

pictures the striking difference between the Presbyterian Mission to the Laos country, Upper Siam, open in 1867, and the older mission in Lower Siam, opened so long ago as 1840. The missionary forces in each region have averaged about the same, yet the Laos converts are numbered by the thousand, are constantly increasing, and among them are many ordained native helpers, while in the older mission there are only about 300 converts, and not a single ordained native helper.

China.—"Thrifty and patient and cunning as Jews, the Chinese can accommodate themselves to any climate and to any environment. They can live in Java or in Siberia, in Borneo or in Tibet. Unlike the modern Jews, however, they are more to be feared in industry than in commerce, for there is scarcely any form of manual skilled labor at which they are not capable of killing white competition. Their history in Australia has proved this fact. But in commerce also they are able to hold their own against the cleverest merchants of other races. They are adepts at combination, excellent financiers, shrewd and daring speculators. Tho' not yet rivals of Europeans in that class of production dependent upon the application of modern science to manufacture, they have given proof of ability to master that science whenever the study can profit them. They are learning thoroughly the commercial conditions of every country which they visit; and tho' the history of their emigration began within recent times, they are already to be found in almost every part of the world."—*Lafcadio Hearn*.

—United States Minister Denby reports that the emperor has issued a decree, directing a certain Mr. Hu, a protégé of Prince Kung, to build a railroad from Tientsin to the Lu Kou bridge, which is within 8 miles of Peking. The distance is 70 miles, and the road is to be built at government expense. That the line does not enter

the city of Peking is due to the superstition that the sacred precincts of the imperial residence must not be contaminated by Western improvements. In his decree the emperor says: "Railroads are important to commerce and beneficial to the laboring classes. This government having determined upon its construction, it is desirable that the work be undertaken." This decree also suggests to merchants who have means that they build a line from the Lu Kou bridge to Hankow.

—Russel & Co.'s banking house, in Shanghai, whose Chinese loans amounted to \$100,000,000 in its fifty years' existence, *never lost a dollar by them*. This house employed thousands of Chinese, and never one betrayed his trust or became a defaulter. One employé for twenty-five years never knew a Chinaman to break his word in a business transaction.

—The coal-fields of China are said to be exceeded in value by few in the world. Some of the richest districts are only about 30 miles from Peking, the capital. They have hitherto been worked only in the superficial, mole fashion of the Chinese. As soon as they have penetrated deep enough to encounter water, the Chinese have been accustomed to abandon such mine. Now, however, stirred by the railway movement, some of the wealthy, enterprising Chinese have entered into contracts with foreign engineers to develop their mines, which give promise of large yields. It may be that the development of these immense coal deposits of China will soon become an important factor in the commerce of the Far East.—*Free Church Monthly*.

Japan.—In this empire all Christian bodies together have 111,588 members, 858 missionaries, 331 native ministers, and 981 catechists. Of the church-members the Catholics have 50,302 (including all baptized children); the Greek Church, 22,576; and the Protestant societies, 38,710.