

**A TOUR OF THE MISSIONS:
OBSERVATIONS
AND CONCLUSIONS**

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A Tour of the Missions: Observations and Conclusions by Augustus Hopkins Strong

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AUGUSTUS HOPKINS STRONG

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1848

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Observations and Conclusions

BY

AUGUSTUS HOPKINS STRONG, D. D., LL. D., Litt. D.

PRESIDENT EMERITUS OF THE ROCHESTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

AUTHOR OF "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY," "PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION," "CHRIST
IN CREATION," "MISCELLANIES," "CHAPEL-TALKS," "LECTURES ON THE
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THE
ASSOCIATION

A PERSONAL FOREWORD

THE forty years of my presidency and teaching in the Rochester Theological Seminary have been rewarded by the knowledge that more than a hundred of my pupils have become missionaries in heathen lands. For many years these former students have been urging me to visit them. Until recently seminary sessions and literary work have prevented acceptance of their invitations. When I laid down my official duties, two alternatives presented themselves: I could sit down and read through the new Encyclopædia Britannica, or I could go round the world. A friend suggested that I might combine these schemes. The publishers provide a felt-lined trunk to hold the encyclopædia: I could read it, and circumnavigate the globe at the same time. This proposition, however, had an air of cumbrousness. I concluded to take my wife as my encyclopædia instead of the books, and this seemed the more rational since she had, seven or eight years before, made the same tour of the missions which I had in mind. To her therefore a large part of the information in the following pages is due, for in all my journey she was my guide, philosopher, and friend.

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Our tour would not have covered so much ground nor have been so crowded with incidents of interest, if it had not been for the foresight and assistance of the Reverend Louis Agassiz Gould. He was a student in our seminary forty years ago, and after his graduation he became a missionary to China. Though his work abroad lasted only a decade, his interest in missions has never ceased, and he is an authority with regard to their history and their methods. I was fortunate in securing him as my courier, secretary, and typewriter, and his companionship enlivened our table intercourse and our social life. But he was bound that we should see all that there was to be seen. Without my knowledge he wrote ahead to all the missions which we were to visit, and the result was almost as if a delegation with brass band met us at every station. We were sight-seeing all day, and traveling in sleeping-cars all night. Though I had notified the public that I could preach no more sermons and make no more addresses, I was summoned before nearly every church, school, and college that we visited, and fifty or sixty extemporized talks were extorted from me, most of them interpreted to the audience by a pastor or teacher. My letters to home friends were often written on the platforms of railway stations while we were waiting for our trains, and after six months of these exhausting labors I still survived.

These preliminary remarks are intended to prepare the reader for a final statement, namely, that the papers which follow were written with no thought of publication. They were simply a record of travel, set down each week, for the information of relatives and friends. I have been urged to give them a wider circulation by putting them into print. In doing this I have added some reflections which, for substance, were also written at intervals on my journey, and these, with sundry emendations and omissions, I have called my "Conclusions." I submit both "Observations" and "Conclusions" to the judgment of my readers, in hope that my "Tour of the Missions" may lead other and more competent observers to appreciate the wonderful attractions and the immeasurable needs of Oriental lands.

I cannot close this personal foreword without expressing to my former students and the many friends who so hospitably entertained us on our journey, my undying sense of their great kindness, and my hope that between the lines of my descriptions of what I saw they will discover my earnest desire to serve the cause of Christ and his truth, even though my impressions may at times result from my own shortsightedness and ignorance. Only what I have can I give.

AUGUSTUS H. STRONG.

ROCHESTER, August 3, 1917.

