

III.—FIELD OF MONTHLY SURVEY.

India,* Burma,† Hinduism.‡

BURMA IN MISSIONS.

BY REV. A. HUNKER, TOUNGOO, BURMA.

The idea that our mission work in Burma, after the many years of help which it has received from us, should be able to take care of itself has gained currency among some good people.

Some also, looking at the hundreds of millions of China and India, have questioned if it was wise to expend so much on the comparatively small population of this province as is now being done.

Both of these views are taken from a human standpoint. As we followed God's leading in entering Burma, it will be safe to continue our work until He as unmistakably releases us.

As the preaching of the Gospel to all nations is His work, and as His servants should follow His leading only, we believe it is as unwise to compare missions with missions as it is to set off one kind of mission work against another. Domestic, home, and foreign missions are one in fact, and so the field is the world. One field of labor is more important than another only as it is so in the mind of God.

Burma, with its nine millions of inhabitants, may be as important, in the mind of God, to the conquest of Asia for Christ as are the millions of India. The mathematics of God are not those of men. The small band, with Abraham as leader, who, in the early history of the Hebrew race, crossed the Euphrates to an unknown land were more than all the nations of the earth in God's plan. His providential leading should determine the following of His people, not numbers, wealth, or worldly influence. Clough sought the high-caste Bramins, but God sent him back to the

Pariahs. "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty; yea, the things that are not to bring to naught the things that are."

Following this lead, is it too much to assume that His children may in some degree, at least, forecast His plans, when once He has begun to unfold them?

Now, the providential leadings which took Judson to Burma are familiar to all students of missionary history.

At this point we may well pause and ask:

1. If our work in Burma is completed, or only just begun?
2. What are the providential leadings now before us?
3. What do recent developments teach us?
4. What does the field now offer?
5. What things in our work should be emphasized for the future?

A somewhat accurate knowledge of Burma is necessary to enable us to answer these questions.

Burma is a part of a great country having intimate relations with many races and tribes. It cannot be easily detached from any plan of missionary work which must embrace the whole continent of Asia. Its physical geography, taken in connection with the peoples who dwell on the plains and mountains; its situation with reference to other races, as regards the lines of commerce and travel already developed or in prospect; and its importance in its relations to all future development should be carefully considered.

Objection has been taken to the phrase, "Burma at the back door of China." But however we may regard its situation with reference to that country, a careful study of its relations to the countries bordering upon it will show that the provinces of Szechuan and Yunnan must be brought into immediate relations with Rangoon, the *entree* of

* See pp. 30 (January), 99 (February), 172, 179, 212 (March), 247, 267, 270, 281 (present issue).

† See also p. 125 (February).

‡ See also pp. 179 (March), 234 (present issue).