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THE TRUE CHARM AND POWER OF MISSIONS.

BY THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.

That which constitutes the value and virtue of incense is an invisible, impalpable, and subtle principle, called perfume or odor. A similar charm, supposed to invest acceptable offerings, gave them the name of "sweet savor offerings," and caused such expressions as the "savor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God," to be applied to unselfish service.

Comparison of many passages of Scripture will show that the essence of this acceptable savor is found in *unselfishness, self-oblivion, or self-loss*. The savor of selfishness is offensive to God; and just as certain pungent, aromatic odors were supposed to overcome or annul the offensive smell of burning victims, the odor of a spirit that renounces all self-gain in an absorbing passion for His glory is represented as neutralizing what is distasteful to God, and so becomes the secret of all acceptable, sweet savor offerings.

Here lies, perhaps, the grandest of all arguments for missions—that they both demand and develop the highest self-oblivion. It is a peculiar mark of the incapacity of a worldly mind to appreciate spiritual truth and motive, that the very *objections* raised to missions, that commercially and selfishly they "do not pay," are in God's eyes the *reasons* for them. They make no appeal to the carnal, and hence evoke the nobler and more god-like principles within us.

The hope which inspires missionary effort is not the hope of seeing adequate results, such as in the material harvest of human enterprise justifies the sowing; God sometimes grants abundant returns, but not always, nor to the actual individual who has put forth the greatest measure of effort. The supreme hope of the true missionary is that he may witness for Christ to the unsaved so faithfully and fully that his Master at His coming may approve him with His own "Well done."

The hope thus set before us is so much above the sphere of time and

III.—FIELD OF MONTHLY SURVEY.

Siam and Laos, Malaysia,* Unoccupied Fields,† Buddhism,‡

MISSION WORK AMONG THE LAOS.

BY REV. DANIEL MCGILVARY, D.D.

Chieng Mai, Lamphoon, Lakawn, Praa, Nan, Chieng Hai, and Chieng Saan are the capitals of provinces of the same name in the north of the Kingdom of Siam, to which they are tributary. They occupy the valleys and plateaus of the upper tributaries of the Maa Nam, separated from the lower plain by mountains and rapids. They are governed by a line of native rulers who receive their appointment and their insignia of office from Bangkok.

Having first obtained consent of the viceroy, permission to establish a mission station in Chieng Mai was granted by the Siamese Government, and the mission was formally opened by the writer and his family April 3d, 1867, Mr. Wilson and family following in 1868. The warm reception that the missionaries received from all classes, the baptism of the first convert, the bright prospects of the mission so soon clouded by the changed attitude of the viceroy and the martyrdom of Noi Sunyah and Nan Chai, the tragic death of the viceroy soon after, the kindness of his successor, the present viceroy, counteracted by the hostile acts of his brother, the second in command, leading to the appeal to Bangkok and the Royal Proclamation of Religious Toleration from the young king in 1878, are matters of history and need not be repeated. The death of the brother soon after was another of the many Providential interpositions in behalf of the mission. The only case of persecution since then was the imprisonment for eight months of a valued assistant under false charges, but really on account of his religion. From his prison cell he wrote consoling letters to his family

not to be intimidated by his bonds. Most of the obstacles since then have been some petty annoyances to be expected, and such as have acted as a wholesome tonic.

For long years only two ordained missionaries were in the field. In 1883 Rev. Dr. Peoples and others arrived, followed next year by Rev. Chalmers Martin. Since then the growth of the church has been remarkable for its steady uniformity. For three years the yearly accessions to the communion of the church was about ninety. For the last seven successive years the accessions have been 110, 129, 180, 190, 241, 299, and 303 for 1893. Our present adult membership is 1586, total baptized 2707. The mother church at Chieng Mai has sent out eight colonies, and still has an adult membership of 719, and Dr. Dennis in his latest work makes the Presbytery of North Laos the banner presbytery in the General Assembly. Probably a greater prominence has been given to the evangelistic work than in most missions, and in this we have largely used the native talent available. From the beginning of the mission the preaching and pastoral work have been magnified. For a long time this was from necessity. Our small force precluded some departments of mission work. What was begun from necessity has been continued from conviction and experience of its success. We have endeavored to reach the present generation first; and no subject has such constraining power over men who are conscious of their guilt and sin as the Cross of Christ. The Laos readily admit that there is no provision for pardon in Buddhism. "I would embrace any religion that offers pardon for sin," said an officer from Chieng Toong, met on a late tour.

From the first, too, it was evident that a large field for medical work was opened. The ordained ministers stood

* See pp. 332 and 384 (present issue).

† See p. 377 (present issue).

‡ See pp. 326 and 367 (present issue).

aghast at the demand for foreign medicine which they had created, but could not supply. A missionary station is not complete without a physician. The healing of the body and the remedy for the soul, as in the Saviour's ministry, have acted and reacted on each other. They are the counterpart and complement of each other. When there is no physician the minister has to become a quack and treat cases for which he is not qualified. When this work is turned over to an accomplished physician he can devote his energies to his own special work. The consecrated physician can easily combine the preaching of the Gospel with the medical work. The reverse is not always possible. Among the Laos the medical missionary has an ideal field for influence. The evangelistic and the medical work combined have laid the broad foundation for all our other work, and given the solid basis on which it stands. In the pioneer work in the broad field already opened and opening in the east and the north, we must look to the consecrated physician to be preacher and healer. With his medicine and surgical case and his Bible, he is welcome alike to the residences of chiefs and governors and to the homes of the poor. The extent of its influence may be seen by a single statement. Dr. McKean, medical missionary in Chieng Mai, reports five thousand cases treated last year at the station, and three thousand vaccinations, thus bringing eight thousand souls under the direct influence of the Gospel. In a tour of five months last year the writer distributed eighty-eight ounces of quinine gratuitously, or otherwise, giving us a welcome in some places where the people would have been indifferent. We would emphasize the fact that just now **THREE MEDICAL MISSIONARIES are NEEDED** for our **IMMEDIATE WORK**. Shall this appeal be made in vain?

Special mention should be made of the influence of our native Christians in advancing the work. First among these is our native ordained minister,

Rev. Nan Tah. He is one of the most learned men in Buddhistic literature, which gives him great influence among his people. In manner and tact he is all that could be desired, instant in season and out of season, and is himself a bright example of the power of the Gospel which he preaches.

Besides him the annual report for the closing year mentions about *thirty* native ruling elders who have devoted much time to evangelistic work during the year. The report adds, "They go before, we follow and reap the harvest." Besides the influence of these, the church is growing by the vitality in its native members. Most of the male members lead in public prayer, and many of the women in their own prayer-meetings. Family prayer is generally observed, and they do not hesitate to urge the subject of religion on their people. In all of the sub-stations natives lead the Sabbath worship. An officer from Lakawn, sixty-five miles to the southeast, became a Christian—a church was soon organized, and a call made for a mission station, to which Dr. and Mrs. Peoples and others since responded. When the station in Lam-poon was opened, one hundred and twenty members were already waiting to be dismissed to the church then organized. The churches in Chieng Saan and Chieng Hai and Papow and Chieng Dow, all in distant provinces, have grown up under native labor, with only an annual visit from the missionary. They have called in vain for the settlement of a missionary.

With the evangelistic and medical work as a basis, as soon as we had force to open schools, Christian parents were waiting to put their children in them. The Girls' Boarding School was the first. It has had a succession of faithful teachers. Under its present principal, Miss Griffin, assisted by Miss Allie McGilvary, it has completed a prosperous year. The Boys' Boarding School was commenced later by Mr. Collins, who is now assisted by Miss C. H. McGilvary. One hundred and fifteen pu-

pils were enrolled during the year. One of the most encouraging features of these schools is that all the girls and nearly all the boys come from Christian families—not to learn English, which is not taught, but to receive a Christian education. Most of the pupils are either communicants or non-communicating members on entering, and the communion roll is constantly enlarged from these schools, *twenty-three* having been added during the fall term. The influence of the pupils reacts on the families and villages from which they come. A prosperous school at Lakawn, under Miss Fleeson and Mr. Taylor, was commenced soon after the station was established, and now a boys' school is in operation under Mr. Taylor, who also superintends the Industrial School, leaving Dr. Peoples free for evangelistic work and the medical work in the absence of Dr. Briggs. Even the last station at Lampoon has a good beginning in school work.

Last and not least, before we were ready for it, the evangelistic work had furnished pupils for the Theological Training School. Rev. Nan Tah was prepared for the ministry by the members of the Chieng Mai station in the intervals of other duties. A strong need had long been felt for an organized effort, and in Mr. Dodd, since joined by Mr. Irwin, the right men were found. Our ruling elders and others, who have proved themselves efficient workers, have been encouraged to enter the Training School. It has one feature of a model theological school. The teaching is practical and biblical as well as theoretical, the Bible being the principal text-book. A portion of each day is devoted to evangelistic work, and on Sabbath the pupils are sent out two by two, and the first school hour in the week is devoted to hearing a report of their work, with criticisms and practical suggestions from teachers and fellow-pupils. *Twenty-five* were enrolled last year, and at the last meeting of presbytery in December *five* of the pupils were licensed to preach the Gospel, one

of whom, a son-in-law of Nan Intah, the first convert, was ordained.

To all of these schools we look for a generation of better educated Christians, and, above all, for a strong force of Christian ministers and workers to evangelize their own and neighboring tribes. The first duty of the foreign missionary is to lay the foundations, translate the Scriptures, and give a Christian literature, then to train workers and act as bishops in superintending and directing the work.

Our *Sabbath-schools* have one feature worthy of universal adoption. They embrace the old and the young, men and women; in other words, the church and congregation studying the Scriptures.

A font of Laos type prepared by Dr. Peoples is a success, and the press in Chieng Mai under Mr. Collins is sending forth the printed Word of God. The Gospel of Matthew revised, and Acts translated, by Rev. E. B. McGilvary, have been published, and the Gospel of John is now ready for the press, while Mr. Wilson has translated the Psalms. The whole of the Scriptures are accessible to those who read Siamese, as most of our Christians do.

Hitherto we have referred to the work in the Siamo-Laos States in the north of Siam, which gave it the title of *North Laos Mission*. Recent explorations in the regions north of the Kingdom of Siam have shown that the title *NORTH Laos Mission* is a misnomer. The eastern and northeastern portion of British Burma and a large number of districts and towns subject to Yunnan, China, are inhabited by the Kerns and Lus, two large and numerous branches of the Laos family, who might be called the Burmo and Chino-Laos. This is doubtless the original home of the whole Siamese and Laos family. These tribes have retained more of their original characteristics, while the Siamese have developed a type of civilization of their own. A tour was taken the first five months of 1893 by the Rev. Robert Irwin and the writer, passing through

the provinces of British Burma to the Sip Song Panna, a confederation of Lu States under the jurisdiction of China. We visited about seventeen districts and towns, in all of which the Kern and Lu dialects of the Laos are spoken, and the written character is the same as that used in our mission. The extent of the race to the north, the large area in which the Laos language is spoken, and the openness of the field were a revelation to us. A missionary had never been in the region before, and the name of Christ was unknown. It is stating the fact mildly when we say that we were well received throughout the whole region. We had a most cordial welcome from both rulers and people.

The length of the tour precluded a long stay in each place, but we had everywhere eager listeners to the Gospel message. Chieng Hoong, in north latitude 22°, the chief city of the Sip Song Punna, was the limit of the tour to the north. This confederation formerly paid tribute to Burma and China, but the present Chow Fa of Chieng Hoong was placed in authority by Yunnan. The Laos race extended much further north and also east and west of Chieng Hoong. There we crossed the Cambodia River and visited a number of towns to the east and south, and re-crossed it at Chieng Lap. In two of the towns which we visited we were invited to hold worship in the residence of the Chow Fa, where we found large and attentive audiences. It was sad to leave so many places where they were disappointed at our short stay, and urged us to come again.

The length of this article, already too long, allows the mention of only one other important fact. The whole region abounds in numerous Hill tribes inhabiting the mountains on both sides of the Cambodia and its tributaries. We have an interesting work already begun among the Yahoos or Moosurs. Two of the most interesting months of my thirty-six years of mission life were spent in visiting on foot the Moosurs on the hills west of Chieng Hai; and the

baptism of twenty-two, the first of the Moosur race who had embraced the Gospel, was a red-letter day in my life. Ch Boo Kaw, the first Moosur convert, has since gone to his rest, exhorting his people with his last breath to embrace the Gospel. Besides the Moosurs, there are the Kooies, the Kaws, the Maaos, the Yows, the Ka Hoks, the Ka Lohs, the Lanteens, the Tai Luangs, the Ka Moos, and Lemates and other tribes. Like the Karens of Burma, but few of these Hill tribes are Buddhists, and we have reason to believe that many of them are waiting for the Gospel. None of them have written languages, and as yet we have had to preach to them through an interpreter in the Laos language, which most of the men understand but imperfectly. Their contiguity to China has introduced the opium vice among them, but they are hospitable and industrious, and those not addicted to the use of opium are, for heathen tribes, moral.

The Presbyterian Mission of Siam and Laos together embrace the whole country from the Gulf of Siam to China, and the Laos race alone must comprise three or four millions of people. How shall that whole region be evangelized? We need only the men and the means to occupy the whole field.

At the meeting of the Presbytery of North Laos in 1892 a call was made for eighteen workers, not including those needed for Nan and the Laos provinces and Hill tribes north of the Siamese boundary. The Wood River Church, Nebraska, has sent us *five* workers, now on their way. Of these Mr. and Mrs. Shields will join Dr. and Mrs. Briggs at Praa, the new station opened by the famine. The other three, Rev. J. L. Thomas, M.D., and wife, and Miss Hatch, and also Miss Wilson, go to Lakawn, and Mr. and Mrs. Phraner are waiting to establish a station in Chieng Hai when a physician can be obtained.

More than eighteen are still needed, of whom at least three should be physicians, to occupy Rahang, a large town

on the Southern Laos border and Nan on the east, and the Burmo-Laos and Chino-Laos and the Hill tribes in the north. For speedy and large returns for labor and means expended, it is doubtful whether a more promising field is anywhere open to the Church. We most earnestly request the prayers of the Church for laborets and success in giving them the Gospel. We would sound the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us." Who will hear in it a call, "The Lord hath need of *thine*"? "The Lord hath need of *THEE*"?

Siam and Laos. Area 250,000 square miles; population about 6,000,000, consisting of one third Siamese, one third Laotians, and the remainder Chinese and Malays. The prevailing religion is Buddhism. The Presbyterians (North) have in the Laos country 10 ordained, 5 medical, 6 lady missionaries, and 1 ordained native; 8 churches and 1600 communicants; and in the Siam Mission, 7 ordained, 2 medical, 4 lady missionaries, and 1 native evangelist; 7 churches and 330 communicants. The American Baptist Missionary Union also has a work in Bangkok chiefly for the Chinese.

Unoccupied Fields will be the subject of a paper in our June and July issues.

Buddhism has been said to be the religion of one third of the human race. Probably not over 100,000,000, however, are in reality Buddhists.

The following are some extracts from a Buddhist catechism:

What is a Buddhist?

He is one who professes to be a follower of Our Lord Buddha.

Was Buddha a God?

No.

Was He a man?

In form He was a man; but internally He was not like other men—that is, in mental and moral order He surpassed

all the men of His time and all other times.

Was Buddha His name?

No. It is the name of a state of mind.

Its signification?

Illuminated; or He who has perfect wisdom.

Did Buddha discover the cause of human misery?

At last He discovered it. As the light of the rising sun scatters the shades of night and reveals everything to view, so the light of knowledge rose in His mind, and He saw clearly the causes of human suffering and the means of escaping them.

Did He have to make great efforts to attain this knowledge?

Yes; He had to conquer all the defects, the desires, and the appetites which deprive us of the sight of the truth.

What is the light which can disperse our ignorance and drive away all troubles?

The knowledge of the Four Noble Truths, as Buddha calls them.

What are those truths?

(1) That misery always accompanies existence; (2) that all modes of existence result from passion or desire; (3) that there is no escape from existence except by destruction of desire; (4) the means of obtaining the destruction of desire.

When we are in possession of the Four Noble Truths, at what do we arrive?

At Nirvana.

What is Nirvana?

The state of perfect repose, the absence of desire, of illusion, of pain, the complete annulment of everything which constitutes physical man. Before attaining Nirvana, man can be incessantly born again; when he has attained it he cannot be born again.

Buddhism aims at the destruction of sin as a disease and the practical *extinction* of the soul; Christianity compasses the destruction of the disease and the *salvation* of the soul.