

EDUCATION AND LITERATURE IN SIAM.

The education of the Siamese is necessarily limited and the standard low, when compared with that of European countries. The temples or monasteries are the common schools of the country. Every priest can take to the temple with him as many pupils as he can teach, so that at almost every temple can be found a collection of boys, making a very respectable school. These boys, besides being taught the rudiments of their own language and the tenets of the Buddhist religion, act also as servants to the teacher, propelling his boat when he goes out on the river, and doing other like menial turns for him. They live on the rice which is left, after the priests are satisfied. Every pupil is taught to hold his teacher in special reverence, which lasts through life.

The males are thus gathered in when boys, and taught to read and write their own language, and the simple rules of arithmetic, as the Siamese knowledge of that art does not extend beyond the simple rules. It is consequently rare that a male can be found who cannot read and write his own language, and is just as rare that a female is found who can.

No provision has yet been made for the education of females. Indeed the feeling in high quarters has hitherto been against it, but not near so strongly as in India and many other places; but that feeling is now happily passing away. It used to be said that if woman could read, she would become too tricky for man. The females, amongst the common people, especially, are the drudges, and become wives and mothers so early, that there is but little time for their education. Some of the women of the higher classes have in some way learned to read, and the missionary ladies have managed to teach some few others to read, whilst employed in their families; but aside from these few exceptions, the great mass of the women are ignorant of letters. The late king made one or two efforts to have the ladies of the palace taught English. Soon after he ascended the throne, he employed some of the missionary ladies to go to the palace regularly and teach; but soon became alarmed lest they should teach too much religion, and requested them to stop. A few years previous to his death also he employed an English governess in the palace, who, after about three years of arduous labor, succeeded in giving the women and children of the palace some knowledge of English, and perhaps a smattering of some of the sciences.

The higher order of education amongst the males consists of a correct knowledge of their own language, and a smattering at least of the Pali or sacred language. Some few who remain sufficiently long in the priesthood, make considerable proficiency in the Pali.

Their standard of education is rather depreciating than rising. Missionaries now find it difficult to secure a young man sufficiently educated to make a good teacher. One reason of this is that since the country has been opened to foreign commerce, opportunities to make money are more common, and young men do not now remain sufficiently long in the priesthood to become good scholars, but leave it to go into business.

The Siamese language proper is monosyllabic and rather poverty-stricken. It has, however, been enriched from time to time from the Pali, and from the languages of the surrounding nations, and by a few words from the Chinese. Titles of nobility and distinction are all taken from the Pali. Many of the words used in addressing the king, and others high in authority, have been transferred from the Pali, and some from the Sanscrit. The late king professed to be proficient in the Sanscrit, and some of their learned men now make pretensions in that way. It is doubtful, however, whether the late king, although the most learned man in the kingdom, had anything more than a smattering of Sanscrit, and I do not suppose there is any one now in the kingdom who knows anything about it worth naming.

The Siamese alphabet, consists of forty-four consonants, with several vowel-points, diacritical marks and abbreviations. The alphabet is divided into three classes, and there are also five tones, so that words beginning with a certain class of letters are spoken with a raised tone, whilst others are spoken with a depressed tone. Some of the consonants too, are spoken with an aspirate, whilst in others the aspirate is withheld. This putting on the tone and the aspirate in certain instances, and leaving them off in others,

makes it very difficult for one not born to it to acquire the language correctly. "Kai," with an aspirate, means an egg, but by leaving off the aspirate it is a chicken. Although spelled somewhat differently, the sound to an unaccustomed ear is exactly the same. In those things foreigners make some ridiculous mistakes. A missionary lady, whilst in her garden, told her servant to bring her a knife, as she thought; but was surprised to see him coming out with a table on this head. I once heard a missionary, otherwise good in the language, but who could never manage the aspirates and unspirates correctly, announcing to his audiences that there would be services at such an hour in the Siamese language; but unfortunately he left off the aspirate, and announced that there would be services in the dead language. Still, the audiences understood from the connection what he meant.

The literature of the Siamese is very meagre. They have a history of their country which commences in fable, but after a few pages, it becomes a reliable history of the kingdom. It is written in a condensed style, and in good language. They have also tolerably reliable histories of the neighboring countries, such as Cambodia, Pegu, and Burmah. They are exceedingly fond of fiction, and have a fabulous history of China, translated into Siamese, which is very popular.

The Regent and Foreign Minister have both been recently engaged in translating additions to the fabulous history. The remainder of their literature consists in vile and disgusting plays, in which they take great delight, both in reading and seeing them performed in their theatres. They are also very fond of a kind of jingling verse, and will listen for hours to the mere jingle, caring little or nothing for the sense, of which it is generally devoid.—Gleanings.

NO ORGAN OF THOUGHT OR ACTION can be employed without the assistance of the blood, and no organ can be employed safely or with impunity without a supply of healthy blood. With healthy blood the exercised organs become well developed, whether they be muscular or intellectual. By the use of Fellows' Compound Syrup of Hypophosphites the blood is vitalized and purified, and so made capable of producing a sound mind and a sound body.

"Persons suffering from impure blood, or whose health is giving way, either as ministers or those who study closely, will find in the Syrup the material to build them up and the tonic to keep them there."—Dr. Clay.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BY REV. CHARLES TUPPER, D. D.

APPENDIX, No. 5.

During the Week of Prayer, 1872, I assisted the brethren in several sections of my extensive field of labor. The removal to a better world of valued brethren who were formerly active and useful on such occasions, had diminished the number of our laborers. Some still living had become so aged and infirm that they could rarely attend, especially at evening meetings. While a number of our young men had left us to enter the ministry, comparatively few of those remaining with us, seemed disposed to fill, even as far as they might, the places thus vacated. Hence the urgent need of a gracious revival of vital religion became painfully evident. Though no extraordinary results were immediately manifest, yet it cannot be reasonably imagined, that the time devoted, the prayers offered, and the addresses delivered, were altogether in vain. Indeed some refreshing seasons were enjoyed while the meetings were being held.

On the 21st day of February my beloved son-in-law, Rev. Thomas Bleakney, was called home, after a short illness. This was, as may be naturally supposed, a painful stroke to me. He was a zealous minister of the gospel, laboring acceptably and beneficially in a new and important field, namely, Woodstock, N. B. My eldest daughter, his affectionate wife, while sick herself, was suddenly called to part with the kind and beloved companion of her youth, and left among comparative strangers, in charge of a family of children. It was utterly out of my power to visit her

in this season of deep affliction; but the kindness of friends at Woodstock, on her way to Cumberland, and of those with whom she subsequently met was truly consoling to me, and it is gratefully remembered by me.

I had long been aware of the propriety of regarding the admonitions kindly given me by numerous friends in the field of my labor, to avoid exposing my health to injury by travelling in times of extreme cold and violent storms. Still, however, cases would occasionally occur in which earnest desire to fulfil appointments, or to visit the afflicted, has prompted me to disregard these cautions. In one of these emergencies a heavy cold was taken toward the close of January; as likewise in March, in which month the weather was exceedingly boisterous. On the 11th of that month, returning home at night, after visiting four sick persons, I received an urgent request to visit a man thought to be near the close of life. Having in the early part of my ministry suffered much disquietude and regret from postponing compliance with a similar request, in a case in which the person died before my arrival, I had determined always in future to comply with such calls promptly, if possible. Accordingly, though the man resided about 9 miles distant, out of the bounds of my field, and the roads were in a very bad state, I set out early the next morning. Ere I reached the place a violent snow-storm came on. The anxious man who was very ill, seemed grateful for my visit. He justly remarked, "I shall never see grass grow again;" for he lived only two days after this. My return home was effected with great difficulty, as the roads were almost utterly impassable; so filled with deep drifts of snow that the rail cars were deterred from running for a number of days. Though my health suffered from the journey, yet I was glad that the visit was immediately made, for had it been deferred, it would not have been made while the sick man was on the shores of time.

The 24th day of March, 1872, was precisely 56 years since my public entrance on the ministry. During all that time I am not aware that two Sabbaths ever occurred together in which storms and drifts rendered it impossible for me to go to a place of worship; but on the 17th and 24th days of this month such was the case.

My resignation of the pastorate had been previously tendered. It had not, however, been formally accepted. Especially as it was generally deemed desirable to have the large church, extending over a great area, divided into two, on the eighth day of April, to facilitate the obtaining of a full supply of ministerial labor, I tendered my resignation in writing, with an earnest request that it should be unanimously accepted and I be relieved from further responsibility. This was accordingly done. It was cheering to me to know, that the connection, unanimously formed about twenty-one years before, and harmoniously continued ever since, was now dissolved with mutual good will, and with an expression of desire for me to labor still among them as might be convenient for me; and a readiness to minister, by donations, to my support and comfort.

Not long after this friends,—especially those on Prince William Street, where the proposal relative to one was first made—kindly and generously constituted Mrs. Tupper and me Life Members of Woman's Missionary Aid Society, by the payment of fifty dollars into its funds.

Being desirous to visit my widowed daughter and her fatherless children, with other relatives and friends in Cumberland, at as early a period as might be, and also to supply the place of Bro. Steele during a part of the time of his absence, Mrs. T. and I left home, on our annual tour thither on the 6th of May. We found the roads from Parrsborough to Amherst, and throughout that region, in a dismal state, owing to the backwardness of the spring and frequent heavy rains. Hence our visits to friends were quite limited. We were favored, however, with pleasant interviews with those whom we saw. The people generally, where I had labored for many years, gave good attendance to the preaching of the word, and treated us very kindly.

Though we were detained a night on our passage, yet we got within about 50 miles of home on Saturday night; so that, having left the principal part of our luggage to be forwarded by the cars, I succeeded, through divine favor, in reaching and fulfilling, as in all former similar instances, my appointments on Lord's day, May 26th.

He who can take advice is sometimes superior to him who can give it.

We received the following letter two or three weeks since, and perhaps should offer an apology to the writer for the delay in its insertion. It may not be necessary for us to say more than that we feared that our worthy brother, the Treasurer, would regard it as unkind in us to publish it. After devoting so much of his time and labor, gratuitously, to the work, and placing the churches under such obligations to him for his assiduity and attention to this very important part of our Christian effort; and yet we knew that the writer had the kindest intention towards him, and a sincere desire to promote the best interests of the cause which we all have so much at heart, in offering the suggestions he makes. We therefore hope that our brother the Treasurer and members of the Board will accept the suggestions in the same spirit in which we believe they are given, and if they think we have erred in judgment in this matter, they will consider the very delicate position we occupy in reference to it and them, and make all necessary allowances:

For the Christian Messenger.

FOREIGN MISSIONARY ACCOUNTS.

Mr. Editor,—

The "Minutes of the Convention" are at last at hand, after a patient waiting of nearly three months. In looking over the statement of the transactions of the "Foreign Missionary Board" during the past year, the Treasurer's account therewith published has especially attracted my attention, and I must confess, although unwillingly, that a more confused and unsystematic document has seldom been presented for my perusal. The figures (as representing items) may be absolutely correct, but the details are unsuitable for publication by any "Board" presuming to business habits. In the first place, "the Treasurer" has failed to remember that his "personality" should be forgotten, as he does not represent himself but the "Board" who absorbs his individuality, and recognises in the treasurer only "an accountant of the Funds" which it guards.

The books of one treasurer pass to his successor, who makes a statement of the funds of the society, which are really in the custody of the Board. In a similar manner the Cashier of a Bank making a statement of the resources of the institution signs it, whilst the funds are truly in the hands of the Directors. This being the case the present treasurer should have commenced his account with "balance as per account last year," and added to it the receipts through the year. In this case the five or six entries of money received from the late treasurer would have been unnecessary. The two accounts, No. 3, and Appendix to No. 3, are worse than useless, and should never have been published, being only private memoranda between outgoing and incoming Treasurer, with which others have no concern. Besides, the receipts are given so much in detail that it is almost impossible to learn any thing of any "series" of donations; viz. How much was paid by individual and churches in Nova Scotia for "general purposes," and how much for Native Preachers. How much was donated in New Brunswick and also in P. E. Island for the same purposes. Six lines would have stated this, and with one or two items of interest would have been all that was necessary; the names of donors and churches under appropriate headings being published in the Appendix. Accounts to enable the "auditors" easily to examine and compare, may be very diffuse or even an exact copy of the Treasurer's books, but all that a society should permit to be published is a "thoroughly condensed abstract of Treasurer's accounts, anything else becomes confusing and inexplicable. Referring to payments; there may be found twenty-two entries of Postage, Exchange, and other incidentals amounting to \$62. One line would have comprehended all this. Thus is interest credited received from Mr. Selden on Debentures, and on funds in Savings Bank: why are these funds not brought into the general assets of the Board? while the Treasurer makes a balance which is his individual balance, not the whole funds held by the Board which the account should show, to be complete. There is an item of interest said to be allowed by the Bank on Deposits. If this was allowed before the accounts were balanced, why not state it in the usual place. It not received until after the accounts were made up, it should not have appeared until the next annual statement. In the account of the "Woman's Aid Society" during the year there are credited five different remittances from

the Nova Scotia treasurer and three from that of New Brunswick. One entry for each during the year would have been sufficient, and would have indicated at a glance the amount of the annual receipts for each Province. Unnecessary entries of payments likewise appear. Four entries for Miss Norris during the year should give place to one, which would be sufficient, but this one should have afforded information as to what date the salary was paid to—instead of this item the Treasurer leaves a blank for the reader to fill up as best he can.

A glance at the account of the Treasurer of Acadia College will explain I think what is required. In his general account for the year all the items are condensed into eight lines of debit and nine of credit, and are easily understood; for instance, "Received from the churches on appeal \$1,134," is plainly stated, and by a memorandum on the opposite page any church can easily ascertain, or even any individual find out, whether their donations have been properly credited. The accounts of the Missionary Treasury do not appear to have been audited, this I presume was an omission which should be guarded against in the future.

This has not been written from a disposition to find fault, but from a desire that the financial matters may assume a more correct and tangible form before the accounts for next year are made public.

A FORMER TREASURER.

*In explanation of the item to which "a former Treasurer" here refers: "Received from S. Selden Interest Savings Bank, Halifax, N. S. \$4.80," we may remark that it should have been Mrs. Selden. There are no "funds" from which this interest is derived. It is simply the interest from the deposits made during the Quarter, of sums paid in from time to time as received from the Societies, and drawn out at the end of each three months and transmitted to the Treasurer.—Ed. C. M.

COLLEGE ENDOWMENT.

ELLINGTON, Dec. 10th, 1872.

Dear Bro. Selden,—

Having now about completed my work in Queen's County, in behalf of Acadia College Endowment Fund, it may be expected that I complete the report of success, attending that labor.

As intimated in a former letter, the most of the County was canvassed in September. Still I believed that two or three hundred dollars could be obtained in the northern section of the county, if application were made. And on being requested to go and finish up the work in that section of the County, I consented to do so. Nur am I sorry for having done so. For, as I had expected, so it came to pass, the good people in that portion of the county—as well as in the other parts before visited, responded, promptly and liberally, to the call. I hope four counties that have two, three or even four times the wealth and number of Baptists, will follow the example of the people of Queens, and contribute liberally to Endow Acadia, just now. If so, there will be no difficulty in completing the 100,000 dollars this year—in Nova Scotia alone. Then all that comes from the other Provinces could go towards the second hundred thousand.

The present is one of the most important periods in the history of the Baptist denomination of these Provinces. Emphatically, now is the time to act.

Let no man, who has any Baptist blood in his veins; or, any Baptist—or Bible principle in his heart, shrink from or shirk duty in this important crisis! Much more depends on the success of the present efforts at Endowing Acadia College, this very year, than many Baptists are aware.

I could give several instances of noble self-denial in reference to the people of Queens. I could also give a few of exactly the opposite character.

Of the former class, a professional man, whose salary amounts to between three and four hundred dollars, per annum, unsolicited, handed me one hundred dollars, in cash—with the remark—"Wife has had the promise of a bedroom-set for several years, and we had secured the needed sum, I had also laid by a few dollars more for a special purpose. We have talked the matter over; and have agreed to put the two sums together and give it to Acadia College." The wife who stood by said "yes; we can do without the bedroom-set; but can't do without the College."

Another, in cheerfully offering one hundred dollars, though her means of support are, by no means abundant, did so with the remark, which in substance is as follows:—"The Lord will provide, I shall not want."

Other similar instances might be given, but I forbear.

Please publish the following list in the C. M.

Yours very truly,
J. F. KEMPTON.