

Burma and its last Rebellion.

Rev. R. R. Crowley will please accept our thanks for the following interesting paper copied from The Friend of India:

From the days of Cain the history of Asiatic countries has consisted of successive acts of bloodshed and treachery. For a time theocratic followed by Roman influences in Syria, and for a century English and indirectly theocratic government in India, have created cases in the weary expanse of wrong. But on the whole the state of Asia never changes. Events only reproduce themselves. The moral retrogression which provoked the deluge goes on still. Whether we look at the Wahabees in Arabia, the Mussulmans cutting each other's throats for years in Afghanistan, the same people expelling the Chinese from Turkestan, or the Tartars avenging themselves on Taipings, Nienfei and other nameless rebels, each scene of the drama so disgraceful to a race made in God's image goes on like its predecessor during a long eight thousand years. The actors have different names, or creeds or watchwords, but their result is the same,—blood, lust, grinding oppression and fiendish cruelty. As the thoughtful observer surveys the dreary past and sickening present of Asia, the cry rises to his lips—"How long, oh Lord, how long!"

Perhaps of all the creeds which, though beginning in gentleness so great that its votaries will not harm an insect, have produced the greatest cruelty, the Buddhist is the worst, and of all the races which have been moulded by Buddhism the Burmese are the cruellest. Midway between India and China, they seem to combine the lowest passions of the people of both, when roused from that dreamy indifference which is their ordinary state. Burma has been for so many centuries accustomed to rebellions and revolutions till it has been almost depopulated, that the long peace enjoyed under the present king might have been expected to work a beneficial change. But the leopard cannot change his spots. The last three months' rebellion, of which we have obtained an authentic history, shows a combination of all those hideous cruelties and vices which marked its predecessors, although it lasted for only three months from 2nd August to 2nd November. In itself the narrative is worthy of study. In the present state of Burma, with another revolution imminent, a knowledge of the events of these three months becomes indispensable.

The present King of Burma was placed on the throne by his younger brother, who manifested a generosity rare in Burmese annals. The heir apparent was another brother, the Crown Prince. Desiring to put him, if not also his father, out of the way, and secure the succession for himself, the Meeingon prince assisted by his brother, murdered his uncle on 2nd August last, seized the only royal steamer off the capital, pillaged the frontier customs station of Menhla, equipped a force with the arms which he found there, and cut off all communication between Mandalay and the south. The Pudyne prince, son of the murdered heir apparent, fled to Shoay Bo, the birth place of the great Alopra, and for a time the asylum of the present King. The King had no grudge against the prince, who is a mild and intelligent person, but his followers committed him to a contest for the rights which had descended to him from his father. One, Moug Mhan, especially distinguished himself in his cause, eager like a true Asiatic to use the prince's name as a cloak for his own designs on the throne. The King found himself, a fortnight after the outbreak, opposed by his own sons to the south, penned in by his nephew's forces of 12,000 men to the north, and with the people of Mandalay in such a panic that the northern quarter of the capital was a desert. With true Buddhist stolidity he sat inactive and his leading priests urged him to abdicate. But the Namahan Piyah, his half sister and chief Queen, who practised the arts of astrology and divination, urged him to trust to his destiny. Like Macbeth in the extremity of his need he was roused to action. He fortified Mandalay Hill and the city gates. He summoned to his side an old and neglected General, Bo Bein, and sent him out against the Pudyne prince's troops to the north. For eleven days a series of Homeric battles was fought around Madaya, and the King conquered by the simple fact of possessing more ammunition than the enemy. The Burmese despise the English custom of close fighting. They prefer what they call "long bullets," and so expend a prodigious amount of powder and ball with only a few casualties. Only when brought to bay like a rat in a hole will a Burman fight. With the end of August the first campaign ended in the temporary triumph of the King, and his belief in destiny rose accordingly.

The Pudyne prince's force now shifted its base of operations to the west, to those provinces of Pagan and Toungwengyee where his father used to nurse swarms of freebooters who annoyed our border. The enemy held the ancient capital of Ava, and threatened Mandalay from the west bank of the river. That city was in a frightful state. A general conscription enrolled every householder for local defence, and forced him to pay five ruples for recruits for the field. E. on the town police were sent to the front. Enormous sums were paid for the defence of houses left without a male inhabitant. Law and restraint ceased. Every citizen who had a private grudge now paid it off. Numbers were cut down on the mere suspicion of sympathy with the rebels. Food and money were hoarded, and famine prevailed. The growing crops were cut down. No less than 30,000 men were blockading Mandalay, and all seemed lost a second time. But again the King's destiny came to his aid. The chief leader of dacoits on the enemy's side was an old acquaintance, and so

the King wrote to him urging desertion. The letter fell into the hands of his brother General, and sowed such distrust in the army that they were defeated in the engagement of Puellek. The most prominent in rallying the rebels in that disaster was a woman, Mah Net, who held an officer's commission by special appointment. Her courage, instead of exciting their admiration, so exasperated the King's troops that, when they captured her, she was led in triumph through the streets of Mandalay and paraded naked in its public places. The tale is thus told.

"Arrived at the Criminal Courts of Justice in close proximity to the Palace, she was publicly beaten with thick canes across the back and breast, and then, faint and unable to walk, or even to stand, from the severity of her punishment, she was literally dragged along with violence, nude and unconscious, and thrown into the common jail. Here she was kept a night, but the beating was resumed at intervals, and even torture applied. The next day Mah Net was sent to Ava and handed over to the Thonzai Prince, who wished to be revenged upon a woman who, being a woman, had presumed to oppose the Royal troops which he commanded. Almost expiring from the effect of brutalities already inflicted, she was now fastened to a raft made of plaitain trees, on which also lay the dead body of an only son who had just been murdered before her eyes. A trace of life and consciousness was still left, when her breast was divided down the centre by a sword cut, and the raft, containing the corpse, was pushed into the Irrawaddy where it floated away, a sad and ghastly record of the savage barbarism of Burman warfare, and (must it be said?) the contemptible instinct and littleness of Burmese Princes."

The second campaign closed with the defeat of the rebels, owing to their distrust in their ranks, and again also to their want of ammunition.

October opened with the third campaign. The King was still confined to Mandalay, the Pudyne prince still commanded the west bank of the river opposite to the city. But, as the King believed, his destiny was working. The Shans rose and threatened the two provinces in which the prince's army had left their wives and children. From his luxurious asylum in Shoay Bo, where he had assumed the insignia of royalty, the Pudyne prince now sent a deputation of priests to beg mercy of the King. Moug Mhan caught them on the way and decapitated the leader, but the news spread in the prince's army and contributed to its disgust. They would no longer fight for him, but as rebels they must fight for themselves and Moug Mhan had not given up all hope that by their means he might yet secure the throne. The Prince of Thonzai, who commanded the King's army, took advantage of the enemy's retreat from Sagyne to occupy it, and this first post on the rebel's side of the river was of immense importance. But fifty rebels drove off 400 of the royalists under the Prince's uncle, and it was only under the threat that he would fire on them instead of the enemy that the Thonzai prince induced his uncle finally to occupy the place. Such is Burmese soldiery at "long bullets." Sagyne being garrisoned, a body of 15,000 men were able to cross the river from Mandalay on 6th October under the King's second surviving son.

He was accompanied in great state by a deputation, which bore along with him to the water's edge a Royal invocation or prayerful appeal to the Genii of rocks, rivers, mountains, seas, lakes, and trees, imploving them in the name and for the sake of all that was good and sacred, to favour the King in the person of the young prince and pave the way to victory. Arrived at the river's bank, the invocation was solemnly read by the proper official, and the prince stepped into his boat under the protection (it was supposed) of a set of presiding deities, unrecognized in Buddhist Divinity, but adored nevertheless on occasions with meat and drink offerings, by every practical Buddhist Burman, and even invoked on a state emergency (as in the present instance) by the cumulative assent of the whole Burmese Government."

But in other parts of the country the Pudyne prince was successful, none the less that he captured a large quantity of ammunition and guns including a Whitworth. The enemy having transferred their strength to the east bank, became so successful that only one circumstance saved the King. His destiny, as he thinks, sent up his two war steamers from Rangoon, armed and manned by a few English sailors in red coats. The news spread that the Viceroy had despatched an army to the assistance of his ally. Arriving at Mandalay on 18th October, the steamers were farther filled with ammunition and sent up the Irrawaddy. Opposite every village they fired salvoes of triumph, and waved their banners, till the main rebel force dispersed at the news, and Shoay Bo alone remained as the rebel capital. Moug Mhan deserted the master whom, if successful, he had meant to supplant, and the puppet Pudyne prince, with a crowd of wives and relatives, and guarded by 25 men, fled to the river only to find the villagers, who had seen the steamers, insolent to him. Taking refuge in a monastery he awaited the arrival of the King's troops, who conducted him and his wives in triumph into Mandalay just three months after he had left it to avenge his father's murder. Strange to say, he is believed still to be alive, though, after the fate of Mah Net, and the torture and massacre of Mr. Marcar Abraham, a British subject, we can imagine his condition. Moug Mhan has disappeared, but we are likely to hear of him again.

The year will not pass over without another rising. The Shans are already said to be up. The author of the last rebellion, the Meeingon prince, who with his brother took refuge in our

territory, has again left Rangoon and is fishing in the troubled waters on the frontier. The King is more unpopular than ever with his subjects. His half-sister Queen, the Lady Macbeth of this tragedy, with her weird teachings about destiny confirmed by the result of the war, had more influence over the royal mind than Colonel Phayre, and the Treaty of 1862 still remains virtually a dead letter. For the moment the King was stunned by the Viceroy's letter of warning and reproof, but what is that in the light of his destiny? A few more years and Burma must be altogether British. This course is desired by the oppressed people and nobles themselves, it is advocated by those who are no friends to annexation and, we have reason to believe, it will be approved of by the Home authorities. We should never have gone to Burma. But, being there, the highest considerations demand that we shall do our duty to its fast decreasing population.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BY REV CHARLES TUPPER, D. D.

CHAPTER XIII.

FOURTH RESIDENCE IN AMHERST.

(No. 5.)

As the principal events connected with my tours, both as an agent and as a missionary, have, in general, been recorded in C. M. a brief notice of a few events that have not been published may suffice.

In the autumn of 1843 an extensive tour was performed on Prince Edward Island, and another in New Brunswick. In these, as well as in those which preceded them, besides the attention paid to the affairs of the Christian Messenger, the opportunities afforded were improved to preach many sermons, and to deliver a number of addresses on Temperance.

As I was employed considerably less than half the time in Amherst, it could not be reasonably expected that my labors there would be attended with any great measure of manifest success. There were, however, through the Divine blessing, six persons added by baptism to the Amherst Church in the course of the year 1843, and one to the newly formed Church at Amherst Shore. With the latter I commenced devoting a portion of the time steadily from January 1st, 1844.

The first Sabbath in the new year was spent, while on an agency, in Calais, Maine. After passing a very cold night in a friend's house, made almost as warm as summer, I set out on Monday, Jan. 8th, to proceed to Fredericton by the Military Road, never travelled by me before. Having ascertained at the approach of night, that the distance to the nearest public house was much greater than had been anticipated, I readily accepted an invitation from my informant to tarry the night with him. His house, which was new, appeared well externally; but it proved to be a mere shell, lathed, but not plastered, with no means of keeping any of the inside doors shut. As the wind was high, and the cold intense, it was necessary for me to turn frequently before the fire, in order to prevent suffering on one side from cold and on the other from heat.

After travelling the next day some distance beyond the public house, I found the road not broken out, and my beast was plunged into a deep snow-drift, through which it was almost impossible for me to help her. The severity of the weather, and the bad state of the road, determined me on seeking entertainment at the next house; but its dismal appearance induced me to attempt proceeding farther. As no house could be found on the way where accommodation could be obtained for the night, it was necessary for me to travel through deep snow, in a dreary wilderness, till late in the evening, before a house of entertainment was reached. Its external appearance was mean and forbidding; but within it was comfortable, and the accommodations good. Such are the vicissitudes through which a traveller is sometimes called to pass; and so true is it, that one can not always judge correctly from first appearances. On the 31st of January I returned home, after a tedious journey of 650 miles, in which calls were made at about 430 houses.

On the 22nd day of March I finished copying my work on Baptism, precisely 4 months from the time that the copying was commenced. Much of this labor, as well as that of preparing the original draught, was necessarily performed while my horse was resting and feeding, or storms detained me, on journeys. My distance from the press, also, as well as frequent absence from home, was unavoidably a great inconven-

ence. At the close, however, the following entry was made in my Diary:—"Though the preparing of this work has necessarily cost me much toil and research, yet I have great cause for thankfulness, that my health does not appear to have suffered in the least degree from it; for I am more healthy than when I commenced the work."

April 4th I returned from a missionary tour in Stewiacke, Musquodoboit, Earl Town, New Annan, Tatmagouche, &c., in which 360 miles were travelled, many sermons preached, and numerous families visited, &c.

This year it was my privilege to attend the Nova Scotia Association, in Cornwallis, and that of New Brunswick, in Sackville. Encouraging additions to both were reported in the letters. To the former seven new Churches were added. At the latter ten brethren generously united in sustaining a Domestic Missionary for a whole year.

At each of these Associations a vote of thanks was unanimously tendered to me for my work on Baptism, which had been recently published. In the Minutes of that of Nova Scotia is the following entry:—"On motion of bro. J. W. (now Hon. Judge) Johnston, seconded by Rev. (now Dr.) E. A. Crowley, it was

Resolved, That the thanks of this Association be given to the Rev. Charles Tupper, for his able work in vindication of the principles we hold on the subject of Christian Baptism. That it be recommended to the Churches to encourage its sale and circulation; and, to sustain the author in his worthy advocacy of the truth, it is now particularly deemed desirable that some members in each Church should purchase, in addition to the copies required for their own use, a number of copies for sale and distribution."

(It may be added here, that Rev. David Benedict, in his History of the Baptists, 1848, page 250, remarks, "Mr. Tupper speaks of his opponent with kindness and respect; and a spirit of Christian courtesy runs through the whole of this work. This is a work of no inconsiderable labor and research; and shews a familiar acquaintance with the principal writings which are apposed to on both sides of the baptismal controversy.")

While prosecuting an extensive agency in New Brunswick I was called—the arrangement had been previously made—to sit in council with three esteemed ministering Brethren on a case with reference to the continuance, or non-continuance, of a Minister with a certain Church. Like most cases of that nature, it was a difficult one. Though it was contrary to my usual practice, and injurious to my health, to sit up late at night, yet so many matters for consideration were brought before us, and so much misapprehension required to be corrected, that we continued in session till after midnight; and were then obliged to adjourn to the next day. After a patient and thorough investigation, we retired for consultation. Though aware that in all ordinary cases a majority must govern, yet we deemed it so important for a Church to be united in the choice and retention of a Pastor, that we agreed in the view, as a general principle, that no man could consistently accept a call to the pastorate of a Church, unless at least three fourths of the members were in favor of it; and that it was not expedient for a Pastor to remain where there was not as large a proportion desirous of his continuance. As regarded the case presented to us, we saw no sufficient reason why the Pastor should be immediately dismissed, or at once retire; but we advised, that as soon as convenient he should occupy another field, and the Church call a Pastor in whom the members would be generally united. When our decision, in which we were unanimously presented, it was unanimously adopted; our advice was carried into effect by both parties, and thus happily, by the Lord's blessing, the disagreement was removed.

On a subsequent tour, commenced Oct. 1st, it afforded me much pleasure to find the word of God progressing at Chamcook and adjacent places under the labors of Bro. A. D. Thomson; and also to visit Bro. James Walker, at Letete, where his zealous labors had been much blessed; and the converts, after a considerable space of time, appeared steadfast in their profession, and moral in their conduct.

Although in the field occupied by me in Cumberland no extensive revival occurred, yet we had cause of thankfulness and encouragement, that in the course of this year also (1844,) a few were gradually gathered in. To the little Church at Amherst Shore one more was added by baptism, and 7 to that in Amherst. "The day of small things" must not be "despised."

The anger of God is no furious agitation, but the judgment which awards punishment to sin.