

was told that these people were as yet too wild and savage to be accessible to the Gospel ! But soon after other missionaries, not depending upon the good-will of any government and having more zeal and understanding, occupied this field and won the whole of the Kirghis tribe to the faith of Islam. And as in more than one part of the earth, so here, the Christian missionary has now to fight, not the weak and beggarly elements of an animistic religion, but the seemingly inaccessible granite fortress of Islam ! We do not find then, till the end of the nineteenth century, any special, organized missionary work among the Moslems of North, West and Central Siberia.

About the middle of the last century the Greek Orthodox Church awoke to a more vivid sense of its duty ; and since then we find an ever-widening number of missionary stations covering East Russia and Siberia. We must make special mention of the Greek Orthodox Missionary Society which was founded at Moscow about 1870. It enlisted from the beginning the interest and aid of many learned and noble men and women ; but through the agency of the parish priests this interest spread also among the common people, a great enthusiasm for missionary work was aroused and money and lives were offered. The General Committee has its centre and seat in Moscow, but a vast net of parochial committees serve to bring the public all over Russia in contact with the needs of the empire and to transmit to them the news of failure or success, receiving in exchange men and money. During the first twenty-five years of its activity the Orthodox Missionary Society was in especial favour with the public. It spent two million dollars for missionary work in the Volga districts, densely inhabited by Moslems and heathen, and in seven districts of Siberia. One hundred and five thousand souls received baptism ;