

For the Christian Messenger.

Letter from Burmah.

HENTHADAH, BRITISH BURMAH, January 15th, 1857.

My Dear Mr. Editor,—Having returned a few days since from a very interesting Missionary tour to the neighbouring city of Okpong, I propose writing some account of it for your paper, with the hope that it may prove worthy of a perusal by those who are accustomed to read your Missionary column, and are accustomed to pray for the advancement of God's Kingdom among the Heathen.

In the city of Okpong there is now a little church of four members. Two of these are the old men—of the respective ages of 65 and 79 years—of whom, I think, I wrote you when they were baptized, nearly a year ago. The history of these men forms one of those interesting narratives which are continually recurring in the annals of conversions from Heathenism to Christianity. For more than thirty years before our arrival they believed in the One Eternal God. They received tracts from Dr. Judson when he was on one of his tours to Ava. By reading these tracts, and without any aid, save from on high, they received the truth in the love of it, and continued, surrounded by their unbelieving country-men, faithfully worshipping the true God, and trusting for salvation on the Saviour whom He had sent, until we arrived at Henthadah. We found they needed comparatively little instruction. They had learned that Jesus required them to be baptized on a profession of their faith, and they demanded the rite. After the conquest of the country by the English, and while disorder still reigned all over the Province, the terrible robber, Mounng Goung Gyie, fell upon the village where they lived, and they had barely time to fly with their lives, and behold from their hiding place in the jungle their houses sacked and given to the flames. But in the terror of that moment, while the delay of a moment might cost them their lives, they thought of the books which had taught them to trust in Christ, and though they made no effort to save their valuables, they carried their books with them.

I need scarcely say I never saw clearer evidence of being born of the Spirit than these two men afford. While I was in Okpong the aged brethren were cheered by the baptism of two women, one, the wife of the younger man, the other, a woman who had been inquiring and considering a long time. Some hundreds of men and women assembled to witness the ordinance, and listened very quietly while I attempted to shew them that the idea which forms the basis of their system,—viz., "God can not save man,"—(and hence the natural inference that, except by works of merit and supererogation, there is no salvation, no hope) was indeed perfectly true of him whom they called God—but that, nevertheless, He by whose power Guadama, and all men, and all things were created, could save, and He alone.

This great city, notwithstanding it is one of the strongholds of Buddhism, holds out cheering promise of giving many souls to Christ. It is a noble city. Many acres of ground, in the finest part of the town, and covered with hundreds of the different varieties of the palm, are exclusively devoted to the priest. In the days of Burman power, the dignity and sacredness of the place were enhanced by the rich building and dedicating with great pomp several monasteries and pagodas of unusual magnificence.

During my visit of three days I saw great numbers of people—more, indeed, than I and my assistant, Ko Choke, could properly preach to. In the morning early each day I went up to the principal pagoda, where I was always sure of a good congregation, and tried to preach Christ in such a manner that my hearers could not help seeing the superiority of the glorious Redeemer over all the dumb throng of idols by which we were surrounded,—and the inefficiency, as works of merit, of the long rows of splendid Kyoungs and idol-houses, before Him who charges his angels with folly—and in whose sight the heavens are impure.

One morning, just as I had arrived at the pagoda, I observed a woman reclining on a mat before a large idol. The face of the figure was blackened by exposure to the rains, and some workmen were engaged in retouching it with mortar. For this operation the woman was to pay them about £8, and secure to herself proportionate merit. Her face was a perfect picture of self-satisfaction, and nothing that I could say seemed to have the smallest effect in

relaxing her confidence in her cherished merit.

I observe from your report of the doings of the Convention that it has been voted to contribute from the Foreign Mission fund of your Board a certain amount towards the support of our mission. It is, I can assure you, most grateful to my feelings to know that I and my work are thus remembered. That the Brethren may know there is demand for all that they can give, I need only say that I have now but one assistant, while there is work for an indefinite number.

Believe me ever faithfully yours, ARTHUR R. R. CRAWLEY.

For the Christian Messenger.

Halifax, North Church.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,

As no connected account of the work of God in the North Baptist Church in this City, has appeared in your columns, perhaps you will insert a few lines on the subject. I have no wish to chronicle any efforts of my own, but while all the power, all the honour and praise belong to the "Great God and our Saviour," we may yet thankfully refer to the labors of brethren who have aided us, and record what "God hath wrought."

My connexion with this church commenced some eight months ago. Though during this short period, discouragements have pressed around us, the people have been visited with unexpected mercies. I feel that I have reason, personally, to "thank God and take courage." Long lingering doubts hung over my departure from a dearly beloved people for the sake of laboring here. It may have been that that painful parting was "meant for good."

Under the favouring smile of Heaven, it has been my privilege to witness an increase of prayerfulness and union in this church, and an increase of numbers in the Sabbath School, the congregation and the church. And no small token of good is it that the members of the congregation are connecting themselves with a flourishing "Total Abstinence Society" in this part of the City. The promptness and energy of my people in most of their arrangements are worthy of commendation; and the hearty and able co-operation of the brethren, to a degree almost unanticipated, has given me much cause for gratitude.

On three several Sabbaths of the autumn we visited our baptistry, the capacious Chebucto Harbour, with a single candidate for baptism. For a number of weeks just past we have met more frequently than usual, for prayer, preaching and exhortation. Brotherly love has been evinced, wanderers have returned to the fold, sinners have found pardon and grace through the "precious blood of Christ," and those who had silently cherished a hope in the Saviour, together with new converts, have confessed Christ before men. For five successive Lord's days we have been at the baptismal waters, with, first nine, then fourteen, six, four and three, who, professing faith in Jesus, were "baptized into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." May they all "walk in newness of life," and keep their plighted faith and vows to the Redeemer, till their dying day.

Seed has been sown which has not yet sprung up. Some timid ones shrink from the privilege of "taking up their cross and following Christ." And some, alas! I fear, are more hardened than before. May Almighty grace still abound. "Other men have laboured, and we have entered into their labours," but "neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase."

We are much indebted to ministering brethren for their kind and valuable assistance. We have had a number of able and faithful discourses from each of the brethren David Freeman, Richard McLearn, T. H. Porter, Junr., and Willard G. Parker. I make no attempt at passing eulogiums upon their sermons and addresses or at comparing their respective merits. Let it suffice that we are deeply thankful to them, that we love and honor them as friends and as the Lord's servants, and that the efforts of each and all have, we have cause to believe, been sealed by the effectual energy and blessing of God. The last named brother left his large and interesting church, and travelled far, at an unfavourable season of the year, to visit and to cheer us by his presence and efforts. He left us early in the week, having preached about ten earnest sermons, while the Lord was with him. Our prayers and sympathies follow him. Our young Brother Porter is still in the city, and we hope to hear him further commending that Saviour whom he loves.

We rejoice that good is being done, and encouragement received in the Granville Street Church.

Brethren of the churches, friends of the Redeemer, "pray for us." And the Lord continue to "turn our captivity as the streams in the South."

Yours in the gospel, S. N. BENTLEY.

Halifax, 10th April 1857.

HORTON.—On Saturday last, six persons were received for baptism by the church. Another who had been accepted at New Minas, was baptized with them at Gaspeaux, on Lord's-day morning. A large congregation assembled to witness the baptism, and deep solemnity pervaded the whole.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, APRIL 15, 1857.

AMONG the most pleasing features of the present day, as regards its religious aspects, is the dying out, to a large extent among Protestants, of the old feuds and animosities which have so long disgraced the Christian name, and the introduction of a more liberal and really catholic spirit among those who profess the pure doctrines of our common Faith. After the innumerable evils and scandals that have resulted from the contrary course, it is beginning at last to be felt, that repentance towards God and faith on our Lord Jesus Christ, are the great essentials of Christian Discipleship, and if truly experienced, ought long since to have banished the disgraceful Shibboleths, which the bigotry and intolerance of a corrupted Christianity had so universally introduced. Hierarchies, State-Churches, and long-established forms have been the principal means of nourishing and perpetuating this hateful spirit, even among those who professed to acknowledge "that God was no respecter of persons, but that in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him."

We take from one of our New York exchanges the following truly Gospel sentiment emanating from Bishop Lee (Episcopal) of Delaware:

"We do not believe that the Kingdom of God will be best promoted by the sect-spirit. Dearly do we love, highly do we prize the primitive ministry, the edifying worship of our own venerable Church. But we are persuaded that her true growth and influence will not, in the end, be advanced by elevating her arrangements above the truth as it is in Jesus, and the salvation of souls. To be more intent on making men Episcopalians than Christians, to narrow down the fold of Christ to the limits of our own household, or of those who retain with us a ministry Episcopally ordained, and therefore consign multitudes of believers in Christ, of whom the world is not worthy, to uncovenanted mercies, is to make the Kingdom of God meat and drink, rather than righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Let this exclusive and denunciatory spirit call itself by what name it will, it is in reality the sectarian spirit in its most unlovely form. We find it taught neither in the Word of God nor in the standards of our Church; neither do we find its assumptions verified by observation. God does not confine His blessings within any such contracted boundaries; He does not command the clouds of Heaven not to rain upon the field that is not tilled by our laborers. Rear our partition wall as high as we may, the branches of the tree, the fruitful vine, the spiritual Joseph, run over our wall, and drop their rich sweetness beyond our fence."

Visit of the Hon. Neal Dow.

THE Sons of Temperance,—always ready to embrace an opportunity of forwarding the good cause,—made arrangements to welcome the great champion of the Maine Law, and were waiting the arrival of the Steamer from Boston on Thursday evening last until a late hour. The foggy weather prevented her arrival until Friday about 2 P. M. Several of the brethren attended as a deputation to receive the Honorable gentleman and escort him to Terperance Hall, where an address of congratulation was presented and read by Mr. W. M. Brown. Mr. Dow then occupied about twenty minutes in addressing those assembled, on the present position and future prospects of the cause of prohibition in the United States generally, and in Maine in particular. His address, though brief, was sufficient to exhibit the force and eloquence which he is able to bring to bear on the work to which he is devoted. He shewed himself to be completely master of the subject. His illustrations exhibited a mind full of benevolence, and not to be daunted by a temporary reaction in public opinion. He denied that the sole object of governments was "the protection of property," but con-

sidered that the peaceful possession of a man's home was the only legitimate aim of legislation, and that whatever was opposed to the general good was a proper subject of prohibition. If the rum-traffic was not promoting the welfare of the people, no private rights should for a moment be allowed to prevent its extinction. If such terrible evils flowed from any other business as was the inevitable result of this, no christian legislature or righteous government could allow it to exist, to the destruction of its subjects.

After a few minutes spent in personal introductions, the audience to the number of about two or three hundred formed themselves into procession, and accompanied him back to the Steamer.

Three hearty cheers were given at the Hall and three at the wharf by way of greeting, and many will doubtless follow him with their prayers and best wishes as he proceeds on his tour of philanthropy through Great Britain.

We observed several members of both Houses of the Legislature and of the Government on the platform, and afterwards in the procession.

Our Course.

It is some satisfaction to know that the course we pursue meets with the approval of those whose good opinion we value. Amongst the numerous extracts of a similar character which we might make from our correspondence, and their allusions to recent events in the political world, we take the liberty of inserting two or three from brethren whose names would, we believe, command the respect of the whole denomination.

"I very much approve of the course which you have taken in the political contest which is agitating the Province, and I hope you never will allow the "Christian Messenger," while under your control to become the organ of any political party in Nova Scotia. I see that the "Presbyterian Witness," "Provincial Wesleyan" and some of the other political papers are saying very hard things about you, because you don't abuse the Catholics. Have those political editors yet to learn that Baptists cannot proscribe any man or body of men, because of their religion. This is just what Catholics have always done, and are always doing when they have the power. I would ask what is the difference between Protestant intolerance and Popish. I suppose those people who are so very anxious to deprive the Catholics of the civil privileges which they enjoy, and which is their right to enjoy in a free country, will not find fault with Spain, France, and Italy. I should like to read an essay written by some of those politically religious, (not religiously political) Editors upon the intolerance of these countries.

"Whenever Roman Catholics, Methodists, Presbyterians or any other, undertake to deprive the Baptists of their privileges, whether they be religious, civil or political, or attempt to dictate the course we are to take in these matters, they will find that they have reckoned without their host. I think that Baptists should express to you and to the whole world, their unqualified approval of your conduct."

Another writes:—

"I think I may venture to say that in expressing my own I utter the sentiments of many of our people—indeed the general one; that your course in the late revolutionary movements is just the thing. God bless and prosper you dear brother."

Another says:—

"If you find it necessary to say anything further, drop the silk gloves, and put on iron gauntlets and hit hard."

Our Brother uses a strong figure.

THE letter in another column, on the "Bible in Schools," although not written in a grave, argumentative, solemn style, yet may serve well to open up the subject. We shall be glad to place the succeeding ones before our readers. It is highly important that we should think seriously about the matter, and have it discussed in our pages.

Whilst we must not allow any proscription of the free use of the Word of God to our children, yet there are some reasons for making a difference between the Bible and other books in Schools.

The effort made in Prince Edward's Island to prescribe a form of prayer for Common Schools, and oblige the Teachers to use it, was, we conceive, open to serious objection, and we think Protestants should have been foremost in resisting such an attempt upon their religious liberty.

LONDON dates to the 28th ult. have been received by the Niagara, which arrived on Thursday last.

The news she brings may be considered interesting and important. Parliament has been dissolved, and the whole united Kingdom is at the present moment in the heat of a General Election. Of the event of this great social competition, however, there is little doubt entertained. The policy of the late ministry and their able leader, Lord Palmerston, will, as all present appearances denote, be triumphantly mentioned by a large majority in the new Parliament, and the late vote of want of confidence repudiated by the nation at large.