

# Christian Messenger.

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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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## Religious.

### Burmah. Rangoon Mission.

EXTRACTS OF A LETTER FROM MRS. INGALLS

**Destructive Fire.**—Thongzai, July 20, 1864.—I said in my last that I should be so busily engaged with my work that I should not write during the next two or three months. But our ways are not at all times the Lord's way. We had completed our school-room and were nailing on the last bit of carving on our chapel front, and our Bible class were all engaged with me in the chapel, when the cry of water! water! sounded up the stair-way. Supposing some of the children had fallen into the Thongzai stream, which was then very high from the hill waters which had come rushing down, we all rushed down the stairs.

"I was met by a man and turned another way, and by that time I had made a little circuit to the street near the chapel, the building had burned to the lower floor. In one hour from the time we sat in our beautiful chapel, the ground was one mass of coal and falling posts."

"We were endeavoring to be cautious about fire till the time we could put up a small brick cook-house. My servant had left the cook-house at ten o'clock, and supposed he had deluged the embers; but he probably left some coal, as a very high wind arose at three o'clock, the coal was fanned up, and blazing up through the roof, swept the flames underneath the chapel roof."

"The ground was very soon crowded with hundreds of our heathen friends and Christians, and we were all a company of sorrowful, weeping creatures. I have lost all, and it is a greater loss at this time, when I require so much for my home trip. But the loss of our chapel is the great loss. Aside from the teak timber, which was given to us by the government friends, the chapel has cost us Rs. 2,000, which is far less than it would have cost in a city. The Christians and heathen friends have been greatly interested, and have done all they could in work and funds; and though we have not been proud of our chapel, we have been very much pleased with it. It was large and strong, and the accommodations well adapted for church services, school, rooms for myself, two families, and a room fitted up for native visitors. But it is all gone."

**Sabbath after the Fire.**—This all occurred on Friday, and as I cannot eat rice, my people despatched a boat to Rangoon for eatables. The people were all very kind, and gave all they could from their Burman homes to make me a little comfortable; but Sunday morning I began to feel very ill for the want of food. But as the weeping company gathered in the morning, I felt that I must rally for their sake and try to trust in God. The pastor read the 27th Psalm, and through tears and sighs, we all tried to lift up our hearts to God.

Then they tried to sing, but our hearts were too full, and so we all bowed together again in prayer and our service closed. During the day an English officer who was passing through our district heard of our disaster, and came to me with some bread, a knife, fork, blanket, some paper, and a few very useful things. Then our people lifted up their hearts and plead that I would not leave them, and so here we are, a sorrowful district.

**Assistance after the Fire.**—The heathen people have shown me great kindness, have clothed my school children who were with me and supplied them with Burman articles, and the heathen have come in with their one rupee, to the amount of thirty rupees.

This is a trifle to aid me when I have lost everything; but it has shown me their kind feeling. When I have recovered from the excitement, I shall see the great change between this people now and the time I first came here, and it will be a strong proof of the power of the gospel."

"I shall borrow books in Rangoon and try to resume our studies soon. The pastor, preacher and Christians, are very much cast down and greatly disturbed in all their arrangements, and I must remain with them till I leave in March. I shall have many

discomforts, but they need me now more than before, when all was so nicely settled.

Pray for me and pray for grace to be given to these Christians, and pray also that a blessing may rest upon these kind heathen."

### Mission to the Shans.

FROM THE JOURNAL OF MRS. BIXBY.

**Preaching of Sau Quala.**—We have twelve coolies, six assistants, and three boys who are to take care of the ponies and make themselves generally useful. Besides these we shall need guides by the way, and it may be an occasional coolie on the road.

Sau Quala has preached to our people in Burmese. They have listened attentively, some of them for the first time in their lives. The sermon was so full of kindly interest, fatherly counsel and affectionate Christian regard, that no one could turn away from it. Our friends have doubtless read the history of Sau Quala; but they must see the man and hear him preach the Lord Jesus Christ, the only God and Saviour for all races of men, to form any just idea of the man or of the power of the gospel over the heathen heart and mind. Rarely have I met a Christian minister at home, who more clearly comprehended and more heartily embraced the great doctrine of man's redemption through a crucified Saviour, or who could with more effect commend it to others. If I had ever had any doubt as to the adaptation of the gospel to all races of men, it is now removed, and I feel greatly encouraged and strengthened for our journey. God who has shown his great love and power in this man and many others of his race, is surely able to perfect his praise out of the mouth of the most ignorant barbarians; and if his time to favor the Shans has come, how delightful the work of calling them will be.

As we shall be for so long a time in a measure cut off from all other human beings except those who are with us, you will, I dare say, in the course of these letters, become acquainted with most of them, particularly the assistants, who are Burmans, Shans and Karens. Our cook is a Madras man, so that in all we represent five races of men and speak as many different languages; but we can all communicate in the Burmese language. The Burmese is the language of the country, and all races living here become in some degree familiar with it.

Our guide, procured by Sau Quala, is the head man of a village some twenty miles from this. He of course takes the lead, and the Karen assistants very naturally follow. Next are our coolies, dressed, or rather, undressed in their native costume, a single garment completing their whole attire. This garment they call *bourbees*; it resembles two blue bags united at the top, and reaching from the waist to a little below the knees. Sometimes when they wish to appear particularly well, they wear a jacket, which is white at first; but as it is seldom or never washed, you would scarcely think it white after a few days. On their heads they wear a turban, made sometimes of white muslin, and sometimes of a bright-colored silk handkerchief. When new, the effect of these turbans is very pleasing. They are worn sometimes so as to cover the whole head, and sometimes gracefully folded with their long black hair around the forehead. In addition to this, the Shans often wear a huge bamboo hat, the crown terminating in a point at the top like a small circular pyramid, and brim spreading so as to answer the purpose of hat and umbrella too. Their burdens they carry upon their shoulders in baskets, suspended from the ends of a bamboo pole about four feet long. These bamboos they do not throw away at the end of the journey, getting new ones for the next trip, but preserve them carefully, using the same one as long as they live. "The older they are the better," they say. They become very much attached to these poles. They are to them, they say, as a wife or a mother, and any disrespect shown to one's bamboo, would be resented quite as soon as an insult to his mother.

We have one loaded pony, and one that an assistant who is not strong, sometimes rides. We, with the ponies, naturally remain in the rear, to look after any of the party that may stray from the rest, to aid in disasters and to watch over all generally.

**A Christian Village.**—Lapet Ing, Tuesday 29.—We climbed up to this village early on Monday morning. It is situated on the top of a mountain of the same name, and both mountain and village take their name from a lake which was formerly at the foot of the mountain, on whose borders grew a shrub that Burmans call Lapet, or Tea; hence Tea Lake. It is nominally a Christian village, but there is no teacher here at present, and the only baptized persons in the village are three men and their wives. Nevertheless, according to the custom of Christian Karens everywhere, they meet every evening for prayer.

We met the headman about a mile from the village, cutting trees to build a chapel. He is about thirty-five years old, stout, well formed, with a broad, open, intelligent face, and we are very much interested in him. His name is Moung Shway Yah; his father was a Geckho, and during his early years he lived with the Geckhos, till, at the death of his father, his mother returned to her own people. He still continues his relationship and intimacy with the Geckhos, and has drunk truth or made a league of perpetual friendship with the chiefs of their principal villages. He gives us a more favorable account of the people than we have before received. He says they are wild and warlike, cruel and implacable to their enemies, but faithful to their friends, and by virtue of the treaty he has made with them, he can be surety for us through their whole country. He also knows the Saukus and their country well, but says the road through the Geckho country is much shorter and better than through the Saukus; we have therefore chosen the former, and hope to be on our way again early in the morning.

### The Welsh Jumpers.

John Angell James, in one of his letters, gives a curious account of the religious antics he had witnessed at a Welsh meeting, where deep feeling prevailed, not regulated by a sound judgment:

Considerable attention was paid from the beginning by the congregation, though the preacher at first was calm and sober. As he proceeded, he became more and more animated, and in proportion the people became more and more interested and affected. Great numbers were at length dissolved in tears, and a loud groan, attended by some fervent exclamations, burst from all parts of the house.

Being seated in the gallery, I could command an entire view of the congregation, and could discern many very interesting cases of deep and silent emotion. Some of them interested and affected me greatly. I understood not a syllable that was uttered; but to see hundreds of people melted down to tears and groans by the simple, yet impassioned groans of a rustic, whom I had seen but two days before in the character of a ploughman, was indeed a novel and impressive sight. Thus far all was affecting, and I could not help weeping abundantly.

The preacher now grew more warm than before, and at length proceeded to what in refined English congregations would be accounted a species of raving. Still, however, he was not ungraceful. His eyes seemed ready to start from their sockets. His every muscle seemed strained and quivering. This drew fresh bursts of feeling from his audience. Many screamed out at once, and some writhed as if in agony or in fits. This returned just as often as the preacher ascended into his altitudes.

When the sermon was closed, and the people rose to prayer, you might see them in different parts of the meeting, six or eight in a group, with their arms round each other's necks and waists, all hanging together. The sacrament was now to be administered, which is conducted something after the plan of the church of England. The communicants come and kneel around the railing of the chancel, and receive the elements from the hand of the minister.—Among them were many boys and girls not more than twelve or thirteen years of age. The men approached the table first, and during their approach all was silent and solemn, but no sooner did the women draw near than a scene commenced which baffles all power of language to describe.

One woman, directly after receiving the bread and wine, began to vociferate as loud as her lungs would permit, at the same time throwing her arms about and clapping her hands, more like a man playing the cymbals in a military band of music than any thing else I can compare it to. This never ceased for a single minute during twenty minutes, till, pale and foaming, she seemed ready to drop. Her shrill cry was the signal for many others to commence. The whole place was now filled with a howling I cannot describe. I saw a crowd of women, perhaps thirty in number, come together and literally throw themselves down before the railing, all bathed in tears, and filling the place with loud lamentation. One of them beat against the railing with her fist, as if she was determined to demolish it, till her hands must have been bruised. Another, directly she rose from her knees, plucked off her bonnet and threw it violently across the meeting. As they retired from the table they seemed to form into groups, and commence jumping with all their might, as if they were trying to leap from the area into the gallery. I saw five or six women jump with their bonnets off, I suppose fifty times without stopping, nearly a yard high, at the same time uttering loud cries. They were chiefly occupied in saying, "Bruised for me!" "Died for me!"

In another part of the room were groups of men waving their hands over their heads, clapping them together, and filling the place with their cries. All this time fresh groups were coming up to the table to receive the elements, and in the midst of the surrounding noise and confusion the ministers at the table were perfectly composed, and actually sometimes engaged in prayer with others of the communicants.

### Only a symptom.

"Pshaw, sister! you are are too bigoted in your ideas. I don't believe that a man will be punished forever for swearing now and then, or for doing what he pleases on Sunday, any more than that going to church and subscribing to missionary and Bible societies will take him to heaven."

"Brother, what made you say that you thought that Lewis Rives would not live long because he had those round red spots upon his cheeks every afternoon? Red spots upon his face cannot kill him, I suppose."

"Why, how you talk, Annie! Those hectic spots would of course, be trifling in themselves, but what makes them important is that they are the symptoms of a fatal disease."

"Well, brother, that is just what gives importance to swearing, Sabbath-breaking, and such practices. They are the symptoms of a heart that does not love and reverence its Maker as it should; and it is not more impossible that the symptoms of disease should appear in a perfectly healthy body, than that such habits as these can be indulged in by a man who realises the goodness and holiness of God. Is it not by the fruits of the tree that we are to know its nature? And now, to illustrate my opinion in regard to the last part of your speech concerning church-going, etc., let me ask you a couple of other questions. If a poor man meets you in the street and asks for some assistance, will it do him any good for you to merely put your hand into your pocket, and let it remain there?"

"Why, of course not."

"But yet, if you were going to give him something, you would put your hand into your pocket, I suppose?"

"I should think so; but what of all that?"

"Only this, brother: The movement of your hand is the sign of what you mean to do, but whether it is a sincere movement or not must be proved by the result. This I apply to church-going, and so forth. These things are merely the outward signs of love to God, and a wish to join in praising him. They are actions which a hypocrite may perform, but which it is not at all likely that a Christian will neglect; and the difference between the true and counterfeit may easily be known by their results. In God's sight the motive is as plainly visible as the action; but we mortals, brother, can only judge of characters as we do of diseases—by their symptoms."—*Christian Intelligencer.*