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REV'S. I. E. BILL & R. THOMSON, A. M.,

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

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WHAT IS FAITH?

FAITH is a sweet assurance that beyond this world of toil and pain is one where sorrow, sin and death can never enter; a place where "the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest." By faith are we made partakers of the sacrifice that was offered for a sinful world.

'Tis faith that helps when troubles rise,
To lift our thoughts above the skies.

And when the soul, with sin oppressed,
Would fain on Christ its burden cast,
Faith sweetly says, "Your sin's forgiven,"
And seals your passport into heaven.

'Tis faith that dries the mourner's tear,
And gently whispers, "Christ is near;
'Tis he that holds affliction's rod;
'Be still and know that he is God.'

By faith we know of worlds above,
Where naught is found save joy and love;
Where we, when sufferings all are o'er,
May sing His praise for evermore.

Oh! may we while we sojourn here,
Oppressed with sorrow, sin and care,
E'er "walk by faith, and not by sight,"
And reach, at length, yon world of light!

And knowing that without faith it is impossible to please God, let it—in the language of the disciples—be our earnest, unceasing prayer, "Lord, increase our faith."—*Rural New-Yorker.*

[From the Missionary Magazine.]

RANGOON.

Letters from Mr. Granger.

MEAN-OUNG AND KYAN-KHAN—IDOLS "BE-LONG TO NO ONE."

We were off before breakfast, and at noon were opposite Mean-oung, which is about two miles long and must have a large population. Here we overtook a fleet of fifty boats, convoyed by Assistant Commissioner Latter's armed yacht, ascending the river. They were going with all sails spread, and presented a picturesque appearance as they stretched across the wide stream nearly in line.

At five, p. m., we reached the large town of Kyan-Khan, more than four miles in length, compact, and abounding in pagodas, monasteries, and zayats. Here, too, the destroyer had been busy. Although there were 200 sepoys with English officers, the fleet war boats had just made a successful attack upon the more exposed parts of the town, and effected their escape in safety. Once beyond the reach of grape shot they are safe in the almost impenetrable jungle and numerous small streams. Here we anchored for the night and went on shore. We found a large bazar near, and a great crowd of people on the bank. The town has several parallel streets, with brick pavements in the centre for ponies and walking. It is sufficiently above high water, and is said to be a healthy town. It is perhaps the most important place above Henthaday below Prome, and about midway between the two. In the course of our walk we came to two large monasteries, which I entered, where I found larger collections of images than I had before seen. Besides those which exhibit Gaudama in the usual sitting posture, there were others which represent him as reclining, as standing, in the act of preaching, seated on an elephant, as prostrate, with hands and hair extended above his head. They were made of wood, marble, and papier mache, many of the latter being of beautiful workmanship. I offered to purchase. The priests replied, "We do not sell—we do not give. They are not ours. They belong to no one. They are offerings. If you like, take. No one will complain." These answers confirmed my previ-

ous views. The building of pagodas, the setting up of images in zayats and monasteries, like their offerings of fruits and flowers on worship days, are acts of worship. When offered they cease to be property. The act of religious merit is exhausted in the gift, and the entire surrender of the gift is essential to its religious value.

THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER—FINN SEPOYS.

Here we found Capt. Latter, now the assistant commissioner for Prome under Capt. Phayre. He has resided for some time in the adjoining British provinces, and has written a grammar of the language. He was raised to his present honorable post because of his knowledge of the language, and in consideration of his gallant conduct in leading an assault at the taking of Rangoon. He confirmed all that we had heard respecting the disturbed state of the country, and said that there was no force at their command to put an end to the mischief. He thought the report well founded that Me-at-toon, the robber chieftain, has been in communication with the court of Ava, and that ere long he will be down with an army.

Before leaving, we took on board a hundred sepoys from one of the north-west provinces of India. I was struck by the fine appearance of these men. They have all the prominent features of the western, or Indo European race, and on many of them I observed the peculiar, high aquiline nose, delicate chin and lip, and high round head, of which among Rhode Islanders the face and head of an eloquent U. S. Senator has long been the prominent example. They were much above the average size of the Hindoos. Several on measurement were found to be five feet eleven inches, the tallest invariably having the eagle outline of face.

I subsequently saw at Prome a company of mounted Sikhs, from Afghanistan, known as the irregular cavalry, who have rendered the most efficient service in the late war. What an illustration is this of the might of this growing empire! Here are companies of soldiers from a country bordering on Persia, and with which the English were so recently at war, volunteering to go nearly 3,000 miles eastward, to extend the dominion of Great Britain nearly to the confines of China.

AKOUK-TOUNG—REMARKABLE IMAGES.

We left Kyan-Khan on the morning of Tuesday, August 30th, and at noon were opposite Akouk-toung, where spurs of the Arracan hills, which had been seen for two or three days before, make down to the right bank of the river. Here the country, which had been gradually changing in appearance after leaving Henthaday, loses the unvarying aspect which it wears in the delta. The banks of the river are high, and hill and valley mingle on either hand. At Akouk-toung, which is noted for the numbers of images carved in the precipitous limestone which rises from the river's bank seventy five or a hundred feet, the stream comes down from the west, winding around the rocky point until it recovers its southerly direction. The position on the promontory at Akouk-toung is an admirable one for defending the pass, and the wonder is that the Burmans did not use it better. They had fortified themselves at this point and were prepared to guard it with twenty eight guns. The hon. company's steamers Pluto and Mahammuddee came up here with troops in July 1852, and keeping close to the west bank and beyond the range of the enemy's guns, struck into a small nulla known as the Young-Zeray which connects with the river above and is navigable only at full banks, and leaving both banks of the Irrawadi on the left, passed completely around Akouk-toung, and entering the river again, proceeded immediately to Prome, which surrendered without resistance.

In order to avoid the strong current we went up by the same cross stream, so that I failed to see the remarkable groups of images cut in the rock, to which I have alluded. When returning, we kept to the main stream and passed within a few feet of the naked rock which here faces the north. There is one continuous line of images extending about half a mile, at an average height of twenty feet from the river at high water. Many shorter lines extend above and below the main one, and single ones are scattered over the whole wide surface. In most cases the images, with the recesses in which they are, are cut from the rock. The figures are of all sizes, from one or two feet in length to twenty feet. One recumbent Gaudama is at least twenty feet long. The sitting posture is the common one, but I observed all the other attitudes which are classical with the Burmans. Many of them are gilded and evidently wrought with care; a few only are of marble. I noticed several successive rows, of seven and nine in a row, which constitute a group—the central recess and image being the largest, and the others right and left being gradually smaller.

INCREASING SPLENDOR OF IDOLATRY NORTHWARD.

As we ascend the river, the monuments of superstition increase in number, variety and magnificence. Just before we entered the nulla, we passed the ruined town of Senywa. Pagodas, monasteries and zayats, the latter with roofs of seven terraces surmounted by a gilded pagoda-like spire, crowd upon the banks, intermingled with palm trees and extensive gardens of fruit trees. The bank is here about twenty feet in height, with the ground rising from the shore.

After passing up four or five miles, we came to the largest Gaudama I had then seen in Burmah. It is near a pagoda and guarded by two griffins, invariable accompaniments of all the more costly religious structures of the country. Adjoining are several smaller pagodas and a monastery. The image, judging from the neighbouring palm trees, is about thirty-five feet high, and occupies the sitting posture. It is of brick, covered with a beautiful white stucco, which in this climate is uninjured by the weather, and has the appearance of polished marble. It is flanked by two immense buttresses of naked brick, which reach to the ears of the image. The latter fronts the nulla and overlooks the plain which separates it from the river. The site must command a fine view of the water, plain, town and jungle, and the distant Arracan hills on the west.

SHWAY-DOUNG, "THE OXFORD OF BURMAH."

Shortly after passing this image we again were in the main stream, and towards evening the long line of hills back of Shway-doung and extending up to Prome came in sight. The golden pagoda, which crowns the northern terminus of the range at the city of Prome twelve or fifteen miles off, was glittering in the sun like fire upon the distant hill top.

Shway-doung, of which we shall hear more in future years, for it will doubtless be the seat of the Prome Mission, is one of the most remarkable places in the country, and has been called the Oxford of Burmah, in allusion to its being a noted seat of learning, and the head quarters of what, by an awkward reference to the western ideas and terms, may be called the high-church Buddhism of Burmah. The present town is eight miles south of Prome, with which it is soon to be connected by a fine carriage road, which is completed for one third of the distance. The line of hills commencing at Prome, as it extends south, retreats from the river, so that at Shway-doung it is separated from the town, which lies upon the bank, by a plain four or five miles in breadth. Over this plain, ex-

tending from the river back to the hills; are several parallel and apparently unbroken lines of pagodas, monasteries and zayats. The monasteries are residences of the priests and of their hundreds of pupils, who for the time being adopt the sacred yellow cloth. The zayats are for the temporary accommodation of pilgrims. Nowhere else save at Prome—and there the number cannot be so great—have I seen such rude splendor in architecture. The great pagoda at Rangoon has no rival in all Pegu, but the accompanying religious edifices, which strike the stranger with so much astonishment there, are much inferior in size and ornament to the sacred edifices of Prome and Shway-doung.

AN IMPORTANT MISSION FIELD.

Opposite the latter place is Pa-doung, from which, as I shall afterwards have occasion to notice more particularly, a military road is to be constructed across the mountains to the Arracan coast. Pa-doung contains at present about two thousand houses, Shway-doung at least a thousand more, and Prome is estimated to have not far from ten thousand, making in all, including three or four small villages in the immediate neighbourhood, a population variously estimated at from 75,000 to 100,000. Each of the three towns is now garrisoned, and they will make three important centres for missionary labour, of easy and daily access through the entire year, whichever point may be selected as the place of the missionaries' residence. I shall hereafter speak more particularly of the advantages which Shway-doung offers as the centre of our operations in this district.

The river at this point is three miles in breadth, but contracts rapidly as we approach Prome, being there hemmed in by hills on both sides. There are two islands near Shway-doung, one of which has a small village of fishermen. The other has a much larger village, with fruit gardens and rice fields. I regretted that we were unable to land at either Shway-doung or Pa-doung. Going up, we passed near the latter place, and returning, kept near the left bank, which gave us a fine view of the town. At Prome, however, we had opportunities for obtaining reliable information respecting the three places.

Going up, the steamer forsook the left bank after Shway-doung came in sight, and passed to the opposite side of the river; but not until I had observed the general features of the country below the town. It was formerly much larger than it is at present, and extended several miles below that part which remains. Under the protection of the new government, if it does not regain its former limits, it will approach them. Below the town are extensive fruit gardens extending two or three miles. The river banks are not high, but the elevated plain of which I before spoke is sufficiently elevated in high water for comfort and health.

HEALTHFULNESS OF MISSION STATIONS, COMPARATIVE ONLY.

When I speak of the healthfulness of any place in this country, I do not speak absolutely, or with our American standard in mind, but relatively, as compared with other inviting fields for missionary labour within the tropics. The missionary who would make health a prime object must fail in his efforts to reach the people. The masses, the great centres of these hundreds of millions of Asiatics, do not live in what, to an American or Englishman, are healthy places. The man who would, with Christ's help, save this people, must not count his life dear unto himself. This applies both to the selection of a field of labour, and in a measure also, to questions as to sites for residence and exposure to discomforts. The good of the heathen is the main point. It is easy to live in this country, and to be a missionary to the heathen, and yet to