

THE
MISSIONARY REVIEW OF THE WORLD.

VOL. XVI. No. 10.—*Old Series*. — OCTOBER. — VOL. VI. No. 10.—*New Series*.

CHRISTIAN WORK IN MOSLEM CITIES.

BY REV. JAMES F. RIGGS, D.D.

The apostles began their work, as a rule, in large cities. In Palestine, Asia Minor, and in Greece the city was the focus of evangelistic effort. The radii might be many or few, long or short, but they had a common origin in the same municipal centre. In our modern work likewise we may wisely follow apostolic example in this great principle. The most important Moslem cities of Southwestern Asia are now occupied to some extent as "stations" of our American missions. A "station" is the residence of a missionary or of several together. Very little has yet been accomplished when we consider the vast multitude of souls outside of the truth, yet it is not strictly true to assert that *nothing* has been done for the followers of Mohammed. Even where no one has openly professed a change of religious views, the Moslem population do share in a degree in the influences exerted over the whole empire. The Ottoman Empire is a strange conglomeration. It is a collection of extremes, a motley mixture, and that, too, of long standing, so that the most glaring incongruities are condoned as a matter of course because it was always so. Europe and Asia are in a perpetual joint session on the shores of the Bosphorus, ever learning and yet never able to come to any definite knowledge of the truth. The diverse elements in the population do not blend and combine as they do in a Christian country, but remain dissimilar, like gold and silver and copper coins in a purse. Turks and Armenians, Greeks and Jews, Bulgarians and Koords, all are distinct and, to some extent, hostile. Oriental civilization is not one complete organic system like our own, but consists of several fragments, each being a part of something long since shattered. This broken condition of society sets up additional barriers in the way of moral progress. Furthermore, the Oriental is accustomed to do many things in a way which is precisely opposite to our way. Thus e.g., a carpenter in the East files the teeth of his saw in such a way as to give a set toward the handle; hence, in using the saw, he *pulls* it in