

in our times that makes the claims of missions more imperative than ever before. To use the words of Pierson, to whom I suppose we are indebted for the phrase "Crisis of Missions," the pillar of cloud has moved forward. God has indicated by certain signs that the time has come for the Church to advance and take possession. These signs are the removal of obstacles that stood in the way until recent times.

*Obstacles to Approach.*—All nations have their gates thrown open—the missionaries can enter anywhere and begin work. Not very long ago that was not so in Japan, China or India.

*Obstacles to Interccurse.*—The difficulties as to transportation. When Dr. Geddie went to the New Hebrides he was one hundred and sixty days on the way to Samoa; eight tempestuous days from Halifax to Boston; weeks struggling with the waves at the Cape; and when at Samoa was thirty-nine days from his destination. Now we can cross the Pacific in twelve days. Unless we hear that our missionaries have landed in a few weeks we begin to feel anxious about them.

*Obstacles to Impression.*—The difficulties supposed to be insurmountable, in connection with the religions of India and China, are now less formidable, as they are better understood. It has also been proved that the lowest and weakest races are not too low to be lifted up by the Gospel of Christ "out of the miry clay and set upon a rock."

*Obstacles to Action.*—These are difficulties that originate in connection with our intercourse with heathen nations, such as the opium traffic in China, the liquor traffic in Africa, and other nameless immoralities of white men. Whilst all these obstacles still exist in a measure, they are not so formidable as they were; in spite of them the Gospel prevails. Whoever will may go and be the messenger of life to any people, and that in comparative safety.

Home signals are even more noticeable and important. In England in the beginning of the last century, Blackstone said that he had heard every preacher of note in London, and that there was not in any one discourse he had heard more Christianity than in one of Cicero's orations, and that you could not tell from the sermon whether the preacher was a disciple of Confucius or Mahomet or Christ. It was then that Dr. Rylands said to Carey, when in the Baptist Association he proposed to send a missionary to the heathen, "Sit down, young man, when the Lord pleases to convert the heathen He can convert them without your aid or mine." When Carey proposed to go to India they refused to take him in their ships, and when he did go in a Danish vessel he would have been sent back but for the firmness of the Governor of the Danish settlement at Serampore.

Three years after Carey went to India, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland denounced the movement as delusive, visionary and dangerous to the good order of society; that it was improper