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A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL & GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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## Missionary Intelligence.

### BURMAH.

TOUNGO MISSION.—LETTER FROM DR. MASON.

**Journey to the Bghai Association—First Day.**—A bracing cold morning on the second of February, 1864, found a large party of us en route from Toungo to the Bghai Association, on the top of the highest northern mountains, and on the borders of the Gaikho country.

An elephant carried our baggage and provisions, and I was borne in a vehicle invented by the Karens themselves, like nothing else that ever was created,—hybrid between a chair and a palanquin.

For the first two miles, the road lay through a tract of land in the forks of the Sitang river and Kannee creek, which Mrs. Mason has obtained from Government for the Mountain Karens to cultivate, and on which are now settled more than fifty families.

After crossing Kannee creek, we journeyed all day through an uninhabited region between the Sitang river and the hills. Teak trees and several species of the wood-oil family, afforded magnificent specimens of a tropical forest, diversified by hoary headed black varnish trees, now in full bloom.

On one occasion, we roused a Hamadryad some ten feet long, whose bite the natives say is more fatal than that of the cobra. Indeed, I knew a well authenticated instance of a man dying half an hour after being bitten by one on the wrist. As the brute has been correctly described as "very fierce, and always ready not only to attack, but to pursue when opposed" he was allowed to crawl quietly away,—no one in the company being disposed to enter into contest with him.

**Encampment at Night.**—When evening came, we encamped for the night in a forest of bamboos, and the Karens made me a booth at the foot of a thick clump. We then began to look anxiously for the arrival of the elephant which was behind us, and a party went back to look for it, but returned without any tidings of its appearance. Darkness came on, and we had to lie down hungry and cold, having eaten nothing since our early breakfast in Toungo, and with no clothing but what we had on. Just as weariness had made me forget my dinner and bed, I was aroused from my slumbers by the welcome intelligence that the elephant had arrived.

It appears that Tau-due, one of our faithful people, was behind me, and he began to suspect, about the middle of the day, that all was not right, and turned back to meet the elephant. He found, however, no traces of it till he came down to Mrs. Mason's Karen land, south of Kannee, where he found by the tracks it had taken another road. He followed on speedily, and overtook it at the distance of several miles, when he brought it back, never stopping all day, nor till he reached us in the deep darkness.

**Lost her Reckoning.**—The next day we turned up the mountains and rested for breakfast at a village at their base, inhabited by unconverted Bghais, engaged in the teak timber business. Among them we found a widow and her children from a Christian village, who said she continued to worship and pray to God in the midst of the heathenism around her, although she had lost her reckoning and could not tell when the Sabbath came.

We pitched our leafy tents for the night high among the mountains, by a beautiful cascade, and we were overtaken by a Bghai chief on horseback, who insisted on going on, though it was then sunset, to announce our approach to the nearest village.

**Generous Hospitality.**—The following day, before noon, we were met by four women laden with large baskets of boiled rice and various Karen delicacies. A dozen men soon followed; but wherever religion is concerned, woman is always in the foreground. "Last at the cross and earliest at the grave," reveals her character.

Before evening we reached a Bghai village, with a new chapel on the very summit of the highest hill, excepting one knoll, for thirty or forty miles around. It is at the point of commencement of a table land that stretches far away into the Shan States; and, though not level here, as it is farther east, yet the hills

are low, while the general level of the country is some three thousand feet above tide water.

Here hard frost is found every year, though in the southern part of the province I have never seen it under four or five thousand feet above the plains.

**Raising Silk.**—With this village commences the breeding of the silk worm, which is raised in all the Bghai and Gaikho villages north and east of it. The silk is used in part for their own clothing, but more is sold to the Shans and Burmans. The cocoons sell at half a rupee, or twenty-five cents a thousand, and the raw silk is sold at two rupees, or a dollar a pound. The worms are fed about a month before they take the chrysalis state, but longer when badly fed. They are fed on mulberry leaves, some of which are oval and others deeply lobed and serrate. I judge it to be the white mulberry, but it is possibly *morus Indica*. The plant is raised from cuttings and never forms fruit, nor, the Karens say, goes to flower. The next day I saw a large patch of the young shoots that had been killed by the frost; which seemed singular enough to one familiar with the red mulberry, where the Mississippi is often frozen over. The Bghai name of mulberry is Ma-moo, which is probably of common origin with the Greek *morus*.

**Liberal Donations.**—This is a small church; and nearly the only way by which they can obtain a little money in these mountain fastnesses, is by their silk. Yet they contributed to the Institute schools in town the produce of seventeen thousand cocoons, flooded their chapel, forty feet square, with boards, for which they had to pay for the sawing as well as for the frame, and spent much labor in dragging and hewing their massive pests, which I regret to say are not of the most enduring character, there being no teak, or iron wood, or hopia in the region.

**The Village and Chapel.**—On Friday, Feb. 5th, we reached the place of the Association,—a village of about forty families, where Gna-Mau, the principal Bghai chief in the region, resides. The house stands on a conical knoll, well adapted for defence, which has to be taken into consideration, inasmuch as their enemies, the Gaikhos, live close by them, who within the last half year have plundered two Bghai villages, killing and maiming, robbing and kidnapping the inhabitants. Neither of them, however, were Christian villages.

A temporary booth, more than two hundred feet long by one hundred wide, had been erected for the place of assembly; and here for three days we held one of the most interesting Associations I have ever attended. Between one and two thousand persons were present, and among them several parties of wild Gaikhos from the neighboring villages.

**Description of the People.**—These northern Bghais, as well as the Gaikhos beyond them, are a much finer looking race than the more southern Karens, being larger and more muscular. This I attribute, in part, to the climate, which is much more bracing than that of any other Karen region I have visited. They seem, however, to be a different race. Their skulls have decidedly more the Caucasian form than those of the other Karens; the breadth across the forehead is only slightly less than that across the cheek bones; and they are much fairer. The young people, both male and female, often show red and white in strong contrast on their countenances, altogether unlike the uniform clay color of the south tribes. I met with individuals who, if seen alone, would be pronounced half European. Indeed, if not exposed to the sun, some of them would be as fair, I think, as the inhabitants of southern Europe. I say, some of them, and apparently an admixture of two races. At a small village where I spent a night on my return, I found all the inhabitants of this rosy-cheeked, fair-necked tribe, and I tried in vain to obtain some traditions of their history. They know nothing beyond their having lived where they now do from time immemorial.

**Their Appearance and Dress.**—Perhaps owing to the coolness of the climate and to more industrious habits, the people here dress better than Karens usually do. There sat together before me, every time we assembled, more than three hundred of the best dressed

and fairest Karen women I ever saw. It is a singular fact that the dresses of these Bghais and the Gaikhos are precisely alike, and those of the females are most picturesque. Their white short gowns are covered at the bottom, a foot high, with red silk worked on them, and above stars and rays, as of the rising sun, are embroidered in blue, or yellow, or red silk. The native turban has been nearly set aside by commerce with the Shan traders, and every woman has a few silk handkerchiefs thrown over her head. From the same source, the men obtain very comfortable wadded jackets, which are imported by traders annually.

**The Association—Schools.**—Seventy-six congregations were represented at the Association, reporting several hundred baptisms, and the contributions they brought amounted to six hundred and twenty-nine rupees.

Some stirring appeals were made by our leading Bghai assistants in favor of more vigorous efforts for education in the villages; and it was proposed to establish two high schools for a few months at two central positions in the Bghai country, to impart advanced instruction to those who cannot attend the schools in town.—*Miss. Magazine.*

### MY TWIN BOYS.

These sultry days, and the sight of some dear children bathing in the river that flows so quietly past my window remind me of my George and Harry.

When George was about seven years old, on retiring to bed one night, he suddenly began to weep, and repeated his evening prayer in tears. When I questioned the cause, he replied, "I never do anything right. I am so naughty that God cannot love me." I directed his thoughts to Jesus the Saviour and Friend of sinners, as ready and willing to forgive him and help him in doing as he ought. I showed him that notwithstanding his sins, God loved him so much as to give his Son to die for him, and that He only asked in return for the love and confidence of his childish heart. George seemed to receive what I told him with perfect trust; and resting with simple faith on the divine word which I repeated, he peacefully fell asleep.

He was very correct and exemplary in his deportment but after this he seemed increasingly interested in the Bible, and manifested an unusual respect for Christians, saying of some new neighbors who had come among us, "I like Mrs. — and Miss. — because I think they are real Christians." Thus two or three years passed away.

One Sabbath when it rained too much for the boys to attend church, I came home sooner than they expected me, and heard a gentle murmur of voices in the parlor. Opening the door softly, I looked in. George had drawn a stand to the centre of the room, and with Bible and hymn-book before him, and his brother Harry for audience, was engaged in holding meeting. "Ah," said his father, who through the open door had just caught a glimpse of the scene, "George is playing preacher."

The dear boy looked confused, and slipped away without reply. But Harry answered for him boldly and bravely, "No sir, George was n't playing; he never plays Sundays. But he says he means to be a minister when he is old enough, and he thinks he ought to learn how now. So I agreed to help him, because, you know, he couldn't hold meeting alone." "Well, how did you manage?" "Oh, I sung, and George preached." "Can you tell us about his sermon Harry?" "Yes papa; he read in the Bible about Jesus Christ's obeying his parents, and then he said that he and I ought to mind you and mother just as Jesus did; and that if we tried to do right and asked the Saviour to help us, he surely would, because he had promised to." Was not this a good little sermon?

A few months after, George was taken ill with scarlet fever, and asked me if I thought he should recover. I told him we would do all we could for him, and must leave him in the Lord's hands. He asked me to pray for him; and when I had done so, he told me that he hoped God had forgiven his sins and made him his child.

One Sabbath evening just after his recovery, I had been sitting in his chamber listening

with him to the music of a chime of bells in the adjoining city. "It makes me think of heaven," said George; "some day I hope we shall hear the music there."

I left the room soon after, and came down to my bedroom for private devotions. Just as I was closing my door, I perceived that George had followed me. "I came down to be alone, dear," I said. "Yes, mamma," was his reply; "I thought you came to pray, and I wanted to come with you." So we knelt together at the mercy-seat.

The next morning I went early to the city to pass the day, my husband accompanying me. "We shall be lonely without you," said George and Harry; "what shall we do?" I told them of an errand which would occupy their spare time before school, and reminded them of the brief recess at noon which allowed for little more than time to eat their dinner; and their father assured them that we should doubtless be at home before they returned from school at night. So with loving kisses, and benedictions both uttered and unspoken, we separated.

There was a famous bathing-place in the river near us. I can see it now as I write. My boys, then nearly ten years old, were allowed, when the weather was suitable, to go into the water often, the only restriction being that they should always come to the house and give me information before they went. That was a very sultry afternoon; and when school closed all the boys decided that a bath was necessary. George came home to tell us; but we had not returned. "I will leave a line, so they will know as soon as they come," said the dear boy; and with his pencil he wrote as follows:

"Dear Mamma—Harry and I are gone to bathe; we shall be home soon. A boy gave me some candy; I have put a piece of it under the blue teacup for you. Good-by."

This little note, unsigned, was the first and the last my darling ever wrote to me; for when, an hour later, I reached my dwelling, I found an accident, while in the water, had taken his young life.

How precious to me now, is the remembrance of his filial affection and obedience. And how convolving the evidence that he loved and trusted Jesus both in life and in death. Will you not, my young friends, make George's Saviour yours?—*Am. Messenger.*

### THE ANGEL GUARD.

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.—PSALM 34: 7.

For He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.—PSALM 90: 11.

This, then, is the man that hath his angel to wait on him, even he that feareth the Lord. This is the glorious privilege of the men who fear the Lord. Some of them are so men that they are not noticed by the high ones of this world; but their betters do respect them. The angels of God count not themselves too good to attend on them, and camp about them to deliver them. Who am I, Lord, who am I, that upon thy gracious appointment the glorious spirits should watch over me? Blessed Jesus, what an honor, what a safety is this, that those heavenly spirits which attend thy throne should be my champions! It is thy wonderful mercy that thou hast given thine angels charge over me. Those angels, great in power, and glorious in majesty, are my sure, though invisible guard.

Call the Lord thy sure salvation;  
Rest beneath the Almighty's shade;  
In his secret habitation  
Dwell, and never be dismayed.

He shall charge his angel legions  
Watch and ward o'er thee to keep,  
Though thou walk through hostile regions,  
Though in desert-wilds thou sleep.

**THE FOLLY OF DISCONTENT.**—Herodotus tells us of a people in Africa, who lived in the neighborhood of Mount Atlas, whose daily custom was to curse the sun, when he rises high in the heavens, because his excessive heat scorched and tormented them. We have always thought this a fine illustration of discontent, which overlooks blessings and dwells upon evils. Did they forget that to the sun the cursed they were indebted for light, for food, for the fertility of the country, for ten thousand blessings, without which their con-