

THE
HERO MISSIONARY,

OR,

A History of the Labors

OF THE

REV. EUGENIO KINCAID.

BY ALFRED S. PATTON,

AUTHOR OF "LIGHT IN THE VALLEY," "MY JOY AND CROWN," ETC., ETC.

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"The brother whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches."  
2 Cor. viii. 18.

"We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;  
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.  
We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives  
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best."  
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CHAPTER XII.

LABORS IN TENASSERIM.

“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place.”

2 Cor. ii. 14.

“In the deserts let me labor ;
On the mountains let me tell
How he died—the blessed Saviour—
To redeem a world from hell.”

AFTER passing through the fearful perils narrated in the two preceding chapters, Mr. Kincaid reached Ava on the 11th of March, and found the city filled with the most distressing alarms. Prince Thur-ra-wa-di had risen against his brother, the king, and, after a terrible struggle, he succeeded in dethroning him. The whole country now presented a scene of desolation and misery truly heart-rending. The whole length and breadth of the empire was laid waste. Half of the population had been robbed, and war was raging in all the distant provinces. The capital and neighboring cities, moreover, had by this time been invested with his armies, and such was the danger

which threatened the mission families, that it was deemed prudent to accept the invitation of Colonel Burney, the British Resident, and take up their temporary abode under his roof; here they remained for the space of six days.

During the continuance of the civil war, and after the new king ascended the throne, sanguine hopes had been cherished that the prospects of the mission would become more than ever encouraging. The character of the Prince seemed to warrant such expectations. He had always sought for intercourse with foreigners, and had been remarkable for the liberality of his opinions. He had expressed, also, his disapprobation of the exclusive, jealous policy of the Government, and, whenever it came in his way, had spoken disapprovingly of its harassing and vexatious course toward Mr. Kincaid.

But, alas! with all these grounds of hope, they were doomed to a sad and sudden disappointment. About the middle of May intimations were given that the king had expressed himself averse to the American teachers, and that he should order a discontinuance of their labors. Hearing this, Mr. Kincaid sought, at once, an interview with the king. His majesty received him with evident marks of kindness, and gave him to understand that he was not personally unfriendly to him. "But," said he, "I am now king of Burmah, and am, therefore, *tha tha na da ya*

ka, (defender of the faith) and must support the religion of the country. You must give no more of Christ's books." This he said before the whole assembled court, and added many expressions signifying that the royal will must not be trifled with.

Under these embarrassing circumstances, and apprehending war in consequence of difficulties between the English and the new Burman authorities, it was determined best to leave the capital for a time, and wait patiently until things should become more settled and quiet.

Leaving Ava on the 17th of June, they reached Rangoon on the 6th of July. Upon their arrival there, it was found that the missionaries of that station had already gone to Maulmain, in consequence of the threatening aspect of the revolution, and the decrees which had been issued by the viceroy of the province.

Early in the following month, Mr. Kincaid proceeded to Maulmain, and thence to Tavoy, with the intention of laboring in the Tenasserim province, until the state of the country should warrant his return to Ava. From Tavoy he hastened to the city of Mergui, the place which he had selected as an inviting field for temporary labor. While making this his home, however, the greater proportion of his time was employed in visiting and preaching at points of interest in the surrounding country, and, wherever he went,

a blessing seemed to attend his efforts. In one village, for instance, twenty-five miles distant, he found the people eager to listen to the word of life, and during his sojourning among them, a congregation, numbering from sixty to one hundred souls, would usually gather and join with interest in the exercise of worship. At every successive visit made to this place, he was permitted to see the fruit of his labors, and, in a short time, he had the unspeakable privilege of breaking bread to a church numbering thirty-six rejoicing converts. Among other excursions, he made a visit among the islands some thirty miles from the Tenasserim coast, and about one hundred and fifty miles south of Mergui. Here he found a people in the most abject poverty and degradation. The account he has given of his brief sojourn among them cannot be read but with feelings of the deepest interest and pity.

“The islands,” says he, “are all densely wooded, and of all sizes and forms. Some of them are low and very level, others have bold rocky shores, and rise into mountain ridges. The climate, too, must be delightfully pleasant. One cannot help exclaiming—‘This is a beautiful world.’ The ocean, on every side, spotted with a thousand green islands and islets, all beaming with existence—‘Man alone is vile.’ Those modern infidels, who dream of perfection if they can only wipe out all systems of religion, might find a

splendid field here, all cultivated to their hands. I am now surrounded by about three hundred souls, men, women, and children, entirely free from all religion. They have no God, no temple, no priest, no liturgy, no holy day, and no prayers. In their domestic habits they are free from all conventional rules. They are very poor, too, have no house, no garden, no cultivated field, no domestic animals but dogs. I never saw such abject poverty, such an entire destitution of all the comforts of life.

I have remained on this little island five days, and every morning and evening, sitting on the sea-beach, have taught this poor, degraded people, the knowledge of God. I have resorted to every method of instruction, in order to reach their understanding; with how much success, is known only to the Great Teacher, who is the *true light*. Of God and immortality they had never heard; so much the more they appeared to be interested. Two evenings a large number of them remained till after 9 o'clock. Last evening I urged them to pray to the living God, of whom they had now heard, and in doing so, uttered several short prayers, or rather sentences, that they might the better understand me. Their attention was greatly arrested, and several immediately asked to be taught to pray. I taught them a short prayer, containing three or four sentences, and then asked them if they would forsake all sin and serve the great

God, who made heaven and earth. Some eighty or a hundred immediately replied, 'I will'—'I will.' I told them about the Karens, their conversion to God, and learning to read. They urged me to come and live on one of their islands ; said they would all learn to read and become Christians."

Not less remarkable is the narrative he has furnished of his passage over the Tenasserim Mountains. Starting from the village before alluded to, where his labors had been so signally blest, he arrived, after a march of six hours, at the foot of the mountains, and put up for the night. Here he found two families, living in solitude, and among them, to his great joy, were four persons whom he had previously baptized. They gave him a most cordial welcome, spread a mat in an open veranda, brought water for washing and drinking, dressed a fowl for his dinner, and did every thing that kindness and Christian courtesy could dictate. The next morning he ascertained that while only four in these two houses had been baptized, there were not less than sixteen who believed in Christ, and gave satisfactory evidence of a change of heart. After taking an affectionate leave of these families, Mr. Kincaid thus describes, in graphic language, their toilsome journey, with some of its incidents :

"We set off in Indian file, for more than three-hours wending our way along the bed of a mountain

stream, sometimes only two or three feet deep. On either side the mountains rose up to a great height. In many places the stream is filled with brush and fallen trees, over which we had to climb ; though this was not always practicable, and we were obliged to creep on our hands and feet for fifteen or twenty yards together. After leaving this stream, or rather getting to the head of it, we ascended the high range of mountains which stretch along from north to south between the Tenasserim and the ocean. I was obliged to lie down on the ground several times, completely exhausted, before I got to the top. The mountains are irregular, precipitous, and covered with a dense forest. We traveled about four hours amidst these wild ragged mountains, often having no other path than that made by wild elephants and tigers. This is their own undisputed territory, and if one may judge by their tracts and paths, they are very numerous. Monkeys too range these wild regions in countless numbers. There is one kind very large, and without tails. The Karens tell me they are bold and savage, often attacking travelers, if not more than two together. When surrounded by great numbers of these animals, urging each other forward to an attack, by the most deafening yells, the only security is in setting fires, of which they, like other wild animals, are afraid. For ten or twelve days past we have had thunder storms every evening, preceded

by heat that is nearly suffocating. The thunder is so loud and so constant, that it is difficult making a person hear only a few feet distant. About 4 o'clock the clouds began to gather in dense black masses ; and, as the Karens tell me the storms are much more severe in these mountains than on the plains below, we concluded to halt for the night. Every effort was made to provide a shelter from the rapidly gathering storm. I was so weary it was impossible to render any assistance. We had a very comfortable shelter in less than an hour. Before our dinner was prepared, the storm came down, and except on one or two occasions, I never saw such a storm before. The whole atmosphere appeared to be a living mass of fire. There was a continued roar of thunder, mingled, almost every breath, with sharp, deafening peals, like the discharge of heavy artillery. The rain too was poured out in torrents, from which our leaves afforded us but a partial refuge. The awful grandeur of the scene, however, banished all thought of inconvenience and discomfort. Time passed unnoted ; hours appeared to be minutes ; there was no room for levity, and no room for sadness. The huge masses of clouds, hurrying on, and rolling up and down the sides of lofty and ragged mountains, the blazing atmosphere, the incessant roll of thunder, and the torrents of rain, accompanied with strong gales of wind, altogether formed a scene most impressively sublime.

In the morning I found two of my people suffering with a burning fever. One of them, a fine young lad, after making two or three efforts sunk down upon the ground, quite unable to walk. I had slight fever all night, but was very well in the morning. We set off at an early hour, and after eight hours' march, reached the Tenasserim, one hundred and forty or one hundred and fifty miles above Mergui. Our journey to-day, as yesterday, has been amidst the wildest scenes of nature, most of the way without the least evidence that any human being had been there before us. I suppose one-half the distance we walked in the channel of a stream, having, some part of the way, a most welcome sandy bottom, with only a few inches of water; then again, rocky and precipitous, with occasional deep basins, taking us nearly to the chin in water. Tracks of the rhinoceros, elephant, tiger, deer, wild hog and monkey, are everywhere seen. Their hard-beaten and frequent paths give one a fearful idea of their number. There is here no spot of barren earth. Vegetation is everywhere seen, in all its wildest luxuriance. We are all quite happy to get over the mountains to this pleasant little village. Our reception has been so cordial that we quite forget the hardships of the past three days.

This village, or rather hamlet, stands on the west side of the river, on high level ground, with an ex-

tremely fertile soil. The river is about three hundred yards wide. The chief has visited me two or three times in Mergui, and for a month past has been expecting my arrival. Some time since he built a zayat, in which himself and neighbors meet on the Sabbath and worship the Christian's God. There are five houses, having thirty-two or thirty-three souls. But two or three miles distant, are other hamlets, sitting in the shades of death, and either enemies or ignorant of God. At early candle-lighting all came to hear the gospel. I preached from 'And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.'

The next day was the Sabbath, and having met early to spend a little time in prayer and singing, messengers were afterwards sent off to inform two or three distant hamlets of my arrival, and try to bring them out to hear the blessed gospel. After breakfast spent some time in examining candidates for baptism. Preached at half past ten, and then resumed the examination. Four were received and baptized in the Tenasserim, about four o'clock. * * *

After commending this little church to the care of God and to the word of his grace, and promising, if possible, to send them a school teacher, and also to visit them again myself, I turned away most reluctantly from this bethel. During the day visited two hamlets, with, I believe, nine or ten houses, and