

The Regions Beyond.



HE surrender of Burmah to the British has opened wide the door for which Christians generally, and the American Baptists in particular, have been praying ever since Judson went to Ava. God has now answered these prayers and thrown open a country of a hundred and ninety thousand square miles, and between four and five millions of people for immediate possession, what an opportunity for the work of evangelization and civilization of this vast host and country for God. The whitened harvest field calls for an enthusiastic response of workers and means. It will pay to go up and possess this goodly land. Then the Irrawaddy River shall be a grand gospel highway.

From a report of the Church of England Missionary Meeting held recently in Oxford, England, we clip and cull some of the very interesting and instructive thoughts and descriptions thrown out by various speakers respecting England's responsibilities to India, and its loud claim and demand as a field for missionary operations.

Miss Hewlett, who was about to return to India, addressing the meeting, said.

"India had a claim upon them as subjects of Queen Victoria, because the young men of India were rising in these days to a point of education and civilization and intercourse with other nations which was quite remarkable, which was going on as rapidly as possible for any series of changes to go on, and those young men were going to be the statesmen of India some day, those young men were going to be the judges of India some day, and not only the judges of India, but judges of British subjects in India. Everything pointed in that direction. India had a claim upon them as a country, and, with its 125 millions of female subjects, it has a claim upon them as women, and why? Because these millions of females, who would take somewhere about 230 to 250 years to pass before their eyes minute by minute, if they were to walk through that room—a long dark string—were in ignorance, in sorrow, destitute of comfort, and without any hope for the future. Therefore India had a claim upon every Christian woman who was able to stand up to do anything to help the liberty of the Gospel, which had made England and England's women what they were. India had a strong claim upon all Christians, upon every one who named the name of Christ. India had a strong claim, for India, with all its enlightenment and all its riches, and with all of which they as a country might justly be so proud—for India was not a country of savages or of people who knew nothing—with all its grandeur and riches, was in heathen and Mohammedan darkness, they knew not that Christ Jesus was waiting to save them and bless them. They knew it, and therefore India had a claim upon them as Christians. Unholy home, unhappy women these were the results of Mohammedanism. Of course it was no news to them that Mohammedan women, from the highest rank, except princesses, down to the lowest, except those who were obliged to go out to earn their living, were kept shut up in their own apartments. This very fact was so great that no one ought to fail to grasp it or try to understand what it was for millions of

women to be shut up without any possibility of seeing the outside world. Mohammedanism had brought these things into India, the natives had learned the fashion of keeping their ladies, who professed to be ladies at all, with the exception of princesses, strictly secluded. The ladies who were kept secluded were absolutely prohibited from having any doctor, unless their doctor be also a lady.

The only thing that women in India could do in a sick room was to make a great noise, and all these things were intensified in the upper classes. The poorer women were able to go to hospitals, if they could get over their distaste of seeing a gentleman, but the upper classes were left to themselves in sickness, with no good cook, nurse or doctor at all. So they had a pretty good idea, if 12 millions of women and girls were left in this hopeless state, that it was evident that they needed some doctors and nurses, and that it was a call upon every Christian woman to send or provide what was needed. There they saw one of the deadly influences of the Mohammedan religion, and there were thousands and thousands of lives lost through it. There was another yet of which she must speak. She daresay they had heard that in India it was the custom to marry the children; it was the custom to make a contract of marriage between babies, and she daresay that would make them smile, but it was one of the curses of the country, and let them thank God that the Hindoos themselves were now waking up to see that this kind of thing would not do in India. Gentlemen had themselves written to the English papers to ask that something might be done if possible to alter this terrible state of things. Of course it was only one here and one there who had come to such a good state of mind, for the majority of the people thought themselves utterly disgraced if they had a girl over ten who was not married. England ought to do something in this matter. Suppose there was a contract of marriage between a little Hindu boy and a little Hindu girl, suppose the boy got the measles and died, the girl was a widow—the little girl of a year old, six months old, ten years old, or what not, was a widow, and then perhaps some of them would say "Oh, they don't understand, poor little things; they have none of the sorrows of widowhood, they don't know what it is," and that their sorrows compared with people in this country were just nothing. But first of all the child widow, or woman widow, in India was allowed only one course meal a day, and that must generally be somebody else's leavings; she was only allowed one course garment, and was treated as the slave and outcast of the family, she was allowed no jewellery, which was a great deal to Indian women, no feasting, no pleasure, nothing in life but a dreary prospect of going on day after day the slave and drudge of the family, and she used that word slave in its fullest sense. She did not mean merely to do hard work, but a slave, body, soul and spirit, and besides that these children were compelled to fast twice in every month for 24 hours. She had been an eye witness of a child widow of five years old crying to her mother for bread or water on a hot day, and the mother had beaten the child and said, 'Don't you know you are a widow, and fasting.' Think of the wickedness of calling a child a widow, and by the law of the country those widows might