

# CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

A Family Newspaper: devoted to Religious and General Intelligence.

REV'DS. I. E. BILL & E. THOMSON,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men."

EDITORS.

VOL. 6.

SAINT JOHN, NEW-BRUNSWICK, FEBRUARY 25, 1853.

NO. 6.

## "I SHALL BE SATISFIED."

Not here! Not here! Not satisfied! wherever  
Hope's joyous song is lost in sorrow's moan,  
Not where anticipation's light hath never  
On the fulfilment of its promise shone.

Not where the light from happy eyes is fading,  
Where, on each hearth, the shadow of the bier  
Falls darkly, every home with gloom invading,  
And chastening love itself with mortal fear.

Not where so many cold, harsh words are spoken,  
Not where so few may breathe love's purest air,  
Where cherished ties are in a moment broken,  
And life's long agony becomes despair.

Not where—where every dream of bliss deceives us,  
Where the wan spirit never gains its goal,  
Where, haunted ever by the thoughts that grieve us,  
Across us floods of bitter memory roll.

Not here! Not here! not where the sparkling  
waters  
Fade into mocking sand as we draw near;  
Where in the wilderness, each footstep falters—  
I shall be satisfied! but oh! not here!

There is a land where every pulse is thrilling  
With rapture earth's sojourners may not know,  
Where Heaven's repose the weary heart is stilling,  
And peacefully life's time-tossed currents flow.

Ear hath not heard, nor hath eye seen the vision  
Of light and loveliness beyond the skies;  
Hope is forgotten there in full fruition,  
And the heart vainly to conceive it tries.

Far out of sight, while yet the flesh enfolds us,  
Lies the fair country where our hearts abide,  
And of its bliss is nought more wondrous told us  
Than these few words, "I shall be satisfied."

Satisfied? Satisfied? the spirit's yearning  
For sweet companionship with kindred minds—  
The silent love that here meets no returning—  
The inspiration which no language finds—

Shall they be satisfied? The soul's vague longings—  
The aching void which nothing earthly fills?  
Oh! what desires upon my soul are thronging  
As I look upward to the heavenly hills.

Thither my weak and weary steps are tending—  
Saviour and Lord! with thy frail child abide!  
Guide me toward home, where all my wanderings  
ending,

I shall see thee, and "shall be satisfied."  
Mount Holly, Nov. 19, 1852. R. A. R.

[For the Christian Visitor.]

## A SHORT SKETCH OF BURMAN HISTORY; From 16th Century to 1819.

At the present day, no country perhaps, excites a larger portion of the attention of the Christian world than Burmah. The land itself, with its fertile soil and noble scenery, the people, their arts and inventions, are all regarded with deep interest; while the obscurity which envelopes its early history gives to it that mysterious charm which seldom fails to attract the human mind. These, of themselves, are causes sufficient to render an account of Burmah attractive to every one; but there are others which make it much more so in the Christian's estimation. Burmah, although favored so highly of Heaven in natural adornments and advantages, is sunk in the depths of moral degradation. Paganism, like some bird of prey, is hovering over the land, destroying those millions of immortal souls. The man of God trembles at the sight. His attention and pity are awakened, and he feels within him an earnest longing for their salvation. The effect of this feeling is well known. We have all heard with joy of the frequent departures for those shores, of Christian missionaries, and our hearts sympathize with them as they go, for we know the trials which await them. How often have we mourned over the dreadful tolls of their predecessors!

How often has there been awakened within us a feeling of wondering pity for their agonizing sufferings, and admiration for their heroic constancy and endurance! It is our object in the present paper, to give a brief account of the early history of the Burman Empire, continuing it down until the time of the arrival of missionaries, and to subjoin a few statements concerning its geography and productions.

The Burman empire is situated midway between Hindostan and China. Possessing a partial resemblance to both of those countries in its institutions, its manners, and customs, it has also acquired the name of Chin-India, by which it is frequently mentioned. Owing to the recent British conquests it is not so extensive as formerly. With the exact amount of its present possessions we are not well acquainted; nor does it matter. It is sufficient to say that it occupies a territory of nearly 200,000 square miles. The number of the inhabitants has not been ascertained with accuracy. Certainly we have the amount, as stated by the Burmese themselves, but they are rather prone to exaggeration. This is a slight failing in the Oriental character. Some travellers have placed the number at thirty millions; others as low as three millions. It is certain, however, that the number of people in every race comprising the Burmese empire, is somewhere about eight or ten millions.

There is little satisfaction to be gained in the study of Oriental history. One black catalogue of gross crimes awells the records. Broken treaties, despotic edicts, public and private tyranny every where meet the eye. Closely following upon these are fierce insurrections and more bloody rebellions. The mind is horrified at so dreadful an exhibition of the cruel passions of mankind, and we turn away in disgust from the enormities of Oriental tyranny. If this be the case with the Eastern nations, it is precisely so with regard to Burmah.

Ava Proper is the chief and leading state in the empire, and the one from which came forth that power which afterwards subjugated the surrounding kingdoms. We first see in a clear light the history of Burmah, at the time when this state, by some means or other, had become tributary to its neighbour Pegu. For some time it had held this ignominious vassalage, but at length the warlike and energetic Burmans, ill brooking a state of slavery to a kingdom over which they might be rulers, arose in rebellion, and after a fierce struggle threw off the yoke and became masters of Ava and Martaban, and shortly afterwards of Pegu itself. It seems that they did not find much difficulty in preserving their ascendancy. Their rule over the Peguans was characterized by an utter want of mercy in their dealings with them. Following the customary practice of those lands, they treated the Peguans with insolence and tyranny; subjecting them to burdensome taxations, which were rendered still more grievous by the cruelty of Burmese despotism. But even the stag, when hard pressed, will turn and fly at his pursuers; and the Peguans at length found their situation unendurable, and rose against their masters. Exasperated with a sense of injury, and stung with the sense of their ignominious condition, they united in one general rebellion. This was about 1750. With the assistance of European arms, and aided by some Dutch and Portuguese, they completely vanquished the Burmese armies, entered the territory of their rulers, and marching on took possession of the capital. Dwee-see, the last of his race, was dethroned, and the son of the Peguan king, "Binga-della," was made ruler in his stead. The Peguans, having been so completely successful, felt secure in their power. But they seemed to have received little benefit by their own hard experience. In the flush of their joy and triumph, they

gave way to their revenge, and hurled back upon the heads of the Burmans the grievous burden which they themselves had borne so long. If they acted with a feeling of confidence in the security of their position, they may be said to have had good reasons for that feeling. They had freed themselves from slavery; they had vanquished one by one the best generals of Burmah; crushing the legions which had opposed them; and, lastly, having marched in triumph to the Burmese capital, they had seized in his own halls the Burman King. "Man proposes: God disposes." At this very time there appeared a man who was designed to change entirely the destiny of the whole country.

Alompra was a man of obscure origin, who had become chief of a petty village. Before this time he had, by his courage and address, made himself formidable to his enemies. He now, while viewing the scene before him, found his native country enslaved, and vowed to regain its lost liberty. The king, too, was dead, and here was an opening for his ambition. He lost no time, but after deciding upon his course of action, visited the neighbouring chiefs and inflamed them by his speeches, to which the remembrance of his bravery and gallant deeds lent still more influence. Collecting one hundred men from among the bravest of his followers, he marched against the Peguans and annoyed them by a species of guerilla warfare. For a time he confined himself to small skirmishes. Often would an unsuspecting detachment of Peguans be appalled by the appearance of Alompra and his gallant band, as he burst upon them from some mountain gorge. Terrified and bewildered they would struggle for a while and then be cut down. From such an attack few would escape to tell the fate of their comrades. Thus he continued gradually making his name more terrible, slowly but surely increasing in power, until at last having a sufficient number of followers, he suddenly marched upon the capital, and after a fierce struggle obtained possession. A few more victories expelled the Peguans from Burmah, & confirmed the power of Alompra. He now began to exert all his power in raising armies to chastise the Peguans. This did not occupy much time, for attracted by the splendor of his fame, the enthusiastic Burmans crowded to his standard. At length being prepared he came like a tempest upon Pegu; setting no bounds to revenge, knowing no mercy, the course of Alompra and his army was every where marked by fire and blood. Blazing towns and cities illumined the whole country and reddened the midnight sky. The air resounded with the shrieks of those who were led into hopeless captivity, the screams of women and children, and the groans of the wounded and dying. His course was irresistible. Every where the Peguan armies were panic stricken at his presence, and completely vanquished. Three months seemed to put the whole country together with its capital, in his power. The capital shared the fate of the other towns. It was pillaged and the inhabitants were mercilessly slaughtered. Pegu thus again fell under the power of Burmah with no hope of future freedom. Alompra made himself terrible to his enemies and ruled with a rod of iron. Following the impulses of ambition, he invaded Siam, but while besieging the capital he was taken sick, and died, aged 50 years. His successor afterward continued the war and took the capital of Siam, but was not able to hold possession on account of the startling news of a Chinese invasion, which he exerted all his strength to resist. He was successful. Fifty thousand Chinese were defeated, and all were put to death with the exception of two thousand, who were taken prisoners and carried in triumph to Ava. Not long afterward, he subdued Cassay, and after a prosperous reign

died in 1776. This king's son, who should have reigned, was murdered by his uncle, a son of Alompra's, by name Mindersagee, who took the throne. He conquered Arracan, and part of Siam, which includes the important towns of Tavoy, and Mergui. He died in 1819, and was succeeded by his grandson.

It is unnecessary to give any further account of the history of Burmah. What remains to be told is so well known to all, that a further account would be superfluous. We all know the history of the war with England, and even now we see this country rashly engaging in another strife with her formidable neighbours, heedless of former experience. What has been related is the history of Burmah from a reliable period down to the year 1819. True, we do not find in it much to interest our minds. Many will turn from it in disgust, but the Christian, though his heart may sicken, can still see the workings of God's providence. For it were assuredly better, that the different States should be united under one government, than be separated into a number of petty kingdoms. In the latter case mutual jealousies and ambition, would produce constant wars, and tumults, but when united under one ruler there is more of peace and harmony. Especially do we see the hand of God in the British conquests. Whatever may be thought of the justness of the war, no reflective person can deny that it has been productive of good. Missionaries may now have access to the people, and, protected by the British, pursue in peace their heavenly vocation. The native government has become milder in its treatment of the Missionaries dwelling among its own subjects, and would hesitate to practise those cruelties formerly endured by Judson. Who cannot discern in all this the providence of God? Who does not worship and admire him in his actions? Here as everywhere we see him—

"From seeming evil, still educing good,  
And better thence again, and better still  
In infinite progression."

Before concluding this paper, it may not be uninteresting to make a few statements respecting the climate and productions of Burmah. Situated in the torrid zone, it may be supposed to possess the climate peculiar to those regions. In some parts such is the case, but in general, the climate is temperate, the summer being seldom rendered unpleasant by excessive heat, and the winter being mild and invigorating. The cause of this may be attributed to the natural features of the country. The interior is elevated to a considerable degree above the ocean's surface. Hills and mountains stretch every where through the land, and rivers flow in every direction, watering the valleys and cooling the air with floods from colder regions. In such a climate, the inhabitants enjoy robust frames, and vigorous constitutions. In the southern provinces, and particularly at the estuaries of the rivers there are large plains, where grow all the rich productions which characterize Bengal. In the north the rich soil produces wheat and many different kinds of corn and vegetables. Sugar cane, indigo, and all the tropical fruits are indigenous to Burmah; the tea-plant is also cultivated; but to no great extent. Generally speaking, agriculture flourishes, but of the mode little has been ascertained. Many different kinds of trees are found in Burmah. The palm, the fir and many other species adorn the sides of the hills and mountains. The scenery in Burmah possesses a high degree of beauty. Its lofty mountains look down upon many a fertile valley. Beautiful rivers flow along, giving strength to the soil, and health to the cultivator. The resemblance between Burmah and Italy has frequently occurred to us in a striking manner. In both we see the melancholy spectacle of a