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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

"Lord, that I may receive my sight."

They tell me it is moonlight, for to me
The day is as the night; I cannot see
Nor sun, nor moon, nor flower, nor tree.

Aye, I am blind—I crave for light;
O thou who gav'st the beggar sight,
Thy ways concerning me are right,

I hear the murmuring waterfall,
I hear the busy warblers call
Each other in the forest tall.

And as I tread the leafy glade,
Or sit beneath the tall trees' shade,
I hear the world which God has made.

Perhaps when I lie down to die,
And angels bear me to the sky,
He'll hear my heart's long-suffering cry.

Though I am blind in heaven I'll see,
And know the triune One in Three,
My God; till then I'd patient be.

Woodville, August 1864.

Religious.

KO THAH A.

In our last we mentioned that a likeness of this remarkable man, from a drawing by Mrs. Crawley, was given in the *Macedonian* for the present month. The following brief biography of this aged pastor of the First Baptist Church at Rangoon is from the pen of the Rev. S. Peek, D. D.

HIS LIFE AND SERVICES.

Our earliest notice dates back to 1820. Ko (then Mung) Thah A is first introduced to us by Mr. Judson, as being a frequent visitor at the Rangoon Mission house, and shortly afterwards as "giving good evidence of being a true disciple." He is described at the time as "a respectable householder, rather above the middling class," about fifty years of age, unmarried, and living with his aged mother, who was dependent on him, in a small village called Nan-dau-gong, about half a mile from the mission. He had formerly been an officer under government, and had amassed considerable property, which he mostly spent in building pagodas and making offerings. "But he obtained no satisfaction, found no resting-place for his soul, until he became acquainted with the religion of Jesus. He now," wrote Mr. Judson, "rests in this religion, with conscious security; believes and loves all that he hears of it, and prays that he may become fully a true disciple of the Saviour." (Judson's Mem. vol. 1, p. 277.) He was baptized in August, 1832, just previous to Mr. Judson's departure for Ava. His manner of application evinced his earnestness. "Early in the morning Mung Thah A came in, and taking Mr. Judson aside, knelt down, raised his folded hands in the attitude of reverence, and made a very pathetic and urgent application for immediate baptism. He stated that he had considered the Christian religion for above two years; that his mind was completely settled on every part; and that though he had been harassed with many fears, he was now resolved to enter the service of Jesus Christ, and remain faithful unto death, whatever the consequences in this world might be." The rite was administered the following day, August 20, making the seventeenth Burman who publicly professed his faith in Christ by baptism.

He was ordained to the ministry and the pastorate of Rangoon church by Messrs. Judson and Wade, in 1829. "He had spent a few months, at the end of the war, in 1826, at a large village in the neighborhood of Shwading; and there, devoting himself to the preaching of the word, had produced a very considerable excitement. Several professed to believe in the Christian religion; and three of the most promising received baptism at his hands." Others requested the same favor; but he became alarmed at his own temerity, and declined their repeated applications. On his return to Rangoon, he continued to disseminate the truth, but in a more cautious and covert manner. He had now come to Maulmain to inquire what he should do with those who wished to be baptized, and to get some instructions concerning his own duty.

Of his qualifications for the ministerial office, Dr. J. wrote:—"He has been so evidently called of God to the ministry, that we have not felt at liberty to hesitate or deliberate about the matter. But, if it had been left to us to select one of all the converts to be the first Christian pastor among his countrymen, Ko Thah A is the man we should have chosen. His age, (fifty-seven) his steadiness and weight of character, his attainments in Burman literature, which, though not perhaps necessary, seem desirable in one who is taking up arms against the religion of his country, and his humble devotedness to the sacred work, all conspire to make us acquiesce with readiness and gratitude in the Divine appointment."

Succeeding years have shown that the "Divine appointment" was not misapprehended. "The teachers have come and gone," he remarked on one occasion; "I have always remained here. When the teachers left Rangoon, the rulers seized me; they commanded me not to preach.—They said, 'Do you intend to preach Jesus Christ?' I said to the rulers, 'I shall preach; Jesus Christ is the true God.'" Ko Thah A, as threatened by the rulers, has been subject to repeated persecutions, in common with his brethren; has been fined and imprisoned, his feet set fast in the stocks. Of the horrors of a Burman prison, some conception can be formed from the records of Oung-pen-la. One of these persecutions occurred in the vicereignty of Mung King-being, who was "envious at the religion of God." "I with others," said Ko Thah A, (he had been requested to write out the particulars,) "was then greatly persecuted, and commanded not to worship Christ, but to return to our old religion and worship Gaudama. Our property was seized; I was cast into prison, put into the stocks, and swung up by the feet. I had then to endure for many days the most fearful threatenings; till, by the grace of God, I was set at liberty. From that time till Pogu was conquered, I have been compelled to attend to my work and preach with the wisdom of the serpent. Now," addressing Mr. Ingalls, who gives the narrative, "being permitted to live to the age of eighty-four, I can preach the glad tidings of God, with none to oppose, and can witness the multiplying of converts and the increase of the church. The believers," he adds, "give proof that they have the life of Christ, for their prayers are attended with Divine power."

Ko Thah A has had the satisfaction of inducting into the church by baptism, during his ministry, more than two hundred converts from heathenism, including about eighty Karens. He has also been permitted to bear a part in commissioning other native laborers, Karens and Burmans, as evangelists, pastors, and teachers; and in constituting Karen and Burman churches. In a letter dated at Rangoon, August 19, 1855, Dr. Dawson says, "The venerable native pastor, Ko Thah A, still continues at his post. Though unable now to stand up and preach to his church, his life shines with increasing lustre; and with his prayers there is such an union as to awaken feelings of deep solemnity in every breast. His language is always pertinent to the occasion, and is beautiful for its conciseness and brevity. He is loved by all who know him."

Ko Thah A died at Rangoon, March 26, 1856, aged 86, and was succeeded in the pastorate by Ko En, formerly of Maulmain.

LETTER FROM KO THAH A.

The following letter from Ko Thah A was translated and forwarded, with the original, by Mr. Ingalls, under date of May 19, 1854.

Ko Thah A, pastor of the Rangoon church, sends affectionate salutations to the pastors, brethren, and sisters of the churches in America.

Formerly, when the rulers of this world governed, they persecuted and oppressed the disciples of Christ. I have suffered persecutions three times. Still, I fainted not; and while suffering, I rejoiced and was happy.

I have baptized above two hundred Peguans, Burmans, and Karens.

The divine light and the cause of Christ, through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit,

are now daily advancing in Rangoon. The missionaries are aiding me and the church.

I, Ko Thah A, with the members of the Rangoon church, make daily prayer for all in every place in all the world, who have entered into the church of Christ.

I, Ko Thah A, am now eighty-four years of age.

"This do in remembrance of me."

THE DESIGN.

"This do in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."—1 Cor. 11:24, 26.

Jesus loves us to think of him. He wishes to be remembered by us. He instituted this ordinance on purpose to bring before us his sufferings and death, and to give us an opportunity to meet as his disciples, and unitedly remember him. Here we should remember, what Jesus was, as the only-begotten of the Father—what Jesus became, as our substitute and Saviour—what Jesus did, to satisfy the claims of law—and what Jesus suffered, to meet the demands of justice. We must remember the love, which induced him to engage for us; the pity, that brought him into the world to suffer, bleed, and die for us; and the grace, which led him to make over all his merits to us. Blessed Jesus, may I ever remember thy "glorious nativity, and circumcision, thy baptism, fasting, and temptation, thy agony, and bloody sweat, thy cross and passion!" But, for this especial purpose, may I come to thy table, and unite with thy people in showing forth thy death, until thou shalt come again the second time without sin unto salvation, or send and fetch me to thy Father's house, that I may see, and remember thee without interruption for ever. Christian brother, forget not that the design of the Supper is to afford thee a special opportunity to remember Jesus; fix, therefore, thy thoughts on him, and when they wander, bring them back to the subject, and rejoice in the thought that, while thou art remembering Jesus, he is remembering thee. Blessed Saviour, send the Spirit, as the Remembrancer, to remind us of thee, lead us to thee, and glorify thee before us. O that my thoughts may be filled with Christ, until I see him face to face! "We will be glad and rejoice in thee; we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee."

"ELOQUENT PREACHERS."

REV. ROBERT HALL.

By the death of this great preacher in February, 1831, one of the brightest lights of the British pulpit was extinguished. His eloquence, partaking the qualities of the two great masters and exemplars of the Grecian and Roman school, had no superior then, and is not likely to have any hereafter. In his peculiarities as a pulpit orator he was alone, and stood out in strong relief. Others may have made a greater impression on promiscuous audiences, but none have gone down deeper in the reflective and cultivated British mind. Gifted with an intellect of innate strength and precocious development—reading and relishing "Edwards on the Will" at eleven years of age—with an imagination soaring to the utmost heights and diving to the utmost depths, this incomparable man chose to exert his powers in the noblest of callings and to disport his imagination on the sublimest of themes. In his early training he was favored with ample literary advantages, first at the British Academy, and afterwards at King's college, Aberdeen. While at the former, though a mere stripling, he was urged prematurely into the pulpit, in order to try his gifts. The trial came near depriving the world of his brilliant services. Proceeding in his discourse for a few moments, he suddenly covered his face with his hands, and exclaimed, "All my ideas are fled." Still more mortified was he at a second failure; when, hastening from the pulpit to his closet, he said, "If this do n't humble me, the devil must have me." Doubtless it did humble him; and after a more thorough mental discipline at Aberdeen, he entered the pulpit under better auspices—"a workman that needed

*Sketches of Eloquent Preachers by Rev. J. R. Waterbury, D. D., American Tract Society, New York.

not to be ashamed." At King's college he moved through the course of study with all the ease and enthusiasm of a practised competitor. There it was he became intimate with Sir James McIntosh, and the two—*par mobile fratrum*—in their walks and talks discussed all the profoundest philosophers from Lock to Browne, each acquiring by this intellectual gladiatorialship a power that subserved him in after-life—the one as a lawyer and statesman, the other as the peerless pulpit orator and defender of the orthodox faith.

Mr. Hall's appearance was striking. He possessed an athletic and well proportioned figure, eyes of uncommon lustre, expressive of sharp wit and lofty intellect, unassuming modesty, winning frankness of manner, and an enthusiasm that readily kindled and communicated its fire to others. As he grew older, the forehead—a calm, majestic pile—was denuded towards the crown, giving additional force and dignity to the whole countenance. He had an unconquerable aversion to having his likeness taken; but it was secured clandestinely while preaching. His friends hung it in his study over night, and watched the effect. In the morning he discovered it. Scrutinizing the picture for a while, he placed his hand midway over the face, and said to himself—such is the story—"The upper part, forehead and eyes, angelic; the lower, mouth and chin, Satanic." Dr. Gregory says it was the most speaking countenance he ever contemplated, animated by eyes radiating with the brilliancy imparted to them by benevolence, wit, and intellectual energy.

His manner in the pulpit was affected somewhat by the life-long malady which he endured. Extreme pain in the back, diverging from the spine over the nervous texture of the whole body, made it necessary for him to use narcotics, and to study for the most part in a recumbent posture. Yet this very malady may have roused his intellectual energies to the highest pitch, and given impulse to a mind which, under ordinary circumstances, might not have reached such a height of unequalled grandeur. Many times he rose from the couch of pain to perform the required duties of the pulpit, and his friends could discern the suppressed agony as he struggled on in the service. Hence at the beginning he seemed to lack power. His voice was feeble, requiring the utmost stillness in order to catch the opening sentences. These were generally simple, and interrupted by a spasmodic cough, which to strangers augured disappointment; but like the nettlesome steed that prances a while and then rushes forward with a bound, so the orator began soon to show signs of a strong movement. His voice gathered strength, lost its huskiness, rolled out in augmented volume, while the "thoughts that breathe and words that burn" came glowing brighter and brighter, until every auditor was chained and led captive by an almost superhuman eloquence.

"He could at pleasure," says his friend and biographer, "adopt the unadorned, the ornamental, or the energetic, and indeed combine them in every diversity of modulation. In his higher flights what he said of Burke might, with the slightest deduction, be applied to himself, that 'his imperial fancy laid all nature under tribute, and collected riches from every scene of the creation and every walk of art;' and at the same time that could be affirmed of Mr. Hall which could not be affirmed of Burke, that he never fatigued and oppressed by gaudy and superfluous imagery. As he advanced to his practical applications, all his mental powers were shown in the most palpable but finely balanced exercise. His mind would, if I may so speak, collect itself and come forth with a luminous activity proving as he advanced how vast, and in some important senses, how next to irresistible those powers were. In such seasons his preaching communicated universal animation. His congregation would seem to partake of his spirit, to think and feel as he did, to be fully influenced by the presence of the objects which he set before them, fully actuated by the motives which he had enforced with such energy and pathos.

From the commencement of his discourse an almost breathless silence prevailed, deeply impressive and solemnizing from its singular intensity. Not a sound was heard but that of the preacher's voice, scarcely an eye but was fixed upon him, not a countenance that