?

2. Barriers have sometimes gone down as though a continent had sunk to let the sea overflow the land. Hawaii had burned her idols while the *Thaddeus* was crossing the deep with the first band of missionaries. Japan was undergoing a civil revolution while Commodore Perry was casting anchor in the harbor of Yeddo. Over and over again the missionaries have gone expecting to find gigantic barriers confronting them and have found only prostrate walls. Who has done it ?

3. Men and women have been prepared for the work and the work for them when no human foresight could have shaped either for the other. Who fitted William Goodell to begin in 1831 that wonderful work in Constantinople which at that very time needed just such a pioneer ! Who but God knew that in 1877 a famine would overspread Southern India, and that a civil engineer would be needed to complete that canal, and so give the starving thousands work ; and that the engineer must be a Christian missionary who would teach the workmen of Jesus ? and who was it raised up Mr. Clough to go there long before he knew why he was a civil engineer and felt so strangely drawn to that very station at Ongole ? Who was it fitted the peg to the hole when he set Eli Smith in Syria, Robert Morrison in China, Fidelia Fisk in Oroomiah, Lindley among the Zulus, Moffat among the Boers, Duncan among the Indians of British Columbia, and Hunter Corbett among the simple converts of Chefoo ? Can all history show