

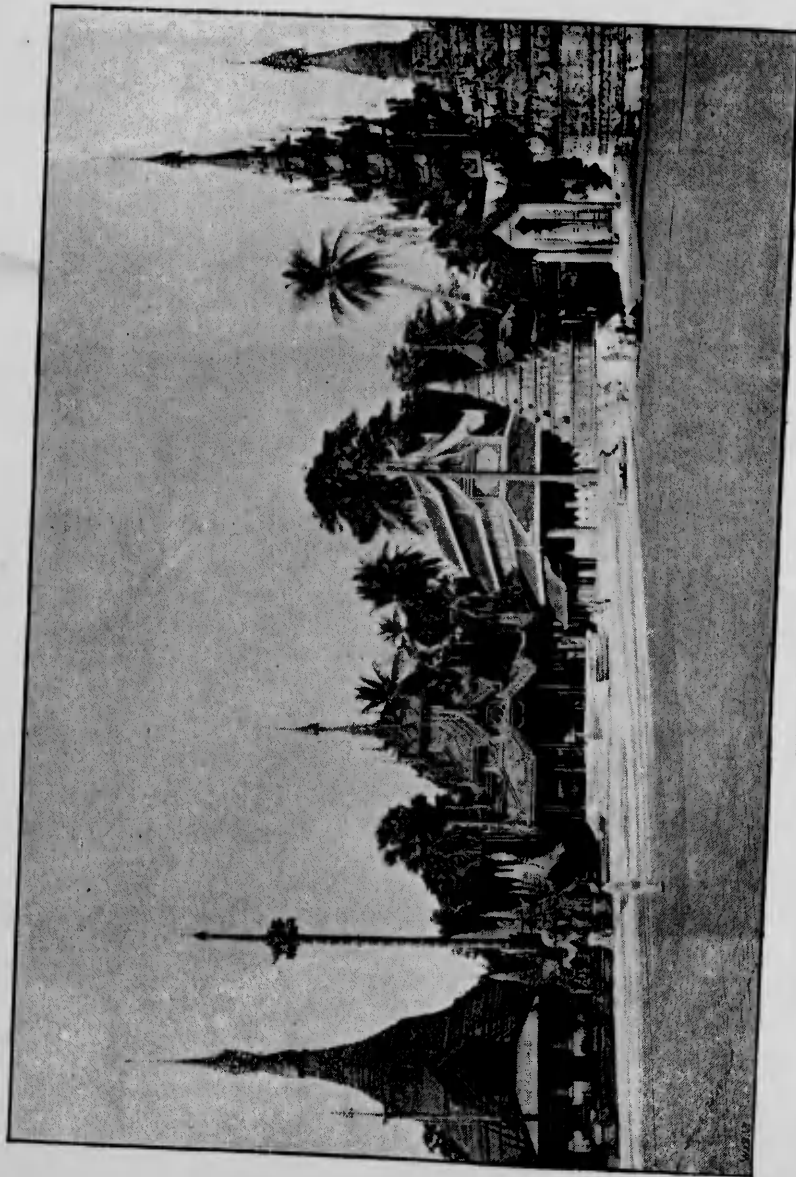


William B. Cordner  
1898

Reward for collecting for the  
Wesleyan Foreign Missions.

12

FOUR YEARS IN UPPER BURMA.



SACRED BUILDINGS OF THE BUDDHISTS.

FOUR YEARS  
IN  
UPPER BURMA.

BY  
W. R. WINSTON.

"Spread it then,  
And let it circulate through ev'ry vein  
Of all your empire; that where Britain's power  
Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too."

*The Task.*

東京外国語大学  
図書館蔵書

648938

平成 21 年度

London:

C. H. KELLY, 2, CASTLE STREET, CITY ROAD, E.C.;

AND 66, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

1892.



## P R E F A C E .

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I HAD certainly no intention of writing a book when I commenced to put together the information contained in these pages. All I purposed to do was to prepare a short report of work done. But I found that the interesting material at hand was too abundant to be compressed within the limits I had originally intended.

The need for a better knowledge, on the part of our English people generally, of the distant dependencies of the British Empire is undeniable, if they are to discharge at all intelligently the duty of governing the many races, which the circumstances of an ever-widening empire, and the extension of the parliamentary franchise, have placed in their hands. The story is told of a member of Parliament who did not know Burma from Bermuda ; and as I have myself found the very same confusion of the two places, in three separate instances, by gentlemen that might have been thought fairly well educated, to say nothing of a respectable alderman who asked whether Burma was an island, and frankly admitted he was very ignorant about it, I can quite believe the story to be true.

Not only is there a need for more knowledge of the countries and races we govern, there is also a demand for it. The events of recent years, especially those resulting from the annexation of King Theebaw's country, have drawn Burma into much closer touch with England; and many people, by no means ignorant of Burma before, now feel a much deeper interest than formerly in all that pertains to that interesting country, whose destinies are henceforth so intimately bound up with our own.

I have endeavoured to draw as faithful and accurate a picture as possible of the country and people, and I have tried to show, from the standpoint of a sympathetic but impartial witness, what the annexation of an Oriental country like Burma really means, what are its immediate results, and what are the many strong points and the few weak points in our rule.

In seeking to raise the condition of a heathen people no remedy can be regarded as a substitute for the Gospel. We value civilisation very highly, with all that it implies in our case—in the way of good government, material prosperity, the amelioration of the conditions of life amongst the people, the progress of knowledge, and the introduction of the arts and conveniences of life—but the only true basis for the highest type of civilisation is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The best instances of a civilisation without the Gospel are in the East, but even the civilisation of the East is, at its best, an arrested civilisation. Those races are "civilised but not enlightened"; they always stop short of that capacity for constant progress which characterises only the nations that have embraced the Gospel; and they achieve that capacity when they have embraced it. Hence

the carrying on of evangelistic work in Burma is a matter of great importance, and my earnest desire is that this little work may do its humble part in deepening that prayerful interest upon which missionary effort depends for its support and continuance.

In addition to those authors that I have consulted on Burma, and have quoted here and there in the course of this work, I would especially mention my indebtedness to that most appreciative and sympathetic observer of the Burman, Mr. J. G. Scott (Shway Yoe), whose work, in two volumes, entitled *The Burman: his Life and Notions*, gives perhaps the best and most complete account of the Burmese people that has yet appeared. I have availed myself of his extensive information to confirm or supplement my own in points where it is obvious that four years was not a long enough period upon which to form a reliable judgment.

W. R. WINSTON.



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## FOUR YEARS IN UPPER BURMA.

### CHAPTER I.

#### *INTRODUCTORY.*

THE annexation of Upper Burma on January 1st, 1886, opened up to England a large and valuable addition to her foreign possessions, whilst it perceptibly widened the ever-increasing area of her responsibilities, both political and moral. Including the Shan States tributary to the kingdom of Burma, the annexation added to Lower or, as it was then called, British Burma, a territory as large as France, thus making all Burma a compact province of our Indian Empire, as large as France and Great Britain together, and bringing British India right up to the frontiers of China.

The resources of Burma are very considerable. Its mineral wealth includes gold and silver, iron and tin; its mines of rubies and sapphires are noted all over the world; its coal and earth-oil are likely to prove of great value; jade, a green stone much prized in China and Japan for the manufacture of bracelets and trinkets, is found in large quantities in Upper Burma, and amber is met with in the northern parts of the country. As the country and its productions become opened up, these treasures are sure to receive the attention they deserve.

The soil of Burma is generally very fertile, and with its diversified elevation and climate of mountain, plain and tableland, almost every variety of tropical productions can be grown, as well

as many belonging to the temperate zone. Lower Burma, especially the great delta of the Irrawaddy, affords unrivalled scope and suitable climate for the growth of rice, the staple food of so large a part of the human race. The area under cultivation for rice in Lower Burma is 4,339,000 acres, and for other crops 474,000 acres, and besides all local consumption, there is the enormous total annual export of rice by sea of 1,145,000 tons.

The dry climate and rich soil of Upper Burma render it more suitable for the growth of wheat, maize, cotton, and many native grains, vegetables and fruits than for rice. On the mountains indigenous tea is grown, is manufactured by natives, and can be bought in any bazaar. Burma is the chosen home of the teak, that prince among timber trees. The reserved forests are under the care of a Government Department for forest conservation, and are the property of the Crown. They cover an area of several thousand square miles, and yielded in the year 1889-90, 260,074 tons of teak, beside other valuable timbers and forest productions, including indiarubber and cutch. Cutch is the common commercial name for a product of the *Acacia Catechu* tree, very valuable as a dye. These forests brought into the public revenue, when all expenses were paid, a net surplus of 3,388,400 rupees for the year 1889-90. The export of teak timber, chiefly for the European market, amounted to 184,431 tons, and the average value was about £10 a ton. Thus Burma is already a country of great material wealth, with vast possibilities of growth and development.

According to the census of 1891 the population of Burma, including the Shan States, is 8,098,014. This total is made up as follows:—

Lower Burma with an area of 87,957 sq. mls.,	population	4,658,627
Upper Burma	" "	83,473
Shan States	" "	40,000
		8,098,014

With regard to the population of the towns, Mandalay stands first with 188,815. Next to this is Rangoon, the capital and

the seat of Government, with 180,324; Maulmein has 56,000. The rest of the towns are considerably smaller.

The population of Burma is scanty in proportion to its area and resources; in fact, population is the great requisite for the development of the country. The quickening touch of British rule and commerce is effecting much in the direction of supplying this need. Every district, without exception, in Lower Burma shows an increase in the last ten years, an increase of 22 per cent. on the whole. The Indian Government is disposed to make the rich province of Burma an outlet for the congested populations of some of the provinces of India, and the great steamer companies are accomplishing this by conveying many hundreds of natives every week from the Indian ports to Rangoon, thereby enriching themselves, enriching Burma, and giving to these people a sphere and a chance in life, where their humble energies may receive their due reward. It is in manifold ways like this that civilisation and a firm and enlightened rule bestow such blessings on these teeming Oriental populations. The number of these immigrants from India into Rangoon, the chief seaport of Burma, during 1890 was 86,609. Owing to the customs of the natives of India, and their reluctance to break entirely away from home and country, there were in that year 65,055 who returned to India. This leaves a balance of over 20,000 for the year, which may represent approximately that very welcome addition to its population which Burma receives from India year by year. Rangoon itself is largely Indian in population, and Indians are to be found all over the country in great numbers.

Both Upper and Lower Burma have yet large tracts of waste land, unoccupied territory that would well repay cultivation, and it is to be hoped that an agricultural population will be attracted from India. Should the railway system of Burma, now being rapidly developed, be united to that of India, that will no doubt be brought about in course of time. As the price of labour, roughly speaking, is 100 per cent. more than it is in India, and as the cost of living is not more than 50 per cent. higher, the balance is decidedly in favour of the immigrant.

Burma is watered by magnificent rivers. Chief of these is the

Irrawaddy, with Rangoon near its mouth, and chief among its tributaries is the Chindwin. Both these rivers are great arteries of trade, being navigated not only by great numbers of the quaint-looking Burmese vessels, but by the large and powerful steamers of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company, which, since 1867, has been trading on these rivers. Their steamers now ply regularly several times a week up the Irrawaddy to Mandalay, 500 miles, and even as far as Bhamo, some 250 miles farther, and up the Chindwin as far as Kendat. These steamers are splendidly built of steel, with flat bottom, and lower and upper deck, with ample accommodation both for saloon and deck passengers, and are fitted throughout with the electric light. Some of them will carry considerably over a thousand passengers besides cargo.

Historically Upper Burma is a land of great interest. It was all that remained of the once powerful Burmese empire, which in the early part of this century was strong enough to menace our Indian territory, and extended from Siam, in the south, to the confines of Bengal, in the north, and from China to the Bay of Bengal.

Each of the three Burmese wars has arisen in a similar way, and has been marked by the same features on the part of the Burmese Government,—viz., an unwillingness to listen to reason, with much bluster and ignorant self-sufficiency at the outset, and inferior military qualities in the performance,—and each has resulted in the annexation of some part of the kingdom to British territory. Arakan and Tenasserim were acquired by treaty after the first Burmese war in 1824-26; the province of Pegu was occupied and retained, consequent on the second war in 1852-53; this gave us the command of the Irrawaddy, with Rangoon for a seaport; the third and last war, in 1885, took away all that remained of Burmese rule, and the kingdom of Burma became a thing of the past.

Much may be said against war in the abstract, and against wars of this description in particular. It would be easy to represent such a war as this, so far away from England, as aggressive and unjustifiable. I am no advocate for war of any kind, and I am not anxious to defend this action of England in conquering

and annexing the last remnant of the Burman kingdom. But I can see that a question of this kind is not to be so summarily settled as may appear on the face of it.

England long ago embarked in India on a career of empire, prompted rather by the force of circumstances than of set purpose; and now it often seems difficult to decide when to go forward and where to stop. I will not attempt to unravel this tangled skein, but will merely say that, leaving aside the questions of how England came by her vast power and influence in the East, and whether she ought ever to extend it, and if so under what circumstances, it seems to me that ultimately and finally the verdict must turn on the use she makes of this unique position, and what she accomplishes with her unrivalled opportunities in the material, intellectual, social and moral advancement of the many races and nations that she rules or protects.

Coming now to the immediate causes of the Burmese war of 1885, the following is the official account of them from the British standpoint:—

“Complaints against the Burmese Government meanwhile multiplied, British subjects suffered insult and violence at the hands of local officials, and no redress could be obtained. Trade monopolies were created in defiance of the express terms of the Treaty of 1867. The disorganisation of Upper Burma infected with disorder the adjacent districts of the British province. Negotiations were carried on by the Burmese Government for the purpose of contracting close alliances with other European countries, to the studied neglect of England. These causes had contributed to make the situation very unsatisfactory to the British Government, but were not such as to demand active interference. A *casus belli* arose, however, out of a specific act of the Burmese Government, who raised a large claim, amounting to several lakhs of rupees, against the Bombay-Burma Trading Corporation, a company of merchants, mainly British subjects, who had a large business in Upper Burma. In view of the magnitude of the claim, and of the interests of British subjects involved, mediation was attempted by the British authorities in order to ensure an impartial investigation. The mediation was

ignored; and the company, without being allowed reasonable opportunity for defending themselves, were condemned by the Burmese Council to be mulcted to the amount of 2,300,000 rupees. The British Government protested against this arbitrary act; and their demand to have the proceedings stayed until the matter had been referred to an arbitrator was peremptorily refused. It was on this refusal that the British Government decided to send to the King of Burma an ultimatum, which should be designed to adjust once for all the relations between the two countries. The ultimatum required the king not only to suspend proceedings against the corporation, and to receive an envoy with a view to the settlement of the matter at issue, but also for the future to permit the residence at Mandalay of a British agent, who should be treated with due respect. It was added, too, that the external relations of Burma should in future be regulated in accordance with the advice of the British Government, and that facilities should be given for opening up trade with China. This ultimatum was dispatched on October 22nd, 1885, and a satisfactory reply was demanded by November 10th. On November 9th the reply was received, containing an absolute refusal of the proposed terms. Moreover, on November 7th a proclamation had been issued by the King of Burma, calling on his subjects to rally round him, that he might annihilate these heretic foreigners, and conquer and annex their country. The ultimatum had thus led to war. The expeditionary force, already prepared, crossed the frontier on November 14th, and within a fortnight from that day Mandalay had been occupied by General Prendergast and his troops, and the king was a prisoner. The only serious resistance met with had been at Minhla."

Such were the events leading up to the war. The demands of the British Government seem not unreasonable, but the stubborn folly of the King of Burma refused them. One cannot but regret that the resources of modern civilisation have as yet established no alternative in such a case of a petty Oriental monarch and a great power like England but an ultimatum and war. King Theebaw was such a ruler that it was in vain to think of reinstating him no other likely ruler was to be found; annexa-

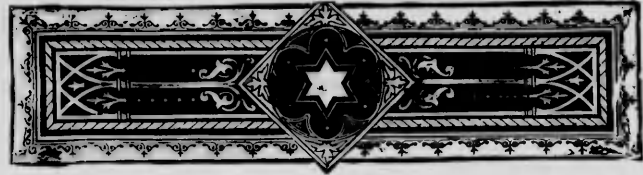
tion was the only way to meet the case. The king was removed to India with his family, his retinue, and his chief astrologer, and there he has been in gilded seclusion ever since. On January 1st, 1886, the proclamation was made that Upper Burma was annexed to our Eastern possessions, and the fact came home to the British mind that a large, valuable, interesting country was now open to British enterprise and incorporated with our Indian Empire.

To the Christian public of England the announcement of the annexation came as a call to duty in regard to the spread of the Gospel amongst a people who had long been suffering from a cruel and tyrannical ruler. From time immemorial the palace of the Burman rulers, chiefly owing to the general practice of polygamy on the part of the kings, and the consequent troops of queens and princes and princesses, has been the scene of much intrigue and corruption, and occasional bloodshed and revolution. Absolute monarchy is almost inseparable from occasional acts of cruelty and tyranny, even if just and kind in the main. But a weak ruler with an insecure title, like the last of the Burmese kings, cannot afford to be lenient, and is more likely to be cruel than a stronger man would be. The disorders of the reign of King Theebaw had made a deep impression on the English mind. He had gained the throne by a court intrigue, for he was not the rightful heir, so that he had to keep by force what he had got by fraud. The result was the massacre of about seventy of the royal family, who were put to death as possible rivals of the new king. That was in 1879, but a greater massacre occurred in 1884, when, owing to the intrigues of certain Burman officials, an attack was made upon the jails of Mandalay, and over three hundred persons were put to death, including some inoffensive princes.

As a very striking proof of the fact that the country was in a most wretched state, bordering on anarchy, by reason of misgovernment, extortion, bad trade and dacoity, it may be mentioned that in a few years no less than ten thousand people of Upper Burma had crossed the border and taken up their abode in British Burma, in order to escape oppression, and live in security under

a more beneficent rule. The tide of population has since the annexation been flowing back to Upper Burma.

Naturally much interest was felt in England over the altered condition of things, and thousands of Englishmen, on seeing the news of the annexation, felt that no time should be lost in securing to the Upper Burmans the liberty of British subjects, and that security to person and property enjoyed by all who are under British rule; and many felt, above all things, that it was a call to give them the Gospel.



## CHAPTER II.

### THE JOURNEY TO MANDALAY.

IT was in the month of January 1887 that I left Calcutta, in company with my old friend and former colleague, the Rev. J. Brown, of Calcutta, for Burma. We were on a prospecting expedition with a view to the establishment of a Mission in Upper Burma. On reaching Rangoon we were cordially received by the members of the American Baptist Mission, and spent a few days there. Rangoon is one of the most remarkable cities in the East for rapid growth and commercial prosperity. It was only after the second Burmese war in 1852-53 that it became British territory. Since then it has grown to be a city of 180,324 inhabitants. This population is by no means all Burman, but is largely English and Eurasian, Indian and Chinese. Its railways, steam tramways, public buildings, sawmills, ricemills, the shipping at anchor in the river, its banks, warehouses, public buildings and shops, at once proclaim it the busy capital of Burma, and in all probability a place destined to see a still greater and more prosperous future as the resources of the country develop.

After a day or two spent in Rangoon and a visit to Toungoo, we proceeded by rail to Prome, which is some 150 miles from Rangoon, and there we embarked on the Irrawaddy by one of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company's splendid river steamers for Mandalay. It was then a time of great demand for transport, on account of the military operations for the pacification of Upper Burma, so that there were, in addition to a large number of Burman and Indian passengers, many military men coming and

going. On that occasion we had over a thousand passengers on board. Not long after leaving Prome we passed what was formerly the British frontier station and port of Thayetmyo. Henceforth the contrast between the trim neatness of the towns under British rule and those of the Upper country was sufficiently apparent; and for many a long day after, the frequent sound of the bugle, and after dark the challenge of the sentries, together with the very warlike state of the news, and the constant sight of soldiers and police, always fully armed, and of gangs of dacoits being brought in manacled, kept us in mind of the fact that we had come to a land where the security of life and property we were accustomed to was only in course of being established.

Towards sunset we reached Minhla, on the right bank of the Irrawaddy; and as we made fast for the night right opposite, we had time before it was dark to step ashore and climb the precipitous bank and look over the redoubt, the taking of which was the only action worth mentioning in the expedition. It is a square-built stone fort, and was well manned with Burmese troops. The British force went round by the jungle, and got to the back of the fort, where there was a way leading up to the ramparts; and having fought their way up to the summit, the Burmans inside were at their mercy, as the machine guns in the armed steamers on the river covered the exit by the front. Thus the place was taken.

Next morning saw us steaming away again up the river. The scenery varies much. Now the banks of the river are flat, showing the country for miles, and again high banks and rolling hills diversify the scene. Further up, near Bhamo, in the defiles, the mighty river has forced its way between high mountains which rise suddenly from the water's edge, and the scenery there is majestic. Numbers of villages and small towns are seen on the banks of the river, for here, as elsewhere, the fresh water of the river means life to man and beast, and verdure and freshness to the crops irrigated from it.

Almost every hill and knoll for much of the way has one or more of the dazzling white, bell-shaped, brickwork pagodas so common all over this Buddhist land, in most cases surmounted

with the "htee" or "umbrella," a large iron framework of that shape, richly covered with gold leaf; and at various points the pagoda is hung with numbers of bells, that tinkle musically with every breeze. The number of pagodas is truly astonishing, and the amount they must have cost is one of the marvels of this strange and interesting country.

Pagodas are seen everywhere and in large numbers. Not only is there hardly a village without them, but they are to be seen



A VILLAGE ON THE IRRAWADDY.

on lonely hillsides and hilltops in abundance, and sometimes in almost inaccessible places, on some crag or ledge of rock overlooking the plain. The reason for this vast multiplication of pagodas is not far to seek. Of all works of merit none is so effectual as the building of a pagoda.

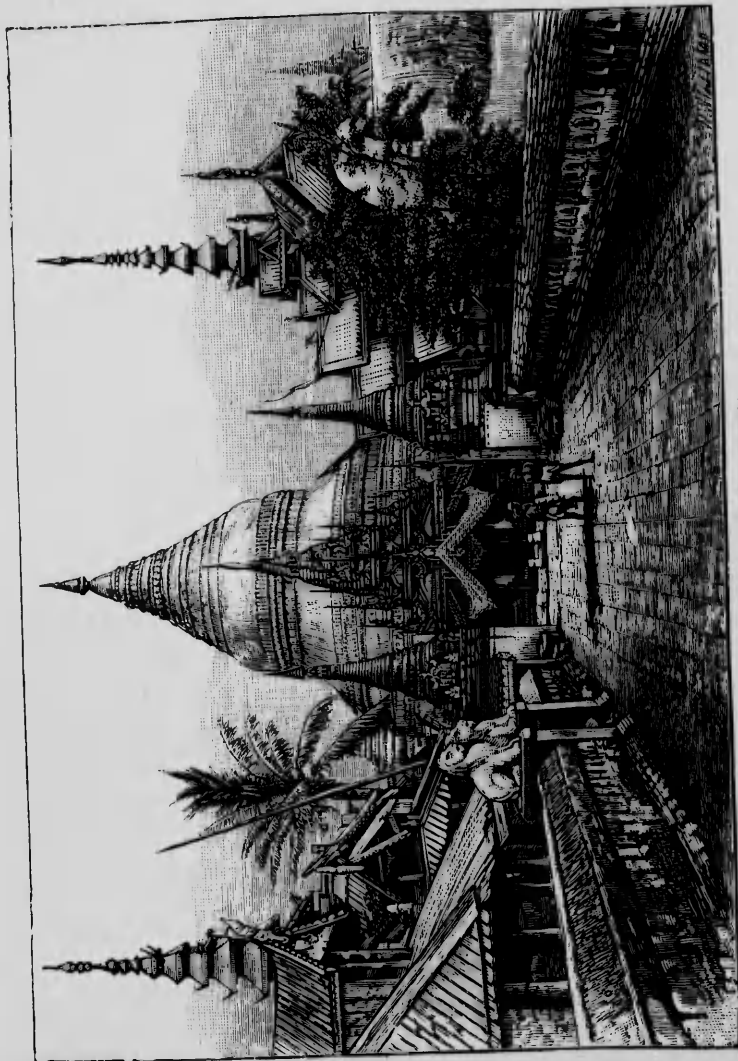
The following day, in the early morning twilight, we passed Pagán, a most remarkable place on the left bank of the river. It is one of the many former capitals of Burma, being the Royal City in the thirteenth century, but is now practically deserted, except for a few hundreds of pagoda slaves—an outcast class,



condemned under Burmese rule to lifelong and hereditary service about the religious buildings.

"It is practically," says a recent writer, "a city of the dead; but as a religious city, it is certainly the most remarkable and interesting in the world, not excepting Mecca, Kieff or Benares. For eight miles along the river bank, and extending to a distance of two miles inland, the whole surface is thickly studded with pagodas of all sizes and shapes, and the very ground is so thickly covered with crumbling remnants of vanished shrines, that according to the popular saying, you cannot move foot or hand without touching a sacred thing. A Burmese proverb says there are 9,999. This may or may not be true; but in any case it is certain that an area of sixteen square miles is practically covered with holy buildings. They are of every form of architecture and in every stage of decay, from the newly built fane glittering in white and gold, with freshly bejewelled umbrella on its spire, to the mere tumulus of crumbling brick, hardly to be distinguished now from a simple mound of earth."

They are also of very various sizes, some of them being fine and imposing buildings, and others very small. What a weird sight it was, in the dim twilight of the early morning, to see from the upper deck of the steamer, passing before us like a panorama for eight miles, the towering growths of many centuries of vain offerings, of useless and unavailing endeavours. All was dark and gloomy; mist and the dim twilight covered everything. It was the abode of the dead. Those pagodas were the memorials of a dead faith, and all the self-sacrifice that produced them was but elaborate self-seeking. The buildings seen in the distance put me in mind of a cathedral city, but it was a chilling thought that amid all that grim and solitary vastness there were neither worshippers nor worship—nothing, in fact, but a dreary waste of pagodas, most of them in various stages of decay. A subsequent visit to Pagán, and the more leisurely survey of this marvellous place, made one feel still more the sadness of the spectacle of this untold expenditure of property and labour, and the result neither honour to God nor benefit to man. Such is human "merit," and such are all attempts to accumulate a store of it.



ENTRANCE TO A BURMESE PAGODA.

It is a curious feature about pagodas that though so many are seen going to decay they still continue to build. The explanation of this is that the work of special merit is to build a pagoda, and no special merit attaches to the work of restoration or repair, except in the cases of the few pagodas of great renown, which are greatly resorted to by worshippers and pilgrims.

On the morning of the fourth day from Prome we reached Mandalay. Here we met the Rev. J. H. Bateson, who had arrived three weeks before, having come out from England in the capacity of Wesleyan chaplain to the Upper Burma Field Force.

The first thing to attend to after we had looked round a little was to find a place to lodge. This matter was soon settled by our Army chaplain taking us to the quarters which had been assigned to him by the military authorities. This lodging was novel, for it consisted of one of the buildings belonging to a large Buddhist monastery, substantially built of teak, and with the usual highly quaint, ornamental and fantastic-looking roof, richly decorated with most elaborate carving all over, and tapering at one end into the form of a spire. There were many other buildings of a similar kind around us, some of them really grand and imposing. Within a very short distance of us, in buildings of a similar kind, which are quite different from the ordinary Burmese houses, the whole of the 2nd Battalion of the Hampshire Regiment, several hundreds strong, were lodged. It was said by the chief Buddhist authorities about the time of the annexation that there were close upon six thousand monks in Mandalay, but there are monastery buildings to accommodate many times that number. In addition to all the monks, the entire British force of English troops, Native Indian Sepoy troops, and military police in Mandalay, altogether several thousands strong, were lodged in monastery buildings, and still there was plenty of room to spare.

Mandalay has been well styled the Vatican of Buddhism. So numerous are the religious buildings they seem almost endless, and it is evident that no small portion of the resources of the country must have gone in these works of merit. Within a day or two of our arrival, when we began to look about, we found

that we were in close proximity to many remarkably fine religious buildings, and many startling contrasts were brought into view by the exigencies of the times. Close by the quarters of the Hampshire Regiment was a pagoda of fantastic shape. Being a brick building, and not liable to catch fire, it had been put in use as the armourer's shop, and there the regimental blacksmith was at work with his anvil and tools, his portable fireplace and bellows, and close beside him, as he worked, was the beautiful marble image of Buddha for which the pagoda was erected.

The regimental canteen, from whence proceeded of an evening the loud laughter of the soldiers in their cups, and the singing of many a long-drawn-out song in the true English vernacular, was originally a building consecrated to Buddhist meditation, asceticism and prayer. The regimental guard-room—and in those days they had to keep good watch and ward, for the country was in a state of great disturbance—was a Burmese *zayat* or resting-place, built by the piety of some one for the benefit of frequenters of these holy places, who little imagined that his *zayat* would ever be used as a place of detention for drunken and refractory British soldiers.

But the great sight of the place is the "Incomparable Pagoda," as the Burmans proudly style it, situated close by the guard-room, and directly facing the beautiful monastery building then used as the officers' mess. This remarkable structure is a huge pile of building raised upon vast masonry pillars. It measures fully 300 feet in length, is proportionately broad, and rises in the form of a pyramid to such a height as to be visible several miles off. Its sumptuously carved and gilded teak-wood doors, forty-four in number, are quite a sight to see in themselves, as is also the magnificent decorative plaster work all around and over the building, and rising to its very summit. At that time, in the absence of churches and chapels, for want of a better place with sufficient space for hundreds to assemble together, the Hampshire Regiment used to have "church parade" in the vast expanse amongst the pillars at the basement of the Incomparable Pagoda. It was a cool, airy, comfortable place, and open on all sides to the breeze, so that it answered very well in such a hot climate.

There also many other meetings were held in those days of "Field Service," when we had all to be satisfied with such accommodation as we could get. It was there our prayer-meetings and class-meetings were held for the soldiers, and there, amidst that wilderness of pillars, under that vast heathen shrine, we had the joy of directing anxious penitents to the Saviour, and there, too, we held, in company with Major Yates of the Royal Artillery, the first temperance meeting ever held in Mandalay.

Leaving this Bethel of ours at the basement of the Incomparable Pagoda, and ascending by one of the fine broad flights of steps, the visitor comes to the wooden platform of the pagoda, and on being ushered in by the polite old abbot or presiding monk, he sees a very fine, spacious building, very lofty, with many images of Buddha, sheltered under great white canopies, besides some curiosities of European manufacture, such as mirrors of vast size, and gigantic coloured glass chandeliers, that must have been imported at immense cost.

But *the* sight of the place is the hall which contains the marvellous wood carvings in relief, all of Burmese workmanship, representing most clearly all manner of sacred histories and incidents, the whole of this elaborate and ingenious work being overlaid with gold leaf. Truly Mandalay is a wonderful place for religious buildings.

Close beside the Incomparable Pagoda are to be seen the *Ku-tho-daw* or Royal Merit pagodas, forming a unique and truly wonderful piece of work. They consist of a triple square of sets of little white pagodas, each of which is amply large enough to form a shrine for one large slab of Burmese marble, which stands up in the middle, like a cemetery headstone, enshrined each in its own neat, bell-shaped pagoda building. Each slab of marble is covered completely with a most accurately executed inscription in the Pali language, in letters about three-eighths of an inch in length. I have never counted these pagodas, but I am told by those who have that there are 730 of them in all. They are arranged in perfect symmetry, forming three squares one within another, each square being surrounded by a wall with handsomely carved gates. In the centre of the innermost square is a large

pagoda, and ascending the steps of that the spectator can obtain a good view of the whole, extending over many acres of ground. The whole space between the rows of pagodas is carefully paved with bricks. Every part of the work has been most thoroughly carried out, utterly regardless of expense, and everything is of the best. There is no crowding, but ample space is given everywhere. Is there to be found anywhere or in any religion a more striking, impressive and unique example of thoughtful devotion and loving care of those writings supposed to contain the sacred truth? These 730 pagodas contain 730 tables of stone covered with inscriptions, and it is considered to be the best edition extant of the text of the three Pitakahs, and the three Pitakahs are the scriptures of Buddhism, acknowledged as authoritative wherever Buddhism is the people's faith.

Close by the Ku-tho-daw we found another marvel. In a tall brick building is an immense marble sitting figure of Buddha, 25 feet high, scores of tons in weight, and thought to be perhaps the largest monolith in the world.

But it is time we returned to the three men who, after a long, hot and tiring day in the dusty streets of Mandalay, had taken refuge in the little monastery, and were preparing to pass the night. Though little was said about it, we were well aware that we ran some risks in being there at that time. Upper Burma was still in the throes of the revolution which had taken place, and life and property were unsafe. Any day a rising might take place. We were practically in an enemy's country. The military were then, and for more than a year after, on the footing of a Field Force, and had constantly to patrol the country in small columns, and to go in all directions in pursuit of dacoits. Conflicts with dacoits were of daily occurrence, and bulletins were published daily by the military authorities describing what took place.

With all this military and police activity there were still bands of dacoits of considerable numbers; crimes of violence and dacoit raids were constantly taking place, often with circumstances of revolting cruelty and outrage. The state of the country was such that English ladies and children were in official circles for-

bidden to come to live in Upper Burma, and in unofficial circles dissuaded from it as much as possible; the authorities could not undertake to protect them. No Englishman was allowed then, and for two years after that time, to travel outside the towns without military escort. Those were days when everybody who possessed a revolver kept it handy in case he should need to defend himself, and Government was glad to supply to every Englishman in the country a rifle and ammunition to be ready in case of need.

Under these circumstances, with so much that was new and strange, it is not much to wonder at if we committed ourselves that night to Divine protection with more than usual fervency of petition. Our monastery was not built to meet such an emergency, and had no proper fastenings to the doors. Our carnal weapons consisted of one revolver and several stout bamboos, which having disposed to the best advantage, we lay down on our camp beds, and rested as well as the circumstances permitted.

Happily this state of things has now passed away, and Upper Burma is as quiet as any other part of our Eastern possessions. During the few days Mr. Brown remained with us in Mandalay we came to the conclusion that this city, from its size and population (about ten times as large as any other town in Upper Burma), and from its general importance, was by far the best place to fix upon for the headquarters of the mission. Having settled this point, we reported to the committee in London accordingly, and Mr. Brown returned to Calcutta. After spending a fortnight in our monastery we found that, as it was on the extreme east of the town and a couple of miles from the centre, it was a very inconvenient place to live in. We therefore moved to a more central position, and rented for the time being a house belonging to an elderly Italian, who had been settled in Mandalay for many years as a weaver of velvet in the service of the king. Here we lived for a period of a year, by which time the new mission house was built, and we removed to our permanent quarters.



### CHAPTER III.

#### MANDALAY IN 1887.

IT was with feelings of no common interest that we disembarked from the steamer at Mandalay, and took our first glimpse of the place. The bustle of so many passengers disembarking created a very busy scene, and dense clouds of dust arose, so that we were glad to get away as soon as possible. We proceeded to charter one of the conveyances we found there waiting for hire, a peculiar kind of vehicle, resembling in size and appearance a dog kennel set on a pair of high wheels, and it proved a marvel of inconvenience. You climb up with difficulty, thrust yourself through the small aperture as best you can, for it is no easy matter, and then you stow yourself away, sitting down on the floor of the conveyance with your knees about your ears. It is quite impossible to preserve a dignified demeanour in one of these bullock gharries, and yet, sad to relate, it was found that this was the only kind of conveyance available for His Majesty the King, when he was removed from the palace to the river on his way to India.

The matter created quite a difficulty. To have mounted the king on such an occasion on a horse or an elephant would have been cruel mockery. At that time there were no horse gharries in Mandalay. They brought a dhooly first, but the king declined point blank to enter it. The bullock gharry was the best arrangement they could devise.

One of the first things that attracted our attention was the inordinately gorgeous appearance of some things, and the very

primitive and mean condition of others. This mixture of grandeur and shabbiness is quite an Oriental trait. The royal city and palace, the pagodas and the monasteries, were most sumptuous in style of building and decoration, but everything else looked very poor in comparison. The bamboo houses of the people looked small and frail and cheap. The roads, which we consider amongst the first essentials of civilised life, were as bad as they could be. They were of mere mud, which became dust several inches deep in dry weather, and a quagmire when it rained. The dense clouds of dust that rose wherever there was much traffic formed an experience truly distressing.

Mandalay has been said to be remarkable for three things, Phoongyees, Pagodas and Pariah dogs. The phoongyees are the brethren of the yellow robe, the Buddhist monks, who are to be seen in Mandalay by thousands, and all through the country in like proportion to the population. The pagodas form here as everywhere in Upper Burma a feature in every landscape. The pariah dogs are uncommonly numerous. You might guess at once you were in a Buddhist country from the thousands of homeless, poor, emaciated, mangy creatures, nobody's dogs, that roam over the city, eating anything they can pick up, the vilest refuse, and acting as the scavengers of the place. They are never on any consideration killed by the Buddhists, but suffered to multiply to any extent. As you walk about you often come upon eight or ten of these dogs at a time, and they seem as if they would tear you to pieces; but though they seem so savage and so numerous they prefer to keep at a safe distance.

Passing through the streets of the town, a drive of about two miles brought us to the moat outside the walls of the royal city. The city is in the form of a square, each face of which is over a mile in extent, and is surrounded by an enormous brick wall twenty-six feet high, many feet in thickness, and with battlements on the top. Outside the city walls is a broad open space of ground all the way round, and outside of that is a deep, broad moat, intended to serve the double purpose of military defence for the city, and of supplying drinking water to the inhabitants.

For the purpose of communicating between the city and the

town outside are five gateways, two on the townward or west side, and one on each of the others, with gates of enormous size and strength. Over each gate is a lofty and handsome tower built of teak wood, and rising to a point. Here and there along the walls at stated intervals, and facing the ends of the streets of the town, which run at right angles to the wall, are smaller towers of similar style, that serve to adorn the great wall of the city, and give it quite a handsome appearance.

At the time I speak of the walled city was inhabited by a large population of Burmans, chiefly people who had been in close connection with the palace; but owing to the decision of Government to make this place the military cantonment, the five thousand houses within the walls have been all cleared out, compensation being paid according to the value, and a very handsome cantonment has been made of it, with barracks for European and Indian troops. As the great majority of the houses were of teak or bamboo, this was not nearly so serious a matter as it might seem. The cantonment is now known by the name of Fort Dufferin.

The royal palace consists of a square enclosure in the centre of the large square city. It was at that time surrounded and defended by a strong stockade of teak logs set on end in the ground, and inside of that, as a second line of defence, was a strong brick wall; but both stockade and wall have since been removed by the British as unnecessary. Passing inside these two defences, the visitor found himself in the spacious grounds of the palace, part of which were prettily laid out as gardens, with artificial canals of water, rockeries and summer houses. Part of this space was devoted to the king's arsenal; on the eastern side were the treasury and the mint.

In the centre of all, raised on an earthen platform about eight feet high, and pretty well covering an area of perhaps a couple of acres with a miscellaneous and irregular collection of handsome lofty buildings, with much carving in teak, and abundance of the inevitable gold leaf, is the royal palace of the kings of Burma. Some of the buildings are of brick, but the majority are of teak. There is something decidedly impressive, unique and highly interesting about the palace, as a specimen of an Oriental



ONE OF THE GATEWAYS OF THE ROYAL CITY OF MANDALAY

monarch's residence, but from a European standpoint it is wanting in unity of design and symmetry of arrangement. The buildings are so huddled together that they lose much of their appearance, and you have to find your way about among these fine buildings by queer narrow little lanes and wooden platforms, and by many sudden and unexpected turns, that to a Western mind take off considerably from the majesty of the place. But then we must remember the character of the Burmese court, notorious for back-stairs influence, corruption, intrigue, conspiracy and the like. That being so, it is only natural that the palace buildings should allow proper facilities for the same, and be in keeping with it.

The only approach to anything like the dignity of a palace from our point of view is the front or eastern side, where there is the throne room or audience hall, surmounted with the great spire which rises roof over roof to a considerable height and almost to a point, terminating with the usual gilt umbrella. This was considered to be the centre of the universe by the Burman courtiers, and it is still facetiously called by that name by the English. It was here that the king used to appear on his throne on special occasions. It is said that King Mindohn, the father of King Theebaw, used to gaze at his people from his throne through a pair of binoculars. The people would all be down on their knees in his presence, and not only on their knees, but crouching on their elbows too, for that is the attitude for special reverence in Burma.

There was one point of contention between the English and this very haughty and conceited Court of Burma that never was settled. That was the reception of our envoy. It was not sufficient for them that he observed all the forms of respect known in European etiquette, but they required from him also their own, even to the removal of his boots in the king's presence. Now an English gentleman does not like to doff his boots in public, and to a military man it would seem particularly outrageous to expect it of him. Hence it was a difficulty. Had King Theebaw accepted instead of rejecting our ultimatum in November 1886, he might have kept his throne and his palace ;

but the proper reception of the British Resident would have been one of the articles he would have had to agree to.

It was in the great throne room that we held at first our Sunday morning parade services for the troops, the preacher taking his stand just by the foot of the throne: an interesting circumstance, and not without a touch of romance,—the Kingdom of Jesus Christ set up on the final downfall of this antiquated, corrupt and cruel Oriental despotism. But though we may hopefully take this as a figure and prophecy of the triumph yet to come, the fact itself is a political rather than a religious one, and indicates just this, and nothing more—that Britain has conquered Burma, and is now able to do what she likes with Burma's most sacred and venerated places. We are not for that reason one inch nearer the real spiritual triumph of Jesus Christ in the hearts of the Buddhists of Burma. That work is but just begun.

Some idea of the large extent of the palace buildings may be gathered from the fact that for many months they provided dwellings for the general and his numerous head-quarters staff, and for many other officers, besides barracks for an entire battery of artillery, officers and men. In addition to this, quite a number of departments, civil and military, had their offices there, including a postal and telegraph department.

Near the front of the palace is the great tower, now used as a fire lookout station. On the top of this a native sentry is always on the watch, and the moment he sees a fire anywhere, either in the cantonment or in the town, he gives the alarm, and the fire-engines are soon on the spot. This is a matter of no small importance in this great city of 188,000 inhabitants, where the houses are of such a highly inflammable material as bamboo, and where in one year 35 fires occurred, destroying 9 monasteries and 724 houses, of the total value of 310,000 rupees.

Close by the front of the palace was the residence of the famous Lord White Elephant, to whom royal honours were paid. He was regarded as the king of elephants, and therefore none but the king could mount him. His trappings were of the most sumptuous and valuable description—silk and rich cloth, ornamented with gold, rubies and emeralds. All his vessels and

utensils were made of gold. None but the king and the white elephant might enjoy the dignity of the white umbrella, for that is the chief emblem of royalty. This august quadruped had his own retinue specially told off to do him service; his attendants and all visitors took off their shoes when they entered his quarters, and the people bowed and did obeisance when he passed through the streets. Not that he was white. No elephant is anything near a white colour; but besides the lighter colour of the animal there are other tests which, according to the Burmese science on the subject, settle the matter of a white elephant; and it is a science of considerable gravity and importance. He must have five toe nails on his hind feet instead of the usual four; and when water is poured upon him, if he is a true albino, he will turn red and not black.

The reason why so much superstitious and absurd reverence was paid to the white elephant was that the possession of an undoubted specimen was supposed to be a sign and symbol of universal sovereignty, so that it was deemed very lucky for the King of Burma to possess one. In the sixteenth century the kingdoms of Pegu and Siam fought over one for many years, till five successive kings and thousands of men were killed, which shows the importance attached to this possession by both nations. How often nations have fought over that which was only a white elephant when they had gained it!

It was a singular coincidence that within a few days of the capture of Mandalay the white elephant died, and was buried with some display, the troops being turned out on the occasion. It was as well he did die, for had he lived he would have been to the English a veritable *white elephant* in the English colloquial sense of that term. We can come quite as near to universal sovereignty as we wish to be, or as is good for us, without the magic aid of a white elephant.

The principal building to the front of the palace, and just within the stockade, is the Hloot Daw, a fine large hall where the four chief ministers of state, with their subordinates, used to meet for the transaction of their business. After the annexation in 1886, there was an attempt made to govern through the medium

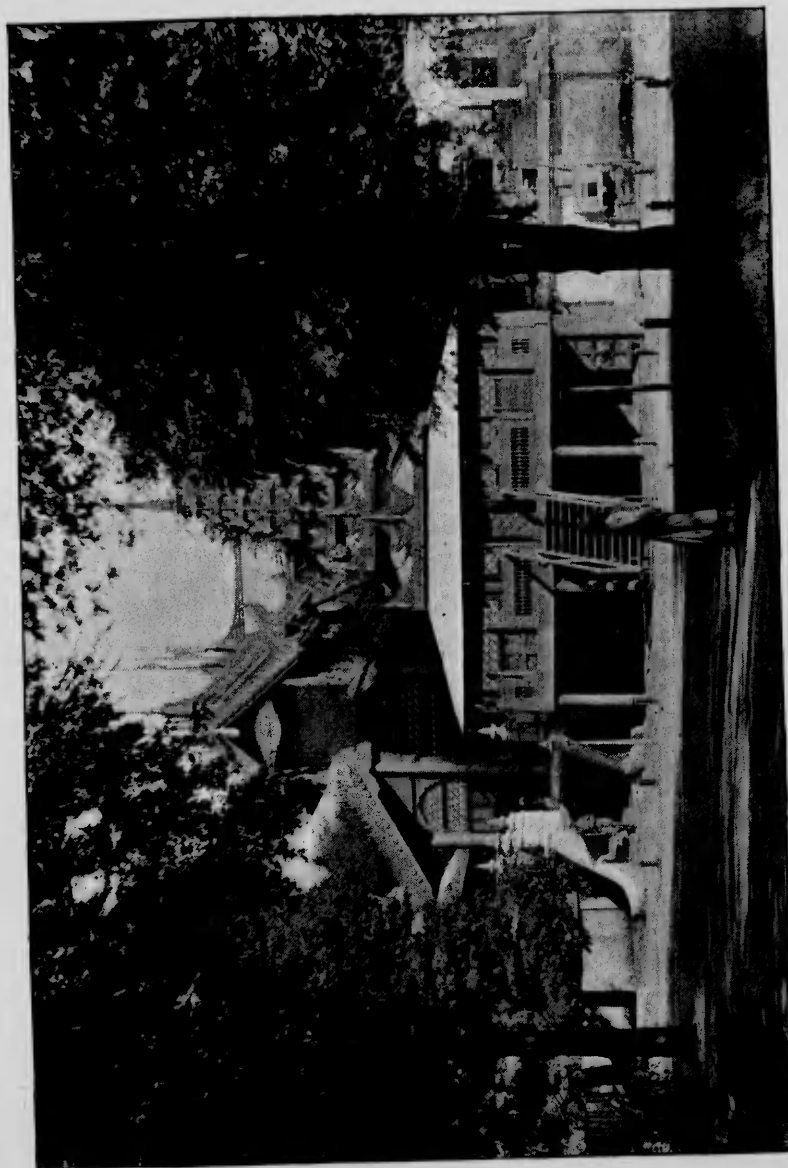


of the Hloot Daw, but it turned out a failure. These high Burmese officials, it was found, needed to learn the very A B C of honest, fair and disinterested administration, and as they were too old to learn they were pensioned off.

Altogether apart from the great walled royal city, now Fort Dufferin, was the still greater town of Mandalay. It is now constituted a municipality; but in Burmese times, when the city was all in all, it was merely in Burmese phrase the Anouk-pyin, *i.e.*, the western suburbs. The town of Mandalay lies, more or less, on all the four sides of the city, but mostly on the west, filling on that side all the space between the city and the river, and from north to south extending five or six miles. The Mandalay municipality covers, more or less densely, an area of eighteen square miles. Some portions of that space are thinly populated, and a very little of it is under cultivation as fields and gardens; but most part of it is pretty well studded with houses, and some of it densely populated, so that it is a very large city. It is uncommonly well laid out. The streets are straight, very wide, run at right angles to each other, and many of them are planted with shady tamarind trees. Some of the streets are now metalled and made serviceable for traffic, but five years ago, though so well planned and broad, they were in a most deplorable state; and those of us who look back to that time have amusing recollections of the straits we were put to in order to get about in the rainy season.

The southern end of Mandalay touches the northern limit of Amarapoora, which was the capital up to 1860. Here are to be seen the remains of a great royal city nearly as large as that at Mandalay, and after the same model exactly,—square; set so as to face the four cardinal points; the ruins of a great wall around; a deep moat outside, now dry; the palace in the centre; pagodas and other sacred buildings here and there, scattered over the place; and everywhere broken bricks strewn about; some of the ground now cultivated, and the rest covered with dense tangled jungle; but not a single inhabitant.

This changing of the capital from place to place, once in a while, seems a strange, extravagant freak on the part of the Burmese



PART OF THE PALACE OF MANDALAY (SOUTH SIDE).

kings, especially in such a case as this, where it involved the founding and building of a new city only four or five miles from the existing one, and all the people had to transfer themselves and their houses and property as best they could at the king's command. Superstitious fear was probably the chief if not the sole reason for all this useless waste. There are, within a circle of a dozen miles, four places that claim the honour of having been sometime capitals of Burma, viz., Mandalay, Amara-poor, Ava and Sagaing, all within little more than a century, and the three latter all show the crumbling remnants of their former glory. There are, besides these, other towns scattered up and down the country that have formerly been capitals.

Sagaing, twelve miles from Mandalay, was the capital in 1762, and the remains of the city wall are still to be seen. Amara-poor was founded in 1783. In 1822 it was almost totally destroyed by fire. It is said, too, that a vulture alighting on the royal spire of the palace caused great uneasiness to the king. The court astrologers were summoned to explain this omen. As, in their estimation, it foreshadowed evil, a new palace was built at Ava, and the capital was removed there in 1823, but only remained there till 1837. Those of us who are now in middle life will remember learning in our geography, "Burma, capital Ava," whereas this fugitive capital, though it appeared so in our school books, had long before our day left Ava and gone back to Amara-poor, where it remained till 1860, when the king and his court made their last removal to Mandalay.

One thing is clear: the country that can afford to gratify its superstitious fear of omens in this spendthrift way, lightly undertaking to build a new capital every now and then, and whilst sparing so much on pagodas, monasteries, monks and other works of merit, yet look so plump and well favoured as Burmans usually do, must possess considerable sources of wealth, and there is no doubt such is the case with Burma.

Between the religious buildings and the dwellings of the people the contrast is great, but it was greater in Burmese times than it is now. It was very significant indeed to observe the rage for building brick houses that took place in Mandalay, when once it

was known for certain that the Burmese Government was no more, and that it was to be the English Government henceforth; and equally instructive was it to observe how the value of property went up by leaps and bounds. One needs no better proof than that of the reputation British rule enjoys even in the remote East, and of the enlivening touch it gives to commerce and all that is free and enterprising. And how the natives of India of different races flocked into the upper province after the annexation! They knew what British rule was in India, even though many of them knew not a word of English. Even the Upper Burmans, who were quite new to our government, seemed at once to enter into the spirit of the change that had come. The sumptuary laws were removed, of course, now the king was gone; that is, such laws as regulated to a nicety what style of house a man might build, and what kind of an umbrella and how many of them he might carry on state occasions; and the Burmans who had money now no longer feared that if they let it be known they would have to part with it. Hence, for various reasons, the building of substantial brick houses went on at a great rate, and almost all the brick houses now seen in Mandalay were built at that time.



## CHAPTER IV.

## THE PEOPLE OF MANDALAY.

MANDALAY is very cosmopolitan. As with many cities in the East, the modern facilities for travel and the prospects of business have brought together people of many nations and tongues. As regards the Burmans themselves, who of course are the great majority of the inhabitants, future chapters will afford opportunities for describing them. It is rather of the multifarious foreign element of the population that I wish now to speak.

In the streets of Mandalay it is no uncommon thing to see a people evidently of the Mongolian type, and not unlike the Burmans in appearance, but slightly different in features, different in language, and in dress. These are the Shans, the inhabitants of the elevated country to the east of Upper Burma—a fine country by all accounts, and likely to grow greatly in prosperity and to attract population, now that it has come under firm and settled rule. They are distinguishable by their dark, baggy trousers in place of the Burmese loin cloth, by the very large pliable straw sun-hats which they wear, and by a larger amount of tattooing on the body than is usual with the Burmans. The Shans are great gardeners and great traders. Caravans of pack bullocks loaded with produce from the Shan Hills are frequently seen coming into Mandalay, accompanied by Shans armed to the teeth, as well as men on foot carrying loads; and now that the land has rest from incessant tribal war and dacoity, this trade is on the increase. In 1888-89, according to Government returns, the number of laden bullocks was 27,170, and the value of the

goods 730,279 rupees; nearly double the returns of the previous year. The Shans, after disposing of their loads, purchase in the bazaar goods of European manufacture for the return journey. A few Shans are permanently resident in Mandalay.

There were scarcely any English people in Upper Burma, especially during the reign of King Theebaw; but now, of course, they are the leading race, and are to be found in all the highest posts. In addition to those belonging to the army, the leading civilians and officials of Government are English gentlemen; and to them is committed the control of the revenue, the administration of justice, the police, the Departments of Public Works and of Survey; whilst some are there in business of their own, and others find employment under the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company as officers or engineers on board the river steamers.

The Eurasian element—*i.e.*, of mixed descent, European and Asian—is of course also to be found, some having come over from India, others belonging to Burma, and they mostly find employment as clerks or in some similar capacity. French, Italians and Greeks were there before we were, and some of these nationalities found employment in various capacities in the service of the king.

The Armenians are a small but very respectable class. They are similar in dress and habits to Europeans, and speak English. Many of their number are to be found in Calcutta also, and in Rangoon, quite settled and domiciled in the East. In Mandalay they have a church of their own, and the priests of the Greek Church, to which they belong, pay occasional visits.

Of Parsees we have a few; and here, as in their native place about Bombay, they are an enlightened and very respectable people in good positions.

There is quite a numerous section of the population belonging to the Zarabadee community, as they are called. They are half-caste Mahomedans, the descendants of Mahomedans from India settled in Mandalay, by Burmese mothers. They supply an interesting example of the growth of a religious community merely by the natural process, and apart from proselytising efforts, when the natural increase of numbers is all absorbed by that



"THE SHANS ARE DISTINGUISHABLE BY THEIR DARK, BAGGY TROUSERS, AND THE VERY LARGE PLIABLE STRAW SUN-HATS THEY WEAR."

religious community. They are Mahomedan in religion, but largely Burman in dress and appearance. They speak Hindustanee and Burmese.

There is a class of people called Kathays about whom there appears to be some special interest. They are the descendants of people from Manipur, brought over formerly as the result of some conquest by the Burmans, and long since settled in the capital. Their condition, at least as it was originally, reminds one of the exile of the Jews in Babylon. They have a language and religion of their own, but speak Burmese too. They are a peaceable and industrious community, mostly employed in weaving the pretty, bright-coloured, figured silk cloths worn by the Burmese women.

Another class not native, but long resident in Upper Burma, are the Ponnâs or Brahmins from Manipur. To one accustomed to meet with that caste in India they look very degenerate, and although they still wear the sacred Brahmin thread over the shoulder as in India, they seem to have become very much less fastidious about mixing with other castes than their brethren of the great continent. They seem to enjoy a position of considerable standing and influence in the country of their adoption, and gain a good livelihood by the two apparently not very kindred occupations of dairy-keeping and fortune-telling. It is their reputation for the latter that gains them their position of importance with a light-hearted, casual and very superstitious people like the Burmans. This soothsaying seems to be quite a recognised function, that makes the Ponnâ welcome throughout Burmese society, and nowhere more so than at court. In their literature, the Ponnâ constantly figures as an honoured and indispensable personage at the palace, whose business it is to study the stars, consult the horoscopes, make known lucky days, and, in fact, decide the thousand and one important affairs of life wherein the Burman considers it necessary to appeal to the occult.

Coming now to the mercantile classes, we have some interesting specimens. First, the Suratees, keen business men, merchants and shopkeepers, men capable of large transactions, Mahomedans in religion, Oriental in dress. The leading member of this

community in Upper Burma, a very wealthy man, did a good deal of financing for the king, and no doubt made it pay well. When the downfall of the Burman kingdom took place he came to no harm. Amongst other transactions he was the lessee of the Great Bazaar, and as the lease had still some years to run, he continued to hold it, and profited greatly by the enormously improved trade.

The Marwarees are another class of traders hailing from India. They are Hindus from Gujerat, wholesale dealers in piece goods, and very smart business men.

The Moguls are Mahomedans from Persia, with a complexion almost as fair as a European's. They are the only people of all the many nationalities I have met with in the East who dress exactly like the pictures that are drawn of Bible scenes and characters. The special shape and size of turban, and the long loose outer garment some of them wear, put one in mind of the pictures exactly.

A cosmopolitan place would be incomplete without some Jews. We have them in Mandalay of various nationalities, European and Oriental, and they seem to be all shopkeepers. One firm hail from Baghdad, very near the dwelling-place of our first parents, and speak a vernacular which they call Hebrew.

The principal native bankers are the Hindu Chetties from the Madras Presidency. They are a remarkable class of people, very wealthy, very keen at business, men of their word in all transactions, being fully alive to the value of keeping their credit by an unstained reputation in finances; and if one firm of their community find it difficult to make their payments, the rest of the Chetty firms will usually come to their help, to save the reputation of the whole. Yet with all this they dress, eat and live as if they had a very meagre income, and have the appearance of mere savages. The vast array of naked skin they show is almost black in complexion, and they have almost no education beyond the bare necessities of finance. Their food is of the simplest; their houses, all on the two sides of one street to be near each other, are substantially built to protect them from thieves, but almost devoid of all furniture. They are not negli-

gent of religion, for as soon as they came they secured land and built a Hindu temple. Their dress, consisting of two pieces of thin white cotton cloth, one round the waist and the other loosely thrown over one shoulder, could be bought for three-and-sixpence; the closely shaven head has no covering, and the feet none. Such is the Tamil Chetty, the very last man in all Mandalay you would take for a wealthy money-lender; but he is in great request with the improvident Burmans who possess any property upon which it is possible to borrow. The Chetties came over to Mandalay when the country was annexed; their keen business instincts telling them two things—one, that there would now be plenty of business doing; the other, that it would now be safe to come and do it. The prospects of those who get into their clutches are not bright. The price of money is very high in the East. The late Earl of Beaconsfield speaks somewhere of "the sweet simplicity of the three per cents," but the Tamil Chetty considers twenty-five per cent. per annum much simpler.

Leaving the mercantile and moneyed classes, and coming to the rank and file, there are in Mandalay some thousands of natives from many different parts of India, speaking many languages, and engaging in a great variety of callings. Europeans often think of India as a country, but it is really a continent, and has as great, if not a far greater, variety of peoples and tribes than Europe presents. There is the Bengalee Baboo, probably a clerk, the Hindustanee doorkeeper or messenger, the Tamil overseer or coolie. Even in our Sepoy army in Mandalay one sees great variety. There is the tall hardy Punjabee, the wild Pathan and the still wilder Beloochee. There is the jolly stout little Goorkha, who stands in such good repute as a fighting man; the somewhat weedy-looking Madrassee, whose name does not rank high for valour; and there is the brave, fierce-looking Sikh, with a national-religious scruple against cutting his hair, who curls the two ends of his beard up round his two ears when it becomes too long to hang down. What tact it must require to mould out of these diverse elements "the finest body of disciplined Asiatic troops in existence," and yet we are told, and it is true, that the real strength and safety of our Indian Sepoy army lies in the

judicious blending and balancing of these diverse elements, a lesson which the great mutiny unmistakably taught us.

We depend very much upon Indians for the supplying of our wants in Burma. The butcher, the baker, the washerman, the cook, the railway porter, the writer, the messenger, the soldier, the cabman, the postman, the farrier, the sweetmeat vendor, the sweeper, are in almost all instances natives of India, for the easy-going Burman lets all these employments slip past him.

The place is quite a Babel for languages. The names of the stations on the railway indicate the polyglot character of the population. It is of course out of the question to attempt to represent even the half of the tongues commonly spoken, but they select the five which we may presume are in most common use, English, Burmese, Hindustanee, Hindi and Tamil, and the name of the station is painted in all these.

The Chinese in Burma are worthy of special mention as forming an important community in every great centre of population. In Mandalay they are numerous, occupying almost entirely both sides of one long street, called after them China Street, as well as other localities in the town. They seem to settle down and marry Burmese women and live very happily. They are keener business men than the Burmans, more knowing, more enterprising, more persevering, more industrious. The Burman is as good at carpentry as he is at anything; that is, in fact, one of his strongest points, but John Chinaman ousts him completely at that. Leaving the little petty carpentry to the Burmans, he carries all before him in large building contracts. Though John's rates are higher he does the work better, and what is important to the English mind, he finishes the work in the time stated. Some of the Chinese are shopkeepers. Whilst many Chinamen are thus a boon to the country, and valued as a useful class of workers, others again do much mischief, corrupting the people wherever they go—keeping liquor shops, diligently spreading the opium-smoking habit, and pandering to the natural love of the Burmans for gambling. The offenders against the excise laws—cunning secreters and workers of illicit stills—are usually Chinese.

With the mention of so many different nationalities of foreigners

in the place, it will at once occur to the reader that the carrying on of all kinds of work and business depends very largely upon the foreigners and very little upon the Burmans. That is true. Somehow the Burmans, though they are in Mandalay considerably over 100,000 strong, and multitudes of them are very poor, fail to take up very many of the duties of life and the needs of society, and allow themselves to be ousted in many employments by immigrants from other countries where the conditions of life have taught them to bestir themselves. The Burman is easy-going, casual and satisfied with a little. When a great increase of the population of Burma has rendered the struggle for existence much more urgent than it is now, the Burman will either have to bestir himself or go to the wall.



## CHAPTER V.

### *THE PACIFICATION OF UPPER BURMA.*

IT has already been stated that Upper Burma, at the time of the annexation, and for some time after, was politically and socially in a state of serious disturbance and disorder. It may be well to inquire a little more closely into this matter, that we may the better understand the circumstances of the country as we found it, and the better appreciate what has been done by way of remedy.

A state of disturbance was, under the circumstances, inevitable. An invasion, followed by an annexation, is seldom a very quiet and peaceable process, and this was no exception. But in this case there were features that greatly complicated the matter, and made the task of pacifying and governing much harder. When the expedition under General Prendergast went up the Irrawaddy at the close of 1885 it was an easy victory, and there was no resistance worth mentioning. Mandalay, the capital, yielded without a blow. This easy conquest proved the inefficiency of the Burmans as a Government, and led to the belief that very little trouble would be experienced in governing the country. But this proved to be by no means the case. For four years it has been one constant and strenuous battle with the forces of disorder; and whatever has been done in the way of pacification and improvement of the country has been done in the teeth of difficulties of no ordinary character.

If the question be asked how it was that the country was so easy to conquer yet so difficult to pacify and restore to order, the answer is not far to seek. In the first place, the weaker a

Government is the stronger are the elements of crime and disorder lurking about, and having overthrown the one you still have to reckon with the other. King Theebaw's was a weak Government, and crime and disorder had increased so much that their reduction had become a formidable task.

The territory over which King Theebaw ruled, or professed to rule, was of immense extent, and very sparsely populated, and the vast tracts of jungle with hilly, broken country afforded ample cover for the numerous bands of dacoits. Dacoity is the word used in India for gang robbery, and it is usually accompanied with murder and various forms of cruelty. It had always flourished in Upper Burma, and was unfortunately regarded not as a cruel, brutal and detestable crime, to be put down by the united efforts of the government and the people, but more as an acknowledged and unavoidable institution.

We may find some parallels to this in brigandage in Southern Europe, in the Border warfare so well described by Sir Walter Scott, and in the state of things prevailing formerly in the West of England, as set forth in *Lorna Doone*. The dacoit leaders were a kind of privileged freebooters, who spared those who paid blackmail, and wreaked their vengeance on others, and there was, in the opinion of the people, some air of romance about the life. No Burmese Government had ever been strong enough or resolute enough effectually to stamp out this plague. When the English took the reins of government at the annexation, this naturally gave a fresh impulse to dacoity under the notion of patriotism; and for some time the leaders who had large gangs occasionally tried conclusions with the small columns of police and military sent out to patrol the country.

The Government official report of affairs in Upper Burma gives the following summary of the first year's work of pacification, viz., up to the end of 1886.

"The pacification of the country has been a prolonged work of much difficulty. Dacoity on the largest scale has been rampant; and military operations have been necessary in almost every part of the country in order to suppress it. To the end of the year 1886 about 180 encounters had taken place with these



lawless bands. They seldom offered serious resistance, except when fighting in bush or jungle. The loss they caused to the British troops between November 17th, 1885, and October 31st, 1886, amounted to 11 officers and 80 men, killed or died from wounds. But greater difficulties than the armed opposition were found in the dense jungle, the want of roads, and the unfavourable, in some cases deadly, climate. The result of these difficulties during the period above mentioned was a total loss of 3,053 officers and men, who died from disease or had to be invalided. The average number of troops employed in Upper Burma during 1886 has been 14,000, but at the end of 1886 the number in the country was 25,000."

So deep-rooted is the habit of dacoity in Burma that it easily breaks out afresh whenever disorder spreads, or whenever any daring fellow thinks fit to try his luck as a *boh* or leader. The people are easily deluded with his boast and swagger; and having implicit faith in the special tattooing and charms which are warranted to render them bullet and sword proof, they readily follow his standard. Hundreds of *bohs* have had their day during the last five years, and pursued a successful course of robbery, murder and rebellion for months together, eluding the police and the military. But owing to the tenacity of purpose, and the inexhaustible resources of the British Government, they have to succumb in the end. Many have been killed or taken prisoners in engagements fought; others treacherously murdered by their own followers, to get the reward set on the head of the notorious outlaw; others, after months of a hunted life in the jungles, have come in and surrendered. There has been always ample opportunity given by the British for those who wished to abandon that bad way of life to do so, and more than once a free pardon has been offered to all those who might give themselves up, provided that they had not been guilty of murder. Many, from time to time, have availed themselves of that arrangement.

Several princes—in Burma princes are fairly plentiful, notwithstanding that so many were massacred by order of King Theebaw—have tried their hands at it, with vague ideas of getting the mastery of the country in due time. One, known



DACOITS IN PRISON, WITH INDIAN SEPOY GUARD.

by the title of the Sekkya Prince, established himself in the hill country about Kyaukse, only thirty miles from Mandalay, and as late as 1889 gave an immense amount of trouble, setting the military police at defiance for months, and committing many murders and depredations. He had an armed following of several hundreds, and several fights took place between them and the police. Though the dacoits were each time defeated and scattered, the ground was so difficult for pursuit, that they could never catch the leader. At length he was taken in the Shan States, brought to Kyaukse, tried, convicted and hanged. This is a specimen of the kind of guerilla warfare going on in every district all over the country at that time.

Another matter, which still further complicated the situation and gave strength to the forces of disorder, was the sanction which dacoity had received through the corruption of those high in office in the Burman Government before we took it over. A British civil officer of high rank, the commissioner of a division, writes as follows, as late as the middle of 1889, more than three years after the annexation :—

“The task of reducing my own division to order I find a gigantic one. The Burman nature is simply saturated with lawlessness, and it takes the form of dacoity. Since King Mindohn's death [*i.e.*, from the accession of King Theebaw in 1878] it is a fact that most of the official classes in Upper Burma made large incomes by dacoity. Men high in office in Mandalay actually kept dacoit *bohs*, and shared with them loot, or the subsidies which were paid by the villagers for protection from other dacoits. The dacoit *bohs* were actually the governors, and paid some of the mingeeyes [ministers of state] in Mandalay regular sums, on condition of being let alone! Each *boh* had a large immediate gang or body of men around him, and a militia at any time available from the villages. We have had to break up this system of *boh* government all over Upper Burma, a system which had been running for the last ten years. The villagers themselves have become so accustomed to the government by dacoit chiefs, that they are actually afraid and even unwilling to help in getting rid of them. It will be admitted that difficulties like

these are enormous; sometimes they seem to be insuperable, and one is often inclined to despair. We have not only to deal with the thousands of lawless ones who think we are encroaching upon their rights, but we have to try and educate the people to believe that these dacoits are not their rulers, and are not to be so. The villagers do not yet realise this, and it is this process of education, slow and painful, that impedes us so terribly in the work of subjugation and pacification. But the progress made has been very great."

The following is given as a specimen of the encounters which for the first two or three years were of constant occurrence. This affair was perhaps exceptional in the amount of resistance offered, but in other respects quite usual and ordinary. It is quoted from a newspaper dated May 1888:—

"On the night of the 21st inst. 400 dacoits, principally Shans, with people from Mogaung district, under the leadership of Boh Ti, took up a position outside Mogaung. Lieutenant O'Donnell, Battalion Commandant, and Lieutenant Elliot, Assistant Commissioner, with 75 Goorkha military police, patrolled outside the fort the whole night. At 4 A.M. they attacked the dacoits, who held a strong position in a series of pagodas, which they had fortified during the night. The dacoits tenaciously held the position, and the consequence was that a fierce contest ensued, each pagoda being taken in succession. The last pagoda, when taken, was found to be choked with dead. The Goorkha police behaved splendidly. Our casualties were 8 killed and 15 wounded, while 49 dead dacoits were counted, and over 100 were reported as wounded, most of whom escaped. The struggle at the last pagoda was hand to hand over a four-foot wall, and bayonets and spears were used. It was here that 6 out of the 8 police killed fell."

The mention of these fights deserves a place in any record of those times, for it was through this hard, rough police and military work—this continuous pounding at the mass of crime and lawlessness that would not yield to gentler measures—that the land now enjoys peace and quiet throughout its length and breadth. There was manifestly no other way of quelling the disorders and curing the miseries under which the country groaned.

This was a specimen of the fighting of our Indian military police; now for a specimen of that of our English soldiers, who also were incessantly employed in patrolling the country, and often met with dacoit bands. The instance given here does not by any means stand alone; similar affairs often occurred at that time. It illustrates the courage and dash our men have shown throughout this very laborious and difficult campaign. Often called to go out in very small parties, they usually carried the day against all odds; and even when, as in this instance, they met with such an unusual number of casualties as to debar them from getting the victory, their coolness and presence of mind have staved off defeat and disaster, and enabled them to get through so well that the reverse was, considering the circumstances, as creditable as a victory would have been.

"On January 14th, 1889, information reached Lieutenant Nugent, in charge of a small force of the Hants Regiment, that the advanced guard of a certain rebel prince was stockaded in a village ten miles away. He at once decided to attack. He marched out with Sergeant Bevis and 15 privates, preceded by some of the troops, such as they were, of the Sawbwa of Momeit. On turning the corner of a jungle path, their stockade was observed with the gate shut, and white flags (emblematic of royalty) flying at the gate. The dacoits, on seeing our men, at once began to blow horns and beat tomtoms. Our Burmese auxiliaries at once made off, firing their weapons in the air. Nevertheless Lieutenant Nugent and the 16 Englishmen promptly charged the stockade, 16 against 200! When about thirty yards from the stockade the dacoits delivered such a heavy and well-directed volley that 8 out of the 16 were hit. Private Roberts was killed on the spot, and Lieutenant Nugent himself was wounded. Seeing that himself and half his party were disabled, and further assault was out of the question, Nugent gave the order to get the wounded from under fire and retire. It is at this point that the soldierly qualities of these men specially appear. The few men who were able had meanwhile got under cover of a slight inequality in the ground, and were keeping up a fire on the stockade. While himself assisting Private James,

who was dangerously wounded, Lieutenant Nugent was again struck a little below the left breast, this time mortally.

"Sergeant Bevis now took the command, and rallied his small party round their fallen officer, and seeing that the dacoits, now emboldened by observing the small number opposed to them, were coming out at the gate, he ordered his men to fire a volley. This caused the enemy to retire inside the stockade, and our party was molested no more. Stretchers were improvised with rifles and bamboos for Lieutenant Nugent and Private James, the other wounded managing to walk. The party made a halt at the village which they had passed marching out; and here the gallant Nugent breathed his last. By dint of much pressure and promises of reward Sergeant Bevis obtained assistance from the Sawbwa's troops to carry the body and the bad cases to Momeit."

Sergeant Bevis was much commended for his good management. He was promoted at once, and received the decoration of the Distinguished Service Order. Five days after a small force of Hampshire men and military police surprised and carried the stockade.

Many were the deeds of valour in this long and trying campaign. A considerable number of badges of the Distinguished Service Order were awarded, and of the highest decoration for gallantry in the field that military men can aspire to, the Victoria Cross, no less than three were given.

After what has been said about the Burmese ministers of the Crown, it will be no matter of surprise that the honest attempt of the British Government to utilise the local knowledge and experience of the Hloot Daw or supreme council of the king, as the medium of government, should entirely break down. As might have been expected, those worthies were found to be worse than useless at such a crisis. The kind of government they had been accustomed to administer was just the kind that was not wanted. They were therefore pensioned off, the pension acting in a twofold manner, as a substantial compensation for loss of office, and as a guarantee of their loyalty; they had something to lose.

During the first year or two of the British occupation there

was need for very special vigilance to prevent the carrying out of plots of insurrection, especially in Mandalay. It was of course childish to think they could dislodge the British power, but many of the people were slow to believe this, and foolish enough to listen to boasting proposals of this kind. However, such a good watch was kept, and the officials kept themselves so well informed, that all such attempts were nipped in the bud. Some idea of the magnitude of the work of pacification may be gathered from a paper published by the Chief Commissioner of Burma in 1889, from which it appears that no less than 363 dacoit *bohs* or leaders were either killed, or surrendered, or were taken prisoners between April 1887 and August 1889.

The British Government, whilst very stern in pursuing, arresting and punishing these notorious outlaws, made every concession towards mercy where it was possible. When a gang of dacoits was broken up, and the *boh* killed or taken, the men composing it were usually allowed to settle down in their villages, giving some sort of guarantee for their future good behaviour. As soon as it became safe to show any considerable leniency, the cases of all who had been sentenced to terms of penal servitude for participating in dacoity were carefully gone through by an experienced and able judicial commissioner, for the purpose of remitting the punishment wherever it could safely be done, particularly in cases where men had been led, during a time of anarchy and political excitement, to take part in crimes and acts of violence, from which, under ordinary circumstances, they would have abstained. The result was that 899 prisoners were set at liberty at once, and 450 more were promised their release in the following December if their conduct in jail continued good. Only the worst and most desperate offenders were kept in jail.

It is just possible that some readers, failing to realise the full force of all the circumstances, may be inclined to think that the information given in this chapter leans too much in the direction of admiration of the military deeds described, and is lacking in consideration for the case of the unfortunate men against whom these operations were directed. I feel that it would ill become me to do anything to fan the flame of the military spirit, for

militarism is without doubt one of the great curses of this age, and I have had no such design in view. I have merely described what took place. If the reader feels inclined to admire any of the actions here described, I must give him notice that he does it entirely on his own responsibility.

It may occur to the reader that perhaps after all it was the spirit of patriotism that animated these Burmans. Were they not fighting for their country and their liberty, and doing their feeble best to cast out the invader? Doubtless there was in some cases something of this feeling in their minds, enough to give a colourable pretext to their conduct at the time. But there are considerations that go to show that if we are to make any allowance on this account it will have to be very little.

Dacoity existed and was rampant for years prior to our annexation of the country.

How is the motive of patriotism to be reconciled with the gross cruelty, and robbery, and murder which all the dacoit bands continually practised?

When so many hundreds of *bohs* were fighting, each for his own hand, which were we to recognise? And how many? Their claims to the mastery were mutually antagonistic.

I have already said that I decline to take the responsibility either of defending or of impeaching the action of England in the invasion of Upper Burma. It involves the great and wide question of Empire, which I leave to more competent hands. I content myself with giving the facts from the standpoint of an eyewitness, and enabling or assisting wiser men to settle the greater question. I take up the question at this point—England the *de facto* ruler. Somehow, rightfully or wrongfully, she is there, and has undertaken the government of the country. The country is in a flame with crime and disorder. What is she to do?

There have been times, even in our own country, when certain crimes of violence, such as garotting, and certain forms of murder, have spread so as to cause almost a panic, and have needed special measures both as to detection and punishment. We are far more liable to such things in India. Take, for instance, that strange

phase of crime known as "thuggee," which prevailed to a fearful extent years ago in India, and to which, in respect of each being an epidemic form of crime, dacoity in Burma has sometimes been compared. Thuggee was a thoroughly organised system of robbery and murder, carried out with great secrecy by an association of men banded together for the purpose, and who did it not by open assault but by stealthy approaches, and, strangest of all, with religious motives. The verdict of civilised society was that the extermination of the thugs was not only a justifiable thing to be done, but the solemn duty of the Government, notwithstanding the religious motives, and special officers of Government were deputed for that purpose, and the system was finally stamped out.

So with dacoity. If men will be brutal, will set all law, human and divine, at defiance, will make human life cheap and property unsafe, and keep the whole country in terror and confusion, to the detriment of all peace and progress, if, in short, they will come to no terms, but deliberately elect to assume the character of wild beasts preying on society, then all reasonable men will feel constrained sorrowfully to admit that a civilised Government has no alternative but to treat them as such, and hunt them down; always however remembering that, as it is in the divine, so in the human administration, justice should be tempered with mercy; and wherever there is room to hope for better things, the criminal should have another chance, a provision which our Government, as I have shown, has not neglected.



## CHAPTER VI.

### *BRITISH INFLUENCE IN THE SHAN STATES.*

THE previous chapter dealt with the pacification of Upper Burma proper, that tract of country which England has annexed, and in which we have assumed the full responsibility of government. In this chapter we have to consider our relations with certain states and tribes on our frontiers, which are not British territory, but for whose well-being and good behaviour we hold ourselves to some extent responsible, in proportion as our influence among them is more or less direct.

As soon as our first difficulties in the pacification and administration of Upper Burma were to some extent overcome, our Government had to turn its attention to the doings of the many barbarous and semi-barbarous tribes and races in the regions immediately adjacent to Burma.

To the east of Upper Burma, and situated between that country and the great empire of China, are the Shan States tributary to Burma, with an area about four-fifths that of England, but with a population no larger than that of Worcestershire, not one-fourth, it is said, of what it was fifty years ago. This country is a very fine one, consisting of a great plateau with a diversified climate and great natural resources, of which coal is one, though it has not yet been worked, and with every capacity for development. The Shan States are likely to play no unimportant part in the commercial development of the next few years, for it is by that route that the railway will go from Burma to China at no distant date.

At present these states are in a most backward and uncivilised condition, and as they afford such an interesting illustration of the true frontier policy of England in the East, and the kind of influence our country is so well able to exert, in the discharge of her duty as the great suzerain power amongst many little races and peoples, I make no apology for describing it with some degree of detail. Such work as England is attempting to do, and will in the end undoubtedly succeed in doing there, is so beneficent and meritorious as to be beyond the possibility of objection; and it would excite remark and applause if it were not so common—if England were not doing much the same all over her Eastern dominions.

The relation of the Shan States to the British rule is a feudatory relation. They paid tribute to the King of Burma, and were supposed to be subject to him, but although receiving tribute, Burma conferred no benefits upon them. In fact, the idea that something in the shape of government was due to the Shans, in return for the tribute they paid, probably never entered the head of King Theebaw. These states have not been annexed to British territory, and are not likely to be, unless it should be found quite impossible to get their chiefs to learn to rule properly. At present the policy is entirely in the direction of setting these native rulers on their feet, and strengthening their power as much as possible. When the English commenced to rule at Mandalay that feudatory relation to the defunct Burmese Government passed over to the English.

Politically the Shan States are divided amongst some eighteen chiefs, each ruling a greater or less extent of territory. In the early part of 1888 two British expeditions were sent to the Northern and Southern Shan States respectively, and the first steps were taken toward adjusting our relations with them.

The condition in which the States were found by the British forces was a very sad one. For want of a controlling power over them there was a state of disorder amounting almost to anarchy. Might was right, and in the struggle for mastery the Shans were fast exterminating each other. Each petty chieftain with his followers was on the look-out to extend the sphere of his rule

by aggression, and dacoit raids and incessant civil war were the result.

Throughout the reign of King Theebaw the States had suffered, and the population had so seriously fallen off, by war and perhaps too by emigration, that land had fallen out of cultivation, and prosperous towns had been reduced, in some cases, to one-tenth of their former size. Added to this there had been a season of scarcity, and cattle disease had been very fatal.

The people cordially welcomed the advent of a strong power that could enforce peace amongst them; and what was wanting for the temporal salvation of this distressed country was just that kind of sovereignty and paternal rule which England was able and willing to give them. It was necessary for England to assert and maintain her rights as the suzerain power, and to discharge her duties by taking them under the broad shield of her protection and guidance.

The British representatives accordingly received the personal submission of all the principal sawbwas or chiefs, confirmed them in their positions as tributary rulers, settled their relations with Government and with each other, fixed the amount of tribute to be paid by each chief, and succeeded in placing the administration of the states on a satisfactory footing. Two British officials were appointed as Superintendents of the two divisions of the Shan States, northern and southern. Tribal disputes were henceforth to be referred to these officials for arbitration, and fighting between individual states was strictly forbidden. They were not to enter into relations with any other foreign power; and they were gradually to approximate their primitive methods of government to our standards.

In return for these conditions, to be fulfilled by the Shans, certain very substantial advantages were bestowed upon them by the British. Each chieftain is recognised and protected in the exercise of his chieftainship.

The import duties formerly levied by Burma on goods going from Shanland into Burma are abolished, to the great advantage and encouragement of their trade.

The great want of means of communication through the country

is being met by the construction of roads by the British Government, at its own expense.

A preliminary survey has been made of the different routes for a railway to run through the country, and a more accurate and detailed survey of the one chosen is to be made shortly.

The navigation of the upper parts of the Salween River, which flows through the Shan States, is receiving attention with the view of utilising it for purposes of trade, if it be found practicable.

Experiments are being made under the auspices of the British in the Shan country, in order to introduce the cultivation of new cereals and other products amongst them, and to improve their breed of cattle and sheep.

In short, England is trying to do her duty by this naturally magnificent but very backward country, and it may be confidently stated that if any Government could help them on their feet it is the one they now have. The most recent information from the Chief Superintendent of the Shan States, the responsible British officer appointed to look after them, shows that he finds them in a most benighted and backward condition socially and politically, and there will be need for lengthened intervention and much patience and perseverance on the part of the British Government. It is found that there has been no such thing as law in the country, written or unwritten. Everybody does what is right in his own eyes, if he can. The hold which these chiefs have on the territories they are supposed to rule is of the feeblest description; and it will require time for the people to get out of that state of turbulence, unrest and distraction, and for the rulers to acquire power and experience for civil rule. Like incompetent rulers, they try at present to maintain their authority by inflicting most barbarous punishments for the most trivial offences.

The Sawbwa of Thibaw is reported to be the only chief among them who exercises any real and active control throughout his state, and he endeavours to enforce the rule that the power of awarding capital punishment shall be restricted to the chiefs. In all the other states the people are fleeced by the minor officials, and criminal justice is administered in a cruel and haphazard

fashion. An English traveller recently found the fresh head of a so-called thief posted up in the Mangko bazaar; and in another place through which he travelled a boy of sixteen was summarily killed and barbarously mutilated, on the ground that he had been seen entering a buffalo shed, and was therefore supposed to be attempting cattle-stealing.

As a beginning in the way of much-needed reform, our paternal Government has framed for their guidance a few simple rules for the administration of criminal justice, and supplied them to each chieftain, as a sort of alphabet of government for them to learn. I wonder what they think of our notions of justice. They must appear to them unaccountably and unnecessarily lenient towards the prisoner. How it must puzzle them, for instance, to be told that an accused person must be presumed to be innocent until he is proved to be guilty!

As a lesson in revenue and finance, each chief is now required to frame a simple form of budget for his state, subject to the approval of the Superintendent, fixing the amount to be devoted to the private expenditure of the ruling family, and making reasonable provision for the administration of civil and criminal justice, police, and public works. It puts one in mind of a class of boys coming up with their lessons written out for the teacher to see; but it is evidently needed work, and it will not do to despise the day of small things. It will of course be a new idea to them that anybody else but the sawbwa himself has anything to do with the expenditure of the revenue of the state, which they have always been accustomed to consider as his private property. But Orientals take kindly to this tutelage, and will scarcely think of resenting it, though they might be tempted to neglect it if they could. And it must not be supposed that this case of the Shan States is any rarity, for this kind of inspection, instruction and guidance is only what we are called upon to do in a greater or less degree in all the protected states which are feudatory to our Indian Empire, and in other parts of the world.

The Chief Commissioner of Burma, to whom all the chiefs are amenable, commenting on the above rules, endorses the opinion

expressed by one of the Superintendents, that it will probably be found impossible to effect any real reforms until a trained Dewan (Prime Minister) is appointed for each state to teach the rulers how to rule. As England is very resolute in all she takes in hand in this way, perhaps in course of time some faint sense of the responsibility of ruling may find its way into the minds of these benighted Shan sawbwas. But if it be not so, and if in the end England should find herself compelled, in the interests of humanity, to take a still larger share of the responsibility of ruling in that country, of which however there is at present no sign or mention, the foregoing information clearly shows that it will not be for want of an honest effort to get them to do it themselves.

All this explains incidentally how it is that Empire with its responsibilities grows on our hands. In human affairs, when a man does his work well, you promote him by giving him more work to do. When the sudden emergency arises men naturally saddle the willing horse. It is so throughout the divine economy also. "Whatsoever *thy hand findeth to do*, do it with thy might." "For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away."

Of one thing there is no doubt, the states now enjoy tranquillity and the beginnings of prosperity such as they have not enjoyed for many years. Not long ago, meeting a Shan who had just come to Mandalay several days' journey on foot through the Shan States, I asked him what was the present condition of the country. His reply was, "So quiet, that even an unprotected female could walk through it."

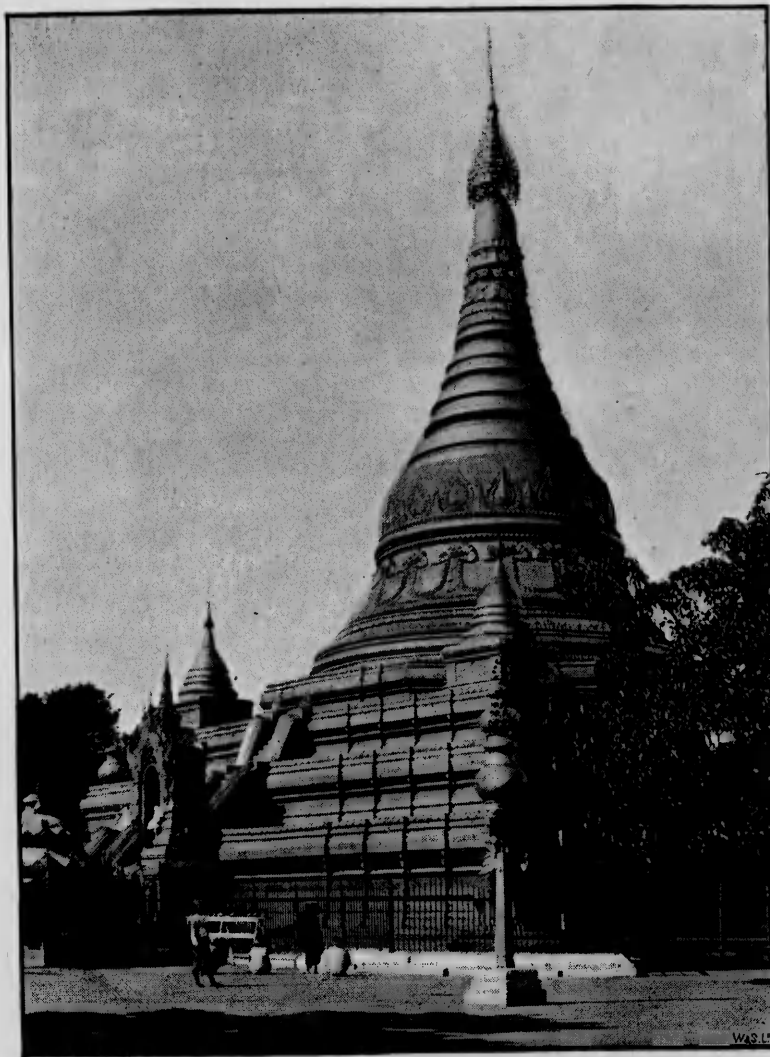
The chieftain mentioned above with approval as an exceptional prince, and more enlightened than his fellows, is the Sawbwa of Thibaw. He once had a curious experience, that appears to have considerably opened his mind and enlarged his ideas. Some years ago, before the annexation of Upper Burma was even thought of, he paid a visit to the great city of Rangoon. Like the Queen of Sheba, who had heard of the wisdom and glory of Solomon, he had received tidings of the great transformation that had taken



place in that city, and wished to see the British power for himself. Possibly, as the Shans are Buddhists, he might be inclined also to pay a visit to the world-renowned Buddhist shrine at Rangoon, the Shwe Dago pagoda. To venture so far away from his remote inland state among the mountains shows him to be a man of some natural force of character, for most sawbwaws would have been afraid to leave their states for so long. Whilst in Rangoon one of his retainers displeased him, and in a burst of anger he killed him on the spot. But, unfortunately for him, this had happened in British territory, where they call such actions, no matter who does them, by the name of murder; and he was accordingly arrested and put in jail to stand his trial for that crime. His plea was of course that he was a king, and that he had the power of life and death; and seeing that such was the case in his own territories, and that he had no idea he was exceeding his prerogative in doing as he did, he was released, and some good advice was given him for future use. It is gratifying to find that this experience has borne fruit, and that years after, when in course of things the Shan States have become tributary to Britain, and an attempt is being made to bring them somewhat into line with more enlightened nations, he is officially named as the most progressive and reliable of the Shan rulers.

Other operations for the pacification of our Burmese frontiers may be mentioned here. Amongst the barbarous and unlettered tribes on the mountains in the north there has been a continuance of the kind of lawlessness prevalent in the days before our rule in Upper Burma. The tribes of wild Kachins there have given considerable trouble from time to time. They are warlike and predatory, and in their mountains and jungles able to offer considerable resistance.

Occasionally, too, in the north, large numbers of disbanded Chinese soldiers have turned dacoits, and crossed the frontier into the Bhamo district to plunder. They have, however, suffered severely whenever they have tried conclusions with the British columns sent out against them. Attention is being given to the delimitation of the Chinese frontier, which will lead the way to a better protection of it on both sides. In the east the Red



THE GOLDEN PAGODA AT MANDALAY, COMPLETELY COVERED WITH GOLD LEAF.

Karens gave trouble, while on the west the wild Chins of the Arakan Yoma mountains continued their former practice of raiding into Burma and carrying off loot and captives.

All this had to be brought to an end, and these lawless marauders given clearly to understand that it would no longer be permitted, but that a power now ruled in Burma that was able to keep them in check, and would protect the interests of its subjects against their acts of rapine and violence. Several expeditions were undertaken for this purpose to the different mountain tribes, and much hard, rough work had to be done; but beyond keeping these tribes in order in relation to Burma, it is uncertain yet what measures England will initiate for their internal government.

In connection with these different expeditions much valuable exploration and surveying work have been done on our frontiers, in what was formerly an unknown country.

On the whole, it will be seen that to restore order and establish good government, in a country like this, and under such circumstances, was a work of gigantic difficulty, requiring much activity and vigilance, much firmness and courage, readiness of resource, and withal a long purse. What has been spent, however, may be regarded as capital well laid out, that has already begun to be productive. Seldom, perhaps, has England undertaken a heavier task so far away from home; never has she accomplished it with more credit. Gradually, but surely, the British talent for organising and ruling has asserted itself, and the great resources at our command, despite the smallness of our numbers on the spot, have materially helped to win the victory. One cannot but admire that splendid courage, and that administrative ability, whereby our countrymen have taken over a country of vast extent, in a condition bordering on anarchy, and in five years, with the aid that India has been able to give in men and means, they have made it safer and more prosperous to live in than at any previous period of its history in modern times.

The more extended notice of the progress made in the material development of Upper Burma is reserved for another chapter.



## CHAPTER VII.

### *FIVE YEARS OF BRITISH RULE.*

**B**RITISH rule would have nothing to justify its presence in such a country as Burma if it did not evidently make for the well-being of the people. In this chapter we have to consider the initiation of those measures that have been adopted with this view, and to ascertain how far they are likely to secure it. Five years is not a period of time from which much can be expected by way of results, but it is long enough for us to form an estimate of the kind of beginning that has been made.

Under Burmese rule no attempt was made at a division of the work of the executive into departments. Each minister of state was considered eligible to take charge of any and every post in the state, whether judicial, revenue, military or what not, just as in England, as Macaulay tells us, until comparatively recent times, any gentleman, if he possessed sufficient interest, might aspire to command a man-of-war, and naval and military commands were more or less interchangeable. But we have got far beyond that now, and our Indian Government is a model of efficiency and business-like working, the officers of some departments being professionally educated for them, and in others, specially trained for the work.

The state of the public revenue is always some test of the industrial and fiscal conditions of a country. Beginning with the first year of the annexation, the income for the five years has steadily and rapidly risen:—

	Rupees.
In 1886-87 the revenue was ... ..	2,200,000
1887-88 " " " ... ..	5,010,000
1888-89 " " " ... ..	7,683,450
1889-90 " " " ... ..	8,638,170
1890-91 " " " ... ..	9,400,000

To the amount for the last year a considerable sum might fairly be added on account of the earnings of the new line of railway to Mandalay. Under the Burman king the revenue never exceeded 10,000,000 rupees, and during King Theebaw's reign it had fallen to 9,000,000, and fully one-third of this amount accrued from monopolies and imposts on trade and industry, that the British Government has very properly abolished; so that, although we took over the country at a very great disadvantage, we have already raised the revenue, by healthy and legitimate means (excepting the excise), to an amount equal to what it ever was before. There can be no doubt that a career of prosperity awaits Upper Burma, and that the steady increase in the revenue indicates that it has already entered upon that career. The testimony of the revenue officers is that it is, as a rule, collected without difficulty, and that the taxation does not fall at all heavily on the people. The chief item is a kind of capitation or household tax, averaging 10 rupees per house per year. This is levied as a lump sum on each village, and the payment is distributed amongst the families of the village, according to their means and circumstances, by a committee of village elders—a method they are accustomed to, and that seems to work well.

The administration of justice is one of the fundamental duties of Government and one of its chief functions. Our Government undertook this duty amid special difficulties and drawbacks; for not only were crime and disorder very general, but there was a great paucity of officials with the necessary experience of the country and knowledge of the language, to fill the subordinate grades of the Civil Service, and to act as magistrates. It must have been no easy task to administer justice at once over an area as large as France. Great progress has been made during the

five years, and the various courts of justice have long been in good working order after the methods of India.

The adaptation of a regular system of criminal law, as laid down in the Indian Penal Code, with British principles as regards evidence and procedure, with all our well-known safeguards of the rights of the subject and the dignity and sanctity of law, must be a great improvement on the old haphazard Burmese system, and must afford far greater protection to the innocent, and a greater probability of detecting and punishing the guilty. In point of impartiality and freedom from corruption, too, there must be a great change for the better. Since the country has begun to thoroughly settle down, and the necessity for a speedy and summary decision in criminal cases is no longer felt, a Judicial Commissioner has been appointed for Upper Burma, a trained civilian of high position and experience, whose duty it is to revise the proceedings of the subordinate courts, and, if necessary, alter the findings. This precaution Government takes to ensure that the cases shall have full and mature consideration, and that in the name of justice, justice shall be done.

An illustration of the improved methods of legal procedure, after Western models, introduced under the British administration, is the compulsory registration of deeds relating to immovable property. This measure operates to prevent fraud and secure and simplify titles. The deed being registered, and a copy of it being kept in Government records, forgery and other methods of cheating are made far more difficult. Under the Burman rule deeds were not used, the theory being that all property belonged to the king. It can readily be imagined what confusion of title resulted from that primitive method, and how necessary it was to make enactments that should minimise the risk of fraud, dispute and litigation.

The survey of the whole country has made good progress. Year by year, despite the disturbed state of the country, and the consequent danger of travelling, survey parties have been diligently employed in that important business. Triangulation has been carried over 84,000 square miles, and the whole country has been mapped on a scale of four miles to the inch.

Experimental farming is, in Upper Burma, a new undertaking which necessarily falls to the lot of Government, in the absence of the requisite knowledge and enterprise on the part of the people. With a view to increasing the products of the country, and bettering the position of the people, an experimental farm has been established in the Shan States. Various products, new to Burma, are receiving a trial; for instance, English fruit trees on some of the hill stations, and at various other places potatoes, American maize, wheat, barley, and English garden vegetables. The successful introduction of some of these new products may mean a great deal for the prosperity of the country. Attention has also been paid to the rearing of cattle, sheep and horses, and veterinary assistants are employed, at the expense of Government, in combating cattle disease, and their work has given satisfaction to the people.

There is no branch of the public service for which there is more need in a new country than that of the Department of Public Works. A country recently come under British rule presents a wide field for the talents and energies of the civil engineer. The principal public works of the Burmans consisted of the construction of reservoirs for that great necessity of life, water, both for drinking purposes and for irrigation, and the formation of channels for conducting the water to the fields. These works were found only in a few favoured places, and though not finished in first-rate engineering style, exhibited no small amount of ingenuity and skill. Beyond this their engineering manifested itself rather in religious edifices than in works of general public utility.

There was therefore great need to supplement what the Burmans had left lacking. The country was without a single good road. Even in Mandalay itself there was not a road worthy of the name. Now some hundreds of miles of good road have been constructed, the streams bridged, and communications opened up on the principal lines of travel. An extensive system of new irrigation works is under construction or in contemplation. In every principal station barracks for the soldiers and the police, and jails have been built, and in every town, market houses, court

houses, public offices and hospitals provided; so that already there is not a town of any considerable size which does not show abundant outward signs of the change which has come over the country.

Railways were of course unknown in Upper Burma before the advent of British rule; and they are likely to prove a powerful stimulus to the development of the country. There was a line of railway already finished in Lower Burma from Rangoon to Toungoo, 166 miles, and the extension of this line to Mandalay, 220 miles farther, was one of the first great public works projected. It was sanctioned in November 1886; the survey was pushed on and completed by the summer of 1887; the work was begun on each section as soon as the estimates were sanctioned; and so rapidly was the work carried on that an engine ran through from Toungoo to Mandalay by May 1st, 1888. The line was finally completed and opened for traffic in March 1889. The cost was a little over twenty millions of rupees.

At the beginning the work practically lay through an enemy's country, but survey parties and working parties were carefully guarded, and no successful attacks were made upon the many thousands of labourers on the work. The construction gave employment and wages to a large number of Burmans, at a time when the labouring classes would have been otherwise in great straits. The finding of honest remunerative work for so many people was, in itself, a great check on dacoity. Since the railway was opened the districts through which it runs have been the quietest in Upper Burma, although previously so greatly disturbed.

From every point of view this first introduction of railways into Upper Burma must be pronounced a great success. From the very first this line paid its working expenses, and in conjunction with the rest of the state railways in Burma, 4 per cent. on the capital invested. If it could do that at the outset it will do much more when other railway extensions are carried out, and roads are made as feeders to the traffic. To all this must be added the great convenience it affords to the public and to Government, and the impulse it gives to commerce, besides its strategic importance from a military point of view.

Encouraged by this result, another line, called the Mu Valley

extension, is already well on towards completion. It starts from Sagaing, on the opposite side of the Irrawaddy to Mandalay, proceeds in a northerly direction, and will ultimately go as far as Mogaung in the far north of the country, some 300 miles from Sagaing. The laying of this line through the territory of the semi-independent little state of Wuntho was the last straw that broke the back of the loyalty of the sawbwa. From the first he had been awkward, and had given trouble, but the prospect of having a railway through his dominions was too much for him, and he broke out into open rebellion. There was nothing for it but to put down the insurrection, annex his petty state, and administer it. Civilisation and the general welfare cannot be expected to come to a standstill at the bidding of an ignorant little chieftain like Wuntho.

Another extension of the Mandalay line, from Meiktila to Myingyan on the Irrawaddy, is about to be taken in hand; and a second and more detailed survey is shortly to be made for that very important extension from Mandalay up to the hills, and across the Shan plateau in a north-easterly direction, to open up the rich Shan country, and eventually, in all probability, to connect Upper Burma with Yunan, the great westerly province of China, with eleven millions of inhabitants.

Railways bring new life to a country like Burma, and arouse men from the sleep of centuries. They pay well; they civilise the people by bringing together, in an amicable way and for their mutual benefit, races and tribes that formerly were enemies; they render it easier to get an honest living than to live by robbery; they not only stimulate trade, they create it; they help to solve the difficulties of demand and supply in the labour question, by making it cheap and easy for the people to get to and fro; and when times of scarcity and famine come round, they enable the Government to cope with them, and prevent or mitigate their horrors.

The post, the telegraph and the telephone, which are now amongst the necessities of civilised life, have all been established in Upper Burma, and are now in thorough working order. In fact, so civilised has Upper Burma become, that a movement is

on foot for a private company to lay down several miles of tramway in the streets of Mandalay, and start a service of trams; and another scheme has been submitted for lighting the principal streets with electricity.

A government in an Oriental country, to be successful, must, before everything else, be strong, and nothing contributes more to this than an efficient police. At the outset, the establishment of order was largely a military work, and the brunt of it rested on our British and Sepoy troops. But gradually as the country settled down, the troops were reduced, and the police took over the work of keeping order. Here was considerable scope for organisation. In most of the countries where English rule has been established, we have managed to organise a police out of the materials the country supplied. But the Burmans do not prove very tractable for this, so that whilst there has been special need for a strong police to keep matters in order, it so happens that we have a people specially wanting in the qualities necessary for this work. The police officers complain that the Burmans in the force "cannot be trusted to oppose a larger force of dacoits, or to do sentry work." The Burman finds great difficulty in submitting to discipline or carrying out any regular routine whatever in a reliable manner. He loves to have his own way, to feel free to come and go just when he likes, and generally to go on in a careless and casual manner.

After the annexation of Pegu in 1853, an attempt was made to raise a military battalion of Burmese. By an unintentional irony it was called "The Pegu Light Infantry." It was found that they were altogether too *light* and lacking in the spirit of discipline ever to make good soldiers, and the Pegu Light Infantry was accordingly disbanded.

For this reason Government has had to look elsewhere for its police, and they have been recruited chiefly from amongst the warlike races of Northern India, with a sprinkling of Burmans, who are necessary for the detection of crime, and for such work as their knowledge of their own people and language the better fits them. During the troublous times of 1886-89 there has been a force of twenty thousand civil and military police, about two-

thirds of whom were natives of India. But as the number of crimes of violence decreases, it becomes possible greatly to reduce this number.

Of all the numerous innovations on Oriental methods of government which we have introduced, that of local self-government, as applied to municipalities, is perhaps the most noteworthy, not for what it does at present, but for what it leads up to. This little seedling of *representative government* we are sedulously planting everywhere throughout our Indian Empire, and nurturing it with patient and sympathetic care; and he would indeed be worthy of the name of prophet who could say whereunto it will grow. Never under any Indian or Burmese rule was there a vestige of representative government, but we think it well to train them up to it.

The schoolboy in India has the History of England put into his hands, and there he learns what Englishmen think of liberty and self-government; and he finds that the ruling power has broadened down in the course of ages from the one to the few, from the few to the many, and from the many to the whole population, who now really govern themselves. Our British policy is to organise municipalities in every considerable town. We, the governing power, call together a native municipal committee, as representative as we can make it by nomination, and then we say in effect, "Now we have called you in to consult with us, the leading English representatives of government, and by your votes to show your opinions on such questions as the cleaning, the lighting, the paving, and the sanitation of the town, its water supply, the regulation of its markets, and a number of other local matters, and we ask you to vote supplies of money for these things, and to levy taxes and rates accordingly."

All these things are matters of course to the Englishman in his own country, and if any of them were conducted without consulting him through his elected representatives, he would soon want to know the reason why. But not so with the Oriental; they are to him innovations of an unheard-of character. Neither he nor any of his forefathers were ever asked to do such a thing as vote before. It is no wonder, therefore, if our worthy native

citizen takes his seat as he is bidden in the municipal council-chamber of his town, bewildered at first with this unwonted experience, voting to the best of his ability as he thinks the worthy president, the English Deputy Commissioner of the district, would desire him to vote. But in course of time he comes to see what it all means, for the Oriental is by no means deficient in perception. He sees that the measures proposed and carried affect him and his kindred and his neighbours, and he begins to see that a voice and a vote mean power, and that these are questions which touch his pocket and circumstances.

By-and-by the people find that the municipal ordinance provides for the expression of their opinions in a more direct and effective way. The rule is, that "as soon as any town desires to elect its members it is permitted to do so." In many towns in India they are now elected. We have in Upper Burma seventeen municipalities, but in no case yet is there any election of members; they are all appointed by nomination. The change from the full-blown doctrine of the divine right of kings, in its completest form, to representative government, is too sudden for them to realise where they are as yet. But it will come. All the teaching we give them, both by precept and example, is in effect this: *that the true ideal of government is government by the people, and that all other forms of government are only temporary expedients leading up to it.*

We cannot wonder if in time they follow the path where it logically leads them to a wider outlook than merely municipal affairs. "If in municipal why not in national affairs?" they will naturally ask. The National Congress in India is the natural sequence of all this. It is the feeling after some arrangement or institution that shall give effect to the will of the people, on many more matters than they are at present consulted upon. It may be silly sometimes, and selfish, and reactionary, and stupidly conservative, and childish, but whatever its faults, its follies, and its weaknesses, it is at all events our own bantling, the child of our own careful nurture and instruction. It is no use our attempting to frown it out of countenance; what we have to do is to take it by the hand, and guide it until it reaches years of discretion.



BURMESE WOMAN ON HER WAY TO THE WELL TO DRAW WATER.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### *INTOXICANTS IN BURMA—THE LIQUOR QUESTION.*

WE have seen how much there is to admire and to be proud of in the capacity and skill of our nation as the great ruling power in India. One cannot have dwelt in Upper Burma during the last few years without observing how sincerely our rulers have sought the welfare of the people, and how ably they have secured it. The liberty of the people, their freedom from oppression, the greater security for life and property all over the country, their general comfort and well-being, the introduction of a far better system of law and justice than ever they knew before, the development of the resources of the country, and the general prosperity that has ensued, are results well worth securing.

But the countenance given to the sale and consumption of intoxicants, and the growth of these vices under our rule, when we ought to be so well able to discourage and check them, are very grave defects; and it is this matter I propose in this and the following chapters to discuss. This is just now a question which is receiving much attention. It is not a case for heated controversy, or for calling ill names, but for calmly and dispassionately looking the facts in the face, and asking ourselves in the sight of God whether we are doing right, or whether there is not a more excellent way.

A special and peculiar interest surrounds this question, owing partly to the fact that the new province was so recently annexed, and our policy is not as yet finally fixed; partly to the delicate



and anomalous position in which we, as a non-abstaining race, find ourselves, in governing a race whose religion definitely enjoins total abstinence from everything intoxicating, and who earnestly desire that prohibition be continued as the law of the land; and partly from the very disastrous effects which have been found to result from the policy we have been pursuing during the many years we have been ruling Lower Burma.

On our annexing Upper Burma in 1886, we found the fifth commandment of the Buddhist religion, "Thou shalt not take anything that intoxicates," was the law of the land, the only law on the subject the Burmans had ever known. On this point I quote no less an authority than a despatch from the Government of India to the Secretary of State, dated October 1886, in which are certain "Instructions to Civil Officers," and it is there stated that—

"Burmans of all classes, monks and laity, very strongly wish that drinking shops and the habit of drinking should be discouraged in Upper Burma. In the time of the late king traffic in liquor was altogether forbidden. No doubt there is some making and drinking of toddy, of rice beer, and even of spirits in Burman villages. But the sense of the better classes is against the practice. No revenue was ever raised by the late king from liquor, lest he should seem to be encouraging evil. And under the circumstances, it seems expedient to meet the wishes of the people by declining for the present to license drinking shops."

It certainly did seem expedient, with the nation on its knees begging us not to inflict drinking shops upon them, to license no shops whatever; and that not only "for the present," but to resolve never to allow any. If ever there was a case in this world for local option, which was overwhelmingly in favour of entire prohibition, surely it was there; and under such circumstances the introduction of licensed liquor shops, on any plea whatever, was entirely unjustifiable and uncalled for. But the document proceeds:—

"Where a real demand exists for liquor to be consumed by Europeans, Indians or Chinese, shops for the sale of spirits and of fermented liquors may be licensed."

So it unfortunately comes to this, that because there are certain foreigners in the country with "a real demand" for liquor, the whole policy of the country is to be changed for their sakes, and an excitable, volatile people such as the Burmans, peculiarly liable to fall away through drink, are to be exposed to temptations in their streets, in the shape of licensed liquor shops, such as they never had before, and such as it is well known multitudes of them will be quite unable to resist. It is true there is a clause in the law making it a punishable offence for the holder of the licence to sell liquor to Burmans. But what avails such a clause? The shops are there with the liquor for sale; that is the one all-important and damaging fact; and as for that clause, it is in theory a glaring anomaly, and in practice simply a farce. Any Burman can get as much liquor as he wishes.

A recent Government report fully admits this, and shows the futility of such a lame attempt to shield the Burmans from the effects of the temptations furnished by the drinking taverns established in their midst.

"The licences for the sale of liquor and opium are intended for the convenience of the non-Burman population of Upper Burma, and the sale of either liquor (except tari) or opium to Burmans is prohibited by law. But there can be no doubt that the prohibition is in practice inoperative."

Now observe how we have progressed with this business during the first few years of our rule. In Upper Burma, where, before we assumed the government, there never had been such a thing as a licensed liquor shop, and where drunkenness, when it did occur, was severely punished, there are now 175 licensed liquor shops, and Burmans are constantly under temptation to indulge. In Upper Burma, where there had always been every discouragement to the manufacture of liquor, there are now central distilleries established, under Government patronage and licence, for the wholesale manufacture of spirits, and one of these turns out, as the proprietor informed a friend of mine, 500 gallons a day.

Bad as Burmese rule was, corrupt, weak and worn out, and badly in want of funds, it never sunk so low as to derive any

revenue by the sale of licences, but now the excise revenue from liquor and opium licences is advancing by leaps and bounds.

For the year 1887-88	it was	210,480	rupees.
"	1888-89	" 433,430	"
"	1889-90	" 541,700	"

It looks as though liquor and opium under the British Government were rapidly tightening their hold of the country, and it is quite time England made up her mind what she is really going to do in the matter, and whether she can reconcile this state of things with her notions of duty to a subject race.

It is urged by the advocates of the present system that there was drinking before, even under Burmese rule. No doubt there was. With the materials all around in abundance in the products of the country, both for fermenting and distilling liquors, it is not to be supposed that alcohol was unknown. It was, however, a very uncommon thing amongst Burmans to drink, and it can afford no possible justification for licensing and thereby increasing the evil.

It is also urged that it is impossible to do away with drinking entirely. "Prohibit it altogether," say they, "and it will still go on secretly." There scarcely could be a poorer plea than this. How many evils and crimes and vices there are in every country that cannot be entirely done away with, and yet no one in his senses would propose to license and regulate them on that ground. Our reply to this is that a Government can only do its best, and if, after we had done our best to discourage the drinking it still existed, despite all we could do, it would not be our fault. But if King Theebaw could do as much as he evidently did, with his worn-out methods of government, to keep his people sober, what might not we accomplish with the splendid machine of government we possess?

The last resort of the apologists for licensing intoxicants usually is that, good or bad, we are committed to the system, and cannot get rid of it without causing greater evils than what we now have. This is one of the arguments used with respect to India, but it fails altogether when applied to Burma, and has

not a leg to stand on. We had every opportunity to have continued the law of prohibition just as we found it, and the people earnestly requested us to do so, and we ought to have done it. Even now it is not too late to retrace our steps in that direction, for the present state of things is felt to be unsatisfactory, and the law cannot be carried out.

Why cannot we end it by prohibiting the manufacture and sale of liquor throughout the country? If it be said that this would bear hardly upon the foreign residents, it may well be replied that the rights and liberties of foreigners ought not to prejudice those of the vast majority, the natives of the country; and if that were the law, and foreigners did not choose to put up with it, they would have their remedy. No one is compelled to live in Burma.

The pity is, that England should so lag behind in the matter of temperance reform. The Empire is inevitably increasing, yet England, by continuing to cling to liquor as she does, fails in this respect to fit herself for properly carrying out her duty amongst the abstaining races that come within the sphere of our influence.

The day is coming, as every one can see, when England's own liquor question must be effectually dealt with, for the mind of the majority of the English people is rapidly ripening for it. But in the meantime, the very painful, anomalous and inconsistent position we occupy in Upper Burma—a Christian nation establishing liquor shops in every centre of population, against the strongly expressed wishes of "all classes of Burmans, monks and laity"—is a humiliating proof of the need there is for this reform to be hastened at home, so that it may be faithfully carried out abroad, and that too before it is too late.



## CHAPTER IX.

### *INTOXICANTS IN BURMA—THE OPIUM QUESTION.*

**I**F the case of Burma in respect of liquor is serious, that of opium is more so. It presents in a vivid manner some of the most frightful evils of the traffic in this drug, and it shows clearly the gross inconsistency of any Christian nation, especially when it is the ruling power, deliberately introducing and maintaining such an evil and profiting largely in the revenue by it, when it is eating the very vitals of the subject nation that has implored us again and again to remove it.

The whole question of the opium policy of our Indian Government in the East is now prominently under the view of the nation. Parliament has already declared in the abstract that our opium policy is indefensible, and the conscience of the British public, never quite easy on the subject, is at present feeling keenly about it. It seems not unlikely that the consideration of Burma, our latest, and in some respects our worst development of the policy, may greatly aid in shaping the views of the public on this question, and may decide us, at the earliest possible moment, to wash our hands of the whole sad business.

It ought, in the first place, to be understood that the opium business is not like liquor in England, a matter of private enterprise. It is one big monopoly of the Indian Government from first to last, and no one else is allowed to manufacture it. Government assumes the entire responsibility for the growth, manufacture, sale and export of opium, and sells licences for the permission to retail it in British India. Government is the

proprietor of the whole concern. The greater part of the Indian opium is exported to China, and there, as everybody knows, we added to our delinquencies by compelling the Chinese, at the point of the sword, to allow us to import opium into China, to the lasting detriment and ruin of untold multitudes of that people. Some of the opium, a constantly increasing quantity, is disposed of in the different provinces of India, this part of the business also being under Government management and licence.

As regards Upper Burma, the law we found on annexing the country was, and had ever been, the law of prohibition. Government knew and fully admitted this. From the despatch already quoted of October 1886, it would appear at first sight that on taking over the country they had fully resolved to continue that policy.

“No shops whatever will be licensed for the sale of opium, inasmuch as all respectable classes of Burmans are against legalising the consumption of opium in the new province. . . . As the traffic in opium was prohibited under the Burmese Government, there will be no hardship in thus proscribing opium dealings.”

But the very next sentence goes on to make an exception in favour of Chinamen, to whom, and to whom only, it shall be lawful to sell opium, and this clause at once lets in the mischief.

I know a small town in Upper Burma where a Chinaman obtained a licence to sell opium to his countrymen under this regulation, on his representing that there were two hundred of them in the town, when, as a matter of fact, there were not more than half a dozen. He meant, of course, to sell to the Burmans. I had this from the township officer, who knew all the circumstances; not, however, the officer who had helped him to get his licence. It is well known that the restriction is merely nominal and ineffectual, and the Government officers freely admit the fact. A recent Government officer of standing reports that—

“The consumption of liquors and opium is theoretically confined to the non-Burman population. But there can be no doubt that a considerable amount of both finds its way into the hands of Burmans.”

Of course it does. The temptations are there in the shape of licensed shops, and the tempters in the shape of cunning Chinamen with an eye to the main chance; and so long as this is the case the Burmans will fall into the snare in ever-increasing numbers, for they are, like the Chinese, peculiarly liable to yield to the opium habit. The following is the testimony of Mr. Gregory, a gentleman who travelled through Burma to see for himself what the facts of the case were; and whatever may be said by the apologists for opium against alleged exaggerations, I think we may, at any rate, receive the testimony of a Christian man concerning what he saw himself. I quote what he says of Upper Burma. It fully proves how ineffectual the restrictive legislation is, and how powerful the temptation:—

“At Pyinmana I saw Burmans buying opium, and at the same place the abbot of the Buddhist monasteries and one of the chief monks both told me that large numbers of the Burmans smoked. One of them bitterly complained that, whereas in the late king's time he had power to stop these things, now he had none. At Yamethin, a prominent Burman official told me that there were numbers of purely Burmese villages in the neighbourhood supplied with opium from the Yamethin centre. I myself saw Burmans purchase opium there. At Kyaukse I saw Burmans served with opium. At all three of the opium centres at Mandalay I saw opium served to Burmans. One of the Chinese managers told me that the prohibition was only nominal, and he expected that it would be shortly removed ‘now that the Opium Act was getting into proper working order.’ At one of the Mandalay shops I saw three Burmans being taught to smoke by one of the Chinese assistants. A fourth was lying insensible. At Katha I saw a number of Burmans smoking opium in their houses in rooms quite open and visible, close by the court-house. At Bhamo, in the far north, I saw Burmans in crowds buying opium at the Government centre.”

Thus this legislative expedient we pretend to have adopted for keeping the Burman from opium completely breaks down, and is a mere dead letter. Nominally we are carrying out prohibition as we undertook to do, but really we are tempting the Burmans

to their ruin by means of the licensed shops. Time was when Chinese opium vendors in Upper Burma, when caught, were disgraced in every possible way, and even flogged and imprisoned. Recently Mr. Justice Grantham, at the Durham assizes, was trying the case of one miner who had caused the death of another, while the two were drunk together in the Colliery Tavern. The prisoner was found guilty. Upon this his lordship directed the landlord of the Colliery Tavern to take his place beside the prisoner in the dock, and the landlord having done so, the judge proceeded to tell him in plain terms that he (the judge) would have felt more satisfied if the jury, instead of finding the prisoner guilty, had found the publican guilty of causing the death of the deceased. He had served the deceased with liquor when he was drunk already, and had undoubtedly thus caused the man's death.

The Burman king's way of looking upon opium vendors was the right way, and the judge's rebuke of the publican was well merited; the misfortune is that so few can see it yet. The Chinese wealthy opium vendors in Burma now ride in first-class railway carriages, and are put forward into the honorary rank of municipal commissioners; whilst in England we go further than this, and admit to the peerage the heads of the great brewing firms!

We have carried the exceptional, “grandmotherly” method of legislation to a very absurd length in Burma, prompted on the one hand by our usual policy of regulating by licensing these vicious indulgences, and yet restrained by a natural horror for the mischief they do to the Burmese race, and by a well-grounded fear, founded on painful experience, that if we do not somehow keep the nation from liquor and opium, these vices will destroy multitudes of them.

Liquor can be lawfully sold in Upper Burma to Europeans, Eurasians, natives of India and Chinese, but not to Burmans.

Opium to Chinese only.

Both liquor and opium may be sold to Burmans in Lower Burma.

Gunja, a product of hemp, very intoxicating, and used largely

by natives of India in their own country, is absolutely forbidden to everybody in Burma.

The absurd and illogical in legislation could hardly go further than the British have gone in these complicated enactments. In view of all this one naturally inquires, If it be right to prohibit gunja, why should it not be proper to forbid opium? If opium ought to be kept from every race in Upper Burma but one, and they immigrants from a foreign country and a very small minority, why not go further and shut it out altogether? If liquor and opium are denied to Upper Burmans, why should they be allowed to the same race in Lower Burma, where they have done so much mischief? If liquor is bad for Burmans in Upper Burma, how can it be good for Europeans, Chinese and natives of India?

We should have entire prohibition of the opium curse in Upper Burma if it were not for the Chinese; that lets in all the mischief. Why is this? Why indeed, unless it is that having forced opium upon them in China at the point of the bayonet, we cannot for very shame withhold it from them in Burma, but must grant them the indulgence, at any cost to the inhabitants, lest we become a byword and a laughing-stock among the nations. There is no consistent standing place between total prohibition on the one hand, and the cynical tone adopted by the advocates of licensing on the other: "It comes to this, that if the Burmans cannot learn to use these indulgences in moderation they must take the consequences."

If we persist in driving the Burmans to "*take the consequences*" God will surely require it at our hands.

The further we go into the question the more does it demonstrate the utter futility of a vacillating, partial, halting policy like this our latest in Burma. There is nothing for it but to make that clean sweep of it which the Burmans have always requested we would, and to repent and do our first works, however late in the day it is for us to begin. A brief review of the history of the opium difficulty in our older province of Lower Burma gives emphasis to this view.

There is no wonder our rulers should in the new province show some signs of compunction, and some feeble attempt to prohibit

opium to the Burmans, with the dreadful experience of Lower Burma before their eyes. But they should have gone further, and made prohibition complete. Lower Burma is in the unenviable position of having the largest consumption of opium, per head of the population, of any of our Indian provinces. The quantity supplied by Government for the year 1890-91 was 54,205 seers for a population of 4,658,000.

It is evident from these startling figures that opium in Lower Burma has a history; and a sad and disgraceful history it is so far as our Government is concerned. I gather the following particulars from a publication issued by the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade.

The provinces of Arakan and Tenasserim were annexed in 1826, and Pegu in 1853, and these three provinces formed what has since been known as Lower Burma or British Burma.

There is satisfactory evidence that before these territories came under the British flag, the opium vice, though not absolutely unknown, was not prevalent. An official report, dated 1870, states that "Opium eating is not a Burmese habit; it is a *new vice*." Another, dated 1856, says, "The use of this deleterious drug, strictly prohibited in Burmese times, has been considerably on the increase of late." The late Rev. C. Bennett of the American Baptist Mission said, "When I first arrived in the country in 1830 opium was rarely used, and almost entirely confined to Chinamen. There were, however, a few Burmans who used it, and they were looked upon by their countrymen as outcasts and worse than thieves."

One of the earliest measures of the Indian Government was the establishment of shops to retail opium, with no restriction as to the number of shops. It was a notorious fact, and it was officially stated at the time by Government servants, shocked at the demoralising effects of the vice, that—

"Organised efforts were made by Bengal agents to introduce the use of the drug, and to create a taste for it among the rising generation. The general plan was to open a shop with a few cakes of opium, and to invite the young men, and distribute it gratuitously. Then when the taste was established, the opium

was sold at a low rate. Finally, as it spread throughout the whole neighbourhood, the price was raised, and large profits ensued."

In the Excise Report for 1879-80, the district officer for Prome called attention to this growing evil in similar terms, and he gives the details of the way in which lads of twelve or fourteen years of age were allured to evil courses by having the opium supplied to them at first in a milder form.

From time to time the Burmans expostulated with their rulers on this matter. The Chief Commissioner reported in 1865:—

"Last year a majority of the respectable Arakanese petitioned me, asserting that their own children and most of the young men of the country had become drunkards, and had acquired within a few years a craving for spirits and opium."

Again, in 1880, a large deputation of the most influential natives of the town waited upon Commissioner Aitchison, and presented a petition, describing in very forcible language the misery entailed on the population by opium, and praying that the traffic might be altogether abolished in Arakan. The petitioners suggested that Government should impose an extra land tax, in order to make up the deficit which would be occasioned by the loss of the opium revenue, a clear proof of their sincerity.

In the report on the Administration of British Burma during 1877-78, attention was called to the deterioration of the national character, and the increase of gambling, theft, dacoity and other crimes, as the result of the growth of the liquor and opium habits. A searching inquiry was instituted, and the result was the accumulation of a mass of evidence which was irresistible. The wonder was how any Christian Government could ever have established such an abominable system, and having carelessly established it, should have been deaf to repeated remonstrances during so long a course of years. A few brief extracts may be given to show the character of the reports. They are the testimonies of some of the highest British officials, men well acquainted with the country, and responsible for what they said.

Colonel D. Brown, formerly Commissioner of Tenasserim Division, dated April 18th, 1870:—

"In this province the words an opium smoker or eater and a vagabond are, and have been for many years, synonymous. The old and respectable portion of our population complain much of our opium shops, and of the evils they bring on them. The sleepy, dreamy state of the opium smoker has a peculiar attraction for our people; they take to it, and after having acquired the habit, they cannot give it up; their friends refuse to support them; they steal, rob or murder, to get their food and their opium; they often take to dacoity, and join a frontier band; or, if they remain in the province, they end their days in jail, or a halter puts an end to their existence."

Colonel E. B. Sladen, Commissioner of Arakan Division, dated September 13th, 1878:—

"During my residence in Arakan, I have been impressed and made to feel and acknowledge, in opposition, I may say, to all previous ideas on the subject, that opium is becoming the *scourge* of the country. The importance of the evil is this, that the addition to opium consumption is alarmingly on the increase."

G. J. S. Hodgkinson, Esq., Officiating Commissioner of Arakan Division, dated March 12th, 1879:—

"There can be no conception on the part of Government of the fearful strides with which the demoralisation of the Arakanese portion of the Kyouk-pyoo district is progressing, mainly owing to the indulgence of the inhabitants in this vice."

The following is an extract from a memorial presented by the leading natives of Akyab to the Chief Commissioner on March 13th, 1878:—

"The consumption of opium is contrary to the religion of the people, and its baneful effects are telling markedly on their character, inducing enervation of both mind and body, unfitting them for the active duties of life, whereby the material progress of the country is retarded. Lands are thrown out of cultivation, those who should be engaged in agricultural pursuits becoming unfitted for work, and taking to idleness and bad livelihood."

The Chief Commissioner sums up this extraordinary body of testimony in an unsparing indictment of opium in Burma, which leaves it no loophole of excuse.

“The papers now presented for consideration present a painful picture of the demoralisation, misery and ruin produced amongst the Burmese by opium smoking. Responsible officers in all divisions and districts of the province, and natives everywhere, bear testimony to it. To facilitate the examination of the evidence on this point, I have thrown some extracts from the reports into an appendix to this memorandum. These show that among the Burmans the habitual use of the drug saps the physical and mental energies, destroys the nerves, and emaciates the body, predisposes to disease, induces indolent and filthy habits of life, destroys self-respect, is one of the most fertile sources of misery, destitution and crime, fills the jails with men of relaxed frames predisposed to dysentery and cholera, prevents the due extension of cultivation and the development of the land revenue, checks the natural growth of the population, and enfeebles the constitution of succeeding generations. That opium smoking is spreading at an alarming rate under our rule does not admit of doubt. On this point the testimony of all classes of officers and of the people is unanimous.”

A high official gentleman, Mr. Hodgkinson, the late Judicial Commissioner of Upper Burma, when Commissioner of the Irawaddy District, wrote :—

“A large revenue is secured to the Government by the present system, but it is secured by sapping the very hearts' blood of the people, the better classes of whom most bitterly reproach us, and, in my opinion, very justly, for our apathy and misgovernment in this matter.”

To sum up, the following facts are proved, beyond all manner of doubt; and criticism of them, though it may attempt to palliate, cannot explain them away :—

1. The Burmans have strongly objected to any licensing of opium from first to last.
2. In spite of their continued protests the British Government has thrust it upon them.
3. The Burman temperament and constitution is found to be peculiarly liable to succumb to this temptation.

4. Seeing and feeling the alarming growth of the evil, the Burmans have bitterly complained, and begged their rulers to remove the evil, but in vain.

5. Officials in different parts of the province have faithfully reported these things, and their reports have been in print for years.

6. The evil has gone on increasing to this day, and now has reached unprecedented proportions. In Lower Burma the excise revenue (liquor and opium) has increased 80 per cent. in the *five years* ending with 1890, whereas the increase of population has only been 22 per cent. for the *ten years*. The excise revenue of all India yields an average of 4 annas per head of the whole population; in Lower Burma it averages 9 annas.

7. And lastly, we are in danger of doing the same thing in the new province of Upper Burma unless we alter our policy.

What is required for the removal of this evil is a complete reform. The feeble attempts at remedy so far have shown themselves to be useless.

The first attempt at improvement was the closing of the greater part of the licensed shops in Lower Burma. A good deal has been made of that by the upholders and defenders of the present system. We are told that there is only one licensed opium house in Akyab, for instance. An eyewitness tells us that in forty-five minutes he visited fifty opium dens in that town of “only one licensed shop,” and he was told that there are in the district not less than one thousand places where opium is sold. That one house pays 158,000 rupees (about £10,533) annually for licence duty.

The system of high licences has been tried, and the price has been put up, until in Rangoon the price of the drug is equal to its weight in silver, but this makes little or no difference.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the present Chief Commissioner of Burma, now proposes to make it penal to sell opium to Burmans in Lower Burma, as it is in Upper Burma, or for Burmans to be in possession of opium; but this is merely trifling with the evil. If it is ineffectual in Upper Burma, what good is it likely to

accomplish in the Lower province, where so many have acquired the habit?

These all stop short of an effectual dealing with the opium question; they will avail nothing so long as the drug is within reach. The real remedy, I submit, is entire prohibition, and many officials of Government, of standing and experience, concur in this view. Let our Indian Government give up entirely, except for medicinal purposes, this iniquitous and disreputable business of manufacturing and supplying opium, and get rid of the guilt of it. "Native opinion," says Commissioner Aitchison, speaking of Burma, "is unanimously in favour of stopping the supply altogether, and no measures we could adopt would be so popular with all the respectable and law-abiding class of the population."

Lord Cross has recently said: "It is not practicable to close all opium shops and to stop opium consumption so long as opium is grown in British India and in the native states." Quite so. No doubt we shall have to take up the accursed thing by the roots to do it effectually.

We are told that the consequences of this course would be very dreadful, but we have been told this in the case of every reform ever yet proposed, and the statement has ceased to frighten us. If we had the cordial support of the whole of the "respectable and law-abiding class of the population," no great harm could come of it. At any rate, the consequences could not then be worse than they are now.



## CHAPTER X.

### ✓ THE FRONTIER MOUNTAIN RACES OF BURMA.

IN Burma there are in all some forty different races and tribes. These may be grouped into two classes. First, there are the Buddhist races, consisting of the more civilised peoples, the Burmans, Talaings and Shans, the inhabitants of the best parts of the country, the rich and fertile plains and valleys of the great rivers, and the great plateau country to the east bordering on China. These races form the bulk of the population, have each a language and literature of their own, and far more of the arts and conveniences of life than their more barbarous neighbours. And secondly, we have the many spirit or demon-worshipping races, who have never yet become Buddhist—the wild, unlettered, uncivilised tribes scattered all along the mountains on Burma's frontiers, north, east and west. They have never got beyond that primitive form of religion which would appear to have been the earlier worship of all the races of that region; and, far removed from the pathways of commerce, their barbarous condition remains much as it was centuries ago.

These hill-races are very various. Bordering on Lower Burma are the Karens, now well known in the history of missions as a remarkable instance of the rapidly regenerating and uplifting power of the Gospel. Theirs is as cheering and striking a narrative as missionary annals afford. What Fiji has been to the Wesleyan Missionary Society the Karen mission in Burma has been to the American Baptist Mission.

There are some fifteen or twenty tribes of them in all, more or



less closely connected, all supposed to be of the Aryan stock. There are different languages among them; their unlettered condition naturally resulting in the multiplication of tongues and dialects, and the isolation of the many tribes contributing to the same result.

The American Baptist Mission has done splendid work amongst the Karens. They found them, like all the other hill-tribes, without a trace of a written language. Into two of the Karen languages, the Pwo Karen and the Sgau Karen, the entire Bible has been translated, and quite a considerable literature has been produced. Degraded and oppressed greatly by the Burmans in the days of Burman rule, the Burmans quite needlessly regarding them and treating them as nothing better than animals, they were peculiarly amenable, as all races under similar circumstances are, to the kindly, beneficent message of the Gospel. Like the rest of the hill-tribes, they were utterly ignorant and addicted to drunkenness. But it has ever been found that the hindrances to the Gospel arising from a low state of civilisation are not formidable in comparison with those which spring from the possession of a powerful, well-defined, ancient system of religion such as Buddhism, which claims to have a philosophy which accounts for everything, and whose rites and observances meet all the wants of which its followers are conscious. It is part of the principle of compensation we find running through life, that "these things"—the mysteries of the Kingdom—are ever hid from "the wise and prudent, and revealed to babes." It is part of the mercy and wisdom of the Divine appointments, and it tends to give the uncivilised nations their fair chance.

The following account of this interesting people, whose manners, language and worship are quite distinct from those of the Burmans, is from the pen of Mrs. Emily C. Judson, the wife of Dr. Judson, the first missionary of the American Baptist Mission.

"They are a rude, wandering race, drawing their principal support from the streams that flow through their valleys, and from the natural products of their native mountains. They migrate in small parties, and, when they have found a favourable spot, fire



BURMESE CHILDREN.

the underbrush, and erect a cluster of three or four huts on the ashes. In the intervals of procuring food, the men have frequent occasion to hew out a canoe or weave a basket; and the women manufacture a kind of cotton cloth, which furnishes materials for the clothing of the family. Here they remain until they have exhausted the resources of the surrounding forest, when they seek out another spot, and repeat the same process.

"The Karens are a meek, peaceful race, simple and credulous, with many of the softer virtues, and few flagrant vices. Though greatly addicted to drunkenness, and extremely filthy and indolent in their habits, their morals in other respects are superior to many more civilised races. Their traditions, like those of several tribes of American Indians, are a curious medley of truth and absurdity; but they have some tolerably definite ideas of a Great Being who governs the universe, and many of their traditional precepts bear a striking resemblance to those of the Gospel.\* They have various petty superstitions, but, with the exception of a small division, they have never adopted Buddhism, the oppressive treatment which they have received at the hands of their Burmese rulers probably contributing to increase their aversion to idolatry.

"Soon after the arrival of the first Burmese missionary in Rangoon, his attention was attracted by small parties of strange, wild-looking men, clad in unshapely garments, who from time to time straggled past his residence. He was told they were Karens; that they were more numerous than any similar tribe in the vicinity, and as untamable as the wild cow of the mountains. He was further told that they shrank from association

\* Mr. Smeaton says in his book, *The Loyal Karens of Burma*, that Judson had lived seven years in Rangoon, preaching the eternal God, before a single Burman would admit His existence, while the poor unnoticed Karens were continually passing his door singing by the way:—

"God is eternal, His life is long—  
 God is immortal, His life is long:  
 One cycle He dies not,  
 Two cycles He dies not,  
 Perfect in great attributes,  
 Age on age He dies not."

with other men, seldom entering a town except on compulsion; and that therefore any attempt to bring them within the sphere of his influence would prove unsuccessful. His earnest inquiries, however, awakened an interest in the minds of the Burmese converts; and one of them finding, during the war, a poor Karen bond-servant in Rangoon, paid his debt, and thus became, according to the custom of the country, his temporary master. When peace was restored, he was brought to the missionaries on the Tenasserim coast, and instructed in the principles of the Christian religion. He eventually became the subject of regenerating grace, and proved a faithful and efficient evangelist. Through this man, Ko-Thah-Byu by name, access was gained to others of his countrymen, and they listened with ready interest. They were naturally docile; they had no long-cherished prejudices and time-honoured customs to fetter them; and their traditions taught them to look for the arrival of white-faced foreigners from the west, who would make them acquainted with the true God. The missionaries in their first communications with the Karens were obliged to employ a Burmese interpreter; and notwithstanding the disadvantages under which they laboured, the truth spread with great rapidity. Soon, however, Messrs. Wade and Mason devoted themselves to the acquisition of the language, and the former conferred an inestimable blessing on the race, by reducing it to writing. This gave a fresh impetus to the spread of Christianity. The wild men and women in their mountain homes found a new employment, and they entered upon it with enthusiastic avidity. They had never before supposed their language capable of being represented by signs, like other languages; and they felt themselves, from being a tribe of crushed, down-trodden slaves, suddenly elevated into a nation, with every facility for possessing a national literature. This had a tendency to check their roving propensities; and under the protection of the British Government they began to cultivate a few simple arts, though the most civilised among them still refuse to congregate in towns, and it is unusual to find a village that numbers more than five or six houses. Their first reading books consisted of detached portions of the Gospel, and the Holy Spirit gave to the truth thus com-

municated regenerating power. Churches sprang up, dotting the wilderness like so many lighted tapers; and far back among the rocky fastnesses of the mountains, where foreign foot has never trod, the light is already kindled, and will continue to increase in brilliancy, till one of the darkest corners shall be completely illuminated."

Since these words were written many years have passed away, and the process of the making and upraising of the Karens has steadily proceeded. In all the principal centres where they are found dwelling the Mission has flourishing churches and schools; and they have been found at all times of unrest and insurrection, when violent crime has been rife, amongst the most loyal subjects of the British power in Burma; and of late years, especially since the annexation of Upper Burma has been accompanied and succeeded by a period of disorder, the British Government has learnt how surely it can confide in the loyalty of the Christian Karens, and what good service they can render in time of need.

The following particulars, taken from the *Encyclopædia of Missions* recently published, give interesting information concerning the Karen Mission in one of its chief centres.

"The Bassein Sgau Karen Mission is the crowning glory and most perfect flower of the Karen Missions of Burma. Begun in 1837 by the preaching of Mr. Abbott, who spent but five or six days there, the good work went on, entirely through the labour of native converts, and the circulation of books and tracts in Karen and Burmese, till in 1839 more than 2,000 were converted, though only one had been baptized. The fires of persecution raged fiercely; the converts were beaten, chained, fined, imprisoned, sold as slaves, tortured, and put to death; but not one apostatised. Mr. Abbott and the other missionaries were forbidden to enter Bassein under pain of death, and in 1840 he removed to Sandoway, Arakan, which was British territory, separated from Bassein by the Yoma range of mountains; and from there he and his associates managed the Karen Mission for thirteen years. In 1852-53 the missionaries and the Sandoway Mission were transferred to Bassein. About 20 churches and 2,000 members went

from Arakan, and in all there were 58 churches, about 6,100 members, and nearly 5,000 converts not yet baptized. More than 5,000 had passed away from Burmese cruelties, cholera and other pestilences, famine and exposure on the mountains. The whole number of converts up to that time had been about 16,000. Their course since then has been one of steady progress. In 1854 the churches became self-supporting, and missionary efforts for the heathen around them by the native evangelists were commenced; village schools were established, and a town High School commenced under Mr. Beecher's efforts. The spiritual condition was improved; in 1866 all the schools were supported by the churches. Mr. Abbott died in 1854, and Mr. Beecher in 1866. In 1868 Mr. Carpenter took charge, and, while constantly striving for their spiritual growth, he pushed forward educational measures and a thorough system of schools, culminating in the Ko-Thah-Byu Memorial Hall, till in twelve years this people, steeped to the lips in poverty, expended in the building, supporting and endowing of schools a sum equal to £27,000, besides building their chapels, supporting their pastors, their village schools, and their native missionaries; and in 1875 and 1877 sent 1,000 rupees to the sufferers from famine in Toungoo, and to the perishing Telugus. Since 1880, under Mr. Nichols, they have continued to advance. They have endowed their High School, 'the best in all Burma,' with about £10,000; they have 425 students of both sexes, a fine printing office, and an extensive sawmill and machine shop. Both board and tuition are free to those who can pass the examination. They have enlarged their great Memorial Hall, and built and endowed a hospital. The discipline of the churches is strict; their pastors are well and thoroughly trained; their benevolence is maintained on a system which reaches every member; and in their dress, furniture, domestic life and social condition, they compare favourably with the country churches in Christian lands. There are now in the Bassein Mission 89 churches, and nearly 10,000 members, with an adherent population in their 85 Christian villages of about 50,000 souls."

"There are in all Burma about 480 Karen churches, with about 28,200 members, and an adherent population of 200,000."

Well may we exclaim in view of these facts and statistics, "What hath God wrought!" Seldom, indeed, has such a record as this been possible, that in the short space of fifty years so lowly a people should not only embrace the Gospel, but should rise to the happy conditions of civilised life, and of educational and social progress, such as they enjoy. Most gladly do I add my independent testimony to the thorough success of this mission work amongst the Karens, as instances of it have come within my own observation.

I have known intimately in Upper Burma, for years, Karens doing well in different walks of life—in the medical profession, as teachers, as clerks in Government offices, and as surveyors—who are as devout, upright and consistent members of the Christian Church as are to be found anywhere. I have sat and listened in Upper Burma with wonder and admiration to a concert consisting of classical English music, anthems, glees, choruses and solos, rendered by Karen young men and maidens from the High School at Bassein above mentioned, that would have afforded the greatest delight to any English audience, and would have been the rage of the season, if the same had been given with such perfect musical accuracy, sweetness and harmony in London or Manchester. I have been brought into close daily contact for two or three years, in the work of our own Mission, with two Karen young men, members of the Baptist Church in Lower Burma, who came to help us at the outset of our work, and I am able to testify that in regard to educational attainments, Christian character and consistency, truthfulness, purity and integrity of life, I found them all I could wish. If I had never met with any other evidence of the kind, this alone would have been quite sufficient to prove the mighty power of Divine grace to uplift the lowest and the most degraded, if only the circumstances afford a fair chance and the Gospel be fairly presented.

If few fields of missionary labour have yielded such rapid and satisfactory results, it is because in few instances indeed have the social conditions and even the very traditions of a people afforded such a conjuncture of favourable circumstances as was the case with the Karens. In the case of the Mission of the same Society

to the Burmans and other Buddhist races of Burma, there has been no such striking and phenomenal success. There are to-day twenty Karen converts to one Burman, and the work throughout has been in like proportion twenty times as hard in regard to obtaining success amongst the latter as amongst the former.

The question of mission work in relation to successful results, and the tractability of different races in respect to the Gospel, is a very wide and complex question, that has never yet received the patient and intelligent study it deserves. People find it difficult to understand why, in the same Mission, Burmese work should yield such different results from Karen work, and why converts should be numbered by units in Benares and by thousands in Tinnevely; though they can see reasons, when it is brought home to them, why Cornwall should be a much better field for evangelical preaching than County Cork. And the conclusion is often too hastily reached in favour of some pet theory or method as against others. But a wider experience goes to show that though the right methods and the right men are essential to success, success on this large scale is far more than a question of methods and men. It is largely a question of *the circumstances in which the people are found*. In the prosecution of missionary labours in different lands, and even amongst different races in the same country, the utmost diversity obtains in their conditions.

We meet, for instance, with nations enjoying very ancient civilisations, like the Hindus and the Chinese; some, like the Mahomedans, under the power of a religion which they hold with the utmost tenacity of enthusiasm; others again, like the Buddhists, in proud possession of a philosophy and a literature that fully satisfies them. It is in such cases that the Gospel is confronted with its greatest difficulties. In conjunction with these conditions, others of a social character are sometimes found, that greatly increase the difficulties of the situation, as, for instance, where large communities are hedged round with the restraints of caste, which, while they secure them in the exclusive enjoyment of rank, influence and privilege, greatly cripple them in respect of liberty of conscience and conduct. To win people

to the Gospel from such conditions has always been a difficult task, for it usually requires them to give up all that human beings ordinarily value most.

But in the case of races like the Karens of Burma, the Pariahs and other low castes of India, and the negro slaves of the West Indies, Christianity finds human beings suffering from special disabilities, a lowly people, shut out, by the selfishness of those above them, from all the ordinary chances of bettering their lot, ill-used, oppressed, enslaved, kept in unlettered ignorance, deprived of all that makes life worth living. When the Gospel messenger speaks to them hopefully of a better state of things, and holds out a helping hand, it is evident, even to their dark minds, that this is their one chance of improvement, both in temporal and eternal things. They have everything to gain and almost nothing to lose by embracing the Gospel, and the consequence is that the success of the Gospel amongst such races is usually rapid.

Another class of races there is, consisting of tribes wild and barbarous, beyond the confines of civilisation, and from time immemorial left to themselves, whose state of primitive savagery precludes the possibility of any elaborate form of religion, quite unlettered, and without a written language. Such are many of the races of the interior of Africa, many of the hill-tribes of Asia, and the inhabitants of the groups of islands in Polynesia. Here, again, are found the conditions generally favourable for a rapid ingathering, notwithstanding their extreme barbarism and coarse brutality at first, amounting sometimes to cannibalism. For even the savage is conscious before long that he has something to gain by adopting the ways of civilisation. Where mission work has been conducted with perseverance in such countries it has always been successful.

When we have fully recognised the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, to whose gracious influences we are indebted for *all* Gospel success, and when we have said all we have to say about different methods and men, the student of missions will still feel that he has not fully accounted for the marked diversity in the successes; he must also take account of the social and economic conditions of the different races, when the Gospel addresses them, and the

hold their own religions generally have upon their minds. For the Gospel is like every other force in the universe, whether moral or physical, in this, that it always proceeds with most energy along the track of the least resistance; and he will find, if he carefully studies the matter, that the difficulties arising from social disabilities, and from a low state of civilisation, are not the greatest possible hindrances to the Gospel.

In the approaching revival of missionary activity and enthusiasm these questions are sure to receive more careful attention; and when these problems come to be considered, Burma with its different races will contribute not a few interesting facts and experiences.

The success of the Gospel amongst the Karens causes one to look wistfully at some others of the frontier mountain races of Burma. The religious views of all these primitive tribes are of much the same type, and their religious observances, what few they have, are similar. Their religion consists in the worship of *nats* or demons. They believe all nature is filled with *nats*; every stone, and tree, and pool, and breath of air has its spirit inhabiting it; and these *nats* are malevolent in their nature. Their religious observances consist not so much in worshipping them, as in propitiating them by means of offerings. They practise no regular system of worship, but consult the *nats* occasionally, whenever things do not go well with them, or whenever there seems special reason to fly to the supernatural for guidance. Thus they have not much to cling to in the way of a religion, and their life and surroundings are so barbarous as to appear, even to themselves, obviously capable of improvement.

In the north of Burma, on the mountains in the neighbourhood of Bhamo, are found the Kachins, a warlike hill people who have, since the annexation of Upper Burma, given the British some trouble by their raiding propensities. Amongst them the bones of sacrificed animals and other articles are placed outside the villages, to prevent the *nats* from entering in search of victims. It is believed that by this means their attention is called off. Some of the Kachins have taken to coming down from the hills and settling in Bhamo for work as labourers; and a success-

ful work is being carried on by the American Baptist Mission there.

Since the annexation a good deal has been done in the way of exploring the country, and bringing to light interesting facts with regard to these barbarous tribes on our frontiers. Lieutenant R. M. Rainey, Commandant of the Chin Frontier Levy, has published some interesting notes of his observations amongst the Chin tribes bordering on the Yaw country in the Pakokku district. The following facts are largely culled from his notes, many of them having been corroborated by what the writer and a missionary companion witnessed, in a recent visit to the tribe of the Chinbók Chins, living nearest to the district described.

The Chins of that region consist of various tribes all more or less distinct in language, and to some extent in customs, the Weloung Chins, the Boungshès, the Chinbòks, the Yindus, and the Chinbóns. No less than eight different dialects are spoken by these tribes, the Chinbók language itself subdividing into three.

There is no attempt at any system of laws or government amongst them, beyond the fact that they have something of a village system, and there are certain customs which all observe. Quarrels are wiped out with blood. Their religion, in common with that of all the other mountain tribes of the frontiers, consists in propitiating and consulting the *nats*. For this an animal must be slaughtered—a buffalo, a bullock, a goat, a pig, a dog, or a fowl. The slaughtered animal is always afterwards eaten. In consulting the *nats* they observe the direction in which the blood of the sacrificed animal flows; this and similar omens are observed and acted upon. When raiding, or on a journey, or passing through a notoriously unhealthy jungle, sacrifices are frequently made, the animals being taken with them on purpose. Dogs are preferred for this object, as they follow, and require no carrying or leading. If the omens prove unfavourable they fear to carry out their purpose. Raids are frequently abandoned in this way at the last moment, and after they have travelled long distances.

If, when the omens prove unfavourable, the parties are

nevertheless desirous of accomplishing their purpose, as for instance in the case of an intended marriage, the *nats* are periodically consulted until they are favourable. This must always happen in time if they are only consulted frequently enough.

The Chins are very much given to drunkenness, and are inclined to make of any and every incident a special occasion for getting drunk. A visitor, a birth, a marriage, a death, a case of sickness, are all possible and likely occasions for a carousal. In this worship of Bacchus they differ essentially from their Buddhist neighbours; but they may fairly claim to resemble in that respect many individuals of a distant race, and a race laying claim to a far higher civilisation. They have a novel mode of drinking the rice beer they manufacture for these occasions. The liquor is stored in jars standing two feet in height, and half full of fermenting grain. A hollow bamboo, the thickness of one's little finger, is thrust into the jar and pressed well down into the grain. The company sit round and take sucks in turn.

Of medicine and surgery they know nothing. When they fall sick they make no attempt at medicine, but merely consult the *nats* to ascertain the result, and propitiate them to avert the calamity.

Scarcely any clothing is worn by the men, and that of the women, though sufficient for mere decency, is scanty, the legs being entirely bare. They are all fond of ornaments. Necklaces of beads of all kinds are much worn, cocks' feathers appear in the topknots of the men, and a kind of brass skewer is worn in the hair. They are also fond of wearing deer's teeth and cowries. Telegraph wire, a new importation into their territory, forms a great temptation to them, inasmuch as a few inches of that metal, bent into a circle, forms a most becoming earring.

Their weapons consist of bows and arrows, which they use with great dexterity. They often carry a short spear, and every man has a kind of weapon, which is dagger, knife and hatchet all in one, which sadly too often does murderous execution in their quarrels, and which, when not in use, is worn on the person in a bone scabbard consisting of the shoulder-blade of the buffalo.

Their cultivation, though of a very rude description, is a laborious business. They have first to fell the jungle on the steep slopes of the hills, and after some months, during which it has had time to dry, they burn what has been felled. The grain is then sown without further preparation. They can only cultivate in the same place in this primitive fashion for two years together. In the third year the grass has grown so strong that cultivation is impossible. They then usually leave the land for five years, during which the jungle again grows up, when it is again cleared and cultivated as before. Their crops consist of rice and other



TATTOOING OF THE FACES OF CHIN WOMEN.

grains, a considerable variety of yams and roots, including ginger, beans and vegetables, also cotton.

The propensity of the Chins for raiding upon their weaker neighbours, and especially upon the Burman villages, is that which has compelled the British as the governing power to take account of them. Several military expeditions have had to be organised in order to punish this raiding, and to impress upon them the fact that it cannot be allowed. Many are the tales of the sudden descents of the Chins upon the peaceful villagers in the plains, robbing them of money, cattle and other property, and taking away prisoners, who are removed to the Chin villages, and held to ransom. If not quickly redeemed by their people they are often sold from village to village, which renders it difficult to

trace and recover them. Many of these unfortunate captives have been rescued through our military expeditions.

Perhaps the most extraordinary custom they have is that of tattooing the faces of their women. The process is commenced when they are young, and is gradually completed. Although the result is hideous to our eyes, it is said that the beauty of a woman is judged by the style in which the tattooing has been done. Thus fashion rules the world despite appearances and common sense. The Yindu women are tattooed in lines across the face. The Chinbóns tattoo jet black, and are the most repulsive in appearance, though often fair-skinned. The Chinbók method is to have several lines down the forehead, the nose and the chin; and the cheeks are covered with rows of little circles.



## CHAPTER XI.

### BUDDHISM IN BURMA.

THE greater part of the inhabitants of Burma are Buddhists. The Burman race are so universally, except in the cases where Christianity has gained a few. It is in Burma that Buddhism is found with the least admixture of any other religion, and where it is followed with a more thoroughgoing devotion perhaps than anywhere else. Even the Burman, however, has never discarded in spirit, or even in form, the indigenous *nat* worship of his far-off ancestors. It may have little of outward appearance, but it remains side by side with Buddhism to the present day. In their numerous popular stories the *nats* play a prominent part, the wicked ones performing all manner of mischievous pranks, the good ones appearing at the opportune moment to succour the hero of the story, usually some "*paya-loung*," or incipient Buddha, for the moment in peril through the trials that have befallen him.

This hankering after the *nats* is a significant fact. There is no God in Buddhism, and yet a man must have a deity or deities of some kind. The elaborate philosophy of Buddhism may occupy the intellect, and dominate the religious life, but it cannot satisfy this natural craving in man for God. Hence the worship and the fear of the *nats*, and the many superstitious ceremonies to propitiate them. And hence, too, if we mistake not, the strong tendency to plunge deeply into the occult, and to claim intimacy with the world of spirits, which characterises those Europeans and Americans who have discarded Christianity, and have devised



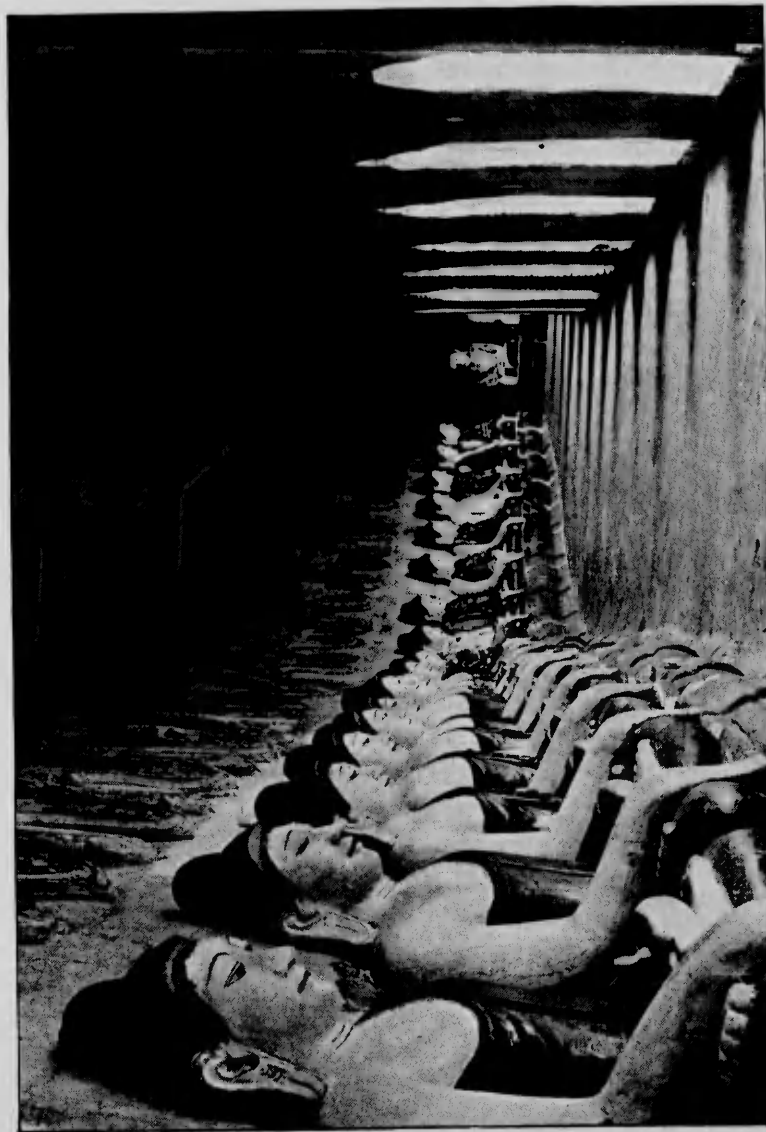
for themselves a system fashioned on the basis of Buddhism, for their light and guidance.

Buddhism has been well described as "A proud attempt to create a faith without a God, and to conceive a deliverance in which man delivers himself." Gautama, the future Buddha, and the founder of the Buddhist religion, was born at Kapilavastu, a town about one hundred miles from Benares, about 500 B.C. His father was the ruler of the Sakya tribe. Gautama early showed a disposition for a retired, studious, ascetic, contemplative life. His father wished to see him fit himself for the career of a prince, and heaped upon him every luxury, but in vain. At length we find the young prince, after many struggles between family affection and his view of duty, secretly by night leaving his home of luxury, his wife and child, exchanging his dress for the garments of a mendicant, and commencing his long quest after truth. Six years he spent in fastings and acts of penance. Then perceiving that mere ritual could bring him to no new conceptions of truth, he changed his method, and set himself to devise that system of philosophy which to this day is associated with his name.

The ethics of Buddhism are grand, and for its noble conceptions of man's duty it well deserves the title of the finest system of heathenism ever devised by man. But it fails altogether as a moral power. The account it gives of man's nature, and the problem of life generally, though very elaborate, is erroneous and misleading. It knows nothing of a Divine Creator and Father, a Divine Saviour, or a Divine Regenerator. It proclaims no God, offers no Gospel of glad tidings, enjoins no prayer (in our sense of the word, as petition), sets forth no sacrifice for sin, holds out no hope of Divine help, no saving grace, no pardon, no renewal. Man must work out everything by his own endeavours.

For forty-five years Buddha lived to preach his doctrines, winning many converts, and he died at over eighty years of age greatly revered.

That Buddhism is an uninspired system of teaching is most clearly indicated by its attempts at natural science. We need



"IMAGES OF BUDDHA ARE EXTENSIVELY USED."

nothing more than a glance at these absurdities to dispose at once of Buddha's claim to omniscience. His geography followed that of the Hindus, and was no improvement upon it. Its only virtue is that it is very liberal with numbers. It has its countless worlds, in the centre of which is the mountain called Maha Meru, 1,344,000 miles in length, the same in breadth, the same in depth beneath the sea, and rising to the same height out of it. Its teaching upon such matters as eclipses, earthquakes and the like, consists of the wildest of guesses.

It may be well to give the reader a brief outline of the religious teachings of Buddhism. Buddhism denies the creation of the world. Matter is eternal, and all the changes attending it are caused and regulated by certain laws co-eternal with it. Matter and its laws are not under the control of any being. Hence creation and a creator are out of the question.

With such a formidable list of negations to begin with, it becomes a matter of no small interest to inquire out of what materials this vast system could possibly have been constructed. First, then, we have the Buddhist ten commandments. Five of these are binding upon all:—

1. Not to take life.
2. Not to steal.
3. Not to commit adultery.
4. Not to lie.
5. Not to take that which intoxicates.

The other five are applicable only to the monastic order:—

6. Not to eat after midday.
7. Not to attend theatrical amusements, or dance, sing, or play on a musical instrument.
8. Not to use garlands, scents, or cosmetics.
9. Not to stand, sit, or sleep on a platform or elevated place.
10. Not to receive gold or silver.

Besides these precepts there are many minor regulations, some of them entering very minutely into the life of the laity, and others the monks. There are rules for the conduct of parents and children, pupils and teachers, husband and wife, friends and companions, masters and servants, laymen and the religious

order; in fact, considering the light Gautama possessed, the moral teaching of Buddhism is of a very high order.

But what about the means of attaining to moral excellence? Here Buddhism, it must be confessed, is found wanting. To conceive of a high state of moral excellence is manifestly better within the reach of man's unaided mind, than to find out a way for the bulk of mankind in their frailty and sinfulness to reach it.

In order to place before the reader any intelligible view of the Buddhist way of salvation, it is essential that we consider first its teaching concerning the nature and circumstances of man.

Buddhism is thoroughly pessimistic in its outlook. It teaches that life is a misery, existence an evil. This doctrine is taught in the sacred books with a wealth and ingenuity of illustration worthy of a more gay and festive theme. The sentient being is "like a worm in the midst of a nest of ants; like a lizard in the hollow of a bamboo that is burning at both ends; like a living carcass, bereft of hands and feet, and thrown upon the sand." All beings are "entangled in a web of passions; tossed upon the raging billows of a sea of ever-renewing existences; whirling in a vortex of endless miseries; tormented incessantly by the stings of concupiscence; sunk in a dark abyss of ignorance; the wretched victims of an illusory, unsubstantial and unreal world."

It is true these views of life do not seem unduly to distress the followers of Gautama. The Burmans, the best of Buddhists, are as merry and laughing a people as are to be found anywhere, and the burden of life rests not more lightly upon any people than upon them. Nevertheless such is the teaching. "*Anaihsa, Doakka, Anatta*" is the formula in Burmese: "Transient, Sorrowful, Unreal." The monk muses on this in his monastery. The pious Buddhist repeats it to himself as he spends his spare time smoking and meditating on the bench at his door, or strolling idly about, telling off the beads of his rosary the while.

Seeing that life is necessarily a misery, and existence an evil, the problem of life would seem to be how to bring existence to an end. The Christian would say wait for the release of death, but two formidable difficulties stand in the way, to prevent death

proving any release—namely, *Transmigration* and *Karma* (Burmese *Kan*).

Transmigration constantly renews sentient existence in a countless succession of births and lives. Hence the polite form of the announcement of a death is that the deceased has "changed his state of existence," that is, put off one existence and taken on another. This is not merely a polite form of speech, but more correctly embodies the popular belief than the mere statement that he has "died." Moreover, in future births man may rise and fall in the scale of existences; and as human life and animal life are considered to be of the same nature, no difficulty is experienced in readily believing that a man may become an animal, or an animal may become a man in future births. Hence the scruple against taking any kind of animal life amongst the Burmans, extending even to vermin. Supposing transmigration to be true, it follows that if one kills any animal, large or small, even the smallest insect, he may be taking the life of his deceased grandfather, who has thus reappeared in the body.

This universal belief of the Buddhists in transmigration was curiously illustrated quite recently in a court of justice in Burma. A mother and her son came one day to the magistrate of their district and expressed a desire to institute a suit. The case for the son, who was the plaintiff, was as follows. Some years before, a certain man, it was stated, had left in charge of the defendant some jewellery and a silk cloth for safe keeping. While engaged in repairing the roof of a house he fell off and died of the injury. The jewellery and cloth remained in the hands of the defendant, and the suit was now instituted to recover the same.

What was the ground for this claim? Not that this boy or his mother were related to the deceased, but that the boy was that identical man in another birth. But how could he prove it? There was no difficulty in proving this, at least to the satisfaction of the Buddhists. The boy displayed upon his body certain marks, which those who knew the deceased said were precisely similar to marks he bore. The mother, by a comparison of dates, sought to prove the date of the birth of the boy was just when it would be supposing his claim to be true. But the most convincing

testimony of all was that the boy distinctly remembered the whole of the circumstances happening in his former existence! The defendant admitted receiving the silk cloth, but denied all knowledge of the jewellery. He admitted that he believed the boy was the very man who left the cloth with him, and was willing to return it if the boy paid a small debt of eight annas borrowed on it by the owner. The boy said he remembered the eight annas, but also insisted on the jewellery. Unfortunately for him his good memory did not avail him; it was a British court of justice, not a Burmese, and the magistrate had to dismiss the case as extending to matters beyond his jurisdiction.

*Karma* or *Kan* (Burmese), or *Fate*, as it is sometimes rather inadequately rendered, is that self-originating, self-operating, inflexible law which necessitates and causes the working out of the cumulative influences of merit and demerit; these separately producing in succeeding births their full and appropriate effects, extending through cycles of ages, the *Kan* being modified from time to time by the passage through these different births. Thus *Kan* is not in any sense a Divine Providence. It is a blind impersonal force that attends our destiny through all the course of our many existences, and makes us to reap in other births what we sow in this. It may be compared to a balance. In the one side we are always putting in acts of merit, and in the other side acts of demerit, and the *Kan* goes on determining which preponderates, and blindly producing its appropriate consequences until each has worked itself out to the pleasant or the bitter end.

Undoubtedly this doctrine is a bold expedient for explaining the apparent anomalies and wrongs in the distribution of happiness and misery in this life; and although it is incapable alike of proof and of disproof, it fully satisfies those who can believe it. A child, for instance, is blind,—this is owing to his eye-vanity, lust of the eye in a former birth,—but he has also unusual powers of hearing; this is because he loved in a former birth to listen to the preaching of the law. Thus the theory can always be made to fit the facts, for it is derived from them. But it satisfies the Oriental mind none the less for that, and it is the belief of millions of Hindus and Buddhists to-day.

*Nirvana* (Burmese *Neibbān*) is the state of complete deliverance from further births and deaths. So long as existence lasts evil and suffering must continue, and there is no hope of blessedness until conscious individuality has become wholly eliminated, and the individual has arrived at that state where further births are no longer possible. This means practically annihilation; but it is so much easier to do wrong than to do right, and it takes so long for *Kan* to work out its result, that *Neibbān* becomes, by the ordinary way, so distant and so difficult of attainment as to be out of reach to the vast majority of the human race.

If Buddhism ended there, and if nothing had been devised to relieve this strain of seeking after an all but hopeless and well-nigh impossible good, it would have been of all creeds the most pessimistic and miserable. The mind must needs have revolted from an outlook so gloomy, and we may safely affirm that it would in that case never have numbered its votaries by hundreds of millions as it does to-day. For it just amounts to this, that "Sin and its consequences follow man as the wheels of the cart follow the legs of the bullocks," and there is no Saviour and no salvation that he can seek outside of himself.

But just at this point the doctrine of works of merit steps in and offers its hopes to the Buddhist, and seems to bring the attainment of future good at once within the sphere of the practicable. According to this, man can be continually improving his *Kan* by so-called works of merit, and he may hope, with comparatively little trouble, to make his merits outweigh his demerits, and thereby improve his lot in future existences.

See that row of waterpots under the shade of that great tree upon a dusty road, set upon a neat stand, with a neatly carved roof constructed over them, with a ladle to drink out of, and each of the pots covered with a tin cover to keep out the dust and insects. It is privately constructed and presented for public use, a work of merit; all done to get what they are often thinking and talking about—*koothoh*.

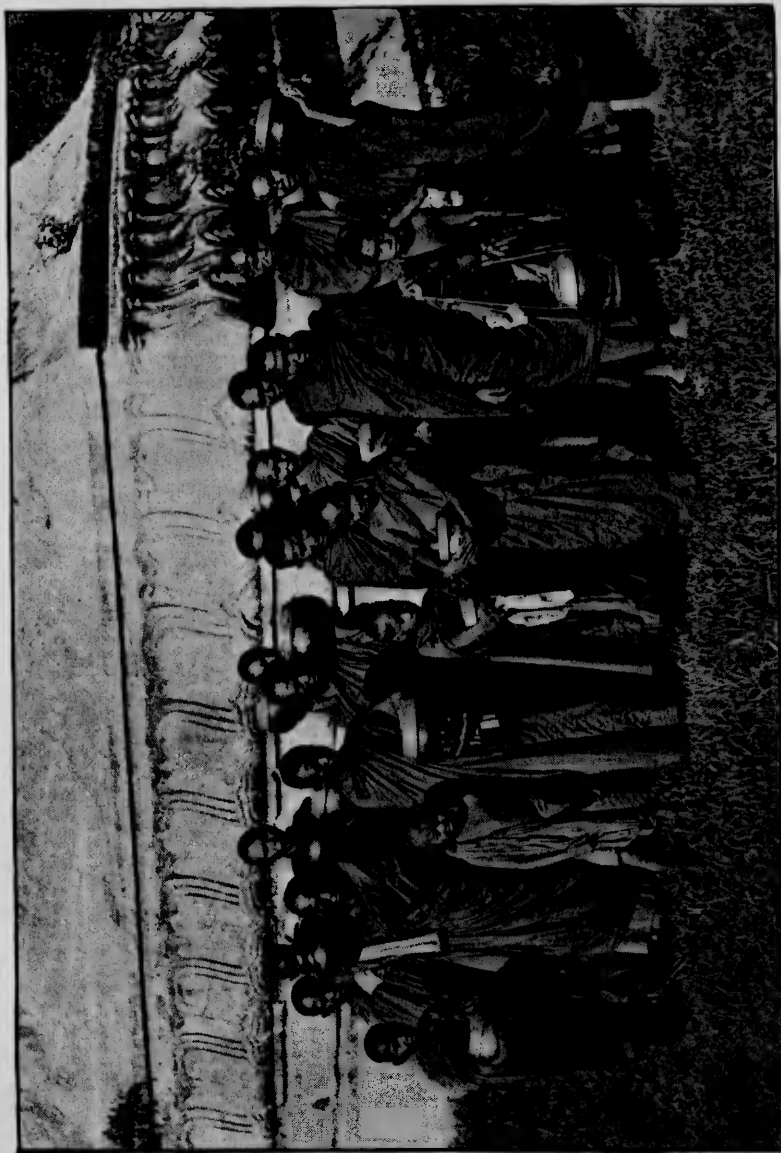
What is the meaning of all this lavishing on the monks of food daily, and various offerings, including almost everything except

money, which they are under vows not to touch? Answer, *koothoh*. So with all alms and offerings to monks, to the poor, to dogs, or crows; so with good works of every imaginable description. You may acquire merit by conforming to the ceremonies, by attending the festivals, by listening to the reading of the Law, by striking the pagoda bells, by buying and lighting pagoda tapers, by plastering gold leaf on the pagoda, by contributing to the repairs of the sacred edifices, by showing lights at the festival of lighting in October, and by many, many ways. As might be expected, when the acquiring of merit is so important a matter, there are many avenues opened to it.

Though of course you have not kept all the laws, yet if you have gone out of your way a little to do something more than keep one of them it gives you merit. The care for animal life offers great scope in that direction. An English soldier whilst fishing caught a tortoise and was taking it home, when a Burman met him, bought the tortoise for a rupee, and took it back to its native element. He would expect to gain merit by that. Men have been known to make a regular trade of snaring little birds in the jungle, and bringing them to the bazaar to sell to the merit seekers, who buy them merely to set them free.

Many works of merit involve great expense, such as the digging of a well, the erection of a bridge, a *zayat* or rest-house, a monastery, a pagoda. Judging by the enormous number of these sacred buildings in Upper Burma, it would appear that this is a favourite way of seeking merit. The builder of a pagoda is honoured with a special title attached to his name, and he is understood to be in a fair way for *Nirvana*. This seeking after merit is practically the most predominant aim in Burmese religious life.

So fixed is this belief in merit, that when the Burmans see the English so intent upon opening up the country, making roads and railways, metalling streets and lighting them, building hospitals and markets, constructing irrigation works, and carrying out a multitude of other necessary and useful efforts of public utility, they measure us by their own bushel, and remark that there will be great merit to the Government and its officers by means of these things. What other motive could men have for



"IN THE MORNING THE MONKS INVARIABLY GO FORTH CARRYING THE ALMS-BOWLS TO COLLECT THEIR DAILY FOOD FROM THE PEOPLE."

taking so much pains and trouble for the public good, if not to accumulate merit?

In elaborating this law relating to merit, Gautama was preparing the sheet anchor of his system. It is that mainly by which it abides, and retains its influence over its millions of followers until this day.

Every false religion, however, whatever master mind designed it, must show, somewhere or other, its weak places. It is manifestly a weak place in Buddhism that alms and works of merit may so easily outweigh whatever demerit may attach through real crimes and sins, and that, too, without any repentance or reformation on the part of the offender. This also makes the attainment of merit largely dependent on the pecuniary means and influence at the disposal of the individual. A work may be very easy for a king or a rich man which would be utterly impossible for a poor man. To the Christian mind this seems very unequal and unfair, but to the Burman it presents no stumbling-block. Supposing we do see great inequalities in money, or any other temporal advantages that men possess. Be it so. It arises from differences in their *Kan*, and that depends on what took place in previous births. One's *Kan* is not a thing to rail against, but to submit to.

It might be thought that as Christianity is so evidently superior to Buddhism as a religious system, it should be an easy matter to get them to discard their religion and accept the religion of Christ. But this is very far from being the case. The superiority is not apparent to a mind sophisticated by a lifelong familiarity with only the one religion, and it is only, as a rule, perceived after a prolonged and impartial study and comparison of the two has opened the mind. This is the great reason for educational work. It is a very difficult matter to make the votaries of an elaborate system like Buddhism see the superiority of Christ over Buddha; they are more than contented with what they have.

Besides this, we ought to remember that Buddhism has everything on its side that tends to make a religion powerful and influential. It has a concrete existence, and very much of outward and visible form and appearance; it is in possession; it has

numbers, a voluminous literature, a definite and consistent system of philosophy. It has plenty of popular observances and popular enthusiasm. It is cleverly adapted to man's natural desire to work out his own salvation. It is most powerfully sustained and buttressed in the regard and confidence of the people by its very numerous monastic institutions, which are recruited from all classes of the people, from the prince to the peasant, for every male Burman must be a monk, for a longer or a shorter time, at some period of his life.



## CHAPTER XII.

*BURMESE RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS AND USAGES.*

THE Burmans, like most nations of the East, are essentially a religious people, and pay great regard to the religious usages and institutions in which they have been brought up.

Chief amongst these is the monastic institution of Buddhism. Buddha was not only a great philosopher and thinker, but a great organiser too, and he provided in the monastic system a social bond of union that knits the entire community together in the Buddhist faith. This is made more obvious by the fact that every male Burman must be a monk at some time in his life, for a longer or shorter period, otherwise the demerit attaching to him would so overbalance his merits, as to render it impossible for him ever to make any improvement in his future existences. His ill deeds would swell the sum of his demerits, but no act of charity or pious devotion would be recorded to his advantage. Hence, in Upper Burma, almost every youth dons the yellow robe and becomes a monk. It may be for a week, a month, or a season or two, or it may be for many years, or it may prove to be lifelong. The longer they stay in the monastery the more sanctity attaches to them. But the Buddhist monk, unlike some other monks, is at liberty to terminate his monastic vows at pleasure, and return to ordinary life. The monks reckon the continuance of their monastic condition by the number of *Wahs* spent in the monastery, the *Wah* being the annual recurrence of a kind of Buddhist Lent, extending from July to October.

This recruiting of the monks from the entire population—so

different from Hinduism, which acknowledges a rigidly exclusive, priestly caste—immensely strengthens the hold Buddhism has on the people, and widens the popular basis upon which it rests. In my missionary life amongst the Hindus in Ceylon, I have observed in reading and expounding the parable of "The Good Samaritan" to a heathen congregation, a great readiness to apply, of their own accord, the cases of the Priest and the Levite, who passed by on the other side, to their own Brahmin priests, and they were always ready to take sides against them as quite a separate caste; but there can never be the same alienation between monks and laity in a Buddhist land like Burma, where the monks are their own kith and kin.

The monasteries are very extensively spread over the country. Mandalay, at the time of the annexation, was officially stated to have close upon 6,000 monks, and you can visit scarcely any town or village, however small or remote, which has not its monastic establishment. The monastery is always the best building in the place, and has the cleanest enclosure of any house in the village, and there is an air of sanctity and repose about it. The monks are very approachable. The stranger, whether native or foreigner, is always made welcome; indeed, that is a characteristic of the Burmans everywhere, that they receive strangers freely and affably, and being free from those caste scruples so usual amongst the Hindus, one is not for ever fearful of transgressing their notions of propriety, or unwittingly hurting their dignity. As the monasteries are spacious, and often supplied with additional *zayats* or rest-houses, it will rarely happen in travelling that they will be unable or unwilling to assign the stranger some humble place of rest, where he may tie up his pony, eat his food, and spread his mat and pillow for the night. To the poor and destitute the monastery is a place of relief, where they can always hope to obtain a little food out of that which is daily given to the monks in their house to house morning visits.

It must be frankly admitted that the monasteries of the country do a useful work in the way of imparting elementary education. To them is chiefly due the creditable fact that there are comparatively few of the men who cannot read and write; and this does

much to bind the people to the support of the Order. But the education scarcely ever goes beyond the most elementary stage. They learn to read Burmese, and they learn to repeat a few Pali prayers and forms of devotion. Pali is the sacred language; very few even of the monks understand the meaning.

On the other hand, the monks' life is a very idle one. They live in perfect ease, all their wants are supplied by the people, and they are not expected to work at all, except some of them at teaching. There are usually far more of them in the monastery than are required for that purpose, so that they spend a vast amount of idle time, and it is thought by many that the indolent, easy-going habits, and the lack of discipline and enterprise the Burmans display as a nation, is largely owing to the idle life of the monastery, which is continually before their eyes, for there they receive their teaching when young.

The Buddhist monk is not a minister of religion in our sense. He has no pastoral charge. He is for himself, and for his own deliverance, and the merit he acquires he shares with nobody. He may occasionally be called to attend this or that function, when the presence of a monk is customary, or he may expound the law occasionally, if he so choose, reciting some of the sacred writings for that purpose; but he undertakes no responsibility for the guidance of the souls of others. In Buddhism a man must save himself, and nothing that a monk or any one else may do can alter the balance of his merits and demerits. Even if the monk be summoned to the couch of a dying man, as he is sometimes, it is not that he may speak words of consolation, or offer him the comforts of religion. It is merely that the presence of the holy man may drive away the evil spirits that would be liable to haunt the place on such an occasion.

The habits of the monastic Order are very simple. In the morning, after the few Pali prayers have been uttered, the monks invariably go forth through the village, attended by the boys carrying the alms-bowls, to collect their daily food from the people. Not that they beg. There is no occasion for that. Their rules forbid them to ask; and in going from door to door amongst their own people they do not ask. But privately, I



must own, I have found occasionally amongst the Buddhist monks of my acquaintance some of the most arrant cadgers I ever met with. Few, indeed, are the matrons who do not put something in the way of food in the alms-bowl. Nor do they thank the people for what they receive. They would never think of doing so. In fact, the obligation is all on the other side. The monks are conferring a favour by giving the people the opportunity to do this work of high merit by means of their alms. A useful hint, by the way, to collectors for good and useful objects in England!

In their walks abroad, and in the performance of such functions as bring them into mixed companies, many of the monks carry a large palm-leaf fan in their hands, in order that, as celibate ascetics, they may shut off the sight of feminine charms from their eyes.

The education given at the monasteries is very poor, but the acquisition of any learning at all by the children is a matter for wonder, when we consider how poor the instruction is. What they do succeed in learning is not so much by means of teaching, as we understand it, but is almost entirely due to the system of noisy repetition of the lessons, at the full pitch of their voices in unison, in which all the children engage, the elder ones leading, and the younger following. For this reason the little learning imparted at these schools is of a mechanical sort, and lacks intelligence. Arithmetic is very low indeed. Geography, if taught at all, must of course square with the orthodox Buddhist cosmogony; and as there is much that is doubtful about that, it is perhaps best left alone, and is accordingly. Burmese history is abundant in quantity, but in quality it only consists of what we call fiction, and has but a poor foothold upon fact, and is left out of the curriculum. All other branches of study are unknown, except a little of Pali in the form of devotions, which, however, is mostly taught in mere parrot fashion.

The Director of Public Instruction in Burma told me a good story of his first visit to Mandalay. He had been calling on the great *Thathanabine* or Buddhist Archbishop of Burma, and had sought to impress upon that venerable ecclesiastic the desirability



"THERE THE PEOPLE ASSEMBLE OF AN EVENING, AND ARE TO BE SEEN IN THE OPEN SPACE AROUND THE PAGODA, ON THEIR KNEES IN THE OPEN AIR, REPEATING THEIR DEVOTIONS IN PALI."

of improving the education given at the monastery schools. He mentioned arithmetic and geography as very desirable subjects to be taught, offering to supply teachers already trained and able to teach them. One of the attendant monks, an elderly brother of the yellow robe, remarked that for his part he could not see any great need for learning geography, especially now that the English Government had been good enough to construct a railway. "If you want to go anywhere all you have to do is to take your ticket and get into the train." Where was the use of learning geography?

The honour paid to the monks by the people is quite extraordinary. In the Burmese language the commonest acts of life as performed by the monks are spoken of with respectful expressions, which are never applied to similar acts as done by the common people. The oldest layman honours the youngest monk, and gives place to him. The ordinary posture before a monk is down on their knees, and often on their elbows also, with the palms of the hands joined together, and raised as if in supplication, and the title "*Paja*" is used—the very name which has to do duty for the deity.

An instance is on record of a venerable monk being called from Mandalay to settle a dispute between two parties concerning some religious point, in a town on the banks of the Irrawaddy. On his arrival the whole population lined both sides of the path up to the monastery, and kneeling, they loosed down their long black hair, for the men as well as the women wear it long, and spread it across the path, so that he walked all the distance from the river bank to the monastery on human tresses.

The pagodas are the ordinary resorts of the people as places of worship; not all of them, however, for the great majority are merely erected as works of merit, and never attain any celebrity as places of worship; only the chief and most notable shrines. There the people assemble of an evening, and are to be seen in the flagged open space around the pagoda, on their knees in the open air, repeating their devotions in Pali. Though many of them come together, it is not of the nature of congregational worship, nor is any one appointed to lead their devotions. It is each one

for himself. There is no prayer in our sense of that term, that is, petition. With no God to address, what place is there for prayer? Buddhism knows no higher being than the Buddha, and he is gone, twenty-four centuries ago, into Nirvana. The sentences they utter in Pali consist of expressions in praise of Buddha, the Law, and the Monastic Order. Images of Buddha are extensively used, but for all that, the people can hardly be called idolaters. The burning of candles and of incense at worship time is customary.

The Burmese "duty days," of which there are four in the month, are observed on the eighth of the crescent, the full, the eighth of the waning, and the change of the moon. These are kept more strictly as worship days during what is called the *Wah* than at any other time. That is the period from July to October, which is observed as a time of special fasting and solemnity, ever since the days of their founder, who used to spend this, the rainy season, when travelling about in India is scarcely practicable, in retirement and meditation. During the *Wah* there is a cessation of all festivities, and of the theatrical performances of which the Burmans are so fond.

At the end of the *Wah* there is a time of general rejoicing. For some days before amusements are observed to be in progress in the streets. Effigies of animals, very well executed, are carried about. Here a buffalo of gigantic size, made of some light material, cunningly finished and coloured to the life, with horns and hide and all complete, is seen walking about on two pairs of human legs, the said legs being clad in the very baggy dark trousers worn by the Shans; its head balanced so as to swing with the walk in a most realistic and natural manner.

Yonder, in the Chinese temple, a huge pasteboard demon is seen disporting himself, with head of frightful aspect and enormous size, and body of cloth. You may freely walk in; and as you look around and admire the excellence of the building and the expensive and choice furniture, lamps and decorations, you may also see the huge creature writhing about, with all manner of contortions, to the deafening din of drums and the clash of cymbals. Somehow Orientals seem to be able to combine amuse-

ment with devotion. My three little children who have walked in with me, scared almost out of their wits with the noise, and still more with the portentous sight of the demon, promptly take to their heels and rush out of the temple, and cannot be induced to return, so I go out in search of them. At the corner of the next street an enormous representation of a tiger, ten times life size, in teeth and claws complete, and with a most ferocious aspect, has been glaring at the passers-by for some days. And, as you look, here comes a rude likeness of a gigantic lady ten feet high, who, however, seems to move along very ungracefully, and bows very stiffly in acknowledgment of the cheers of the crowd. The Chinese are particularly fond of getting up a very brilliantly executed figure of a serpent, in great splendour and in very bright colours, many yards long, which is borne high overhead through the streets on these occasions, with quite a procession. This particular show seems to afford scope for high art in representing the wriggings of the monster as it is carried along.

But this is all only preparatory to the festival called *Wah-gyoot* (literally "the release from the Wah"). It is a festival of lights. For three nights the whole city of Mandalay is one blaze of illumination. Every house has its complement of candles or oil lamps; the rich in keeping with their means, and the poor according to their poverty. At that season the air is still, there is little or no wind, all the lights are out of doors and burn brightly. The streets are lit up with candles at every ten paces; the pagodas are effectively illuminated with hundreds of lights far up into their spires. Little children are trundling extemporised carts with bamboo wheels, each carrying a tiny illumination, covered with a lamp of thin, coloured paper. In addition to the house illuminations, paper lanterns are quite the fashion in China Street, where the well-known ingenuity of John Chinaman produces fantastic shapes in various colours, representing sundry animals, fishes, ships and what not. On the great river, as soon as it grows dark, the villagers row out into the middle of the stream and set adrift multitudes of oil lamps, each fastened to a little float of bamboo or plantain stem. Thousands of them

are sent out by each village, so that the whole Irrawaddy is one blaze of twinkling lights.

Another very prominent and popular festival of the Burmans is the Water Feast, which occurs at their New Year in April. For two or three days at that time "the compliments of the season" consist in walking up to you in the street, or even in your own house, and discharging a jar of clean water over you, with the expression, "I will do homage to you with water"; and it would be considered very bad form to show any resentment for this kind and polite attention. It is obvious that such a custom as this must afford great scope to the rollicking Burmans of both sexes. It leads to abundance of larking and merriment in the streets. Everybody who ventures forth stands a great chance of a thorough drenching. Fortunately it occurs in April, the time of the sun's greatest power, and the sweltering heat renders it less of an inconvenience than it would be in a colder climate.

There is nothing the Burmans are more scrupulous about than the taking of life. A mother has been seen to pick up the scorpion that stung her child, between two pieces of bamboo, and merely drop it gently outside the door. Twice when I have found a deadly cobra lurking about the house where the children were playing—the most venomous of snakes, whose bite is death—and have asked a Burmese servant to help me to kill it, he has declined, and I have had to kill it myself. But though the Burman will not kill a snake, he will not scruple to take it home to cook and eat it after some other person has killed it. Animal food seldom comes amiss to them, whether it has been killed by another or has died of itself. They are not very choice in their food.

Mandalay swarms with thousands of half-starved, mangy, miserable animals—nobody's dogs. No matter how they increase and multiply, no Burman is willing to "put them out of their misery"; the firm belief in transmigration prevents this. I have known half a dozen such dreadful creatures quarter themselves uninvited on the Mission premises. One of the half-dozen, a savage brute, living under the school on the Mission premises, one day bit a little Burman boy, and tore his bare arm very

badly. This was too much for me. Fearing it might do further mischief, and might even be mad, I waylaid and shot it. The Burmans thought I had done very wrong. Their tender care for animals often appears in touching forms. I have noticed a Burman coolie engaged in mixing mortar, on finding he had brought a number of tadpoles from the neighbouring pond in his bucket of water, take them all out with great care, and carry them back to the pond, though it was 150 yards away and he had to go on purpose. And yet, so strangely inconsistent is human nature, there are perhaps few countries in the world, with any pretensions to civilisation, where human life is held so cheap as in Burma, and where the people have commonly such a propensity to the crime of dacoity or robbery with violence, and often with murder. And yet, again, with strange inconsistency, the coarse and hardened criminal, the Burman dacoit, who has imbrued his hands in his neighbour's blood more than once, will scruple to harm the vermin that infests his couch.

Some of the great Buddhist shrines in Burma are buildings of wonderful magnificence. The Shwê Dagoon Pagoda at Rangoon is one of the most important and sacred. It is considered to be over two thousand years old. Originally it was very small, but now it rises to a height of 370 feet, or a little higher than St. Paul's Cathedral, and is a quarter of a mile in circumference at the base. It is situated on the top of a very high hill, of which the summit has been, at vast labour and expense, made into a level platform, and carefully paved. This immense platform is partly occupied by many smaller pagodas, resting places for worshippers, and chapels containing colossal images of Buddha; and considerable open space is left for the immense crowds of worshippers that assemble there. In the centre rises the great pagoda in the usual bell shape, one vast, solid mass of masonry terminating in a spire. Four flights of stone steps lead up from the plain beneath, one on each side of the hill. On the summit of the pagoda is the *htee*, or gilt iron framework in the form of an umbrella, with multitudes of gold and silver bells, richly bejewelled, which tinkle with every passing breeze. The *htee* was presented by King Mindohn, the father of King Theebaw, and cost £50,000. The pagoda

itself with the adjacent buildings must have cost, from first to last, a fabulous sum. This pagoda, like many others of the principal ones, is covered with pure gold leaf. Every few years it has to be regilt. Sometimes this has been done by some particular king, as a great work of merit. One king is said to have spent his own weight of gold upon it. In 1887 there was a regilding by public subscription. The accounts when published showed an expenditure of some £9,000; and this money, be it known to all Christians, was raised at once, without leaving any debt for the next generation to defray. And not only so, but it was raised in money actually contributed directly for this purpose. There was no need to resort to any of the well-known, artful, coaxing methods of raising funds, which have to be adopted in more civilised countries. There was not even a bazaar, not even a raffle! I have no hesitation in stating that it is my belief that Buddhists spend on their religion, in edifices, on the support of the monks, and on other works of charity, much more per head in proportion to their means than the average of Christians spend on theirs.

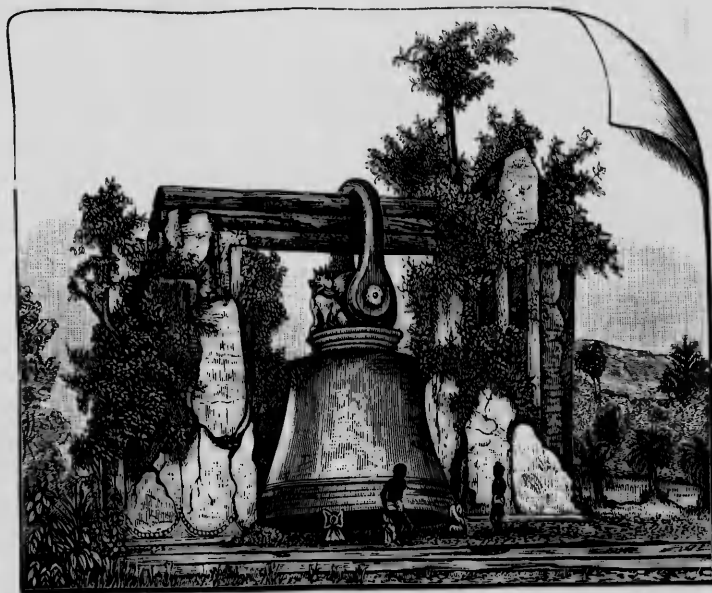
Another remarkable thing about the Shwê Dagohn Pagoda is its bell, 14 feet high,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  feet across, and weighing 42 tons, the third largest bell in the world. This bell has a history. After the second Burmese war in 1853, the English made an attempt to carry it off as a trophy to Calcutta, but ere they shipped it the monster toppled over into the Rangoon river, and sank to the bottom. With the appliances then at hand they were unable to get it up again. After a time the Burmans made request that they might have it.

Yes, they might have the bell *if they could get it*.

They succeeded in raising it out of the river, and hauled it back in triumph to the position it occupies to-day.

When great shrines like this exist in Burma, on such a vast scale and with such splendour, it is not much to wonder at if there should be some specimens of unfinished and abortive undertakings, by which the kings of Burma, in their ambition to obtain great merit and a name, sought to equal or excel the great shrines of antiquity, but which had to be relinquished because the

resources, even of despotic kings, are not unlimited. Such a one is the great unfinished Mengohn Pagoda, which is built in a pleasant spot on the right bank of the Irrawaddy, about nine miles above Mandalay. It is supposed that this must be the largest mass of solid brickwork in the world, and it is now nearly a century old. It covers a square of 450 feet, and has therefore an area of  $4\frac{3}{4}$  acres. Its height is 155 feet, which is much



GREAT BELL AT THE MINGOHN PAGODA.

less than it would have been had it gone on to completion. An Englishman, Captain Cox, was there, and saw the beginning of this huge structure. He says in his book that there was a great square chamber built in the basement of the pagoda as usual, to receive the offerings of the king and the people, and amongst many peculiarly Burmese and Buddhist articles, such as models of precious relics in gold caskets, and gold and silver miniature pagodas and images, the miscellaneous collection included an article of

Western manufacture—a soda-water machine, at that time almost as great a novelty in England as it was in Burma. Close by this large unfinished pagoda is the second largest bell in the world; the largest is at Moscow. An earthquake, which occurred in 1839, cracked this enormous mass of brickwork, and dislodged a portion of it; but so solid is it that it would take many earthquakes utterly to destroy it.

Notwithstanding the failure to complete this gigantic enterprise, it did not deter a later king, the father of King Theebaw, from attempting a still larger and more ambitious effort. Four miles to the east of Mandalay there was to have been erected the Yankeen-toung Pagoda, built of stone quarried from the adjoining hill; and it was to have been larger considerably than the unfinished Mengohn. The whole kingdom was laid under contribution to furnish men to labour by turns, a few months at a time, on this pious work.

After four years' labour, so vast was the extent that the basement had only reached a height of four feet. At this stage a French engineer was called in to make an estimate and report upon it. His calculation was that if 5,000 men worked every day on the building, it might at that rate be finished in eighty-four years. It never went beyond the basement.

Since the annexation of Upper Burma, the practical British mind, finding the Yankeen-toung stone eminently suitable for road-making, and seeing that the roads in Mandalay, with its 188,000 people, were not, up to that time, made of anything better than black clay, has devoted this stone, intended for the pagoda, with which King Mindohn had purposed, so to speak, paving his own way to Nirvana, to the humbler, but more generally useful enterprise of mending the people's ways about the town.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE BURMANS.

OF the forty or more different races and tribes dwelling in Burma and on its frontiers, the Burmans are the leading race: first, in point of numbers, for they far exceed any of the others; also as regards position and advantages, for they naturally, as the leading race, have come to occupy all the best and most fertile soil, all the tracts of country lying between the great mountain ranges, the valleys of the Irrawaddy and the Chindwin rivers; and still more in respect of their prestige, for they have long been the ruling race of this region, and their language is far more widely diffused than any other. Most of the other indigenous races of Burma, as we have seen, are demon worshippers, uncivilised, without a written language, and with many and wide diversities from the Burmans. The Burmans, however, have an ancient civilisation, an elaborate religious system, a philosophy and a literature, and with regard to the arts, handicrafts and conveniences of ordinary life, are quite on a par with the Hindus. The present chapter applies to the Burman race.

The Burmans are of Mongolian origin, in common with the Chinese, Siamese and other inhabitants of the Indo-Chinese peninsula. Their features plainly show this, especially the almond-shaped eye, the slightly flattened nose and the almost entire absence of hair on the faces of the men. They are lighter in complexion than the majority of the natives of India, and slightly browner than the Chinese.

They show a marked contrast in many respects to the races of

India, especially in the entire absence of caste. The king was the fountain of all position in the country. He made and unmade nobles at his sole will and pleasure, so that there is no hereditary rank or nobility. There is also no priestly caste like the Brahmins of India; the Buddhist monks are recruited from all classes, from the royal family downwards. Except the pagoda slaves, a class doomed to hereditary servitude in connection with the more important sacred shrines, and with a few other trifling exceptions, the Burmans as a people have all the avenues of native life and privilege open to them. This renders them less fastidious and more approachable than the people of India, and does away with the withering, blighting effects of caste. It renders them less conservative also, and makes them more ready to take up new ideas.

The Burmese language, in common with the Mongolian languages generally, is monosyllabic, each word consisting of one syllable. Of course the progress of all languages tends to unite words, and in the majority of languages this tendency has resulted in the original monosyllables becoming so united and changed as to be not easily capable of separation. But in Burmese and other monosyllabic languages very many names and words are still of one syllable, and even where they are of two or three, each syllable seems to show a sturdy vigour of its own, and a determination to preserve its individuality complete, and not sink into the position of a mere servant of its neighbours. In pronunciation or reading of Burmese this appears in a marked degree; and in writing Burmese names one always feels inclined to follow the pronunciation, and insert the hyphen between the syllables. Even where there is any disposition of the syllables to cleave together in the formation of words, in anything like a permanent form, they readily fall asunder the moment they are touched for the purpose of critical examination.

To compensate for the convenience of expression afforded in most languages by inflections, much is made in the Burmese of particles. Indeed, the grammar of the language, which is very simple, consists largely of the classification of the monosyllables that serve as particles, and a great deal of variety of meaning

is expressed by tones. The alphabet is derived from the ancient Nagari, the common source of the alphabets of many of the Indian languages, but the characters themselves belong exclusively to

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စိတ်နှစ်လုံးဖြောင့်မတ်သောသူတို့၊  
 ကိုယ်တော်မြတ်၌ဝမ်းမြောက်ကြလေ။  
 ကိုယ်တော်မြတ်ကိုရွေးကောက်သူတို့၊  
 ဝမ်းနည်းမှုပန်ခြင်းပယ်ရှောင်ချေ။  
 ထပ်၍ဆိုရန်။—ဝမ်းမြောက်၊ဝမ်းမြောက်၊  
 ကိုယ်တော်မြတ်၌ဝမ်းမြောက်ကြလေ။  
 ဝမ်းမြောက်၊ဝမ်းမြောက်၊  
 ကိုယ်တော်မြတ်၌ဝမ်းမြောက်ကြလေ။

၂

ဝမ်းမြောက်ကြလော့၊ကိုယ်တော်မြတ်သည်၊  
 မြေပေါ်ကောင်းကင်ထက်အုပ်စိုး၏။  
 နှုတ်ကပတ်တော်မြတ်အားဖြင့်သာ၊  
 အုပ်စိုးစီရင်ကယ်တင်မှုတော့။

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အမှန်တို့ရာစစ်တိုက်သောခါ၊  
 မခရ်နတ်သည်အောင်မြင်လှသော်လည်း။  
 ကိုယ်တော်မြတ်၏စစ်ဗိုလ်ပါများ၊  
 ရန်သူတို့ထက်များထွသတည်း။

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 SPECIMEN OF BURMESE TYPE.

the Burmese tongue, except that they have been adopted for the Shan and Karen languages. The alphabet is called the *them-bon-gyee* or great basket of learning, and it well deserves the

name; for what with the 10 vowels, the 32 consonants, the vowel-consonants to the number of  $10 \times 32$ , and a very numerous series of characters to express many combinations of letters, it really is a very great basketful indeed, and occupies 28 pages of a closely printed pamphlet with the characters alone.

One of the difficulties to a foreigner in picking up the spoken language is the Burmese custom of dropping the sound of the final consonants of syllables. This is not, as it is with some English people, a bad habit, but is sanctioned by the usage of the language. In the grammar of the language some interesting features appear. Thus in many verbs the intransitive is changed into the transitive by the mere aspiration of an initial consonant: as *kya-thee*, to fall; *khya-thee*, to throw down, or cause to fall; *loht-thee*, to be free; *hloht-thee*, to set free. The adjective does not precede but follows the noun it qualifies. The accusative is followed by the verb that governs it.

Burmese abounds with honorific expressions. First of all is the ever-recurring ordinary honorific form *daw*, placed after nouns and verbs, to indicate that the thing or action named has to do with some person out of the common order. The first personal pronoun has three distinct forms, so that a speaker is able, by choosing one or other of these three, in a word, as it were, to place himself on an eminence above, on an equality with, or in a position beneath the person he is addressing; a great convenience, surely. What could the framers of our own poor language have been thinking about, to neglect to secure for us such an obvious advantage as that?

The second personal pronoun is even richer, for it counts no less than six well-defined gradations of expression, not to mention several more supernumerary forms, that may be employed if the regular forms of the pronoun are not enough. By means of these the person addressed may be treated with veneration, gently flattered, addressed with easy familiarity, made to feel his relative littleness, scolded, or abused, as occasion may require. And all this variety of expression in the mere choice of the pronoun in the second person! What a language it must be in the mouth of a competent person!

Again, with regard to "Yes," our affirmative of assent, the Burmese can vary its form, by means of well-sanctioned idioms in constant use, from something equivalent to the American "That's so," through several more and more polite affirmatives, up to "What you say is appropriate, my Lord," an expression reserved of course for the king, the monks, some respectable European, or Burman of distinction. Where such various expressions would sound very stilted in English, the Burmese idiom can give them as ordinary forms of politeness. Thus again, the ordinary man is said to "eat"; the monk "nourishes his body with the alms of the pious"; but the king tops them all, for he "ascends to the lordly board." It is asserted of a man when he dies merely that he has "changed the bawâ," *i.e.*, left one state of existence and gone into another; but in the case of a monk we may safely go further and say, as the idiom does, that he has "returned to the blissful seats"; the king, when he dies, is politely said to have "ascended to the village of the *nats*" (beings superior to men). These Oriental peculiarities of language and idiom are interesting and amusing, and the frequent discovery of them, in the course of his studies, does much to compensate the foreigner for the drudgery involved in learning the language thoroughly, provided he is not devoid of the sense of humour, and can appreciate them when he finds them.

But perhaps the chief oddity of the Burmese language to the foreigner is the use of numeral auxiliaries. In using numbers you make quite a business of it, by adding in the case of each of the things mentioned, a special term descriptive of the class of things to which they belong. It is on this wise: first, you name the things spoken of, then the number, and finally the appropriate numeral auxiliary. Thus if you wish to say "six dogs" you must put it in this form to be idiomatic, "dogs six *living creatures*."

Five horses = "horses five *beasts of burden*."

Four men = "men four *rational beings*."

Three monks = "monks three *highly respectable characters*."

Two rupees = "rupees two *flat things*."

Always to have to supply, on the spur of the moment, whilst speaking, the correct classification of the objects named in making



use of numbers, seems to the foreigner a very needless and arbitrary demand, and so new to him that, until he gets accustomed to it, he is constantly liable to overlook it. The classification of things made in this way does not extend, however, beyond some twenty-one categories. In addition to those named there are things in a line, things in a circle, things long and straight, things nearly round or cubical, things which are used as tools, trees and plants (which class includes hair!), and some others. But the classification of things provided for by the use of these numeral auxiliaries is neither very scientific nor very complete, for the list is soon exhausted; and when you come to such things as chairs, bedsteads and a multitude of other things which come under none of the recognised classes of things, they are all slumped under the head of "individual things," which is disappointing after the hopes raised of a complete classification of all things.

Burmese literature is largely devoted to Buddhism. Of popular works the most common are the *Zats*, stories of embryo Buddhas, and what they did in their different births, before they arrived at that state. Here is obviously much scope for fancy in tracing the buddings of their wisdom and glory, and all their miraculous adventures and deliverances, together with much about the *nats* or spirits supposed to haunt the universe. Christian literature is miserably meagre as yet, and there is much scope and need for more. All Christian workers, and indeed all foreigners who aim at learning Burmese, are deeply indebted to Dr. Judson, the first missionary of the American Baptist Mission, for his excellent translation of the whole Bible, and for his English-Burmese and Burmese-English dictionaries, his Burmese grammar, and other minor works. To multitudes in England and America Dr. Judson is famous for what he suffered; but amongst those who know and can appreciate his literary work, that alone is sufficient to entitle him to an imperishable fame.

Although there are in Burma so many pagodas, monasteries and other religious buildings, which are fine, substantial erections, massive, spacious and very rich in decoration, the dwellings of the people are, as a rule, very poor in accommodation, and are of bamboo, the flimsiest of material, and specially liable to destruc-



"THE BUDDHIST MONASTERIES ARE FINE, SUBSTANTIAL ERECTIONS, MASSIVE, SPACIOUS AND VERY RICH IN DECORATION."

tion by fire. The posts of the house are of teak, the floor is of bamboos, and raised from two to six feet from the ground, the walls are of bamboo matting not much thicker than stout brown paper, and the roof is of bamboo thatch. These houses, though so slightly made, are warm enough for the climate. The floor especially seems very frail to a stranger, made of half bamboos, round side upwards, and lashed together with strips of cane. It gives and sways under your feet as you walk over it in an alarming manner, but the bamboos, though they bend, do not easily break. The Burmans like that kind of a house. It is cool and airy. The floor shows a space between each bamboo, and those spaces are particularly convenient for an easy-going people. All kinds of miscellaneous things not required, including scraps and remnants of food, can be dropped through the floor, so that it requires no sweeping. The mighty host of ownerless, homeless, starving dogs that roam over the town can be safely trusted to find anything there is to eat, and they are not of dainty appetite. All cooking has to be done outside the house, either in a separate building, or more commonly in a little square hole dug in the ground for the purpose, to prevent, if possible, sparks being blown about by the high winds that prevail at certain seasons of the year.

Owing to the extremely inflammable nature of the buildings in Burma, fires are of frequent occurrence, and are exceedingly destructive. In addition to the ordinary risk from cooking fires and paraffin oil lamps, the people are exceedingly careless in handling fire, and they are all smokers. They smoke a kind of cigar made of chopped tobacco mixed with some light woody substance, and enclosed in the outer leaf of the maize cob, or some other leaf used for the same purpose, and these cigars drop sparks in all directions. The end of the hot, dry season, in April and May, when everything is like tinder, and when the high winds prevail, is the most destructive time for fires, and every year at that time they are of daily occurrence in Mandalay, and sometimes scores and sometimes hundreds of bamboo houses are swept away. During the four years I have lived in Mandalay I have known many large portions of the town destroyed time after time.

The most destructive fires that have occurred since the annexation took place on March 31st, 1892, and the following day. The first of these fires originated in 27th Street, near the centre of the town. Exceptionally high winds from the south carried the flames in a northerly direction. All the wooden and bamboo buildings in front of the fire were consumed in an incredibly short space of time. Very soon the flames reached the central telegraph office, a new Government building that cost about £2,000. The flames leaped across a very wide street, and destroyed the office. The fire burnt its way through the town due north for two miles, and ceased only when it had burnt itself out. There is a good fire-engine establishment since the British rule, but fire-engines are of no avail in a case like that.

The first great fire was still smouldering when, on the following day, another broke out in the eastern town. It spread in the same way from south to north about two miles. In the line of this fire, and extending the whole way, were a series of remarkably fine monastery buildings, including some of the finest in Burma, all built of teak, and covered with decorative carving, and two of them covered with gold leaf within and without. One of these monasteries was built by King Mindohn at a cost of 16 lakhs of rupees; the entire loss caused by this one fire alone is roughly estimated at 100 lakhs (say £600,000). The same day a third fire broke out in the north end of the town, and destroyed several hundreds of Burmese houses. This fire was caused by gross negligence, the sparks from a Burmese cigar igniting some Indian corn. When these fires occur the Burmans do not seem to concern themselves. They remove their household goods if they have time, but make no real efforts to stem the progress of the flames. Much valuable property is destroyed, but it is seldom any lives are lost.

All Eastern nations pay great attention to the rules relating to the degree of state and dignity such and such classes of the people may assume. Amongst the Hindus the pariahs and other low castes are most rigidly kept down, and the least sign of alteration for the better in their dress, houses, or circumstances renders them liable to the persecution of the higher castes. I

have known in Ceylon amongst the Hindus prolonged struggles between certain castes, involving serious breaches of the peace, the point at issue being only this—whether a certain caste of people ought or ought not to be allowed to carry umbrellas at their weddings and on other special occasions. In the native kingdom of Travancore, a few years ago, serious riots took place because the women of a certain class of people known as the “slave caste,” having come under the influence of the Gospel, desired to dress themselves with something like decency, whereas the inexorable rule was that neither man nor woman of that caste was to clothe the body above the waist or below the knee.

In Burma, though there is no caste, the sumptuary laws were stringently carried out. The title “Thootay” (rich man) was enjoyed only under royal edict. For funerals five different degrees of rank were all minutely laid down, and the state and show must be accordingly. The umbrella question was regarded as a most vital and important one. In the matter of the use of that great emblem of dignity minute directions were issued and observed. Gilt umbrellas especially were only for the chosen few. The white umbrella no one must assume but the king and the Lord White Elephant. Under Burmese rule any one appearing in public under a white umbrella would have had to answer for it. Where in English we should say “the throne,” or “the crown,” as the emblem of royalty, in Burmese literature it would be “the white umbrella and the palace.”

I remember on one occasion unwittingly making what, in Burmese times, would have been a serious breach in my manners, and it shows how easy it is to do that in an Eastern country. It was at Pagán, a town on the Irrawaddy. Happening to be there one day when the Chief Commissioner of Burma, the representative of our Queen-Empress, was expected, I went down to the river bank, where many Burmans were assembled to see him, and do him honour as he landed from the steamer. The day was bright and the sun very hot, and as usual I put up an umbrella I always carried with me, of the ordinary English alpaca, but with a *white cover*, for additional protection from the sun's rays. I saw the Burmans looking and making remarks, but being in

blissful forgetfulness that I was holding an umbrella at the time, I never thought it referred to me, until suddenly I remembered that there was I, in the presence of the representative of royalty, assuming the white umbrella, and, according to Burmese etiquette, guilty of something approaching to high treason! I hauled down my flag *at once*.

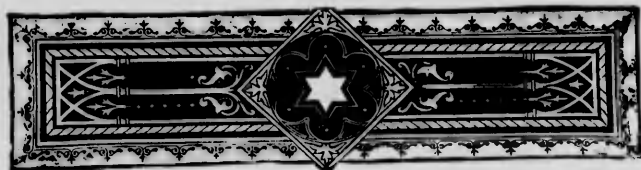
The royal titles of the King of Burma were perhaps the most pompous and pretentious of any monarch—"His most glorious and excellent Majesty, Lord of the Tshaddau, King of Elephants, Master of many White Elephants, Lord of the Mines of gold, silver, rubies, amber, and the noble serpentine, Sovereign of the empires of Thuna-paranta and Tampadipa, and other great empires and countries, and of all the Umbrella-wearing Chiefs, the Supporter of Religion, the Sun-descended Monarch, Arbiter of Life, and great King of Righteousness, King of Kings, and Possessor of Boundless Dominion and Supreme Wisdom."

As may be surmised from this lengthy and extravagant title that ancient doctrine known as the divine right of kings was held in Burma out and out, without the slightest qualification or limit. Every subject was the king's born slave, with no legal right to any property. The king was the absolute master of the lives, the liberties, the property, and the very labour of his subjects. There was little or no private ownership of land; the land belonged to the king. The cultivators were merely the king's tenants, raising produce for his benefit, he graciously allowing them to have some of the produce for their own support.

But there is a principle of compensation running through all human affairs, and even absolute monarchs cannot have things all their own way; and a throne is not always a bed of roses. The more grinding the despotism the greater the danger of revolution. Hence the only real limit to the power of the king was his dread of assassination, and this was a very real and well-grounded fear, especially in the case of a ruler like King Theebaw, with a faulty title and with no natural ability for wielding power. The King of Burma was little better than a prisoner in his own spacious palace and grounds, for he could scarcely ever leave them, for fear of the palace, and the arsenal close by, being seized

in his absence by some pretender to the throne. If that should happen there was small chance of his recovering them. The chief cause of the king's insecurity was the unbridled polygamy of the Burmese court. This resulted in crowds of queens, princes and princesses, all possible claimants to the throne, and it sometimes happened, as in the case of King Theebaw, that there was no rest for him till most of them were put to death.

The Burmese Government was throughout characterised by oppression and misrule. No fixed salaries were paid to officials, but princes, ministers, queens, concubines and favourites were supported by the grant of a province, and known by the title of "Myo-tsa" (province-eater), a title which only too aptly indicated its own meaning. It was the policy of the Myo-tsa to squeeze as much revenue as he could out of the people, in order to pay the required amount at Mandalay and *to pay himself*. Subordinate to the province-eater came the functionaries in charge of circles of villages, and then of the individual villages; and in each case it was the same thing, all intent on making as much as they could out of it. This was with regard to the tax levied on each family or house. The same primitive and essentially vicious methods applied to the other items of taxation—viz., that on produce, fees on law cases, and occasionally, extraordinary contributions to Government for special needs—gave rise to the same kind of fleecing of the people. Towards the end of King Theebaw's reign things grew worse and worse. The sale of monopolies became very common, and state lotteries for the benefit of the revenue did great harm amongst a people naturally fond of gambling. When at last Burmese rule came to an end it was a clearing away of much that was rotten and hopelessly out of date, and on the whole it was a great blessing to the people to substitute for it British rule.



#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### *BURMESE HOME LIFE.*

THE Countess of Dufferin's fund for the training of female nurses in midwifery, for the benefit of women in the East, is nowhere more sorely needed than it is in Burma, for there are among the Burmans, in connection with that critical period, usages that render some more enlightened method of treatment urgently to be desired. Immediately on the birth of the child, it is the earnest endeavour of those in charge to place the mother as near as possible to a very large fire. Hot bricks are applied, rugs and blankets are piled upon her, irrespective of the state of the weather, in a country where for two months of the year the thermometer stands at  $110^{\circ}$  in the shade of the verandah. This continues for seven days, and is with a view to dispel the noxious humours supposed to be generated. This treatment, in addition to the drinking of much medicine at the same time, renders that crisis of life more than usually hazardous to the mother.

The boy goes to the monastery school as soon as he is able to learn, and is there taught to read and write, and is initiated into the teachings of Buddhism. He learns the five universal commandments, the five subsidiary rules, and the Pali formulæ used at the pagoda worship. At the monastery he is made familiar, at the most susceptible period of his life, with the routine of the life of the monks, learning, amongst other things, idleness as a fine art, and he is taught to look upon the condition of the monk as the holiest man can attain in this life. If I were asked which I considered the strongest point Buddhism holds in the midst of the Burmese



"EVERY BURMAN YOUTH, AS HE GROWS UP, IS TATTOOED FROM THE WAIST, TO THE KNEES."

people, I should at once lay my finger on this—the influence of the monastery school on the boys. There can be no doubt that before any great inroads can be made upon Buddhism—before Christianity can have a fair chance of success—the missionary will have to enter into an honourable competition with the monastery schools. These are days of competition. He will have to provide a better and a wider system of vernacular elementary education than the people can get at present, and by providing a better article, he can attract the people to him. Let him fearlessly permeate the teaching through and through with *Christian truth* (not anti-Buddhism), and he will find that will not lessen, but increase, his popularity. In all Oriental lands the heathen instruction of the indigenous schools is a hindrance to Christianity, but I know of no country where it is more so than in Burma.

Every Burman youth, as he grows up, is tattooed from the waist to the knees.\* It is considered an indispensable token of manliness for the thighs to be completely covered with various figures of birds, animals, scrolls and letters. This tattooing would be too painful if done all at once. It is done little by little. Besides this universal method of tattooing, other styles are followed. Sometimes the chest is covered with cabalistic squares and symbols in vermilion, in connection with which many foolish superstitions are entertained. The Burmans have a great notion of some kinds of tattooing as special preservatives against wounds from bullets and sword cuts, and as a means of warding off the evils, and securing the advantages, of life. There was a great deal of this in the troublous times through which we passed after the annexation, and until the country settled down. Many of the dacoit leaders made use of this method to increase the confidence of their followers, by making them invulnerable; but not

\* Lest the reader should get the impression, from the accompanying illustration, that the tattooing appears white on the person, it may be well to explain that the real colour is a very dark blue. The photographer, fully alive to the resources of science, in order to oblige us with a better view of the subject, induced the youth to smear the tattooing plentifully with oil, with the result that the bright shining of the sun on the glistening, dark-blue pattern brought it out white!

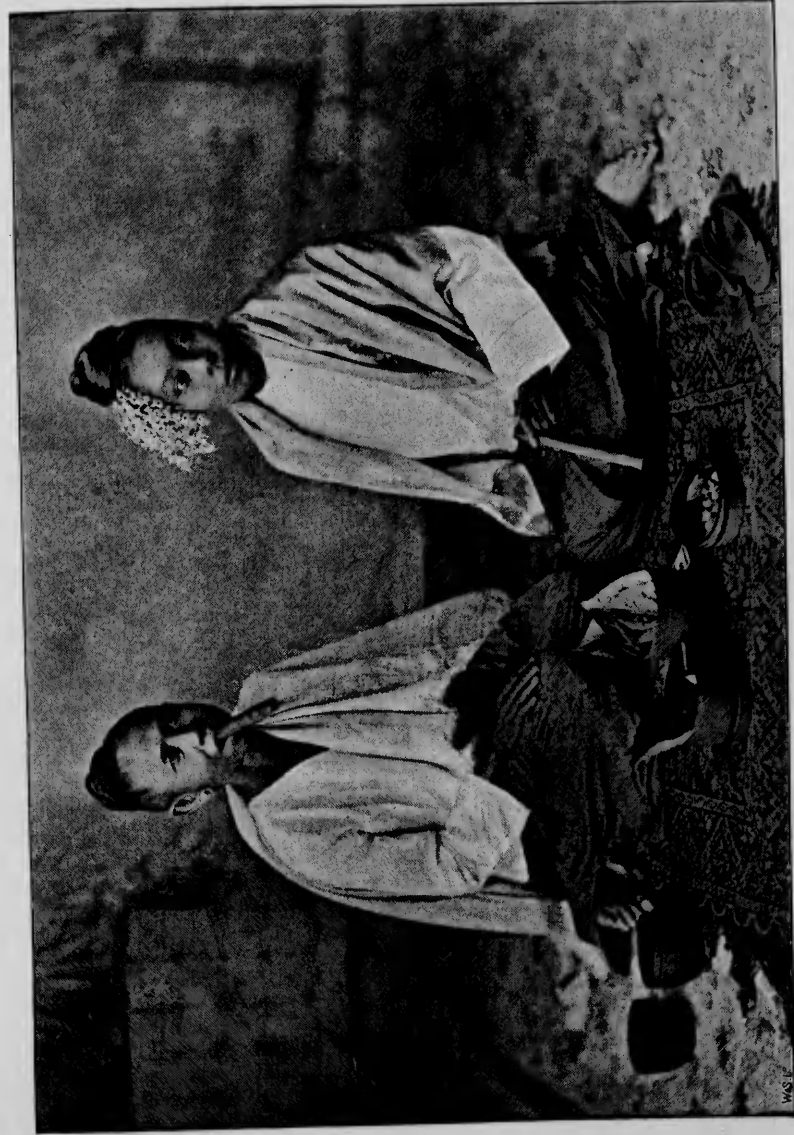
a few who put their trust in this defence found themselves mistaken.

Then there are talismans specially used by Burman dacoits, consisting of charmed or consecrated objects, inserted under their skin, and embedded permanently between the skin and the flesh. Many famed dacoits have long rows of them on their chests.

It is a sign of the ability of this people to take up new ideas, that the Burman tattooers have lately taken to pushing business amongst the English soldiers, who, as a class, are very fond of being decorated in this way. For this purpose these artists have had the tact to leave the patterns fashionable amongst their own countrymen, and have taken to imitating English pictures, devices and emblems. Many a "time-expired" soldier who has served in Burma, now in England, is able to show these decorations (?) on his arms and chest in more than one colour.

The Burmans are a nation of smokers. The children begin at a very tender age, and are not checked. Men, women and children smoke; the most dignified of matrons and the smartest of young damsels not only smoke, but prefer to have their portraits taken cheroot in hand. The Burman can never bring himself to look upon his cigar as out of place, even in the most august presence; it seems a part of himself. If he should drop in to a Christian service he will light up, if you will allow him, as he sits to hear the address.

The staple food of the Burmans is boiled rice, and curry made of vegetables stewed, with the addition of condiments, and meat or fish, if they can get it. Though they are very scrupulous themselves about taking any animal life, they are not at all averse to animal food. Did not the Buddha eat flesh? His last illness is said to have been caused, in extreme age, by a meal of pork, which disagreed with him. The Burmans are coarse feeders. They will readily eat that which has died of itself. We had direct evidence of that one day, when two of us were travelling, and arrived in the evening at a village. A military convoy of elephants, mules and ponies carrying stores, had that day passed through the village, and one of the ponies had died there,



"THE MOST DIGNIFIED OF MATRONS AND THE SMARTEST OF YOUNG DAMSELS NOT ONLY SMOKE, BUT PREFER TO HAVE THEIR PORTRAITS TAKEN CHEROOT IN HAND."

and was lying by the roadside. Next day we met the people carrying portions of the flesh, and on inquiry, they told us it was that same pony, and that they were going to eat it. On our return the whole of it was cleared away. Even snakes and lizards do not come amiss to them.

They are exceedingly fond of a condiment of fish paste called *ngapee*. This is fish dried a little in the sun, salted, and then mashed to a pulp. As the fish for *ngapee* is not properly cured, the effluvia emitted from it is particularly obnoxious, and can be detected a very long way off. The smell might be described as strong, pungent, high; but none of these adjectives serves properly to characterise it. Having never ventured to eat any I cannot describe the taste. Yet this fish paste is so liked by the Burmans that a meal is hardly complete without it. It gives the food a relish.

The Burmans clothe themselves in very bright colours, and in good taste as regards the harmony of the colours. A good deal of what they wear, both silk and cotton cloth, is locally manufactured. The weavers and dyers have some exquisite shades of pink, of red, of primrose, of navy blue, and other colours. They spend more on dress than the natives of India, and less on jewellery. Many of the people wear silk. The women dress their fine, luxuriant jet-black hair very tastefully. It is combed up from all sides very neatly, and made into a coil on the crown of the head. They wear no headdress but a bunch or wreath of flowers. That the Burmans cannot be considered an uncivilised race is clear from the perfect familiarity of their ladies with the mystery of the chignon, and with the manufacture and use of cosmetics for the improvement of the complexion, to say nothing of scents and artificial flowers, also locally made.

The Burmans have some taste, too, in music. They have a fair ear, pick up English tunes without difficulty, and sing them sweetly. Their musical instruments are primitive, and not very elaborate. They have a kind of pipe or clarinet, also a kind of trumpet; but they are greatest in drums. A performer on the drums will have around him in a circle something like a dozen, of different sizes, and varying in pitch, so that he can



almost play a tune on them. For private instrumental solos they have a kind of dulcimer, made of strips of bamboo, which is wonderfully musical and rich in tone, especially considering the material it is made from. It seems strange that the Karens should so excel their neighbours, the other races of Burma, in the capacity for music, especially when we consider that civilisation came to the Karens so late. The relative aptitude for music amongst the different races of the earth, from all one can learn, seems to hinge on something other than the mere extent of the civilisation attained. What does it depend upon?

The Burman artists paint a good many pictures, judging by the great numbers offered for sale and hawked round. The pictures are mostly palace scenes, with kings and queens seated stiffly in state, receiving company, with courtiers standing round, and soldiers posted here and there. Latterly, Thomas Atkins, of the British Infantry, has been the approved type of the soldiery; perhaps with a view to a better sale for the pictures. The artists are adventurous, and willing to attempt anything, and they do not spare the colours, but the pictures are very stiff and the perspective is bad.

The frescoes at the Arakan pagoda in Mandalay, representing the eight hells of Buddhism, are for many reasons a curious study. Those pictures are more of a success from the standpoint of dogmatic theology than from that of high art. The scenes depicted are realistic and definite beyond any manner of doubt. The artist, one would think, had made up his mind to be very "faithful" with us, and to shrink not from depicting what he considered the truth on the subject. Human beings are there seen writhing in torturing fire, fixed on thorns, torn by dogs, dragged by black monsters in human form, thrown by them into torments with pitchforks, or starving by inches, with every bone in their bodies showing, and with faces of unutterable woe. One wretch is represented attempting to climb a tree, his brains being picked out by a bird from above, and his feet being torn off by dogs from beneath; another is seated on the ground, while two men are sawing him in halves, right through the head downwards, the blood all the while flowing in gallons! In one instance, the head,

having been entirely severed from the body, is looking on in consternation at the rest of the body being chopped up.

In the matter of sculpture, the numerous marble images of Gautama (Buddha) show considerable ability in execution, especially in the faces, which show regularity of features and true likeness to the human face, as well as the correct expression of calm meditation appropriate to the Buddha; but there is much room for improvement in the general design, and for accuracy and variety in the various details. But we must remember that the sculptor of a Gautama is bound down by conventional canons of taste as to the postures, and as to the expression of the face, which he may not depart from.

In wood-carving, where there is scope for taste and fancy, we get from the Burman really wonderful results. There is nothing in which they excel more than in this, whether it be in the way of small delicate work in picture frames, brackets, and other articles of small and beautiful workmanship, or in the numerous elaborate adornments of the monastery buildings. Many of the more noted monasteries are quite a study of sumptuous carving in teak wood, the whole building in many cases being one mass of scrolls and decorations, with many well-executed figures of men, cattle, horses and supernatural creatures. In the case of some monasteries whole histories are depicted in the carvings.

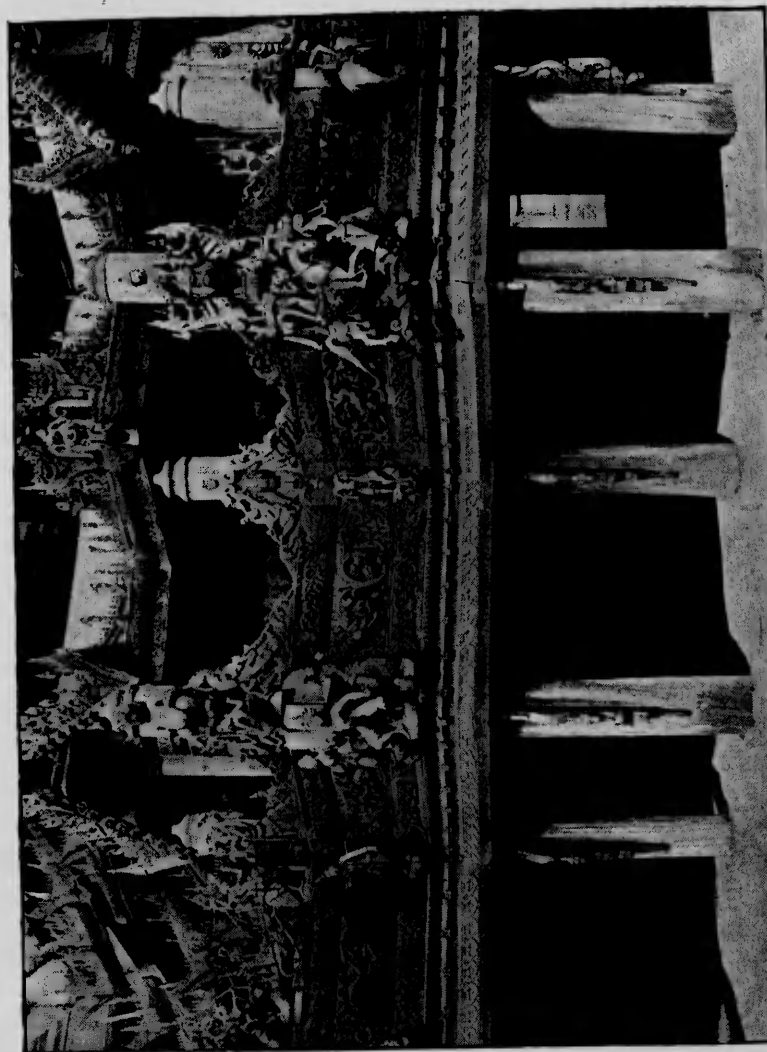
Marriage amongst the Burmans is not a very close bond. It is a civil institution, and altogether non-religious, and divorce for trifling causes is common and easy. I know a well-to-do couple who had been married for some years, and lived happily; but at length a difference of opinion unfortunately arose between them, and a quarrel ensued about a mere trifle, affecting the expenditure of a sum not more than a shilling, and after the quarrel they calmly agreed to separate, on the ground of incompatibility of dispositions. Many a man has had several wives, one after another, and parted with them successively. In case of the dissolution of a marriage, the woman retains whatever property she possessed before marriage, together with what she may have gained by her own separate exertions, or inherited.

Polygamy is sanctioned by usage, but is not very common, as it

is costly; concubinage is by no means uncommon. The wealthy, such as ministers of state and men in high position, usually kept more than one wife. The king was the worst offender in this respect, for he set a very bad example. King Mindohn, the last king but one, had fifty-three recognised wives, of whom thirty-seven survived him, besides numerous concubines; and he had one hundred and ten children, of whom fifty survived him. He himself, however, in conversation with the English envoy, deplored this bad custom, as productive of much intrigue, revolution and bloodshed in the palace. There was sad confirmation of this after his death, in the two fearful massacres during the reign of King Theebaw, that cut off nearly all the surviving members of the royal family, besides many other innocent persons.

One very peculiar and unseemly custom was for the reigning monarch to espouse, as his principal queen, one of the royal princesses, who was therefore his half-sister. It is undoubtedly a blessing for Burma that such a rule, so hopelessly corrupt and demoralising to the nation, so incompetent to keep order, and so determinedly Oriental, conservative and out of date, has become a thing of the past.

The position of woman in Burma, notwithstanding the blemishes on their social system, is not nearly so downtrodden and degraded as in most Eastern countries. This undoubtedly arises from the fact that there are no zenanas among the Burmans, no keeping of women shut up. They are as free to come and go, and take part in the business of life, as women are in England, and they avail themselves of their liberty, and take a very considerable share in the business that is done. In money matters in the family they have always enjoyed an equality with the other sex, which was only of late years accorded to women in England; that is, the power to retain in their own right for themselves and their heirs the property they possessed before, or gained after, marriage. As the women, as a general rule in Burma, are far more industrious than the men, and quite as shrewd and businesslike, this tends towards maintaining a healthy sense of equality with the other sex. If a man has a managing wife who can run a stall in the market, or greatly assist in supporting the family by keeping a shop at



"MANY OF THE MORE NOTED MONASTERIES ARE QUITE A STUDY OF SUMPTUOUS CARVING IN TEAK WOOD."

home, as is very often the case, the husband will think twice before he leaves her, or provokes her to leave him. The wife and mother sits by, and gives her opinion on things in general, in the family conclave, and hen-pecked husbands are not unknown in Burma.

The Burmans are very fond of games. They have an excellent game of football which they very often play, but it is a very different thing from the rough game known in England by that name. English football is too violent an exercise for that climate. It is more on the principle of shuttlecock. Six or eight young men stand around in a circle, with their garments tucked up so as not to impede their movements. A light, hollow wickerwork ball is started by one of them, and the object of the game is to keep it going as long as possible. They must not touch the ball with the hand, but they show great skill and activity in catching it with the foot, either side of the ankle, the heel, the toe, the knee, the shoulder. It is a clever stroke to leap up two or three feet into the air, and meet and kick the ball with the heel, as it is descending; one still more difficult is to leap up, catch the ball between the feet, and jerk it up again into the air before reaching the ground. Each player takes the ball when it is tossed over into his vicinity, and he may keep it going any number of times, before kicking it off across to the other side of the circle. Few games are better calculated to exercise the limbs and render the young men strong on their feet than this.

Boat-racing is another very favourite national amusement. In the racing boats are many rowers, with short paddles, and the races are scenes of wild excitement, both on the part of the competitors and spectators. There is a good deal of betting in connection with these races. The gambling spirit easily takes hold of the Burmans. All games of chance have a great fascination with this excitable, volatile people, and they fall an easy prey to the low, cunning Chinaman, who makes it his business to introduce gambling into the village, and to profit by it.

The Burmans are also exceedingly fond of the drama. For every conceivable event that can by any ingenuity be made a special occasion, there must be what is called a *puwè*. I have

known a *puè* in honour of a birth, and I have known one given to celebrate a death—the execution of a noted dacoit leader, who had been a great curse to the neighbourhood, and had long defied justice—and for almost any occasion occupying an intermediate position between the two, one of these dramatic performances would not be out of place. There are no permanent buildings used as theatres. The performance takes place in the open street. The temporary erection used as the stage is constructed of the useful and indispensable bamboo. It is set up in the street, and extends frequently halfway across it. The rest of the thoroughfare is blocked up with the couches the spectators bring from their homes to sit upon; and traffic is almost suspended in that direction for the time being. All this preparation takes place during the day. The play begins after dark, and goes on until towards sunrise. Temporary stalls for the sale of food are set up at the edge of the crowd, and the people by hundreds make a night of it. The dramas are founded on tales which Gautama (Buddha) told of his five hundred and ten previous existences, or on events in the lives of kings and heroes. The dialogue is chiefly recitative, interspersed with solos, choruses and dancing. Instrumental music accompanies the singing. There is always the clown or jester on these occasions, who has his turn in the course of the performance, and roars of laughter greet the broad jokes he furnishes. The whole performance is free. The custom is for some person to hire the players, and bear the expense of the entertainment, inviting his friends, and throwing it open to all. Pickled tea is handed round among the guests on these occasions as a kind of dessert, mixed with salt, garlic, assafœtida and a few grains of millet seed. It has an anti-soporific effect, and so serves to keep them awake, to listen to the drama.

The Burman is a firm believer in amusement, in relaxation, in holidays. He sees no good in a too strenuous and incessant application to the serious business of life. He likes to take life easily, and to see plenty of change. Even his religious duties usually blend amusement with the seeking after merit. The numerous festivals and religious observances serve for frequent holidays, and whatever he may fancy in the way of diversion. The

Burman is indolent, casual, unstable and uncertain, and not to be depended upon. He does not readily conform to discipline or restraint, and it is found very difficult to make a soldier or a policeman of him. It is difficult to get him into a routine of any kind. He makes a very indifferent servant. In Burma the British Government cannot depend upon Burmans in the constitution of the police force, but finds it necessary to man the greater part of the police ranks with natives of India, enlisted chiefly from among the fighting races of the Punjab.

In mitigation of the indictment against the Burman that he is loose, careless and lazy, it is urged that he is fettered by the multiplicity of lucky and unlucky days, and various astrological difficulties, which we do not appreciate. But when every allowance is made for these things, it must be found a true bill against him. This is one of the weak points in his character.

Even in school life this feature of the national character abundantly manifests itself. The boys, instead of keeping to one school, are fond of attending school after school, changing from one to another, until they have gone the round of all within their reach, when they will start to go the round again. One might almost suppose they thought there was a school where they could learn by magic, and that they were in search of that school. Such a crying evil has this become in Burma, that stringent rules have had to be framed by the Department of Public Instruction to check this incessant migration.

If the Burman has the faults of a careless, happy-go-lucky race, he has the virtues also. He has been called the Irishman of the East. His manners have the ease and the polish of a "gentleman born." He is most affable and approachable, and in religion tolerant of the opinions of others. He is hospitable, and will help the destitute stranger without making too many inquiries. I met one day in Mandalay an English sailor, who had made his way up from Rangoon with another man. They had done the last two hundred miles on foot. They were both quite destitute, and yet they had travelled all that distance, for the most part of it far from any Englishman, and that, too, when the country was in a most disturbed state on account of dacoits,

and without knowing a word of Burmese. They had simply passed on from village to village, their wants being supplied by the Burmans where they halted. That this should have been possible speaks well for the kind-hearted hospitality of the Burmans.

If it is one of the marks of a gentleman to be able in an easy and natural manner to place himself on a level with you, the Burman has this in a high degree. The native of India makes a twofold mistake here. His outlandish notions of etiquette lead him to cringe and crouch before the European, to an extent which is sometimes offensive, whilst at the same time his caste leads him in his heart of hearts to hold himself immeasurably above him. The Burman makes neither of these mistakes. With fine tact he steers a medium course, and ranges himself alongside.

The first Burmese servant I had, a typical Burman, was a fine illustration of this capacity of the race to "make themselves at home" with the foreigner. He did me the honour to take a fancy to my tooth brush. I was not aware of it. He did not purloin it, he only made use of it. The way it came to light was the discovery of him one day, standing before the looking-glass, in the act of using the implement in the orthodox manner. How long the two of us had been using the tooth brush conjointly I cannot say, for I never cared to inquire. I preferred to think it was only that once! He had it to himself ever after.

A story is told that aptly illustrates that buoyancy of temperament which constitutes one feature of the Burmese easy-going character. Some years ago a fire occurred in Mandalay—no uncommon thing. Amongst the bamboo houses it spread with terrible swiftness, until a large number were destroyed. Yet the very next evening they were observed to have rigged up a rude stage among the charred stumps of their house posts, and they spent the night in witnessing one of their dramatic performances, and laughing heartily as usual at the jests of the clown. Few people would have had the heart to go through with that *pwè* under the circumstances.

With a rich country, a sparse population, and a warm climate,

the conditions of life are easy. The Burman has no struggle to get a living. Riches have little attraction for him. He has no desire to hoard. What he has to spare he spends, either in building a monastery, or a pagoda, or on some humbler work of merit which shall secure him an advantage in the next birth.



## CHAPTER XV.

### *A TRUE IDEAL MISSIONARY AND A FALSE MISSIONARY IDEAL.*

THE American Baptist Mission is the oldest Protestant mission working in Burma. It was commenced by Dr. Judson in Rangoon in 1813, and has expanded in Lower Burma to a large and strong mission, having had very signal and rapid success amongst the Karen races, and to a fair extent amongst the Burmans also. As far back as 1824, Dr. Judson, wishing to extend the work to Upper Burma, went up the Irrawaddy and opened a mission at Ava, which was then the capital. Ava is situated about ten or twelve miles from Mandalay, and is now quite an insignificant village, with the remains of the royal city and palace still to be seen. Mandalay, of course, did not at that time exist as a town. Unfortunately, the first Burmese war with England took place whilst Judson was at Ava, and completely broke up the work he had begun to do in the capital, and Judson was imprisoned, together with the few European and American residents, at Ava.

For a year and ten months he was kept in rigorous confinement, under circumstances of great barbarity, first at Ava, and afterwards at the village of Oung-pen-la, which is only about two miles from Mandalay. I have often been to Oung-pen-la, a typical Burmese agricultural village, surrounded by rice fields, which are irrigated from the great Oung-pen-la lake, close by. The site of the old prison is still pointed out by the villagers, but the building itself has been removed, and, being of teak, has left

no trace behind. Seldom have the annals of missions furnished a more pathetic narrative of suffering than this.

"On the 8th of June," wrote Mrs. Judson, "just as we were preparing for dinner, in rushed an officer, holding a black book, with a dozen Burmans, accompanied by *one*, who from his spotted face we knew to be an executioner, and a 'son of the prison.' 'Where is the teacher?' was the first inquiry. Mr. Judson presented himself. 'You are called by the king,' said the officer, —a form of speech always used when about to arrest a criminal. The spotted man instantly seized Mr. Judson, threw him on the floor, and produced the small cord, the instrument of torture."

With this the prisoner was bound and dragged off to the court house, where the governor of the city and the officers were collected, and one of them read the order of the king, to commit Mr. Judson to the death-prison. He was suspected of being in communication with the English, with whom they were at war, though of course he had nothing to do with them.

This was the beginning of his long imprisonment. Whilst in prison Judson suffered much. He was loaded with fetters, which left their marks on his limbs till the day of his death. He was placed in the common prison, amidst dirt and noisome smells, in charge of ferocious jailers, who had to be continually plied with presents to secure for him the very necessaries of existence. At night it was the custom to secure the safe keeping of the prisoners by enclosing their feet in a kind of stocks, several of them in a row, the stocks being then hoisted up into the air a little way, so that the feet were elevated higher than the head, which must have caused great pain and inconvenience. During a great part of the time of this captivity the prisoners were in a state of dreadful suspense, not knowing whether they might not be put to death any day or hour. More than once the design was formed to kill them, but by the Providence of God that intention was never carried out.

The death-prison was constructed of boards, and was rather stronger than a common Burman dwelling-house. There were no windows nor other means of admitting the air, except by such crevices as always exist in a simple board house, and only one small

outer door. What must have been their state with one hundred prisoners of all classes huddled together, including the worst of criminals, all shut up in one room, loaded with fetters, in the sweltering heat of the hot season of Upper Burma, where the thermometer rises every day to 110° in the shade? Prisoners were continually dying of disease, as well as by violent treatment, and yet the place was always full. Several sepoys, and occasionally English soldiers, prisoners of war, swelled the lists of the miserable. These poor creatures, having no regular supply of food, were often brought to the very verge of starvation; and then, on some worship day, the women would come, as a work of charity, to the prison with rice and fruit, and the miserable sufferers, maddened by starvation, would eat and die.

Suddenly, in May, the very hottest month of the year, when life is a burden, even with all that can be done to mitigate the effects of the climate, and when for Europeans to go out in the sun unprotected is at the peril of their lives, the prisoners were removed from the prison at Ava to Amarapoora, and after that to Oung-pen-la. They were made to walk barefoot a journey of nine miles, chained together two by two. The Burman guards, by a refinement of cruelty, instead of making the journey in the cool of the day or night, set out at eleven o'clock in the day, so that they were under the scorching sun all the time, the sand and gravel like burning coals to tread upon, first blistering their feet, and then taking the whole of the skin off. One of the European prisoners, a Greek, who when taken out of prison was in his usual health, fell down on the way, and expired in an hour or two after their arrival, doubtless from sunstroke. The others reached Oung-pen-la more dead than alive.

The sufferings of Judson's devoted wife were scarcely less severe than his own all this time, although she was not imprisoned. During all the months he lay imprisoned at Ava she was harassed with the most consuming anxiety for her husband, and had constantly to exert herself to the utmost to get him food into the prison. During that time her child was born. The removal of the prisoners to Oung-pen-la occurred when the babe was only three months old. It occurred suddenly and unknown to her

and when she found him gone, she knew not whither to go seeking him. She sent first to the place of execution, fearing the worst, but they were not there; and then she had to follow the party as best she could, finding them at last at Oung-pen-la. The very morning after their arrival there, the little Burmese girl she had with her, to help with the baby, was taken ill of smallpox, and the babe of three months took it from her. After that Mrs. Judson herself was taken seriously ill, and for two months lay helpless on a mat on the floor of the wretched little hut, where she had taken up her abode, to be near her husband in the prison. When the child recovered, the mother was unable to nurse her, so that, being deprived of her usual nourishment, the infant suffered greatly. Neither a nurse nor a drop of cow's milk could be procured in the village. However, by making presents to the jailers—nothing could be done without presents—she obtained leave for Dr. Judson to come out of prison daily, in order to carry the emaciated little creature round the village, to the houses of those women who were suckling children, and to beg them for pity's sake to give each a little, to keep the life in the child!

In this way the twenty-two weary months of his captivity passed, amidst hardships, sickness and anxiety unspeakable. At length release came. On the advance of the English army up the Irrawaddy, Dr. Judson was sent for to the Burmese camp, being then a most valuable man, to serve as interpreter and translator, and to negotiate terms of peace; and thus their long captivity came to a close.

Ardently as Judson longed to see his mission established in Upper Burma in his day, sixty years were destined to elapse before the society to which he belonged secured a permanent footing there. It was after the annexation in 1886 that work was permanently taken up by them in Mandalay. A handsome church has recently been erected there at a cost of about £3,000, by contributions from America and Burma, as a memorial of Dr. Judson, and the mission has met with a fair share of success. In addition to Mandalay, three other stations have been taken up by the American Baptist Mission in Upper Burma—viz., Sagaing,

Myingyan and Meiktila, and one medical missionary has gone to the Shan States. Bhamo was occupied previously, during King Theebaw's reign, for work amongst the Kachin tribes.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (S. P. G.) began its work in Mandalay under the comparatively favouring auspices of King Mindohn, the father and immediate predecessor of Theebaw. This monarch built for the mission, at his own cost, very commodious and handsome premises of teak wood, consisting of a church, a mission house, and a school, which still remain. In the church is a handsome font, the appropriate gift of Queen Victoria to this church, built by the munificence of a heathen king! Theebaw, when a boy, was a pupil in that school, and there was no thought then of his succeeding to the throne. He made very little progress with English study, though he had a good reputation for Buddhist lore.

Owing to the massacres and other grievous disorders of Theebaw's reign, the mission had to be closed for several years, the missionaries, along with all the other English residents, having to leave Mandalay. On the annexation being declared, the S. P. G. mission was reopened, and subsequently another station was opened at Shwebo, and these two stations, with a sub-station at Madeya, have experienced a fair share of prosperity since.

During the six years these two missions have been re-established in Upper Burma, the effects of the climate upon the health and lives of the missionaries have been very marked. Both missions have already their record of the faithful dead—mission workers, both male and female, who have fallen in the prime of life, and one before she had well begun her mission work. In both missions, too, during that time several valued workers have had to leave the country, worn down by sickness, and unable to endure the climate.

The Wesleyan Mission commenced work in Mandalay at the beginning of 1887. Up to date we number three European missionaries, two Singhalese workers (from Ceylon), and three other native preachers, and we have occupied three stations, Mandalay, Pakokku and Kyaukse. The story of our work will appear in the subsequent pages.



Singhalese.

Burman.

Tamil.

Singhalese.

Karen.



Coming now to the subject belonging to the second half of this chapter,

## THE FALSE MISSIONARY IDEAL,

I wish to deal with a matter, partly suggested by the recital of the sufferings of Judson just related, upon which something needs to be said. It has often appeared to me that there still lingers, in the minds of many people, a very erroneous ideal of missions and missionaries, which it is quite time to do away with. A recent writer has aptly expressed the notion to which I refer in these words:—

“The more barren the missionary’s lot of all comfort, the greater the degree of self-denial and privation that can be encountered, the better. What he has really undertaken is to carry the Gospel to the destitute, and so to live as to secure the longest, fullest and most complete career of usefulness along that line. But this is not the view of the malcontents; they regard him as a spectacle, an ascetic, an object lesson in self-denial. It is not so much what he does as what he suffers. The chief end is the impression which he makes on men’s minds by his self-mortification.”

This may seem at first sight rather a strong putting of the case, but I think it will be apparent, as we proceed, that it is nearer the popular notion than the reader may at first be prepared to admit. The first witness I will cite is John G. Paton, missionary to the New Hebrides. If the reader has not yet read his book, let me urge him to do so without delay. In the earlier days of his missionary life on the island of Tanna, he passed through a period of almost unexampled trial from the brutal savagery of the natives, owing to the fact that there was no such thing as law, justice, or protection of any kind to be obtained. His trials were such as few men could have endured, and lived. The people were utterly uncivilised, bloodthirsty, quarrelsome, superstitious and vindictive. Human life was scarcely of any value among them, and they were cannibals. His life was attempted times without number. Other missionaries and native Christian teachers were murdered, and done to death by them one way or

another, and how he escaped death amongst them seems nothing short of miraculous.

At length a crisis more acute than usual came, and the wicked and superstitious malice of the Tannese broke out against him to such a degree that he was driven out of the island, all his property was looted, and he barely escaped with his life. In his distress he went over to Australia to recruit his health, which must have needed it after such a strain. Of what occurred there I quote his own statement:—

“Some unsophisticated souls who read these pages will be astonished to learn, but others who know more of the heartless selfishness of human creatures will be quite prepared to hear, that my leaving Tanna was not a little criticised, and a great deal of nonsense was written, even in Church magazines, about the breaking up of the Mission. All such criticism came, of course, from men who were themselves destitute of sympathy, and who probably never endured one pang for Jesus in all their comfortable lives. Conscious that I had, to the last inch of life, tried to do my duty, I left all results in the hands of my only Lord, and all criticisms to His unerring judgment. Hard things also were occasionally spoken to my face. One dear friend, for instance, said, ‘You should not have left. You should have stood at the post of duty till you fell. It would have been to your honour, and better for the cause of the Mission, had you been killed at the post of duty like the Gordons and others.’

“I replied, ‘I regard it as a greater honour to live and to work for Jesus than to be a self-made martyr. God knows that I did not refuse to die; for I stood at the post of duty, amid difficulty and danger, till all hope had fled, till everything I had was lost, and till God, in answer to prayer, sent a means of escape. I left with a clear conscience, knowing that in doing so I was following God’s leading, and serving the Mission too. To have remained longer would have been to incur the guilt of self-murder in the sight of God.’”

These sentiments, especially the words I have italicised, do honour alike to Paton’s devotion and to his common sense, and they are a just rebuke of a very false ideal.

Happening to take up one day an influential religious newspaper, I met with a notice of John G. Paton’s book, which spoke in very high terms of it, and of him, concluding with the following sentence, in which the editor most innocently and unconsciously brings up in another form this same false ideal, even after reading the book; which shows how prevalent the error is, and difficult to eradicate. “Now that civilisation is spreading, and owing to the general extension of facilities for travel to every part of the earth, it is to be feared that such records of missionary experience will soon be amongst the things of the past.” “It is to be feared” say the stay-at-home people, and editors in easy chairs. Any missionary, especially Paton himself, would have said, “It is to be hoped.” If the reader will but ponder that word “feared,” and take in all that it means, he will see that it is the very notion Paton complains of, and that I am here seeking to correct.

We still need to take to heart Dr. Johnson’s exhortation to “clear our minds of cant.” After praying times without number that cannibalism, and all the cruel horrors and barbarities of heathenism might come to an end, we are found *fearing* that our prayer is so near being answered, that soon there will be no more such tales to tell!

The immense wave of sympathy that was evoked through the lamented illness and death of Father Damien, and which spread throughout the civilised world, was another proof of the prevalence of the “object lesson” ideal of the missionary. Missionaries had been at work succouring and tending lepers for many years before that, and a noble society, the Mission to Lepers, established in 1874, has now some thirty homes for lepers under its care, in India, Burma and China, under the management of twelve different Protestant missionary societies. But all this *work* goes on in comparative obscurity, the whole of it together not attracting one hundredth part of the sympathy and notice that this one case of *suffering* attracted. Father Damien *died of leprosy*. “*This, THIS* is what we want; this touches our hearts and our pockets,” cries out universal Christendom. It seems it is not mission work but missionary sufferings the people want to hear about. A false ideal.

A further proof how widespread is this notion will appear from a recent article in the March number of the *Missionary Review of the World* for the year 1892. The writer states it as frankly as words and repetition can express it, quite unconscious that there is anything wrong about it. The article is on "Missionary Fellowship." It is not written by a missionary; no missionary could possibly write such rank nonsense. This is what he says: "Suffering, after all, is the test of missionary character. . . . It is not so much what the missionary does as what he is, and what he is can be shown only by *suffering* for the Gospel's sake." He goes on to say that it is Judson's and his wife's sufferings in Burma, more than their missionary labours, that "canonise them as martyrs of modern missions"; and there is a good deal more "high falutin'" of the same kind.

To my mind this is a false and absurd ideal—mischievously false. Men have gone on thinking it, and occasionally saying it, until they fail to see the falsity and absurdity; but if we think for a moment we must admit that the Bible tells us that every missionary's *work*, every Christian's *work*, must be the test of the man, and not his sufferings, and gives no countenance whatever to this error. Our sufferings are matters for which we are not personally answerable in any way, except as we may cause them ourselves; otherwise they are beyond our control, and can be therefore no test of the man. Judson would have been one of the very greatest of missionaries, all the same, if he had never seen the inside of a Burmese prison. His lifetime of earnest evangelistic labours, his Burmese Bible, his two dictionaries, his Burmese grammar, his other precious literary remains, and the many souls saved through his instrumentality, and long since gone to glory—these are the enduring monuments that entitle him to our reverence, and constitute that bright example which some of us are humbly trying to follow. His sufferings were indeed severe, but to dwell upon them, and laud them as being of far more importance than his work, not only does an injustice to the memory of the man himself, but it feeds a false ideal, and keeps from view the real purpose for which we go to the heathen.

The sooner we give up this nonsense *entirely*, and take our stand upon truth and common sense, the sooner shall we find the sound, and only sure basis for that increase of missionary enthusiasm, which is so much needed at the present time. So long as our enthusiasm is based upon any such shadowy and precarious foundation as the sufferings of missionaries, whether supposed or real, so long will the results disappoint us.

But there is a further objection against this false ideal, on the ground that abroad, in the mission field, it gives rise to a powerful and subtle temptation in some minds, and leads to waste of precious power. In most mission fields the hardness of the hearts of many of the heathen, and the deep sense of isolation from the people which the missionary feels, *and which is inevitable* from the difference of race, language and habits, are so distressing, that there are few conscientious souls that have not felt, at some time or other, a strong tendency towards an ascetic mode of life: "O! let me do this, let me do that, let me do anything, if I can only come nearer the people." There is quite enough tendency to this abroad, without its being further stimulated by a demand at home.

"But what do you mean by asceticism? Where do you draw the line?"

By asceticism I mean the deliberate—sometimes even ostentatious—cutting down of provision as to food, clothing, dwelling, and general comfort, *to a point obviously below the standard of health and efficiency*; this standard being naturally fixed at an approximation to that of the mode of life to which the missionary has previously been accustomed. My own experience of missionary life, extending over nineteen years, is that I have always had to work much harder than if I had been in England, and, whilst the mode of living must needs be very plain and temperate to be healthy, the food must be nourishing, and the surroundings in a fair degree of comfort, or it will soon lead to a collapse.

I do not condemn *economy*; God forbid! No one believes in that more than I do. I entertain strong views as to the import-

ance of a *humble, simple, unostentatious manner of life*, and have always practised it. Nor do I wish to state that the missionary has no need of *self-denial*. A man cannot be even a disciple without self-denial. Without it, as a missionary he would be useless; and I may testify, in all simplicity, that I have known what it was to practise it, and have reaped the sweet and precious fruits of it. But if that hymn of Keble's is true anywhere it is true in the missionary's life—

"The trivial round, the common task,  
Will furnish all we ought to ask;  
Room to deny ourselves; a road  
To bring us, daily, nearer God."

"All we ought to ask"; missionary life with its labours, cares and anxieties, often in an exhausting climate; its frequent and sore disappointments, its loneliness, the separation from friends and children, and the special call sometimes to new and untried spheres of duty; its sense of heavy responsibility in having to stand practically alone, at the head of a band of native helpers, and to be expected to supply enthusiasm for everybody about him—these, the necessary and unavoidable trials, are the legitimate means of denying himself; and they afford infinite scope for useful, holy service, and they are quite enough, without going further afield, like Don Quixote, in search of more.

I trust my readers will bear with me whilst I give the details of some cases I have known, where honoured brethren and sisters have felt moved to attempt the ascetic method, in order that we may observe how it works.

I knew a pious devoted missionary of another Society. He was a man of decidedly ascetic life. One of the ordinary diseases of the country, not generally fatal, assailed him. His constitution, in the opinion of those best able to judge, was so weakened by his ascetic life that he could not rally, but died in the prime of life. Humanly speaking, he died before his time, and one fails to see that his death constitutes any adequate object lesson, to compensate for the loss of his active usefulness. A missionary's continued and useful life ought to be a much greater benefit to

a country than the deposit of his remains in the soil, and the example of a living worker is surely more influential than the memory of one departed.

I knew a missionary and his wife, earnest, devoted, exceedingly kind to the people, and successful. From the first of their settling in the country, their asceticism was so marked that their friends, who saw it, pleaded with them to eat more food and better food, but in vain. Being new to the country, they did not know the risks they ran. After barely two years of earnest work, ill health compelled their retirement from the field, with scarcely any prospect of ever returning. And yet there was no kind of necessity for them to live thus. They appeared to think there was some virtue in self-denial of this type, merely for its own sake.

Another case of the same kind was that of an unmarried missionary lady, with a strong natural tendency to asceticism. She was an able and diligent missionary, and well acquainted with the language. After some years of missionary life, the tendency grew upon her to such an extent, that she withdrew more and more from association with her own people, lived with none but natives, on native food, and broke off one comfort after another, until even bread was too much of a luxury! After a year or eighteen months of this ascetic life, her health broke down so completely that she had to return home to America or die.

One of our brethren in India has told us his story of a similar attempt. It was a sense of duty that urged him to come down to native diet, native dress, and general mode of life; and very loyally to this sense of duty did he persevere for many months. But, to his infinite sorrow, he found that instead of bringing him any nearer to the people, it seemed only to increase the distance; for it aroused their suspicions as to his motives for doing so. He found at length that he could have reached them better if he had moved amongst them in the ordinary way. But meanwhile the penalty of all this had come; his health so completely broke down, clearly in consequence of this method of living, that he had to leave India, and now for several years he has been laid

aside completely in England, unable to do any regular work. He is the victim of an honest, and very persistent, but mistaken attempt to live an ascetic missionary life.

As regards the wearing of the native dress, it has often been assumed that to do so must needs place a missionary more in touch with the natives. But in India it is not found that such is really the case. With the exception of the Salvation Army, this is the only case in India where I ever heard of its being attempted, and it had quite the contrary effect. I have heard that a venerable missionary *once* tried it in Burma, but the peals of laughter that greeted his appearance in the streets instantly convinced him that he could gain nothing by that method. There are probably cases where it is advisable, and even almost necessary, to assume the dress of the country. Each case should be judged upon its own merits, and it greatly depends what kind of a dress it is. In India and Burma they like to see the man be himself, and they respect you for keeping to the customs you have been brought up with.

The following is a faithful account of an heroic, but ill-judged and disastrous, missionary enterprise in Burma, in substance as I had it from the lips of one of the survivors, who paid me a visit in Mandalay, a few of the particulars being supplied by another missionary well acquainted with the facts. I wish that all my readers could have heard the touchingly simple recital, and witnessed the gentle and refined Christian bearing of this excellent brother. It is the narrative of a small mission, sent out by evangelical Christians in Denmark to the Red Karens, an independent tribe of demon worshippers, dwelling in Karennee, on the eastern frontier of Burma. My informant is a Dane. It will be observed that the bane of the whole enterprise was the ascetic idea, imbibed at home, and in this case carried out to the bitter end. The case serves to show also what a formidable difficulty to foreign evangelism we have in the mere matter of the climate.

Near the close of 1884, two young men, Danish missionaries, Hans Polvsen and Hans Jansen, arrived in Burma, with the

purpose of establishing this mission. On their arrival they looked the very picture of health. They had both been inured to hard work from their youth, and they were devout men, and entirely given up to work for the Master. Though receiving aid at first from home, they hoped soon to make the mission self-supporting. They therefore undertook to do all the manual labour themselves. Where others rode they would walk. Where others employed natives they would do their own work. They would cook their own food, and live in the simplest manner, even like the natives of the land. Had the sphere of their mission been the wilds of America, or any country at all similar in climate to their native Denmark, it would have been the right policy, and they might have succeeded. But they soon had painful proof that there are laws in Nature, from which even missionaries are not exempt; and one of these laws is that we cannot do with impunity in the tropics what we may do in the temperate zone.

Some time after their arrival, an opportunity occurred for going into Karennee, and they prepared to start for their destination. By way of preparation they gave away all their extra goods, medicines, clothing, etc., fancying that Matthew x. encouraged such a course. We cannot but place in contrast this conduct with that of a man like Livingstone. His was a self-denying work, if ever there was one; he believed in doing the work God called him to do, no matter what difficulties stood in the way. But he was no believer in asceticism—*i.e.*, needless suffering for suffering's own sake. He relates in his "Last Journals" how, when he found his medicine chest was hopelessly lost, through the carelessness of a native carrier, he felt as if his death warrant were sealed. But these people thought it right to give away their medicines and goods on leaving the confines of civilisation. Before leaving Toungoo they were faithfully warned by experienced missionaries of the American Baptist Mission, that such a course as they were entering upon, at the beginning of the rains, was exceedingly hazardous; but their notions of trust in Providence prevented them from paying any heed to this counsel.

They reached Karennee, after a rough journey over the mountains and through the jungles, and proceeded at once to put up for themselves a house, and establish the mission according to their ideas. It is difficult for any one not knowing the country to conceive how hard their lot would be. Their sufferings were extreme. Hard work and exposure, together with poor food, and only the shelter of a bamboo house, that afforded no proper protection from the pitiless rains, and damp, cold blasts, soon broke down their health. Fever, the great bane of tropical malarious regions, soon found them out. Hans Polvsen died before the rains were over, and Jansen was brought into Toungoo by the American Baptist missionaries, more dead than alive, and kindly nursed and brought round. A new party from Denmark now reached Toungoo, consisting of Knudsen, his wife, and Miss Jansen, the sister of Hans, and the four set out for Karennee. Here the former experiences were renewed; for the party had not yet learnt wisdom, even by such terrible sufferings. Soon they were all very ill. Miss Jansen died: after that a babe, born to the Knudsens after reaching Karennee, was also taken. The stricken father had to get up from his sick-bed to make the coffins. They could get no meat, no bread, no milk, none of the ordinary comforts of civilised life, nothing but an inferior kind of rice, which they could not eat when sick, and which no European could thrive and work upon, even in health. Jansen was warned by an English doctor passing through the place with troops, that he must get away from Burma, or he would soon die. He went to Toungoo again, recovered a little, and, against the earnest advice of the doctor there, who warned him that he went at the peril of his life, he determined to start on a third journey for their chosen mission field. But he never again entered Karennee. On reaching the foot of the great mountain range, he seated himself beneath the shade of a beautiful arching clump of bamboos, and there breathed out his devoted life. It is characteristic of the popular, but false ideal of the missionary life entertained by many people at home, that, as my informant put it,—for by that time his eyes were opened to see the matter in its true light,—“They were inclined to make more of the ‘heroism’

of that unwise act of returning, and *dying on the way*, than they would if he had fulfilled a long career of useful service.”

The Knudsens became so completely broken down in health that they too were compelled to leave Karennee. Thus this little mission, begun with the highest of motives, and carried on with quenchless, self-sacrificing, prayerful zeal, was entirely and hopelessly wrecked, through its adherence to ascetic principles, and had to be finally abandoned, after five years of heroic, but utterly wasted, labour and suffering, and without any appreciable impression being produced upon the natives of that region.

I shall naturally be asked, “What then about those larger missionary organisations, in different parts of the world, that put asceticism (not economy) avowedly in the forefront, as one of their leading principles?” Well, I will only say of them, in brief, that where it is asceticism as defined above, and not mere economy, facts and experiences have proved that, in the tropics, it has resulted in a far heavier death-rate, in far more total or partial failures of health, and, as human nature has its limits of endurance, in a considerable addition to the numbers in the column headed “retired from the work.” A proper deduction made from the working strength of such missions, on account of these non-effectives, would show, perhaps, that the cheapness supposed to be attained, is more apparent than real.

On one occasion it was pointed out to the great Napoleon that he was losing a great many men in a battle; he is credited with the cynical reply, “You cannot have omelettes without breaking eggs.” In like manner one at least of these organisations has said boldly, “You cannot have a war without losing soldiers.”

True; but if the greater part of this loss is clearly needless and preventable, and if it is the result of want of proper provision being made, and through the neglect of proper precautions of the most ordinary kind—then even the sacredness of the purpose does not justify the recklessness of the methods.

“Alas, that bread should be so dear!  
And flesh and blood so cheap!”

There remains only one more point which I need to mention, and that is the utter futility of the ascetic method, if it is used with any intention of impressing the Oriental mind. The utmost degree of asceticism which any European could ever think it right to adopt, in the discharge of his duties as a missionary, would, to an Oriental, fall far short of his ideal of self-denial, and would not be worth the name. A writer, with wide experience of India, has put this so well, that I may as well quote his words.

"The Hindus understand real asceticism perfectly well, and revere it as a subjugation of the flesh; and if the missionary and his wife carried out the ascetic life as Hindus understand it, lived in a hut, half or wholly naked, sought no food but what was given them, and suffered daily some visible physical pain, they might stir up the reverence which Hindus pay to those who are palpably superior to human needs. But in their eyes there is no asceticism in the life of the mean white, the Eurasian writer, or the Portuguese clerk, but only a squalor unbecoming a teacher, and one who professes, and must profess, scholarly cultivation."

I have ventured, not without due reflection, to point out in this chapter what seems to be a very false ideal of missions and missionaries. The setting up of the missionary as a spectacle, an object lesson in self-denial, may be a time-honoured institution, but it ought certainly to give way now to some more rational method of recommending this important enterprise. I do not mean to say that this mistake has been universal, or even general. Many people of knowledge and common sense have risen above it. But the evidences of this idea to be found still in prominent places at home, and the instances of it abroad, which are here cited, prove that there has been in popular thought too much leaning in that direction, and show that there is need to point out the fallacy, and the evil of it.

When the simple recital of missionary facts includes the actual experience of unusual trials and perils—as, alas! must still be the case sometimes—it will always command sympathy and attention; but to represent these things as at all comparable in importance to mission *work*, or to suppose that they essentially belong to it, is neither true nor judicious. And I have shown that, when this

tendency is yielded to in the mission field, it leads to an asceticism which produces no increase of usefulness, but a speedy termination of the missionary's labours.

NOTE.—Since writing the above chapter, an article has appeared in the *Indian Medical Record* on "Missionaries and Mortality," which is so much to the point, and from such an unexceptionable, independent, and competent source, that my readers ought to have the benefit of an extract from it:—

"We would only be just to claim for the missionary every safeguard that we apply to the lives of Europeans in other callings in India. Good, wholesome food, suitable clothing, a proper dwelling-house, and ordinary English home comforts are certainly the least that might be assured to missionaries working in India. Deprived of these vital necessities, it is no wonder that men unused to the enervating influence of the tropics, burdened with cares and anxieties in the arduous work of an Indian mission field, should rapidly succumb to conditions so trying and hostile to their constitutions.

"We have endeavoured to obtain all the information we could upon this important subject, and we are astounded, both from our own personal experience, and from reports which reach us from numerous quarters, at the fearful havoc that goes on yearly in the ranks of the various missionary bodies who labour in these foreign mission fields. We have seen scores and scores of men come to the country seemingly full of vigour and spirits, who within two or three years either die at their posts, or retire disabled temporarily, and often permanently, with enfeebled health or utterly ruined constitutions.

"From one of the statements sent us we learn that the mortality has been as high as twenty-two per cent. in a society that only finds a small portion of the monthly maintenance allowance for its missionaries. In another society that works on similar lines the death-rate is eighteen per cent. per annum. In another, in which the members work without any allowance, and are compelled to find their food, shelter, and clothing among the very poorest of the Indian people whom they seek to convert, the

mortality has been as high as thirty-two per cent. per annum; while its invalid list yields abundant evidence that its methods, while they may be praiseworthy in their ascetic simplicity, are too sacrificial to European life to justify their toleration and continuance.

“Missionary zeal and missionary enterprise have done more for India than any State effort could ever hope to accomplish, and the best work has been done by those societies which, having a due regard for the health and safety of their workers, have provided for the proper conservation and protection of their lives; and lives thus prolonged and preserved have brought with them accumulated experience, which has yielded the advantage not only of laying the foundations of lasting and useful work, but of seeing it cared for, nourished and brought to fruitful perfection by the hands that inaugurated it. Work to be productive of good in the mission fields of India must be lifelong. The short service system is both imbecile and expensive. The languages and habits of the varied peoples of this vast empire cannot be familiarised sufficiently for effective work in a few years. But to enjoy good health and to protect the lives of missionary workers, it is the bounden duty of the great religious societies of England and America to make a full and ample provision for the support and comfort of their representatives in India.”



## CHAPTER XVI.

## OUR EARLY EXPERIENCES IN THE BURMA MISSION.

I WOULD like to give the reader some intelligent idea of what it means to establish a new mission in a new country, with an elaborate religion like Buddhism in possession of the field, and difficult to dislodge.

We make our way up the Irrawaddy by one of the splendid steamers of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company, and in due time we land at Mandalay, and climb the steep bank of the river, and there we are with our few boxes, strangers in a strange land, knowing nobody belonging to the place, not a word of the Burmese language, with no mission house to turn into, no native Christians, and, worst of all, *no native helpers*. After thirteen years of very happy work in Ceylon, where we have a flourishing mission and a large staff of native helpers, it required a stout heart to face the difficulties of pioneer work, and no little faith, hope and perseverance. Especially did we miss the aid of our native brethren.

The chief value of the European missionary, and of the European generally, in the East, is in his capacity as a leader of men. Upon him devolves the initiation, and the vigorous working out, of plans of aggression, and he has to find the enthusiasm for everybody about him. But if the European is brain, and heart, and hand to the mission, his native brethren are equally indispensable as the eyes, ears, and feet. My native brother has a knowledge of his country, and of his people, and of all that is going on, extensive, accurate, and intimate beyond anything I



can ever attain unto, and he is in touch with his own people as no foreigner can ever be—no, not if he spends half a century among them. This invaluable help I greatly missed.

For some days I lodged with the Rev. J. H. Bateson in a Buddhist monastery, which had been assigned to him by the military authorities. He had arrived from England three weeks previously, in the capacity of Wesleyan Chaplain to the Upper Burma Field Force. It was one of a considerable number of buildings that had been "annexed" for the temporary accommodation of the troops, and which were afterwards handed over again to the Buddhist monks. It was a fine, substantial teak building, raised six or seven feet from the ground, with a broad verandah back and front, and consisted of three rooms. The roof was of the usual fantastic Burmese style, in triple form, and at one end it terminated in a rather tall spire; and the whole of the building, as usual with monasteries, was richly decorated with elaborate carvings in wood. Amidst some disadvantages as a residence it had one very obvious advantage, that we paid no rent for it.

The first duty lying before me was obviously to commence the study of the language, and along with that, to look about and find the best sites for establishing our mission centres, and for the first few months I gave my attention closely to those matters. Whilst I was making these preparations for laying the foundations of our future mission work amongst the natives of the country, there was abundance of work also ready to hand amongst the soldiers and other English-speaking people, congregated in a large military and civil station like Mandalay. Mr. Bateson had to undertake long journeys to other military stations at intervals, in the course of his duties as chaplain to the troops, and it fell to my lot to attend to the English congregation in his absence. I have heard and read of some missionaries who have held that it was no part of their duty, as missionaries to the heathen, to preach in English at all. But I never could see that a white skin, and the fact that a man speaks English, should be deemed to disqualify him from receiving Gospel ministrations; and I can see no reason why the time and attention given to our own countrymen need be allowed to interfere materially with the

missionary's work for the natives. It is in circumstances such as those of Upper Burma at that time, and amidst the rough experiences of pioneer life in a new country, that our countrymen most need the ministrations of the Gospel. In a heathen land



OUR FIRST HOME IN MANDALAY.

and amidst the lax morals which heathenism engenders, absent from home and friends, and, as it was then with many, *from wife and family*, and all the ordinary restraints and helps of civilised life; in some cases away for months together in lonely stations, where there were no Christian services of any kind, they were

sorely tempted to go astray, and do things they never would have done at home. I therefore gladly did what I could.

We had "parade services" for the soldiers, and other public services in English, temperance meetings, Bible classes, and devotional meetings, in quaint Burmese sacred buildings, with the images of Buddha about, wherever we could find a place quiet and convenient, for as yet we had no place of our own set apart for Christian services. Our first public Sunday services for the soldiers were held in the throne room of the royal palace, just at the foot of the throne itself. Though this did not mean much from a missionary point of view, yet it certainly furnished a strange and romantic association of ideas, to be conducting Christian worship in such a place as that, in the midst of a heathen palace, where there had been such a despotic government, and at times so much cruelty and bloodshed. Ever since that time we have had a building set apart within the palace precincts for our military services. Many of the meetings, held amidst such strange and grotesque surroundings, were owned of God to the spiritual benefit of those who attended; and some were accompanied by a solemn melting power of the Spirit, confessions of sin, and aspirations after a better life, such as I have seldom witnessed. Doubtless these services were useful in reminding many of almost forgotten truths, and in reviving blessed memories of home and youth, which, amidst the rough life of campaigning in Burma, they were too apt to forget.

It was our happiness, during those first years, never to be without some godly association amongst the officers of the garrison, and also amongst the civilians; and though there were many removals and changes, we always found some like-minded, who took pleasure in assisting in the Gospel and temperance work. They belonged to various sections and denominations of the Church of Christ, but that made no difference; we were able cordially to work together.

My colleague, Mr. Bateson, established a temporary Soldiers' Home, with a bar for the sale of food and refreshments, and convenience for reading, writing and games, in a Burmese building granted by the military authorities for the purpose in the

palace; and this proved a very welcome resort for large numbers of the soldiers, who wished to spend their evenings in a sober and rational manner. It did excellent service for a year or two, and was eventually closed for the removal of the building; a much larger and far more complete Soldiers' Institute having by that time been built and furnished by the military authorities.

Attractive as this work was in one's own language, and amongst one's own people, I felt from the first that the mission to the Burmans, though an incomparably more difficult, less inviting, and less immediately successful work, was my own most pressing duty, and the work for which I had specially come. On my arrival in Rangoon I had engaged the services of a young Burman, and brought him up to Mandalay that he might teach me Burmese, and with him I commenced the study of the language at once. But if any one imagines that a native munshee teaches as an English teacher teaches, he is greatly mistaken. For want of the ability to impart the knowledge he has, the teaching does not flow from him as from a fountain; it has to be laboriously pumped out of him, and it requires some ingenuity to find how to work that pump, and if you fail to pump, or do not pump judiciously, you get nothing. In learning any Oriental language you have, in fact, to teach yourself, using the so-called teacher in much the same way as you would use the dictionary, or any other passive repository of the necessary knowledge.

In studying Burmese, I found it necessary not only to spend as many hours as I could daily with my munshee and my books, but to go out amongst the people for the sake of learning the spoken language. Every language has some difference between its literary and its colloquial style; and it is quite possible for the foreigner to know a good deal that he reads in the books, and yet to be quite nonplussed with the ordinary talk of the people. Unless the foreigner pays attention to the colloquial, though he may in time find himself able to talk after a bookish fashion, he will be unable to make himself properly understood, and unable also to know what the people say in reply. For this reason I made a practice of going out of an evening, often with one of my children's picture books in my hand, and sitting down amongst the Burmans at

their doors, using the pictures as a means of scraping up a conversation—being myself short of words—with notebook in hand, to take down every new word or idiom I heard. As the Burmans appreciate pictures very much, I found this plan always made them talkative, and thus served my purpose as well as amusing them.

This puts me in mind of an incident which occurred about that time, at a certain Buddhist monastery, where I was in the habit of spending an hour or two of an evening, for the purpose of talking Burmese. The long guerilla war with the forces of disorder and crime was then raging, and the country generally was in a very disturbed state. Plot after plot was set on foot for creating an organised disturbance, with a view to harass the British power, and with some faint hope that they might, by a lucky chance, get the mastery. Judge of my surprise, when one morning I learnt that fifty of the ringleaders of a plot of that kind had been discovered and arrested at midnight, in that very monastery where I was in the habit of visiting. Next time the local paper appeared we were told that we had narrowly escaped such a scene of confusion and bloodshed as was common in the time of the Indian mutiny.

The choice of a site for the mission premises was the first matter to settle. It involved much going to and fro in that great city, and much weighing of advantage and disadvantage, for it was a most important question. At length a block of Government land  $5\frac{1}{2}$  acres in extent was fixed upon. I attended the sale. Several pieces of land were put up for sale before ours, and the bidding was fairly brisk. When ours was put up I made a bid; not another voice was heard; they all abstained from bidding because the land was for mission purposes, though I had said not a word on the matter to anybody, and it was knocked down to us at the merely nominal price of one hundred rupees an acre (say £7 10s.). A substantial mission house of teak was at once commenced, and at the earliest possible date we moved into it. Later on we erected on this land a Boys' Training Institution for teachers, and a Girls' Boarding School and Training Institution, and a humble beginning has thus been made in the work of training native helpers, the end of which who can predict?

For the first year we lived there we had no proper roads, and when the rainy season came on, we were separated from the rest of the world by a sea of soft, tenacious, black mud, ankle deep; and for many days I could not get either to or from the house without taking off my shoes and socks, and wading barefoot through it. But in course of time these early pioneer experiences became things of the past. Other houses were built around us, also the Government Courts and offices; good streets were made and lighted with lamps at night, and drains were dug at the sides of the roads to run off the surplus water, and things gradually got into shape.

In September 1887 two more workers arrived—two Singhalese young men, trained by our mission in South Ceylon. We do not of course contemplate permanently looking to Ceylon to supply us with men, but at the outset of the mission it seemed likely that these brethren, being from an older Christian community, and far better educated and trained than any Burmans could possibly be for years to come, would be able to render us material help in the pioneer work, and would bring to bear upon it a degree of Christian knowledge, and a maturity of Christian character and habits, far in advance of anything in Burma. These two brethren are now working in the mission with a fair measure of success, and have justified the expectation we formed of them. Their success in acquiring the language, and their consistent Christian life, as they have gone in and out amongst the people, have been a stay and a help to the work.

It was our desire from the first to begin an Anglo-vernacular school in Mandalay, as the first of a series of educational efforts. It is self-evident to the experienced eye that so long as the youth of Burma remain in the hands of the monks, in connection with the monastery schools, to learn idleness, and to have all the springs of life and thought saturated with Buddhism from their youth, the downfall of that religion will be indefinitely postponed. We must enter into friendly competition with the monastery schools, must take hold of the awakening desire for Western learning, and we must give an education so undeniably better than the monks can give that we shall thus win our way to success. I

have used, about equally, each and every kind of missionary method within my reach, and I hold no brief for the educational method; but thirteen years of mission work amongst the Hindus in Ceylon, where we have an elaborate system of religion to deal with, has shown me that, in the long run, Christian education plays quite as important a part in the conversion of the people as any other agency. The educational and evangelistic work go hand in hand, and we cannot afford to dispense with either. Educational work gives a backbone of intelligence and solidity to the mission, and to the converts; it introduces us to the most intelligent and influential classes of the people, and gives us a powerful influence we could acquire in no other way, and it leads directly to hopeful conversions. So long as we are merely the preachers of another religion amongst them, our influence is circumscribed within that condition. But if, in addition to that, we move amongst the people as the trusted guides and teachers of their youth, it vastly increases our power for good. In the East the teacher of the young is always treated with the utmost respect. And this position of influence, which so legitimately belongs to the preachers of the Gospel, we cannot afford to despise or forego.

After advertising for several months for teachers, we managed at last to engage a young Christian Karen, from Lower Burma, as the teacher, and we began a school in a rented house, near the centre of the town. This school has developed into a good Anglo-vernacular School. In due course, and after much trouble and delay, from having to buy up some twenty or thirty small holdings, with bamboo houses on them, we managed to secure and clear a good site, and there we erected a neat, substantial brick school-chapel, to which our work was transferred from the rented house, and there we have regularly held services in English, in Burmese, and in Tamil.

We early commenced street preaching in Mandalay, and have continued to hold several open-air meetings every week. As a means of publishing the Gospel to the people at large, we have found nothing better. The streets of Mandalay are broad and spacious, so that even a large crowd does not impede the traffic.

The people are generally very willing to listen, tolerant, respectful, and not inclined to cavil. We usually commence by singing a hymn. A number of children are on the scene at once, some of them quite naked up to seven or eight years of age. By the time we have finished the hymn, a crowd of men, women and children has collected, and most of them, having once come, stay till the close. The people, as a rule, look well nourished and healthy, but in almost every Oriental crowd there are evidences of the prevalence of skin disease, in one form or another. Amongst the Tamil people itch is the special form, and in Burma there is quite an excess of ringworm. In Burma many of the people are observed to be pitted with smallpox, for until lately, vaccination was not practised in Upper Burma; and ophthalmia is not uncommon, especially amongst children. The individuals composing the crowd change somewhat. Some are only passers-by, and have to go about their errands; others again have to retire, to attend to household duties. Occasionally a man leaves because he feels a prejudice against hearing the doctrine, or, as one old man put it, because if he listened he would only get "mixed" in his mind. But for the most part they stay and listen attentively until the end. In trying to follow up the address, by conversation with the people at their doors after preaching, I have generally found the Burmans reticent, but still polite.

They are certainly good-natured hearers, and give the preacher a fair chance. To see them sitting on their heels, or on the ground, placidly smoking their cheroots, and looking intently, nodding the head occasionally, and interjecting, "Hoakba, Hoakba" (true, true), one might go away with the idea that they had intelligently taken in the whole discourse, but it does not do to be too sanguine about that. It has to be taken into account that though they may understand the words used, they are sure at first to understand them in a Buddhist sense; and there is such a great deal that is absolutely new to them in Christianity, so many strange names and unfamiliar ideas, that the subject matter of the discourse is by no means easy for them to understand. We are much more liable to underrate than to overrate the difficulty all heathen people have in understanding Christian

preaching, at the first. In addressing them on the subject of religion we must use religious terms. But unfortunately those terms have already a Buddhist meaning clinging to them, which is widely different from the Christian sense; and the higher the truths to which we are seeking to give expression, the greater is the difficulty of putting the meaning into the words at our disposal. How are you to get a Buddhist to realise, for example, any adequate notion of the Divine Being, when he has no such conception in his own religion?

True, there is the word "Paya," and that is the word we have to use. But what meaning does that word convey to a Buddhist? It means primarily Buddha himself, and the philologists tell us that it is that name in another dress. But Buddha never claimed to be God. He was a sage, philosopher, religious reformer, ascetic, who lived and died, and, according to Buddhist teaching, passed into Nirvana, five centuries before Christ. "Paya" may mean also the image of Buddha; or it may be applied to the shrine in which the image is placed; or it may be applied—alas! for the degradation of human language—to you, or to me, or to any person, Burman or European, whom, for the time being, it is worth while to treat with rather a special degree of respect. Which of these meanings attaching to this Burmese word "Paya" brings us even a single step towards the true conception of the Christian revelation of God? And yet, inadequate as it is, it is all the name there is for us to use.

Even the familiar term "man," about which it might seem there could hardly be two opinions, is subject to the same difficulty, when it comes to be used in a theological and religious sense. What with the doctrines of transmigration, and *karma*, which, as we have already seen, the Burmans all firmly believe, the real nature, and circumstances, and final destiny of human beings, as we have to teach these truths, are all new and strange to their minds.

"Sin" is a thing to be recognised and dealt with in preaching; but here again precisely the same difficulty meets you as you stand before a congregation of Burman Buddhists. The Burman, like other Orientals, will not, probably, deny the *fact* of sin, but

if you come to know his notion of what sin is, you will find that it is very different from yours, and that the term does not at all cover the same ground when used in his language and to him, as it does in yours to you. Nor can you, all at once, read into his term for sin the ideas you wish to teach, by merely using it in preaching; that reading in of new meanings is a lengthy process.



A DEPOSITORY FOR IMAGES OF BUDDHA.

Of sacrifice for sin, or the necessity for it, or its efficacy, the Buddhist religion knows nothing; there is no Mediator, no atonement, no pardon, no renewal of our nature; so that all allusions to these great cardinal truths of the Christian religion will carry at first no meaning whatsoever, and the utmost they can do at first is to say with the Athenians, "Thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean."

The simplicity of the Gospel is often made a theme of in Christian circles, and it is simple *when one has been trained up from infancy in its principles, and facts, and lessons*, but in the case of a heathen people, brought up in an elaborate system of religion alien to Christianity, the simplicity cannot be at all apparent.

And, should the preacher, unmindful of the uninstructed condition of his heathen audience, allow himself to slip into the well-known metaphors, and allusions, and phrasology—that “language of Canaan,” in which Christians often express themselves on religious subjects—it will become in the vernacular nothing more than a jargon.

An incident will illustrate this. One Sunday afternoon I went, in company with a missionary brother, who had just arrived in Burma, to hold an out-door service. We sang a hymn to begin with, which I may say was not with any idea that they would understand it, but merely to attract the people to come and hear the preaching. When the singing was finished, he very naturally suggested that it would be well to explain the hymn. It so happened that we had, inadvertently, hit upon a Burmese translation of that well-known hymn—

“There is a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,  
And sinners plunged beneath that flood  
Lose all their guilty stains.”

Let me ask the reader to divest his mind for a moment of every sacred association surrounding that hymn, and calmly consider the words just as they stand, and try to imagine what sense, if any, they would convey to the mind of a pious Buddhist, whose ideas of sin are totally different from ours, who has no conception of the nature or need of a sacrifice or atonement, and to whom the shedding of blood, and the taking of all life, even the killing of an insect, is utterly abhorrent, as a deadly sin. Since that incident I have not been inclined to select that hymn for out-door services.

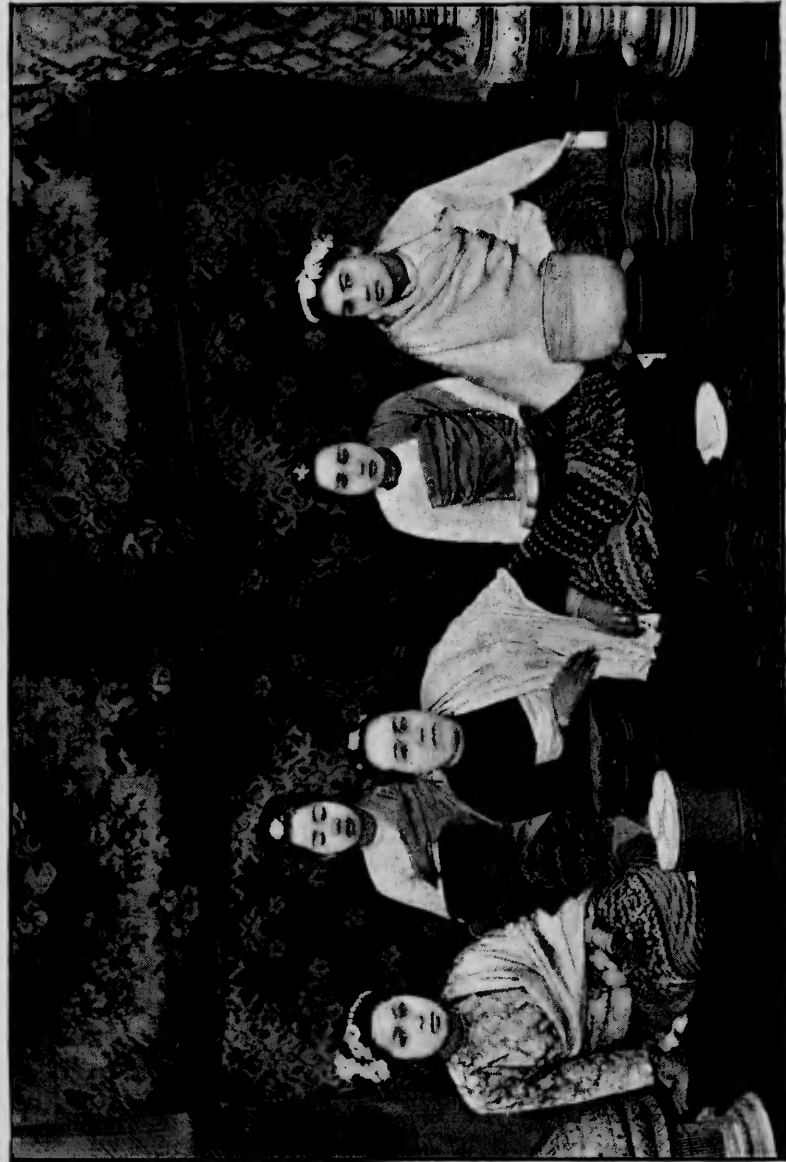
We avoid controversy in preaching to the Buddhists. It seems to be quite unnecessary, and likely to do far more harm than

good. The best thing we can do is to tell, as simply and plainly as we can, such portion of the Scripture narrative, particularly the life and teachings of Christ, as we find they can easily grasp, and to deal with the more prominent doctrines of the Christian religion, as they apply to the hearts and lives of the people before us. It is only when a Buddhist has grasped at least the outlines of Christian truth, and not before, that he will be in any position to assent to the proposition that Buddhism is false. Until he does see that, the assertion in public that it is false, together with all that is said in disparagement of it, must appear to him premature, if not gratuitously abusive. In any case it is the unfolding of the truth that convinces, as it is the belief of the truth (not disbelief in error) that saves. No Oriental can fail to see for himself that the teaching of Christ is antagonistic to that of his own religion, on many essential points, and the clear exposition of our own teaching, therefore, is far more essential than emphasizing the differences. One evening, at a street service, a foolish Burman endeavoured to make it out that their religion and ours taught the very same. The incredulous smiles on the faces of the audience at once showed us that it was unnecessary for us to say more than that *if* their religion taught the same as ours, so much the better. The wish was father to the thought in that case, and the fact that he saw a difference made him anxious to prove there was none. In cases where a person wishes to study the teachings of the two religions, and compare the two closely, the best plan is to put into his hands a tract bearing on the subject, and let him take it home and study it, rather than engage in heated controversy in the streets.

At the same time we do not wish to silence respectful inquiry. Occasionally a question has been asked at these street services, but we have never experienced anything approaching to abuse or disturbance. One evening, not a Burman but a Ponnâ, an astrologer, one of the fortune-telling fraternity, the descendants of the Brahmins from Manipur, spoke up and said he had an inquiry to make. It was with reference to the putting away of sin through Christ, of which we were speaking, and the inquiry seemed quite respectful, and *bonâ fide*. For his part he could

not see how there could be any putting away of sin. If there was, where was it? For example, said he, if a man commits murder, he receives the full penalty of his crime in the body by hanging; and as for the spirit, that passes, by transmigration, at once into some other body, where it receives the appropriate consequences of past deeds, according to the man's *karma* (fate), irrespective of any atonement or any intervention of another. What place then was there for the pardon and removal of transgression? This question will show that in Burma we have to do with a people not wanting in acuteness. Our answer was an explanation of the Christian doctrine of a future life.

At the end of our first year we were able to report that we had made a beginning in preaching the Gospel in the vernacular. It was a humble beginning, and consisted only of reading to a small congregation, in the little rented schoolroom, before we built our own, a short written address; only a beginning, but a beginning in the right direction. We were also glad to welcome an addition to our little staff of workers, in the Rev. A. H. Bestall, a missionary sent out from England.



"THE BURMESE LADIES ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE MYSTERY OF THE CHIGNON, AND WITH THE MANUFACTURE AND USE OF COSMETICS, FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE COMPLEXION, TO SAY NOTHING OF SCENTS AND ARTIFICIAL FLOWERS."



## CHAPTER XVII.

### *FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS.*

IT was during our second year in Burma that we opened two new mission stations, one at Kyaukse, and the other at Pakokku. Kyaukse is a town twenty-nine miles south of Mandalay, on the new line of railway, and the centre of the most fertile and best irrigated district in Upper Burma. Our work in Kyaukse has, from the first, been in charge of one of our Singhalese preachers, and its record, up to the present, has been chiefly of preliminary work.

Pakokku is a town of some size and commercial importance, as a river port and place of trade. It is situated at the junction of the Chindwin river with the Irrawaddy, and is likely to rise in importance, as the country behind it becomes more settled, and increases its productions, and as the trade on the Chindwin is developed. The Pakokku district was, during the earlier years of British rule, the scene of much disturbance, but this did not prevent us from taking the opportunity, afforded by the development of Pakokku, to establish our mission there. Mr. Bestall commenced the work there in the latter part of 1888. As the circumstances at Pakokku illustrate one or two points in mission work, I may with advantage relate them.

On his arrival at Pakokku Mr. Bestall was waited upon by the elders of the town, who were also members of the municipality, and men of influence, and he was politely informed that Pakokku did not want Christianity, and it would be better if he would not preach it amongst them. Here was a damper for the new

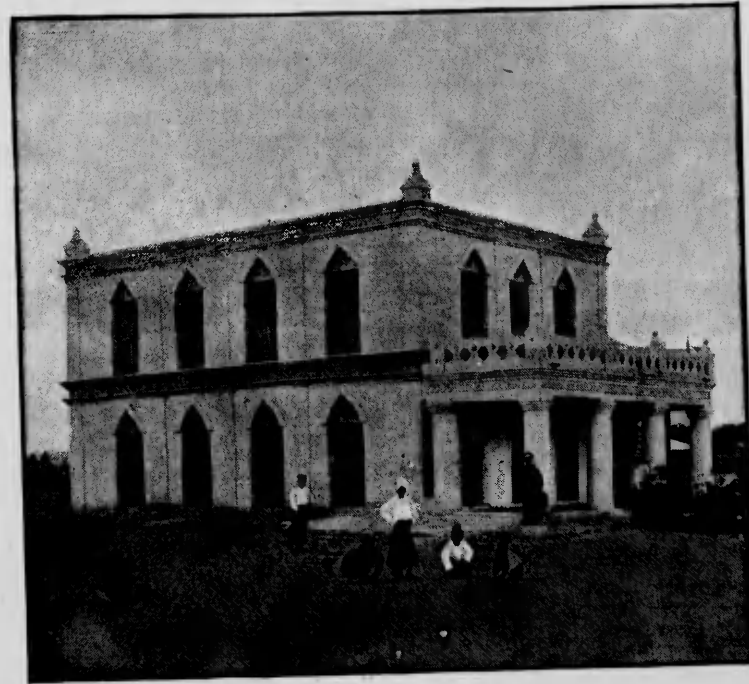


missionary; they were determined, it seemed, not even to give him a hearing. He received them with good humour, and assured them that he would not teach them anything but what was for their good. He took a bamboo house to live and carry on his work in. It was not deserving of any better name than a hut; but for about a year he lived there, preached there, taught school there, and built up a singularly powerful influence, especially considering the disposition with which the people first greeted him. He commenced a school. At first the children who came to the mission school did so under difficulties, having to encounter the maledictions of the monks, and to go in face of the cheerful prospect, held out to them, of descending, in the next birth, to the condition of vermin, if they persisted in receiving the instructions of the missionary.

But the superior quality of the instruction given, and a cheerful, friendly manner towards all, soon disarmed this ill-will and obstruction; the school prospered, and the meetings were well attended. There was another Anglo-vernacular school of the same grade as ours in the town, which, being supported out of municipal funds, could afford to take boys at half the fees we charged, and it had all the weight of official and influential support at its back. But the better work done in the mission school told here also, and it was not long before we held the field without a rival. As early as the second year at Pakokku, all this difficulty and opposition had melted away. The Report of the Mission for 1890 states, as regards Pakokku:—

“This year has witnessed three baptisms from Buddhism. In the case of each, long research and definite decision preceded the Christian rite. The ages of the three were thirty-four, twenty and seventeen. The young man aged twenty on being asked, ‘Are you ready to confess Christ before men?’ replied in his usual serious manner: ‘I know that the Buddhist religion is without a Saviour, and that Jesus Christ saves from sin.’ This youth for two years had been a seeker after Christ, and by his earnest, thoughtful course of conduct had often impressed us. The day school has greatly increased during the year, and in April the municipality *voluntarily closed its school in our favour,*

and entrusted the education of the scholars to our care, *giving us a substantial grant towards the working expenses of the school.* This action has been specially encouraging to us, for on our opening the Mission on this station, influential members of the municipality met us, and seriously asked us to relinquish our purpose,



SCHOOL-CHAPEL AT PAKOKKU.

of endeavouring to plant the Christian faith in the midst of the Buddhism which they loved so well. The sons of most of these members are now with confidence committed to our trust, and this in the face of the fact that the best hour of the day's work is regularly devoted to teaching the Scriptures. The tone of the school is good, the attendance at our two Sunday Burmese services encouraging. The pupil teacher has been baptised, and

there is a work going on in the hearts of some of the boys, which gives us great hope of their salvation. The number on the roll is fifty. The results of the December Government Examinations are most satisfactory. Out of twelve presented from our school ten passed. Out of three Scholarships gained by the whole of Upper Burma two fell to us, while one boy took the first prize for the province in English."

This report shows what hard work can do in the face of discouraging circumstances, and it is also a very clear illustration of the way in which Christian educational work, when wisely conducted, is a valuable assistance to mission work.

So successful and promising a work must needs have permanent mission premises in which to carry it on. Simultaneously with this educational and evangelistic work, our pioneer missionary there had also to undertake the worry of purchasing land, and building a school-chapel, similar to the one at Mandalay. As a mission site, he purchased over four acres of land in a most eligible, central and healthy situation, and at the same price as we paid in Mandalay. It was so cheap that, before long, Mr. Bestall was offered four times what he gave for it. The work of building there was peculiarly slow and trying, owing to the stupidity of the Burman workmen; but at length the school-chapel was finished, and our work in Pakokku assumed definite shape.

The purchase of the site for the school-chapel, and the erection of the building at Mandalay, furnished an experience sufficiently trying to my patience, and consumed a great deal of valuable time, and I could not but wish I had some native brethren, to share the burden of these tedious details. Time is no object to the Oriental, and in dealing with him you have to be prepared to see much precious time wasted. Having chosen the site that seemed on the whole best, the next thing was to purchase it. It was a square piece of land, about an acre and a half in extent, bounded on two sides by the public streets, and on these two sides there were about twenty-five bamboo houses, each in a little plot of ground, all belonging to different owners, besides six or seven more houses inside the square. In the Burmese times no deeds were

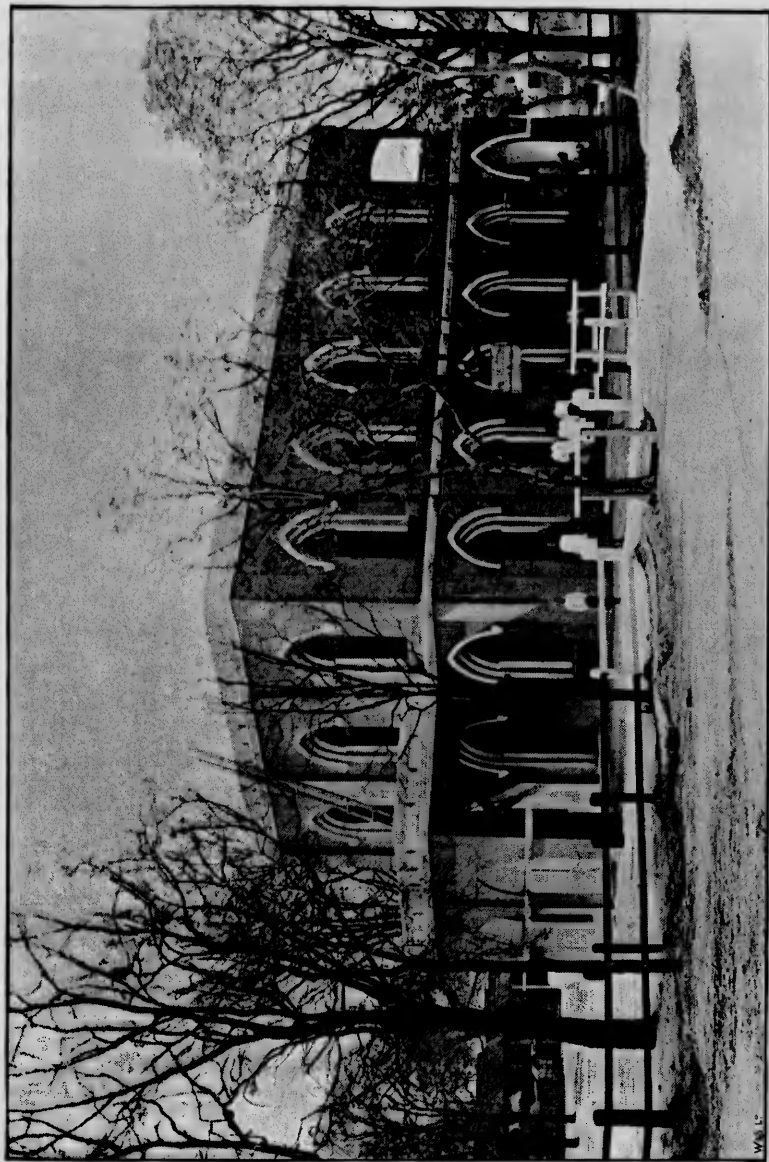
used; everything went by word of mouth; indeed there hardly could be said to be any property in land, as everything belonged to the king. It was therefore, after the annexation, a matter of no little delicacy and risk to buy land, as the evidence of ownership, in the absence of deeds, was most precarious. The danger was that the buyer, in the absence of any local knowledge, should buy from some one who could not prove his title, and afterwards should have to purchase it over again from the real owner. A great deal of property changed hands at that time in Mandalay, and this mishap occurred in some cases. In the case of the Mission, although in our three stations we had to purchase from thirty or forty different owners, we managed in every case to make one payment serve.

I also found that there were amongst the dwellers on the site of the school-chapel, three different kinds of tenure, and we had to be careful not to purchase what the holder had no power to sell. Some six or seven people were merely squatters, and had put up their bamboo houses there without any right or title to the land. The greater number held the land on what is known in Mandalay as the *Almudan* tenure. They were the soldiers, if we might call them such, or retainers of the king, and held only a temporary or conditional interest in the land, by virtue of military service. One only, out of the whole number, could be regarded as the freehold possessor. We had to pay accordingly to each. It was a tedious business finding out all this. Some of the cases were troublesome to settle. One in particular was in dispute between a certain widow, and a man who is a leper, a relative of hers, for some time both claiming the ownership. At length we reached the end of the negotiations, the last of the bamboo houses was taken down and removed, and we were free to begin with the building.

I have mentioned these matters to show the variety of the business details that enter into pioneer mission work, and how many things the missionary has to take up his time. When it came to building the school-chapel, it proved a very lengthy and wearisome affair, on account of the idleness and dilatory habits of the Burman mason who had undertaken the contract. As

the work proceeded he became more clamorous for advances of money, and less inclined to do any work. Thrice the building came to a perfect standstill; he declared he would not work without money in hand; twice I managed to get him to start again, wishing him to complete the contract if possible. But finding, at length, that he never meant to finish it, I had to let him go, and employ a native of India to do the rest of the work, losing something, of course, by the change of contract. With all my love for the Burmans, and a sincere desire to befriend them, I almost resolved never to employ a Burman mason again. This lack of steadiness, reliableness, and patient continuance, is a defect in the national character. They allow most of the prosperity to slip past them, in this way, into the hands of Chinamen and natives of India.

At length, however, the building was finished, a neat, substantial, well-ventilated school-chapel, sixty feet by thirty-six, with a neat portico in front, and two stories high. This building was no sooner finished than we began to find the great advantage of it in our work. It forms an excellent centre, both for educational and evangelistic work, and is put to constant use. On a Sunday we commence with a soldiers' parade service at seven in the morning, from eight to nine the Tamil service, and from nine to ten the Burmese, three services in three languages in the morning. At five in the afternoon we have an out-door service in Burmese near the chapel, and at six o'clock the English service, at which all classes of English-speaking people, both military and civilian, attend. Day by day we have school there, and one evening a week a Bible-class in English, and another evening a magic-lantern exhibition, with Scripture slides only, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel to the Burmans. We have found the latter an exceedingly useful method of preaching the Gospel in Burma. The Burmans have a good appreciation of pictures, and we have found no difficulty in crowding the chapel, week after week, in this way. By this means great numbers of the people have been able, through the eye, as well as through the ear, to gather some definite information about the life and teachings of our Saviour and the great cardinal truths of the Gospel.



'AT LENGTH, HOWEVER, THE SCHOOL-CHAPEL AT MANDALAY WAS FINISHED.'

The purchase of the mission land at Kyaukse was another opportunity of getting an insight into Burmese ways. It was a well-situated plot of land that we chose for the mission premises, about an acre in extent, and was the property of the old Myo-woon or governor of the town, an ancient-looking man, decrepit and almost blind, but with wits as sharp as needles, and very proud and difficult to manage. He wanted to sell. I offered a price for the land that was fair and reasonable. After trying, of course, all he could to get more, he finally agreed to sell it for the price I offered. When all was settled I went over to Kyaukse by train with the money, but there was some hitch, and I had to come back again without settling it. A second time I went, and this time all was in readiness. I thought we might finish the matter in half an hour, and take the next train home again. Nothing of the sort. So many frivolous points of difficulty were raised, even after all the talk there had been before, that it took three or four hours to finish it.

First there was the phraseology of the deed to haggle over, though that was quite unnecessary. Then the conditions of sale, although everything was as clear as it could well be. The last rallying point of the retreating foe was in the matter of the fence, and here it seemed as if the business would really come to a standstill.

If he sold the land, he must, at any rate, be allowed to remove the fence all round the property.

To this I replied that, in the whole course of my experience, I had never heard of such a proposal. The fence belonged to the land, and served to mark it out, and was most important evidence, in case of dispute as to boundaries. If we bought the land how could we give him the fence?

But the Myo-woon wanted the fence.

Very well then, we could not buy on those terms.

The scribe who was proceeding with the writing of the deed, ceased when negotiations came to this abrupt termination, and we all sat silent, gazing into vacancy for several minutes, the old Myo-woon, with his almost sightless eyes, looking particularly studious. After giving me plenty of time to relent in his favour,

and finding no relenting, he abated his terms, and made it only the east and west sides that he must have.

No.

Then the eastern fence only.

No.

Then let him have the posts of the fence.

Not a stick.

On finding me quite resolute in the determination to have fair terms, he surrendered the position with a grace that was really wonderful, considering the absurd and audacious attempt he had made at over-reaching; and he showed a truly Burmese ability, to smooth over, by neat phrase, and courtly style, what a European in his position must have felt as a most awkward dispute.

Europeans wonder sometimes at the outrageous way Orientals have of making claims and requests, which seem to them unfair and impudent to the last degree, and they sometimes feel inclined to lose patience with them about it. I think their doctrine of Fate may account for this propensity. In looking after himself, the mind of the Oriental does not run on what is true, just, proper, or reasonable, but what will the Fates grant; and he likes to frame his request or demand on the off-chance that your charity, or necessity, or complaisance, or ignorance may induce you to yield to him. Thus, supposing six annas to be reasonable, if he asks for six annas, and gets it, he may, on that ground, see cause to upbraid himself for neglect of his own interests, in not trying to get twelve. If, however, he gets less than he asks for, or nothing at all, he can, with the aid of the doctrine of Fate, take it with equanimity, for he has, at any rate, given the Fates a fair chance, and got as much as it was destined for him to get.

It was at an early period of our work in Burma that we felt it very desirable to take steps towards the training of mission workers from amongst the people. Our schools will want teachers, and we shall need to multiply these agencies greatly before our influence is widely felt. We need catechists to instruct the people in the Christian religion, and as our native churches spring up and grow, we shall need native pastors to minister to them. If we had five hundred such workers, we could easily find

work for them. But where are these workers? You look around for them in vain. They do not exist. They will not rise up of themselves; we must grow them; we must take them as they are, in the rough, and train them. Heathenism cannot produce persons ready to our hands, with the character, the knowledge, and the experience requisite for Christian work.

In commencing this department of his work, the pioneer missionary must be content to begin at the very beginning. He cannot afford to hold his hands in this matter, and wait for better, or the best, material. Time is too precious for unnecessary waiting. Every year is valuable, and it ought to be his aim to shorten the initial years of paucity of workers, as much as possible, by seeking to provide them early. He had better commence with such material as he can find, and not be disheartened, however many failures and disappointments there may be. A wise missionary will take care to have always about him a number of young disciples, whom he is training or trying to train, and into whom he is endeavouring to infuse as much as he can of himself, and the Christian training of centuries past which he embodies,—his knowledge, methods, thoughts and aspirations, together with his spirit and example. All the best native ministers, catechists and teachers I have known during many years, have been men who cherished with gratitude the memory of their association with some missionary, and his training and example. And there is no mission work, earnestly persisted in, that is surer of its reward than the labour we spend on our young native brethren.

We commenced this work with a very humble effort in the way of a preparatory school, into which we gathered, from time to time, those who were desirous of following the studies that would fit them for teaching. Our experience illustrates the kind of difficulties that may be expected in a work of this kind, and it also illustrates that, although at the outset the failures and disappointments will be more numerous than the successes, yet even then all is not lost, and if even only one good teacher or preacher be secured out of the first batch, that one will be worth all the labour. Afterwards, when things get more into shape, and we

can make a better selection, we shall be correspondingly better off.

We had gathered eight Burman youths together in this preparatory boarding school on the Mission premises. I had them regularly taught by a conscientious and faithful native Christian teacher. They attended Divine service regularly, and we took pains to give them, in the school, Christian instruction, together with the course of secular instruction that seemed adapted for them. One day I went into the school and found all ominously quiet.

"Where are the boys?"

"All gone but one."

"Gone? Where?" The matter was soon explained. The newly appointed Sawbwa of Momeit, a semi-independent chieftain, ruling a mountain district a few days' journey north of Mandalay, being in need of more followers, some of his men got at these boys of ours, and persuaded them that a career of prosperity would open up to them, if they elected to follow the Sawbwa. These visions of prosperity proved too much of a temptation for these lads, so without as much as "good-bye" they had taken their departure, in the usual Burmese light-hearted way; and by the time we discovered they were missing, they were on their way up the river by steamer, in attendance on the new Sawbwa. One of the youths, however, our most hopeful one, K. by name, had quite privately made a remark to the youth who did not go, from which there seemed reason to hope that, in spite of his yielding to the temptation to leave, there was the root of the matter in him, and some hope that it might still result in good. He told this lad that wherever he went he meant to preach Christ. That remark was a good sign, but our disappointment was great.

In due time the young adventurers found the wisdom of that counsel, "Put not your trust in princes." The Sawbwa never made good his promises. No prosperous career opened out to them, nothing better than lounging about the dirty village of Momeit, which constituted his capital. One by one they left the Sawbwa. Most of them I never saw again, but K., the one

of whom we had most hopes, came back to us, and is with us still. Notwithstanding this and other disappointments, we still hold on in this enterprise of training workers, and mean to do so. K. was the first convert I baptised in Burma, and we have good hopes that he will prove a useful preacher. He certainly has talents in this direction. From the first he has shown more than ordinary intelligence and aptitude for study, and a marked love for the Word of God. Finding in him this aptitude, I commenced to give him, in Burmese, systematic daily instruction in Bible studies and theology. I was surprised to find the progress he had already made, and his extreme aptitude for understanding and imparting it. With intelligence and abilities for study, and with the taste for it, and a good natural utterance, we have great hopes of K.; but knowing what we do of the immoralities so common in Burman society, and the temptations to which young men are subject, we have to tremble, and to exercise watchful care, and to pray that the grace of God in him may prevail. The late C. H. Spurgeon has well said, "To build cathedrals is a little work compared with building up preachers."

A communication recently to hand, from my friend and colleague Mr. Bestall, gives gratifying news of the young men at present in this training school, and gives us good ground to hope that this work is not in vain. Describing the young men he says:—

"K. first heard of Christ in 1888. It would be difficult to find a more fluent speaker or more earnest student. He preaches well and thoughtfully, and we hope to have more to report of him in years to come.

"G. N. is with him. He is an ex-Buddhist monk. He left Buddhism, and for some months has been diligently studying the Scriptures. He preaches in a very different style from K. He is quite familiar with the Buddhist prayers in Pali, and usually prefaces his remarks by a short recital. Having gained the ear of all, he continues, 'I don't pray like that now. Why?' and then he begins his address.

"T. follows. He has been studying for two years, and is developing into an intelligent believer in the Gospel.

"S. is training for the work of a Christian teacher, and always accompanies the preachers to the out-door services.

"Lastly comes N., a quiet, earnest young man, who of his own accord has left a comfortable home to be trained in the Scriptures."

With regard to our general work, we have had converts each year after the first. There is no sign as yet of any great ingathering, but on each station steady, plodding work has brought its reward. Our earnest endeavour has been to commence on sound principles, making ample use of the accumulated experiences of many past years, and to build the foundations strongly and deeply, rather than to aim at mere rapidity, which, in Burma, would be apt to end in disappointment. We have made perceptible progress from year to year in the hold we have on the people, the language and the work generally.

One of our most important enterprises is a Boarding School and Training Institution for girls. We aim not only at the conversion of individuals, but also to constitute Christian homes in Burma, and for that purpose we must have women converted as well as men, and as many of them as of men. If special efforts are not directed to the conversion of women in these Eastern lands, there is great danger of the work being one-sided. The demand for the education of boys is much greater than for the girls, consequently many more boys than girls are placed for training under our care, and the natural consequence is that we are apt to have male converts in excess of female. In the earlier days of mission work in the East it was often so, and this in some cases perceptibly retarded the progress of the work. In some of the harder mission fields, the progress would have been much greater if, from the very first, adequate attention could have been given to women. Surely we ought to profit by that experience in every new mission field taken up now.

What happens when the converts amongst the young men are considerably more numerous than amongst the girls? The time comes for the young men to marry, and they marry heathen wives, because it is unavoidable. Generally speaking, if a woman is a heathen when she marries, she remains so to the end of the



"THERE ARE NO ZENANAS AMONG THE BURMANS, NO KEEPING OF WOMEN SHUT UP."

chapter. There were in the earlier days, thirty or forty years ago, many instances of this in Ceylon, the results of which are seen to this day, and what we see is admonitory. I remember one, a typical case, of an elderly man, a Christian teacher, whom I knew intimately. He had a heathen wife. "There were none of these Girls' Boarding Schools when I was young, to train our Tamil girls," he would say, "and so I married a heathen," and a great trouble it was to him. She was agreeable enough to live with, but totally illiterate, and a rigid Hindu. Everything was done that could be done for her, but she was, as usual, impervious to all influences, and remained in the Hindu faith till the day of her death. It was very seldom that a woman accepted Christianity *after* she was married, whereas a few months under Christian instruction *before* almost always inclined them firmly to the Christian faith. In Jaffna, where we have our largest Girls' Institution in that mission, where there are always some eighty or ninety girls, the Christian influence is so strong, and the minds of the young are so impressible, that they practically all embrace Christianity within a few weeks of their entrance. There are never more than a few new comers unbaptised, who are only waiting that they may learn a little more, or to obtain the consent of their friends and guardians; and it is the same with all the institutions of the kind in our own, and the neighbouring missions. If missionary experience has proved anything in the East, it has proved that no work is more abiding or more remunerative than work done for girls, from ten to fifteen years of age.

Another case in Ceylon was that of a native gentleman, a Christian of good standing and respectable position. He married a heathen wife, because Christian wives were not then to be found. I never knew him, he died before my time, but I knew his family. They are now grown up and in middle life. Under the mother's influence they were brought up as heathens, although the father was a Christian, and when the boys went to school, they had to be dealt with as other heathen lads. Two of them were happily converted and baptised into the Christian faith, after they were grown up, but the rest of the family are all rigid heathens to this



day, and their children also. Experience in such cases amply proves that only when the wife and mother is a Christian before marriage, can the family be relied on as a Christian family. If not, you may expect to have all the work to do over again in the next generation. This is woman's nature all the world over—

“If she will, she will, you may depend on it;  
But if she won't, she won't, and there's an end of it.”

The family depends more on the mother than on any one else for its religious tone.

Besides that, we require, in Burma, female teachers for the girls' schools that we need to establish everywhere, in the towns and villages of the country, and we need Biblewomen to go from house to house teaching the Word of God. The preachers and teachers whom we are seeking to train will need Christian wives. Where are all these Christian girls? They are not in existence. They have to be created. There is nothing for it but to open these Girls' Institutions, and commence with such material as comes to hand. The method found, in all the missions in the East, to be best adapted to secure the conversion and training of native girls and young women, is a boarding school in connection with each principal station where English missionaries reside, in close proximity to the mission house, and under the care of the missionary's wife or some other English lady, where regular secular and religious instruction may be given, without the continual drawback of irregular attendance, which is found in day schools for girls. We make no attempt to denationalise them, or to teach them expensive English habits. They live in the same frugal way as they did at home, and have their food cooked and served up exactly in the same style, squatting like tailors on the floor, and eating their rice with their fingers, without the intervention of knife and fork, just as they have always done. They follow their own fashion in dress, which has this great advantage over European fashions, that it never changes a hair's breadth; and they spread a mat on the floor to sleep at night. Daily there is Christian instruction, and family prayers, and they are taken to Divine service on Sundays.

Under these conditions it is never long before a girl comes asking for baptism. This result, provided these means are adopted, is just as sure as the hopes of a woman's conversion without them are precarious, in a heathen land. Up to the present our Girls' Institution is only in its infancy, and we are only able to furnish one example to show what I mean; but as this is the only case where the circumstances have rendered it possible to test these methods in Burma, and it is a success, I may briefly give the facts. We could find hundreds of examples in Ceylon.

Some two and a half years ago Colonel Cooke, then the Deputy Commissioner of Mandalay, informed me one day that he had received, and forwarded to the provincial government, a petition from the relatives of a certain Burmese princess in Mandalay, asking for some charitable allowance for her support. Though quite destitute, she was the niece of King Theebaw, her father being one of the half-brothers of the king, and he was one of those unfortunate princes put to death in the two dreadful massacres that disgraced the reign of the last of the Burmese kings. The Deputy Commissioner recommended the case to the favourable notice of Government, on condition that the girl, then about fifteen years of age, should be placed in the Mission boarding school, under the eye of the missionary's wife. This is the usual condition in such cases; and it was in order to secure the proper charge of the girl, and a suitable education for her, and to ensure that the twenty rupees monthly, allowed by Government, are really spent on her, and not on somebody else.

She came, and has remained in the school ever since, going on with her education, and receiving a Christian training, though no pressure whatever has at any time been used to induce her to become a Christian, nothing beyond what we give to all the children, and all the members of the public congregation. There is indeed no necessity for any urging with young people, when the Gospel has a fair chance. They themselves desire it. At a Sabbath morning service, early in the present year, when the invitation was given by the preacher to those who had been

prepared for Christian baptism, to come forward for that rite, she was the first to leave her seat, and come quietly forward, and kneel down with the rest, quite unexpectedly to the preacher, who was not aware that such was her intention. Eleven new converts were received in all that Sunday and the previous one.

The work of the Mission during those earliest years had to be done amidst many drawbacks, but these I need not do more than mention, as I have already said that I do not believe in calling attention to the personal difficulties of the missionary, but rather to his work.

In addition to the feeling of unrest, and the danger of tumult throughout the country, and especially in Mandalay, the focus of all political influences, there was always the climate, with its enervating heat, to contend with. For two months of the year more especially, the dazzling glare and fierce heat of the sun, the parching drought, and the hot winds, are very exhausting, and render it very desirable for Europeans to take a holiday, and get away to the hills, a little time, for change of climate; but no such thing was possible in Upper Burma. There are, it is true, mountains up to five and six thousand feet elevation, where the climate is delightfully cool, but they are out of reach, for want of railways and roads, and no one knows yet where the proper health resorts of the future will be. It requires years of experience to know which of the mountain districts are free from the deadly fever malaria, of the jungle, and which are not; consequently there was no chance of a change of climate.

Besides this, we cannot undertake pioneer work in a new country, where there has not been the least attempt at sanitary arrangements, without serious risk to life and health. The other missions have already their roll of the dead and the disabled in Upper Burma, and it is considerable in proportion to the number of the workers. The smallpox epidemic, inevitable in a country up to that time without vaccination, attacked two of our number, and one of them was a very serious case, but by God's preserving mercy they escaped; and typhoid fever, probably the result of an impure water supply, came in its turn, and two

others of our little company—one of them the Rev. T. W. Thomas, a new missionary, who had but just arrived—were brought nigh to the gates of death. These, with the ordinary diseases of the country, such as fever and dysentery, befell us, but a merciful Providence brought us all through, and no one has been called away or permanently disabled.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### SEEKING THE LOST.

ONE peculiar and sadly interesting feature of mission work in a new country is the duty of seeking the lost. Whenever a new country is opened, it not only offers a sphere for steady young men seeking one, but it always attracts also many adventurers, wanderers and prodigals from the more settled communities, and they come in considerable numbers. The annexation of Upper Burma was a case of this kind, and the hope of employment brought over persons, some of whom were to be found serving in positions very different from what they or their friends ever expected them to occupy. I remember one day, whilst visiting Kyaukse on mission business, meeting casually a man of this kind. I heard there was an Englishman lying ill in a certain rest-house. I found the man all alone and very ill, suffering apparently from cholera, which was then very prevalent. He was quite deserted and destitute, unable to attend to himself, and in a very neglected condition. The building was the usual Burmese *zayat*, built of teak, without any furniture whatever, nothing but the man's mattress and pillow spread on the floor. I sent for the Government apothecary, and in the meantime got him some chicken broth made, for he had no food, sponged him, and made him as comfortable as I could. He told me something of his history. He was an Englishman, and had been brought up respectably, and was a near relation of a minister of the Gospel in England. He was a ne'er-do-weel, and had been in many employments in different parts of the world; at one time

at sea in a whaling ship, and at that time driving a locomotive engine, with ballast trains, on the new Mandalay railway, then under construction. His failing, and the cause of all his misery and degradation, was drink. The apothecary gave him medicine, and he recovered, and seemed very grateful to me for the attentions I had shown him. He admitted his faults very candidly, and we had, before I left the next day, a long and serious talk, with prayer. I saw him once afterwards at our service on a Sunday evening in Mandalay, and he seemed altogether brighter and better. Shortly afterwards he left the neighbourhood, stating he wished to break off from his bad companions and start life anew, and I saw him no more.

Another was a very different case. A Brahmin young man was missing from a highly respectable native family in Negapatam. He was a former pupil in our high school there, and had left home in consequence of some dispute with his friends, and was supposed to have come to Mandalay, in search of employment. I did not hear of any lapse of character or misconduct of any kind, but with Brahmins, the mere leaving home and crossing the sea amounts to such a breach of caste, and contamination with others, as to be worse in their eyes than many a deadly sin, and they weep for such a one as over a prodigal. I inquired for him in the public offices where he was likely to be found, but I could find no trace of him.

I received from time to time a number of letters from a young woman belonging to the Eurasian community in Ceylon, asking in great distress for news of her husband, whom she had not seen for seven years. It was a sad story, and the poor woman seemed almost to have lost her senses through grief. Differences had arisen between her husband and his relatives, after the marriage, and he had left home and gone to India, and afterwards to Burma, and had given way to drink. I found traces of him. The missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Rangoon had known him as one of the intemperate characters loafing about the town, whom he had often tried to help, and raise out of the gutter. At last he had suddenly lost sight of him, and could not tell me what had become of him. Through

the Superintendent of Police in Rangoon I found what appeared to be the last trace of this unfortunate man. The police records stated that a man, answering to his description, was found drowned one morning, in the lake near Rangoon, and he was supposed to have wandered there, either whilst helpless in liquor, or with the intention of ending his unhappy career. Which it was there was no evidence to show. It was never fully proved that this was the same man, but as he was nowhere to be found, it seemed very probable that it was he, and the poor soul had to content herself, as best she could, with this sad and uncertain information.

A widow of the Eurasian community, whom I had been acquainted with during my residence in Ceylon, years before, wrote to ask if I could hear any tidings of her younger son, who at the time I knew him was a schoolboy, but by that time a young man. He had left home to seek employment, and had learnt the business of a mechanic, but, like too many, had ceased to write to his mother, who, of course, in the absence of any knowledge of him, feared the worst. What a cruel thing to leave a widowed mother in ignorance of his whereabouts! I made all possible inquiries, but with no result. He had not come to Mandalay.

Another very sad case was that of a young Englishman in Mandalay, in Government service, and in a respectable position. Disappointed apparently at not getting promotion as rapidly as he had hoped, late one night he committed suicide by drowning himself. Morally he had drifted far away from the teachings of home and childhood, and he had formally renounced the Christian religion, declared himself a Buddhist, and had even left instructions in his will, that in the event of his death he should be interred as a Buddhist. Though no one appears to have suspected it before the sad event, it was, after his death, the opinion of many who knew him, that his reason must have lost its balance. There was evidence of great deliberation in the carrying out of the deed. His duties in the public service had occupied him until a late hour, and had all been performed in his usual careful manner. He had then dismissed his native attendant and gone on to a large pool of water, and had taken care to make his body sink and ensure his death. I received a letter

from his mother in England, written after the sad intelligence reached her, asking for further information, and in great trouble. From this letter it appeared that he had, in his youth, been well and religiously brought up, but long residence abroad had blunted those early impressions. Our countrymen abroad need more than all the attention we can give them, and we often wish we could do more. But the working hours of the day are limited; many duties press upon us, and the Europeans are widely scattered over all the country, and it is impossible to reach them all.

One day I received a letter from a respectable Eurasian gentleman, a Christian man in Calcutta, requesting me to seek his son, a young man of twenty-two. He seemed in great trouble about him, and stated that his son had "rejected a life provision, with every comfort of home and family." This was not the only trouble in the family. His elder brother, who had been in Burma also, and had prospered in money matters, had fallen a victim to drink, and had died by his own act, having, under the influence of liquor, thrown himself overboard from a steamer, whilst on the way from Rangoon to Calcutta. The father seemed dreadfully crushed at the thought of the unfortunate end of the elder brother, and the prodigal career of the younger, and wrote to ask if I could learn any tidings of him. After some searching, I found him in, I think, the filthiest house I ever stepped inside of, and consorting with some low Burmans. He was working at his trade pretty regularly, and was earning good wages; but he was so hemmed in by his bad habits, and bad companions, and he seemed to be of such an easy, yielding nature, and so infirm of purpose, that it seemed very difficult, if not impossible, to do anything to help him. As I visited him repeatedly, he expressed from time to time a feeble desire to do better; but he admitted to me that the domestic ties he had formed in Mandalay prevented his leaving the place, and quitting the place was the only chance he could see of getting into a better way of life. It was the usual case—a Burmese wife, and yet not a wife.

And here I must utter a strong protest against those illicit connections which so many of our countrymen, of almost every degree,

form in Burma. It seems to many of them that because the marriage bond amongst the Burmans themselves is lax, and more or less of the nature of a temporary arrangement, and because the standard of social morality is low, it gives them the licence to make it still lower, and the union still looser, by forming still more temporary companionships with Burmese women. In the case of the Englishman I say *still looser*, for there is this difference between the Burman and the Englishman—that in the former case it is to all intents and purposes a marriage, and is not unlikely to prove lifelong, though it may terminate earlier, whereas the Englishman would scornfully refuse the title of wife for his native companion, or “housekeeper,” as he is pleased sometimes to call her, and he never intends the union to be anything but temporary. It is vain therefore to defend this practice from the standpoint of Burmese custom. It is mere concubinage, and in the name of the Christian religion, to which they nominally belong, I protest that no man has the right to inflict such a degrading position upon the mother of his children.

As regards the children of such unions, the result is still more cruel. They find themselves in a most invidious position. Of mixed descent, they belong neither to the English nor the Burmese race, and they suffer serious disadvantages accordingly. Moreover, the English are never permanently resident in Burma, and when the father is tired of the girl, his companion, or when his work, or his official duty, calls him to leave and go to a distant station, or when he goes “home” on furlough, or retires altogether from Burma, or when he marries an English wife in proper legal form, it ends in his paying off the mother and the children, if indeed he prove sufficiently honourable to do that. If she takes all this with a light heart, as she probably may, Burman-like, that does not lessen the guilt and the cruelty involved in such base desertion of his own helpless offspring. That such children are very often left in this way by their fathers, and that they become a charge on missionary bodies for their education, out of sheer pity for their English descent, and that these individuals often go eventually to swell the community of “Poor Whites,” a class very difficult to provide for—all these

are facts too well known in Burma, and in India, to be disputed. These facts should make the young Englishman pause before he follows this evil but prevalent example, surrenders himself to his appetites, and foolishly surrounds himself with ties which are degrading and unworthy, and which he cannot fairly justify or defend, and which he would never think of acknowledging to his mother and sisters “at home.” These considerations ought to make him consider whether he had not better, by early frugality, save his funds, so that he may the sooner be in a position to woo and provide for a wife of his own nation and people, who can be a true companion for him. This evil is one of considerable dimensions in Burma, and holding up social evils to the light of day is one means of seeking their removal.

One day I received a letter from a godly man in Ireland, who wrote asking me to go and see his son, a sergeant in the regiment then stationed in Mandalay. He was under an assumed name, a thing not unusual in the army. His father had not heard from him for ten years, but had just received a letter. It was a sad case—the old story—formerly in a very good position in the Excise in Ireland; drink his ruin. He lost his position, and finding himself at length in distress, enlisted. Being well educated he was soon promoted, but again and again got into trouble through drinking. This went on for years, until at last by sheer desperate effort he managed to pull himself together, feeling sure that if he went on much longer at the rate he was going, he would soon be in his grave. He admitted to me that though he had not, when I saw him, tasted liquor for over a year, the craving that came upon him sometimes was almost insupportable. I urged him to seek the converting grace of God, and get Divine help, which alone could keep straight one in his dangerous position, but he could not see it. I sat with him over an hour that afternoon, and he wept freely; we wept together as we talked about his home, his father, and the days of childhood and innocence, and as he recounted to me the story of his life. Soldiers and sailors are amongst the most candid and approachable of men with the chaplain, and I never find the least difficulty in getting at their hearts. But there was a peculiar difficulty in

his case in another respect. He believed in his father, and there was much tenderness in his mind with regard to sacred things, but he seemed to be utterly sceptical as to Divine grace ever reaching *him*; and it was only with the utmost difficulty that I could get him to kneel in prayer. There seemed to be some hindrance that I could not remove. He came by invitation to my house, and spent an evening with us, but with a like result, and he steadily refrained from attending any of our services. Very shortly after I became acquainted with him, his regiment left for England, and I saw him no more. Let us hope that the scenes of home life once more, and other kindred influences, led to the completion of that work of grace and reformation, the beginning of which was evidenced by his long abstinence from liquor, his writing once more to his father, and the evident feeling he manifested when conversing about home and sacred things.

Where the habit of drinking has become confirmed it is often very difficult to effect a radical cure; consequently looking after such cases as I am describing, where the drink appetite and other gross sins have complicated the situation, is never so hopeful and encouraging. Nevertheless we have no reason to lose hope of any; and cases occur sometimes of the complete reformation of persons who have sunk very low indeed, and long seemed hopeless. In this connection I should like to acknowledge the very satisfactory results that have attended the universal establishment, throughout the British Army in our Indian Empire, of that society known as the Army Temperance Association. This society owes its origin to the efforts of a Baptist missionary in India, the Rev. Gelson Gregson, who started the movement some few years ago. Its working is similar to other temperance organisations, with the exception that it is purposely and specially adapted to the idiosyncrasies and the peculiar circumstances of Thomas Atkins in a tropical climate, far away from "home," and with much spare time on his hands. The great reason why it flourishes is that it really offers counter attractions, such as a soldier can appreciate, to the canteen as a place of resort, with its hilarity and good fellowship, and without any temptation to intoxication.

Chief among these attractions is a *room set apart for the purpose*, where the members of the Army Temperance Association can resort when off duty; a small concession, one would have thought, that might long ago have been less grudgingly and more frequently made to temperance, but really a great matter to the soldier. This, with the necessary refreshment bar for the sale of food, tea and cooling drinks, with a few games to occupy their spare time, and a supply of newspapers and books, forms a basis. The organisation itself is fitted to meet the case of soldiers. A small monthly fee is paid for membership; they elect their own officials from amongst themselves, there is a periodical published by the Secretary at headquarters as the organ of the association, there is a bestowal of medals and decorations, in tangible recognition of abstinence on the part of members, for given lengths of time, and the surplus funds are expended in little entertainments such as they like. It is a matter of much gratification to us in the Burma mission, that the chaplain selected by the military authorities at present, to fill the post of Secretary of the Army Temperance Association, is our former comrade and colleague, the Rev. J. H. Bateson, who in 1887-8 was with us as Wesleyan Chaplain to the Upper Burma Field Force, and we heartily wish him success in the work for which he is so well fitted.

It is a matter of great thankfulness that the Army Temperance Association is not only fully recognised in our Indian army, but that it is a standing order that a branch of it has to be maintained in every regiment and battery. Joining is optional on the part of the men. This wise course has been amply justified by the results. Sixteen thousand out of a total of nearly seventy thousand men are enrolled. It is now found that in proportion as the Army Temperance Association flourishes, both crime and sickness in the army diminish; and so far from soldiers needing liquor to sustain them, they are found far better without it, both in cantonments and in the field. In fact, it is calculated that every five thousand men in the association means a battalion of men less in prison and in hospital, and fit for duty. The wonder is not that such should be found to be the case, but that it should have taken so many years to find it out. In the mission we took

our stand, of course, on the side of total abstinence, and embraced every opportunity of advocating this movement, in military and civil life, both amongst men and amongst women.

We met from time to time with cases of genuine conversion that gave us great joy. Our Sunday evening English service was always followed by an after meeting for prayer and exhortation, and made an opportunity, for any who wished to lead a new life, to give their hearts to the Saviour. Again and again it was our delight to guide those who were seeking to do so, at first in Buddhist monasteries, and pagodas, and anywhere that we could find for the meetings, often with images of Gautama, and other accessories of Buddhist worship around, and later on in our own mission school-chapel. I remember one Sunday evening in particular, the Word came home to many hearts, and that evening, and in the course of the week, I had the privilege of close conversation with several, and some of our Christian members spoke with others who had been awakened by the influence of the Spirit. Amongst the rest I had a request, through a soldier, to the effect that Corporal S. would like to talk with me. I went and met him, and conversed for half an hour in the barrack yard answering his question, "What must I do to be saved?" The circumstances of his awakening were peculiar. A certain passage of Scripture had followed him wherever he had gone. The last Sunday, just before sailing for India, his mother had requested him to go with her to the service, and that had been the text. At Malta he had heard another sermon from the same text. The first time he attended service after he landed in India it had been the same. And a fourth time had he heard it preached from at Shwebo in Upper Burma. This had naturally produced a considerable impression on his mind, which the sermon of the previous Sunday evening had developed into decision to serve the Lord. With a little instruction and prayer he was soon hopefully converted, and happy in the Lord.

It is sometimes urged, as an objection against earnest efforts for the conversion of sinners, that the results attending such efforts are not always abiding; but surely no objection could be more illogical or more ungenerous. If it applies at all, it applies

with equal force against any and every attempt to save men. It may just as well be alleged against the most formal and perfunctory of ministrations as against the more direct and strenuous efforts to pluck men out of the fire. The proper logical outcome of that objection is, "Do nothing at all." We might just as well do nothing as make the Gospel a mere "light to sink by." A chaplain amongst soldiers must often feel a painful sense of disappointment at some results of his work, which are evanescent. The life of the barrack-room necessarily produces, especially in India, such an artificial condition of things, and involves such a departure from the Divine ordinance, which is *the family*, that it must needs bring with it special trials and stress of temptation to any of the dwellers there who desire to lead a godly life. Hence every chaplain has his disappointments over those who grow weary in well-doing. And yet, on the other hand, such is the principle of compensation running through the kingdom of grace, that although barrack-room discipline is bad for the weak Christian, it strengthens the man of determination, and I question whether there are to be found anywhere triumphs of saving grace more marvellous than we find in the army, or more touching examples of humble, sincere and consistent piety.

We had in the battery of Royal Artillery stationed in Mandalay a man whose career had been a peculiarly rough one, but who is now a very bright Christian. He had led a wild life. He was a blacksmith by trade, and, from his youth up, had been in the habit of spending all he possibly could in beer, and, as is usually the case, the beer often made a mere brute and vagabond of him. He first enlisted in a cavalry regiment, from which, after being often in trouble, he deserted. For a time he got work, but he still betook himself to the beer, and the beer made him talk, and let out his former connection with the army, so that he frequently had to disappear hurriedly, lest he should be arrested as a deserter. Finding himself in want, he enlisted again, this time in the Royal Engineers. From this corps he received his discharge in consequence of an illness. Recovering, and entering once more on a course of dissipation, he enlisted a

third time, in the Royal Artillery. The Jubilee year gave him the opportunity to confess his former desertion, and to secure his share in the general pardon, extended by the Queen to all such cases that year; and it was not long before the King of kings granted him His pardon also. Whilst stationed at Woolwich, he happened one evening, when feeling extremely dejected, to enter the Soldiers' Home. The Wesleyan chaplain met him there, spoke to him kindly, and invited him to a meeting. He went. It was a fellowship meeting. He heard a number of his comrades speak, but so dark was his mind in reference to religion, that he could not understand them in the least. However, he gathered that they possessed some source of comfort and joy within, of which he knew nothing. He followed it up, became truly converted, and whilst with us in Mandalay lived a most exemplary life, and exerted a very gracious influence amongst his comrades. Religion had quickened, as it often does, that once darkened and besotted nature; and I have seldom met with a better example of the transforming, elevating power of the Gospel, the power to keep and sanctify, as well as save.

Another very satisfactory instance of true conversion, mainly owing to impressions produced at the parade services, several Sunday mornings in succession, was that of a pay-sergeant in the regiment then stationed in Mandalay, a married man living with his wife and family in the married quarters, a steady, quiet Scotchman, always well disposed, and of strictly moral life. Parade services are not always thought to be very good opportunities for getting at the hearts of soldiers, seeing that they are marched there by compulsion, not always in the best mood, and with their arms and accoutrements (in India), which is a different thing from going to a voluntary service off parade. But does not this fact challenge, as it were, the chaplain to give them of his brightest and best? It must, before all, be very short, or he will ruin everything, and send them away worse than they came; something short, lively and heart-stirring, full of Christ, full of apt illustration, and full of sympathy with souls, so that he may capture these soldier lads in spite of themselves. Well, it was at these parade services that Sergeant C. felt his mind awakened

to new views of truth and duty and Christian privilege. Being aroused about the matter he attended also the evening services, and the devotional meetings on the week-nights, and soon got the light he required, and found himself a new man in Christ Jesus. Well conducted and steady as he had been before, his conversion nevertheless made a great difference to him, giving clearness and brightness to his religious character, and kindling in him a new zeal for the conversion of others.

We found drink to be a fearful curse, not only amongst the English residents, but amongst the natives also. I had a servant, a native of India. He was a great gambler, and very lazy, dishonest and troublesome altogether. Bad as he was, we bore with him over two years, fearing that if we discharged him we might have to put up with somebody worse. Just before we left Burma we dismissed him, because he had sent away his wife and taken up with another. Since coming to England, I learn that this man, in a fit of drunkenness, murdered this woman, with circumstances of unusual atrocity, and that he had to suffer the extreme penalty of the law.

But this drink monster is no respecter of persons, and makes no distinction of race, sweeping down all before it without any discrimination. An English soldier in Mandalay, who had been an abstainer for a considerable period, suddenly took to liquor again one day, and got drunk. That evening he took out his rifle, put in a cartridge, walked down out of the bungalow, and took the direction that the seven devils within him pointed out. This happened to be towards the sergeants' mess, a separate building a stone's-throw away. That evening, a party of sergeants were enjoying a festive gathering, in honour of the seventeenth anniversary of the enlistment of one of their number. His health had just been proposed, and he stood up to reply, when at that very moment the poor crazed drunkard outside fired, and shot the sergeant dead. There had been no provocation, and no reason could be assigned for the rash act. It was merely "the drink." In the distant future, when the temperance reform shall have won its way, and the customs of English society shall have undergone a great change, people will greatly



wonder that their forefathers took so long to discover that liquor was their enemy, and not their friend.

Another example, and I bring these reminiscences to a close. It is the case of a soldier, who formerly belonged to a cavalry regiment, stationed at the time I speak of at one of the principal military stations in the south of India. He had plunged into drinking and vice, until at last he was told by the doctor that he had gone as far as his constitution would allow him, and that if he went any further it would be the end of him. This weighed upon his mind, and a deep sense of his sinfulness and a desire for better things resulted. He felt he needed Divine help, and he thought he had better begin again to pray, a thing he had long ceased to do. But how to begin in a barrack-room, where many pairs of eyes would see him, and misunderstand, and ridicule him? Well, he would wait until all was quiet, and then kneel down by his cot and pray. He waited, but as he was musing the fire kindled, and when he did begin to pray, so urgent was his pleading with God for mercy, that his voice rang through the barrack-room, and all his comrades were aroused by it. They thought he was mad. He was removed to the guard-room, and put under restraint. There, in the quietude of that solitary place, he found pardon, and his soul was filled with peace. Next day the medical officer saw him; he could not quite make out the case, but adopted the safe course of keeping him still under restraint. He told the doctor what it was that had caused the trouble of his mind, and how he had gained deliverance, adding that if they had said he was mad before, it would have been quite true, but that now he had come to his right mind. This explanation only induced the man of science dubiously to elevate his eyebrows. It was a kind of case he was not familiar with. Though perfectly sane, and calm and happy, he was kept under restraint for a month, and he was accustomed to say that that month, almost entirely alone with God and his Bible, was the happiest period of his life.

That work of grace, so strangely begun, was thorough and abiding. It was well known in the station, and produced a great impression for good, supported as it was by his subsequent con-

sistent conduct. It was years after his conversion that I knew him intimately in Burma as a non-commissioned officer, serving in an important and responsible military position, for which he had been specially selected; and I knew him for several years as a consistent Christian, whose firm example and happy, cheerful character made him a blessing to others, and who was never backward in quietly and judiciously speaking for the Master.



## CHAPTER XIX.

### A JUNGLE JOURNEY.

WE had a great desire in the mission to pay a visit to the Chin tribes on the western frontier, with the view of ascertaining their locality and circumstances. Consequently, when the cool season arrived, the usual time of year for tours, I started with my brother missionary, Mr. Bestall, then stationed at Pakokku, for a journey to the Chin country. The Chins, as explained in Chapter X., are not Buddhists, but worshippers of spirits or demons, and are on that account more barbarous, and, contradictory as it may seem to say so, more ready of access than the Buddhistic races, to Christian mission effort.

We left Pakokku at 4 A.M. one morning in November, mounted on two lively Burmese ponies, with a cart drawn by a pair of bullocks for our things. In travelling through the jungle you need to take almost everything you require; so that when the sugar, and salt, and tea, and bread, and butter, and tins of meat (in case the gun brings down nothing), and soap, and candles, and rice, and curry, and frying-pan, and kettle, and crockery, and a few other simple necessaries, not omitting medicines, are packed up in a box, and the pillows and rugs for the night rolled up in a mat, and a change or two of clothes put in a portmanteau, and a few Gospel portions and tracts included, to distribute in the villages as we pass along, you find you require a cart to carry them. As the cart can only travel, on an average, about two miles an hour, it requires a long day to do twenty miles. There is no advantage in going ahead of the cart, you only have to

wait at the end of the stage, and it is more enjoyable to spend the time in leisurely travelling. In this way these jungle journeys, though the travelling is rough and often fatiguing, are very serviceable for the sake of the change of air and scene, and the free out-door exercise they afford.

We managed to make a stage of six miles before it was daylight, and pushed on the next stage of fifteen miles farther without stopping. There we halted at one of the establishments constructed at every stage along this route, to accommodate troops and convoys, on the march to the military and police stations on the frontier. It consisted of long rows of temporary bamboo barracks, and a bamboo shed for the officers. There was a Burmese police guard close by. How regularly and irreproachably that Burman constable shouldered his rifle, and did his "sentry go," *while we were looking on!* Here we halted for our midday meal and a short rest. It is wonderful with what dexterity your native servant, availing himself of almost no facilities for cooking, can produce you a savoury breakfast on the march. Three stones or bricks to support the kettle, and the same for the frying-pan, are all he requires for a fireplace, and a few sticks and bits of bamboo out of the jungle are enough for a fire. In the afternoon we did another twelve miles, making thirty-three miles that day, which was rather more than the cartman would have driven his bullocks, if it had not been that the next day was Sunday, the day of rest. The weather was lovely, being the best time of the year for a journey. It was not much hotter in the day than a warm summer day in England; the nights and mornings were chilly.

At Pyinchaung we halted on the Saturday night, again putting up in the temporary military lines. The route we had taken was not a road, as we understand roads in England, but, strictly speaking, more of a track, fairly passable in dry weather for carts, but almost impracticable after heavy rains. Good metalled roads are a luxury we have not seen much of as yet in Upper Burma, but we shall get them in course of time. On the Sunday we rested, and spent some time amongst the villagers, distributing tracts and preaching. Here we had the misfortune

to lose our two ponies. Mr. Bestall, pitying them, that there was so little grass to eat in the rest-house enclosure, opened his kind heart, and the gate at the same time, and let them out to graze, giving them in charge to the cartman to look after. He followed them for awhile, and then, native-like, came back without them. We went in search of them, but never saw them again that journey. They strayed for many miles, and it was a month before they were brought back. It speaks well for the hold the English now have on the country, and the great diminution of crime, that search was made in all the district round, and they were returned by the police, as we felt sure they would be. We had to borrow for the rest of the way.

An eloquent reminder of the troublous times we had then barely passed through, was the little police fort close by the rest-house, constructed on the top of a ruined pagoda, where there was a view of the country for some distance round. During the first three or four years of British rule places like this had to be selected wherever practicable, and made strong enough to stand a rush by dacoits, and a careful watch had to be kept. The little bamboo house was perched right on the top of the steep mound of ruined brickwork, a wall breast high was erected round it, and with a few resolute men, well armed, inside, it would not have been easy to take. The rest-house at Pyinchaung, looking westward, overlooked a most lovely valley of great extent and fertility, through which we had now to pass. This valley looks as if it might have been at one time the bed of a mighty river, but the stream is now contracted to a very narrow span, and the alluvial soil of this rich valley is a veritable land of plenty. I never saw a region more lovely with "the fairer forms that cultivation glories in" than the Yaw valley then appeared. Whilst crossing this great valley we rode through fields of maize, and another tall grain, a kind of millet, far above our heads, with rice fields here and there, and abundance of pumpkins, beans and other vegetables, the ponies snatching an occasional bite at the sweet juicy stems and leaves of the millet, which they are so fond of. Carts in great numbers passed us, drawn by well-fed, plump oxen, and mostly laden with the leaves which envelop

the maize cobs, all laid straight and packed neatly in bundles. The maize crop had nearly all been reaped, and these leaves of the Yaw valley maize, not the grain itself, form the most valuable product of the crop, and are largely sold all over Burma for the purpose of enveloping Burmese cigars.

The people of this district all looked fat and well fed. There was abundance of cattle, and the inhabitants of that region seemed to want for nothing in a material point of view. Fifteen miles from Pyinchaung we reached Pauk, a small Burmese town, the headquarters of the township officer, a police officer, and a lieutenant in charge of a detachment of Madras troops. They were all very young Englishmen, two of them apparently not over twenty-five, and it might have seemed odd at first sight to see such young men in such responsible positions. But suddenly having to find a sufficient staff of officials, to rule over a country as large as France, has involved engaging the services of many young men, for they must enter upon their duties young to be properly trained for the work; and it is a notable fact that the great work of pacifying and restoring to order Upper Burma has been chiefly the work of very young men. The civil officer is a magistrate, and has to try such cases as are within his jurisdiction, to collect the revenue through his native subordinates, to keep his eye on everything in general, and to keep the Deputy Commissioner of the district informed of all that is going on, to initiate whatever is needful for the well-being of the community, and to act the part of a father to the people of his township, which is as large, though not so populous, as an English county. The police inspector is responsible for the maintenance of order, and the pursuit and arrest of criminals; and the military may at any time be called out to take the field, and try conclusions with some dacoit band that has gathered in force. As far as I could judge they all seemed very fit for the work they had to do.

Only a year or so before, this township of Pauk was in an exceedingly disturbed state, by reason of dacoit bands; and if things had not greatly improved, we could never have travelled unprotected through it as we did. It is to the credit of these

young men, and the troops and police under them, that things are so peaceable now. We saw at Pauk the same abundant evidences of prosperity and improvement, that are visible everywhere throughout the country, not only in the erection of a new court house and public Government office, and many private houses, but still more in the great improvements made about the town, in the improvement of the roads, and most of all in the construction of a new bazaar, which the township officer showed us through with pardonable pride, and in which a great deal of business was going on.

Having stayed in Pauk the night, we were off the next morning early, forded the river, travelled a stage, and rested for our mid-day meal in a monastery. This is no uncommon thing in Burma; we had occasion to do so several times on this journey. There is hardly a village without its monastery, one or more, always the best building in the place, and kept very clean; and it generally happens, as in this case, that there are some vacant buildings used as rest-houses by chance travellers. We always found the monks affable and pleasant to meet, quite chatty, with a kind of friendly familiarity entering at once into conversation, and evidently not having the slightest objection to seeing us about the premises. We, on our part, reciprocated these advances, and made things pleasant all round.

Thus we travelled on from day to day, as fast as our bullocks could make the journey, which was very slowly indeed. As we could gain nothing by going ahead of our cart, we were obliged to spend the spare time as best we could. My companion, having a gun, and being a good shot, managed to get something every day, which, in the entire absence of the butcher's shop, was very acceptable for the larder. We had either a hare, wild pigeons, jungle fowl, partridges, or something. Game is abundant on the route, and in the jungle you have no fear of encroaching on anybody's preserves.

I suppose there are few places in the world now, however remote, where an Englishman is not constantly meeting with some wandering specimens of his countrymen; and even in the wildest recesses of the jungles of Upper Burma, you are liable to

the discovery that the genus Englishman includes the species gentleman and the species snob. We had a curious illustration of this. Arriving one evening, long after dark, about eight o'clock, at a roadside rest-house, built by the Public Works Department for the common use of English travellers, we found a gentleman whom I will call Captain X. He was travelling in charge of a large military convoy of elephants, ponies and other baggage animals, carrying up supplies to one of the distant military stations in the Chin country. He and a junior companion were in possession of the comfortable, spacious, three-roomed bamboo rest-house, where there would have been ample accommodation for us as well, with our scanty travelling kit, in the third room, which they were not using; and they had really no more right to monopolise the whole than we had. However, they were in possession; and on our presenting ourselves at the door, Captain X. never so much as asked us to step inside, never attempted even to ascertain who we were, or to enter at all into conversation with us, but simply directed our attention to a dirty, shabby bamboo shed at the lower part of the compound, built for natives, and at that moment quite full of Burman coolies, who, he cheerfully assured us, would readily "nip out" and make room for us, if we asked them. Some people's idea of the purpose of other people seems to be that they were meant by Providence to "nip out" and make way for them! Gathering from his manner that he did not mean us to have the use of the vacant room at the rest-house, or to show the slightest courtesy in any way, we betook ourselves to the said outbuilding. The courteous Burmans squeezed themselves into smaller space, and left us enough room to spread our rugs on the bamboo floor, and we managed to put up for the night. I am glad to say that this kind of discourtesy is very uncommon indeed abroad. In all my experience of many years in Ceylon and Burma, I have never met with such scant civility from a fellow-traveller in the jungle, but always something more in accordance with the circumstances.

A striking contrast to this was the gentlemanly conduct of Lieutenant T., whom we happened to meet in a similar way at a rest-house on the return journey. He was in possession, too, before

we arrived, and though that rest-house only consisted of one room, which he was occupying, he most kindly pressed us to share it with him. This, however, we would not do, but decided to occupy a *zayat* which we found vacant close by. We entered into conversation, and shortly after, when we took leave of him for the night, we found that, finding our cart had not arrived, and that our supper would have been long delayed, he had sent his servant boy round with enough supper for both of us, and a candle by the light of which to eat it! Lieutenant T. is a brave man, and has made quite a name in connection with the rough military and civil work of the last few years, amongst the tribes of the western frontier. He has been, as we were elsewhere informed, in thirteen engagements; and he was at that time returning to his distant appointment on the hills, from an event which must have been to him, as a soldier, the proudest moment of his life, when the general decorated him, in the presence of all the troops of the station assembled on parade, with the Distinguished Service Order. It was currently reported by his brother-officers that it would have been the Victoria Cross, had he not been in command of the detachment on the special occasion, and as the writer of the despatch, he chivalrously gave the praise to another.

I could not but observe this, as another instance, showing that true bravery is usually associated with true modesty, and all other gentlemanly qualities.

We now began to make our way over a mountainous ridge, along which an earthen road had been cut out, but not gravelled, and many a rustic bridge erected over the torrents that crossed the track, by the British, about a year before, on purpose for the Chin Expedition, and for subsequent traffic. Some £35,000 we were told had been spent upon it. Some thousands of coolies were brought over from India, and the thing was done without delay. The expedition would have been almost impossible without a road. This serves to give the reader a glimpse of what it means to undertake the pacification and administration of a new country of abundant resources, but without means of communication, and with much raiding and dacoity going on. A road, or still better a railway, always means increased traffic and

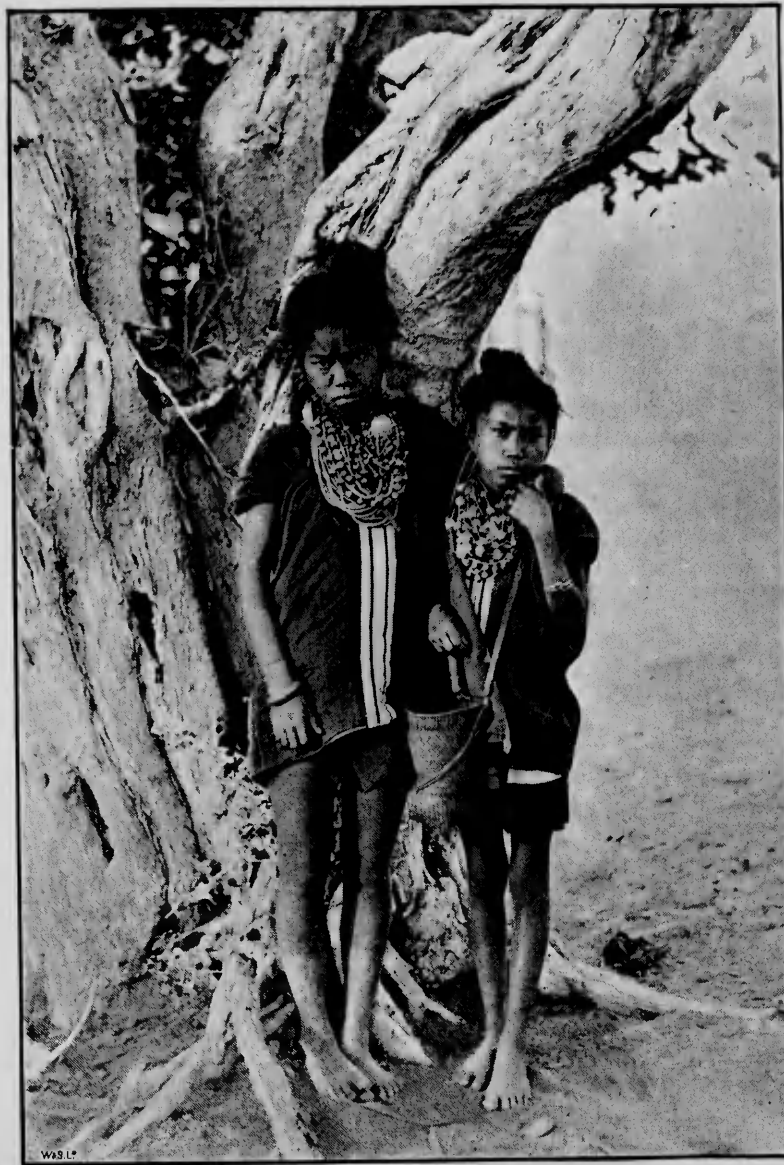
commerce, better markets for produce, and better means of getting about, and is itself, therefore, a pacifier and civiliser of no mean account; and it soon tends, under British law and insistence on good behaviour, to demonstrate that honesty is the best policy. Good government should always make it pay better to lead an honest, industrious, orderly life, than to pursue a career of robbery and violence—should, in fact, make it hard to do wrong and easy to do right.

This part of our journey was through a hilly and picturesque country, consisting almost entirely of thick natural forest, with many teak and other fine timber trees, and bamboo jungle everywhere. At Thileng we were ninety-eight miles from Pakokku, and close to the Chin Hills. We had here to leave the road, and our cart could go no farther with us, as the hills are very precipitous, and there is only a jungle path. We therefore reduced our baggage to the lowest possible limits of sheer necessity, and had our few things carried the remainder of the journey by a couple of coolies.

We observed that the village of Thileng had some attempts at protection against the Chin raids. At each of the four ends of the village, where the two main roads, placed at right angles, lead out to the jungle, there are log huts erected, where a police guard can be sheltered against their arrows and spears, and the gates are shut at night. The remaining protection consists of a broad hedge of dead thorns heaped all round the village. At this and several villages in the vicinity sad tales were told us of Chin raids, in which Burmans were taken captive, and some of them detained amongst the Chins for many years. The various British expeditions sent up to the Chin tribes, with a view of reducing them to order, have released from time to time a great many of these unfortunate people, and the practice will soon come to an end, if it has not already ceased. This is one example of the ways in which English rule is a great blessing to a country like Burma, in removing such an intolerable burden as this constant dread of these murderous and disastrous raids, and the subsequent miseries of the unfortunate captives. The distance from Thileng to Pinloak, the nearest Chin village, is about

sixteen miles, and over as rugged and difficult a path as ever I travelled. About noon we halted, and had our lunch at the bottom of a very lovely gorge, by the side of an icy-cold stream, just the picturesque kind of place that would become a favourite with tourists in England.

At about two o'clock we approached the village, and we halted, under cover of the tall grass, while our Burman guide went forward to announce our approach. Presently they called to us to come forward, and we emerged from the tall grass upon a clearing, on the steep hillside, of several acres. The forest trees and undergrowth had been felled and burnt, and crops of various kinds of grain, cultivated in a rough and ready manner, and a few vegetables, were growing. The people received us in a friendly way, and we went forward and rested in the nearest house, which was of bamboo, something like the houses of the Burmans. We found the Chins in many respects different from the Burmans—far more backward in civilisation. In colour they are about the same complexion, a light brown, but altogether dirty and unwashed. The men wear the merest rag of a garment, the women wear a kind of tunic covering the body, but the legs and thighs and feet are quite bare. The peculiar custom of tattooing the faces of the women, described in Chapter X., gives them rather a hideous appearance, and when seen in such a dress, with the face tattooed in that fashion, and with a bamboo pipe stuck in their mouths, smoking, the effect is not the most lady-like imaginable. Still it is only fair to say that the women we saw, despite all these disadvantages, did not strike us as looking particularly unwomanly. Some of the faces, both of the men and women, were of rather a fine cast, notwithstanding their barbarous, unkempt appearance; but the greater part of them wore that degraded appearance which utter ignorance and the many hardships of a savage life generally produce. As I have given many particulars about the manners and customs of the Chins in a former chapter, I need not repeat it. We spent the afternoon fraternising with them in their houses, making purchases of some of their weapons and other articles, which they certainly did not make the mistake of charging too little for, and



"THE WOMEN AND GIRLS OF THE CHIN TRIBE WEAR A KIND OF TUNIC."

witnessing their wonderfully accurate shooting with the bow and arrow.

As evening drew on our Burmese guide advised us to camp out across the river in preference to sleeping in the village. As the best native houses in Burma are apt to harbour much vermin, and as the Chins never think of such a thing as washing their bodies, it may be understood that we were not unwilling to take that advice. Moreover, it was desirable to avoid any complications that might lead to a breach of the peace, for with barbarians it is sometimes a word and a blow, and the blow first. We therefore crossed the river and prepared to camp out in the forest, under a great clump of bamboos, spreading our mats on the sand, and kindling a good fire, for it became very cold as the night advanced, and the dew dropped from the trees almost like rain. Some of the Chins came over and sat with us as we ate our supper, accepting a taste of each article, and testifying their approval, especially of the jam. As one or two of them could talk Burmese we were able to converse with them, and until late at night they stayed listening round our camp fire, as we told them about England and its greatness, and tried to explain, as well as we could make them understand, some of the leading truths of Christianity.

I must not omit to state what it was in us that astonished them most of all. After they had investigated the mystery of the gun, and had fired off a cartridge, and had examined whatever else we had about us that was curious, my companion suggested to me that, as I embodied in my own person a good example of the dentist's art, it might be well to let them see what the English experts could do in supplementing deficiencies of that nature. I thought it was a good suggestion; so calling their special attention to what I was about to do, I quietly detached the upper set of teeth and held it forth at arm's length, full in the gaze of the astonished barbarians, and then slipped it back again in a moment, and showed them that I was able to eat with them just as well as they could with theirs. We had expected them to be surprised at this exhibition, but their astonishment exceeded our expectation. Up to that moment my friend, as the proprietor of

the gun, and the more affable and engaging gentleman of the two, had been the chief centre of observation and admiration, but after that he had to take the second place. They were greatly amazed. Never had they seen such a thing before. They had no idea it was possible to do it. To make a gun, or any other piece of mechanism, or any manufactured article, was very likely within the power of a highly civilised people. But to be able to detach and take out the whole upper set of teeth, gums, palate and all (apparently), and then to slip them in again, and enjoy the full and perfect use of them!—that far exceeded any notions they had previously formed of what was possible, and they evidently regarded this not as a piece of mechanism, but more in the light of an utterly inexplicable, if not magical, accomplishment.

It is not amiss for barbarous people like these, who have been accustomed to set all law and order at defiance, and raided upon Burmese territory just as they liked, to have the opportunity of seeing for themselves some marks of a superior civilisation. It may be expected to induce in them a wholesome dread of the British power, and a more orderly and peaceful mode of life.

They begged us to stay over the next day, stating that they wished to bring their people from far and near to see this strange sight, but the risk of fever, through sleeping out in the jungle, was too great to justify us in remaining longer, and next day we left Pinloak, and returned the way we came. And we live in hopes that, when the funds will allow of it, the information we gleaned on this tour may be turned to good account.



## CHAPTER XX.

## THE HOME FOR LEPERS AT MANDALAY.

ONE of the painful sights which specially attracts the notice of the European in Burma is the large number of lepers to be seen in all the public places. As you walk along the streets you see them, sitting in the dust, holding out their mutilated limbs, from which sometimes all traces of hands and feet have ulcerated away. If you go into the great bazaar, they are seen mingling with the crowds of buyers and sellers. If you go to the great pagodas, where hundreds of people congregate daily, there are lepers sitting on the steps, and appealing to the generosity of the worshippers. At the gates of the royal city, and in the public *zayats* or resting places, they are to be found; and when the leper has dragged about his poor diseased body as long as he is able, he lies down to die, a friendless, homeless outcast. In Burma, until we took the matter up, there was no organised relief for them beyond chance coppers, no place of refuge where they could be housed and provided for.

Seeing the lepers were so numerous, I began to investigate the matter, and as a preliminary measure looked up the statistics of the leper population of Burma. There had then been no census in Upper Burma, but according to the census of 1881, there were upwards of 2,500 returned as lepers in Lower Burma. Large as that number is, it is to be feared that it does not fully represent the evil, for the people naturally object to being called lepers even if they are, as though by avoiding the name they could hope to avoid the awful thing. I have known a leper, so far advanced



as to have lost the whole of both his hands, and quite emaciated in body, declare in answer to my question, that it was not leprosy, only "Koh-ma-koung-bu," a bad state of body. To form a fair estimate of the actual number of lepers in Burma, we should have to make a considerable addition to the 2,500 returned for Lower Burma, and multiply that by two, to take in both Upper and Lower Burma. It is probably not too much to say that there will be about one leper to every thousand of the population.

I have often been asked what is the cause of leprosy. That is not a question that can be answered in a word. The native of India makes short work of it. He scarcely recognises any laws in nature but the one law of his fate.

"I saw a leper," writes Mr. Bailey,\* "in a shop, sitting in the midst of his goods. He sells betel nut, tobacco, oil, cakes, etc. He has a leprous brother living with him, also a brother not leprous, and a niece who already shows signs of the disease. We asked the healthy brother if he were not afraid to live in the house, and he said that if it were not God's will he could not take the disease." So far as science has yet ascertained, three causes may be specified: (1) Insanitary conditions of life generally, as predisposing to it. (2) Heredity, to some extent. (3) Contagion resulting from lengthened residence in close company with leprous and insanitary surroundings. It is not yet determined to what extent these causes respectively operate. It is the business of the Leprosy Commissioners, sent out at the expense of the National Leprosy Fund, of which the Prince of Wales is the President, to try and ascertain more on these points, by the careful and exhaustive inquiries they have been pursuing; and their report is now awaited.

In India there are medical men who have studied this disease for many years, for there are hundreds of thousands of lepers scattered over India. Dr. Munro, an acknowledged authority, and a man of deep research, says: "Summing up, therefore, leprosy is not always, but only very rarely, transmitted from

\* "The Lepers of our Indian Empire," by W. C. Bailey, Secretary of the Mission to Lepers. (J. F. Shaw & Co., London) A book well worthy of perusal by all who would like to know more on this subject.

generation to generation, has never been proved to be transmitted without contact, is not constantly transmitted even when both parents are diseased, seldom affects more than one child in a family, and those only successively, independently of age, sometimes the youngest first, after contact, and goes back from child to parent when in contact. From all I have learned of the disease, I can find no proof of even the hereditary predisposition allowed to exist by Virchow, but feel much inclined to believe with Landré, that contagion is the only cause of its propagation."

On the contrary, another expert, Dr. MacLaren, who has been in charge of a leper asylum at Dehra for many years, and has very carefully studied the question, has come to the conclusion, after an exhaustive inquiry into the antecedents of all the inmates of his asylum, that 36·4 per cent. of the cases were distinctly traceable to heredity. A curious light has been thrown on these mutually contradictory conclusions, by the contrast in the experience of two different homes for lepers shown in the following quotation from Mr. Bailey's book. At Tarn Taran there is a large Government Institution, supported by the different municipalities that send lepers to it. Here no restriction is placed on marriage, and there is no attempt at the separation of the sexes, consequently many children are born in the asylum. The missionary of the Church Missionary Society stationed there says:—

"Of all the persons born at that asylum during the last thirty years, I know of only two men who up to the present have not become confirmed lepers. But even these, when last I saw them, began to show signs of the disease upon them. How different is the history of the asylum at Almora, which is largely maintained by the Mission to Lepers in India! There, for many years past, this plan of separating the children from their parents has been adopted with most gratifying results. Of all those who have been thus separated, only one child has shown any signs of the disease. Many more are now out in the world, and gaining their own livelihood. Surely we have here a most striking proof, that in one direction at least a great deal can be done towards stopping the

spread of leprosy. What a wide field for the exercise of Christian love is thrown open to us in this branch of work! The followers of Jesus no longer possess the power of curing 'diseases and all manner of sicknesses' by a touch or a word; but in these who may soon be lepers, the 'least' of Christ's little ones, there is given to all an opportunity of stretching forth the hand of loving compassion, and of saying, 'Be clean.'

At the time the public mind was greatly exercised on this leprosy question, and the Leper Bill for India was being considered, the Bombay Medical and Physical Society met to discuss the subject. There was a general consensus of opinion amongst these medical men that heredity is a mode of propagation, though some were of the contrary opinion. As regards contagion as a means of propagation, the majority of the medical men considered it was. It seems, however, to be not easily communicable by contagion, but due to continuous and lengthened contact, together with predisposing general causes. So far no cure for leprosy has been discovered.

Some authorities have expressed the opinion that in some way fish-food, especially when either salted or decomposed, is largely to blame for its origin. The Burmese *ngapee*, which consists of partly decomposed fish made into a paste, can hardly be a healthy article of diet, and may have something to do with predisposing to this and other diseases in Burma.

As the disease advances, mutilation and wasting of the fingers and toes set in, extending in time to the whole hand and foot. The sight is often dimmed or lost, and a kind of horny substance grows over the eyeballs. The skin of the face becomes thickened, giving the countenance a peculiarly heavy, morose expression. Thus the disease progresses, and the constitution becomes enfeebled, until the leper falls a victim to some other malady; for leprosy is not often the immediate cause of death. In the anaesthetic form of leprosy all feeling leaves the part specially affected. Mr. Bailey tells of a case of this kind. "One poor fellow was pointed out to me who had burnt himself fearfully, in burning the dead body of a comrade. He knew nothing of it at the time—the dead burning the dead!"

In the institution at Madras, out of 233 inmates, no less than 34 were Europeans or Eurasians, chiefly the latter.

The leper's lot in India and Burma is a terribly sad one. The following picture of his condition is drawn by Colonel E. H. Paske, late Deputy Commissioner of Kangra, Punjab:—

"Leprosy is a slow, creeping disease, seldom or never immediately fatal, though shortening life. It is accompanied by a great deal of physical pain and suffering, and an amount of mental torture varying with the natural sensibilities of the victim. The leper's life is burdensome to himself, and his presence loathsome to those around him; no object can be more pitiable, more repulsive, or more terrible.

"While the living body is undergoing a process of perceptible waste and decay in a manner the most loathsome, the mind is subjected to the most depressing influences, aggravated by the life of separation and isolation which the sufferer is forced to lead. As soon as the leprous taint becomes apparent, the victim is shunned by those around him, even members of his household avoiding his touch. For a time he leads a life of separation in his own home; but as the disease progresses, and his appearance is rendered more repulsive, he becomes an outcast, wandering through the country, subsisting by beggary, or else located in a small hut at a distance from all other habitations. A truly piteous sight it is to see the leper crouching outside his hovel, holding out wasted stumps that once were hands, and crying for alms from the passing traveller. When the leper resides near his home, his relatives, or fellow-villagers, make provision for his wants, but for a time only; they soon tire of the burden of his support. Too frequently, when police reports announce that a leper has been found dead, has committed suicide, or has been burnt to death in his hut, there is reason to believe that those who have been responsible for the maintenance of the sufferer had adopted sure means of freeing themselves from the burden. In one instance where a leper had been murdered by his own sons and brothers, the prisoners on their trial pleaded that they had put an end to the man's existence at his own request, to spare him from further suffering. In another instance, where a leper had

been buried alive by his next-of-kin, it was urged that this mode of death would prevent the disease from becoming hereditary. Such are briefly a few particulars of the life of the poor crippled leper in India. An outcast, he still clings to life in a condition the most helpless—an object so repulsive that charity almost loathes to approach it."

From the foregoing information it is abundantly evident that there is great need for the establishment of Homes for Lepers. Mr. Bailey, in his recent tour through India, visited twenty-six homes, where he saw in all 1,425 lepers, and he thinks that not more than 5,000 poor sufferers are being provided for throughout the whole of the empire, out of several hundreds of thousands who need such provision.

It was about the beginning of 1890, when our general mission work was getting upon its feet, and the pressure of the early difficulties was relieved a little, that I became concerned to do something for the lepers in Upper Burma, for whom nothing was being done. I waited upon Sir Charles Crosthwaite, then Chief Commissioner, to broach the subject to him, and was very cordially received. Sir Charles welcomed the idea. There was nothing of the kind, he said, in all Burma. Government could not well do anything directly in the matter, and even if they could, he remarked that we, the missionaries, could do it much better, that is, more kindly and mercifully than they could. He would gladly do all he could to help the scheme. Government would give the land, and he himself started the subscription list with one hundred rupees.

Encouraged by this, I issued a printed circular, setting forth the object of the undertaking, and appealing to all classes for subscriptions. There was a very liberal response to this appeal from all classes and sections of the population. I wrote to the Prince of Wales, as President of the National Leprosy Fund. My application was handed to the Secretary of the Fund, and in due time there came, in response to this application, through the Viceroy of India, a draft in rupees which was the equivalent of £80. I also put myself in communication with the Mission to Lepers, and received from that Society immediate help in the

form of a contribution, and eventually we placed ourselves amongst the number of Homes for Lepers supported by the Society.

In all 6,500 rupees were collected for a commencement. The land assigned to us by Government was fenced in, and the first ward of the Home was erected in January 1891, in the usual Burmese style—teak posts, board floor raised a few feet from the ground, bamboo matting for the walls, and thatched roof, with accommodation for fifteen inmates. The time had then arrived for us to go home to England on furlough, and it fell to the lot of my colleague, Mr. Bestall, to gather in the sufferers, if he could induce them to trust themselves to our care.

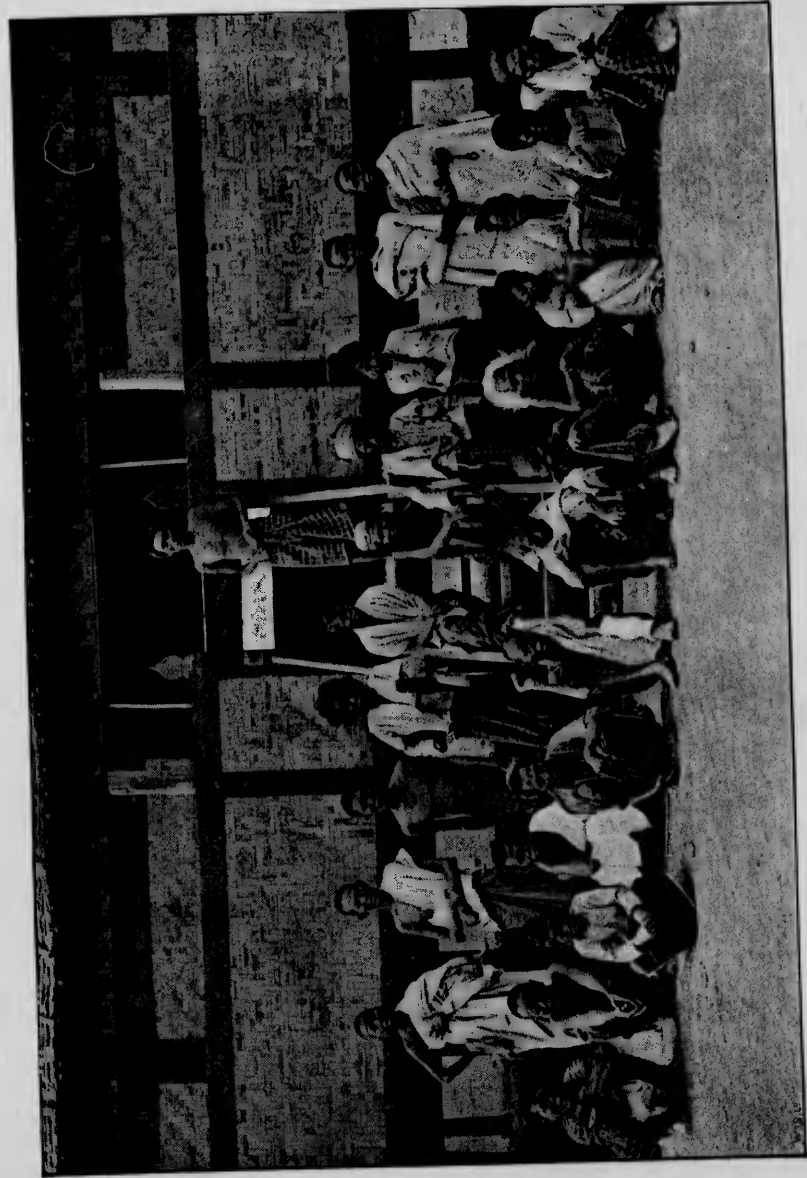
Many had been the predictions that the whole thing would prove a failure. The lepers would never be induced to come; if they came they would never stay. But these fears have not been realised. As regards the first experiences in the Home for Lepers I could not do better than let Mr. Bestall tell the story for himself. Towards the end of 1891 he writes:—

"It is eight months to-day since I set out in the early morning to persuade a few lepers, who lay dying beneath the shadow of Mandalay's pagodas, to enter the refuge we had prepared for them. I anticipated reluctance on the part of these lone creatures to commit themselves to the care of an Englishman. Only five years before, the Burmese king reigned in the palace. Suddenly all Mandalay was in a ferment of dread. English war boats had touched the strand, and British soldiers were marching through the streets, to take the city and capture King Theebaw. Only last year the crack of our rifles was heard in many parts of the country, and even as I write British troops are marching out of the city to take part in fresh expeditions on the frontiers. Burma is not the settled country it will be ten years hence, nor has there yet been time for the people of the conquered land to trust us implicitly. I quite expected, therefore, suspicion and fear on the part of these, the poorest and most desolate of our Burmese fellow-subjects. Persuasion was my only means of gathering them in. To many I was an executioner. What could I want with them except to put them to death? 'We

pray thee let us remain here,' some said. 'For mercy's sake do not take me,' others replied. All were in great terror. I could not but be touched by the timid, fearful attitude of many, and I was very thankful when I saw the first leper on his way in a bullock cart to our Home for Lepers. It was sad to see how they hugged their wretched dwellings, and clung to their filthy haunts. Christian philanthropy they could not understand. I promised them permission to return if they did not like the Home.

"The first day's work of rescue was a long one, and the breakfast ran into the tea hour before I returned with seven inmates for the Home for Lepers. Bazaars, where the people congregate to buy and sell all sorts of food, are always centres of attraction to paupers, lepers and pariah dogs. It is not uncommon to see a poor old leprous native handle the orange or banana on the stall, and ply the world-wide query 'How much?' It is a sad and even disgusting state of things, and it is a dangerous one too. For ages it has gone on; and as far as I know, that morning's work eight months ago was the first attempt ever made in Burma to stay the evil and rescue the lepers.

"We started with a small bungalow capable of housing fifteen inmates. In a little while the number was completed, and I thought of extending the work. I made use of the sufferers already gathered in, sending them out in bullock carts, in charge of a faithful Tamil helper, to advertise the comforts of the Home to their leprous countrymen. Narayanaswamy took a great interest in this work, and was invaluable as an assistant. He met a dreadful fate whilst living at the Home, as I shall afterwards describe, but for six months his fidelity and zeal in leper rescue work were admirable. You should have seen his face light up when he met me at the gate on my daily visit. 'The leopards are all safe, sir,' he would say. And though he knew no more of hunting than his own infant, he would often come across to the mission-house with joy to say, 'Brought two more leopards to the Home to-day, sir.' With his help I extended the work, and built four new houses for the reception of further cases. So that now we have three large bungalows and two



THE HOME FOR LEPERS, MANDALAY.

hospital buildings, a caretaker's house, and—for the purpose of preparing food for the settlement—a substantial brick cook-house. To-day we have fifty inmates in all stages of the disease, of all ages, varying from a little girl of twelve years, to an old man with hair as white as snow.

“The site of the Leper Settlement is over five acres in extent. This area is divided into two sections by a bamboo fence. The western section is given up to female lepers, the eastern to males. The bungalows for men will accommodate sixty, and we have room for twenty-five women. The hospitals are used for separating cases of extreme disease from the other inmates. A mortuary has recently been added. Daily worship is conducted, generally by our few young men whom we are training for preachers and teachers. The singing is not good—how can it be with such a congregation? But the poor souls make a noise, and that is enough in these early days! If they can't sing, they can and do listen. In preaching we have to begin at the beginning and finish there. The idea of a Saviour is to them very surprising. They always thought they had to save themselves. The cleansing Jesus is a new hope to them, for they have been taught to cleanse themselves.

“Service over, the food is brought to the different houses. The boiled rice is carried in a large basket; the curry of meat, fish, or vegetables in earthenware bowls. The lepers eat like ravenous schoolboys, and I believe they have greater appetites than the hale and hearty inhabitants of Mandalay. After breakfast they sit and chat, and read, and—the inevitable—sleep. The few who are able keep the place clean; but no work can be done by the majority. Many of them are without fingers, some without hands. The evening meal is always welcomed, and we get evening worship when it is possible. At present we have no converted leper.\* When we have a few Christian inmates, much

\* In a letter received four months later than this, Mr. Bestall writes: “I am very glad to tell you of one poor old leper, one of the first who came into the Home, finding Christ. He is a sad sight, but after fourteen months' instruction and thought, he has come out from among his fellow-lepers and publicly professed Christ. I don't expect him to live long.”

of the religious work may be conducted by the lepers themselves. This institution, in addition to being a boon to the public, and to the diseased ones, will in time become to the latter the gate of heaven.

"In the eight months of our work among them death has been very busy. Naturally the bodies of these sufferers are little able to cope with sickness. When a leper sinks he sinks like lead. The pale face, the sunken cheeks, the loss of appetite, the unnatural smile, all tell of a speedy end. We have had nine deaths. Some of them have been very touching. The worst case we have received was a woman named Mah So. She was revolting to look at. She had no hands, and her wrists were raw; she was stone blind, and her sightless eyes were covered with a horny skin; she had no feet, and her legs were eaten away to above the ankles; she could only crawl about upon her elbows and knees. I felt more pity for her than for any other fellow-creature I ever saw. I preached to her in a little hut made on purpose for her. She was in dense ignorance. It was very difficult work indeed. She became ill, and was quite helpless. She lingered for a week. Often she would say, 'I want to die; it is no good living; I can't eat, can't sleep; I want to die.' I asked her, 'Where are you going?' 'I don't know.' 'Would you like to go to Jesus?' 'Yes, but I don't know Him.' I told her to repeat after me, 'Lord Jesus, I am Mah So, a dying leper; take me in my weakness and save me now. Amen.' She repeated the short prayer, and died during the night. I never saw a case of more utter misery, and never did a soul pray to Christ from a lower depth of emaciation and disease. Was not that prayer answered?"

"One night a young man came of his own accord to the Home. 'Let me in; I am very ill,' he said. He had only five days to live. Dysentery, fever and leprosy, a hideous trio, were all 'dragging' him, as the Burmans say. We had the opportunity of directing him to Christ in the last hours of his life. And other instances of dying lepers listening to the news of the lepers' Saviour come to me as I write. But these cases are sufficient to show the nature of our spiritual work among this class of the population.

"Our greatest trial has been the loss of the caretaker. On

my return from Rangoon recently,\* we rode over to visit the Home. Narayanaswamy met us at the gates, but his face wore so unnatural an expression that I at once asked him, 'Down with fever again?' 'No, sir,' he replied, 'but I have a bad pain here,' pointing to the back of his head. He looked so strange that I told him to go to the doctor. A bullock gharry stood at the gate. The poor fellow walked to it, but had to cross a bridge over a little ditch, in which lay some water. Immediately he saw the water he uttered a great cry, pressed his sides violently with his hands, and rushed, a very madman, back to the house. In a moment every nerve in his body seemed to spring to life. Nothing could cross his vision without causing him to start violently; water gave him a terrible fright, and I beheld before me the first case of hydrophobia I have ever seen. For the next twenty-four hours I had no rest. He was removed to our own premises, to keep him from terrifying the lepers. He rapidly grew worse, and he who, but a few days previously, had been the best, quietest and most willing helper I had, became a raving maniac. A whole night of paroxysms preceded his death. 'I want to bite you,' was his frequent cry. All the native people fled, and I had to face him alone. The doctor did what could be done. Strange to say, though it is not strange to the disease, in the last hour of his life he was as quiet and reasonable as when in health. 'A little dog scratched my ear,' he said to me. On looking I saw the smallest of marks behind his right ear. He died quite suddenly whilst in the act of taking medicine."

Our aim in establishing and carrying on the Home for Lepers in Mandalay is somewhat wide and far-reaching as a philanthropic enterprise:—

1. To succour and provide for the wretched, helpless, outcast

\* It is an interesting illustration of the lights and shadows mingling in missionary life, that this journey to Rangoon Mr. Bestall speaks of, was to meet and bring home to Mandalay his bride, and it was this young lady's first introduction to the Home for Lepers, in company with her husband, that was marked by this tragic scene! It is worthy of mention in this connection, that Mrs. Bestall, before going out to Burma, underwent a two-years' course of training in nursing and elementary medicine, in order to be more useful among the women and girls of Burma.

lepers. We call this institution not a jail, nor an asylum, but a home; and it is our constant endeavour to make it as much of a home to them as the sad circumstances will permit. That the lepers have taken to it is clear from the fact that there has only been one case, since we commenced the work, in which there was a desire to live again the old mendicant life, and that was the case of a young leper gifted with a fair voice and able to make a good living outside. This speaks volumes, for there is no law either to compel them to come or to remain. It is clear that such a law is not needed.

2. To offer the lepers the Gospel. Worship is held daily. No one is compelled to listen to it, or in any way pressed to accept the Gospel. It is believed they will gladly do so of themselves when they learn how merciful it is, and see illustrations of it in the Home.

3. To segregate the lepers from the healthy population, and thus do what we can to stamp out the disease. Formerly it was impossible to prevent them from going about in the markets and other public places of resort, but there is no reason for allowing that, now there is a comfortable home provided for them.

4. To rescue the children of leprous parents, removing them from the parents, with their consent, before they contract the disease; and to provide for them. What a blessed preventive work is this!

5. Lastly, to follow the example of our Master, who never came in contact with suffering but He relieved it; and thus to give a worthy and consistent view of the true genius and spirit of the Christian religion to the tens of thousands of the heathen who throng around us. To them this Home for Lepers is an argument which they know how to appreciate, and it will not be lost upon them.

Richard Baxter quaintly says: "As long as men have eyes as well as ears, they will think they see your meaning as well as hear it; and of the two senses they are more likely to trust their eyes as being the more reliable sense of the two." So if we can let them *see* Christianity as well as *hear* it, we may hope that they will embrace it the sooner. No one knows philanthropy when he

sees it better than a native of the East. Here, then, we trust there will always be Christianity writ large before their eyes.

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?"

"Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?"

"Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward.

"Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I am. . . .

"And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:

"And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

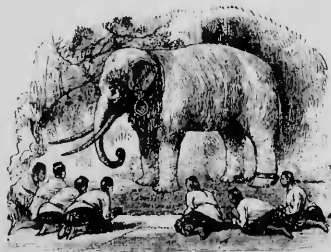
"And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in."—Isa. lviii. 6-12.

With this divinely inspired encomium upon practical godliness, —the godliness that *does something* to make the world brighter and better around it, as distinguished from the bare and empty profession,—I close this humble effort.

The putting together of these chapters has been a labour of love, on behalf of the country and people I wish to serve, accomplished with some difficulty, during the brief breathing spaces afforded in the intervals of a busy life, almost filled up with missionary advocacy, whilst on furlough in England, and in the

hope of returning very shortly to Mandalay. I have here sought to give some information about a country mostly new to English people, rich in interest as regards its different races, their religions and customs, and the circumstances attending the first few years of British rule. Of British rule in the East I entertain a very high opinion as to its substantial justice, and its direct issue in the general well-being of the people. It ought to be the aim of every Christian amongst us to purge it of everything detrimental, and to make it *all* it should be. The responsibilities laid upon us as a people in this respect are very great.

That Burma is destined to play an important part in the development and civilisation of the far East, there can be little doubt, now that our frontier is brought up to the confines of China, and that a railway is to be constructed from Mandalay through the northern Shan States, that will bring us within measurable distance of the great "Celestial Empire." It is of great importance that this development be not confined to material things, but that Britain employ her great power and influence in the direction of everything that will uplift the nations, which Providence has so manifestly placed under her charge. Mission work amongst the Burman race may be slow; humanly speaking, and judging by all former experience, it looks likely to be so. That, however, is not the fault of what is being done; we may safely assert that much more might be done if the work were taken up in a more liberal and enterprising spirit. Are you, dear reader, doing your share?



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