

called Christian government, had stayed for centuries practically without the influence of Jesus Christ and His word.

In Siberia, after its conquest in the end of the sixteenth century, no effort was made to reach the Tatar tribes which inhabited the northwest. We hear of no organized missionary campaign before the beginning of the eighteenth century; and even then it was done for the heathen tribes in the district of Tobolsk only, the Moslems living there being spoken of as fanatical enemies of missionary work, as they were busily engaged in propagating Islam. We receive the impression from the reports of the orthodox missionary pioneers that then, as now, the Tatars were considered to be nearly inaccessible to evangelization. We must add, that the "evangelization" of heathen and Moslems by the Greek Orthodox Church was done in those far-off days in a still more formal, hasty way than it is now done; whole pagan tribes being baptized and reckoned to be Christians after a few days of preaching and instruction; the missionaries not knowing even the languages spoken by the people they baptized. Here just as in the Volga districts missionary work ceased soon after it had begun and darkness spread again over the tribes of Northwestern Siberia for more than a half century till the beginning of the nineteenth century; but even then no special work for Moslems was done here.

South of the Tobolsk district, stretching down towards Turkestan, the immense plains were inhabited by the Kirghis tribes, who were heathen. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, when "the Apostle of the Altai," the reverend Father Macary crossed these plains to reach the Altai, and perceived the state of these millions of heathen, he asked the Russian government to allow him to begin missionary work amongst the Kirghis. But he