

ruary, 1853, 50 congregations, about forty pastors, and 5000 members.

The year 1854 was one of sad visitations of pestilence and famine, three pastors, including the first two ordained—Myat Kyau and Tway Po—had fallen victims to cholera, and 250 of the members had died. About forty had been excluded—mostly those who, in the stress of suffering and starvation, had robbed or maltreated others—but 519 had been baptized, the greater part new converts, and many Burmans had been led by the Christian lives and fortitude of the Karens to become Christians. Mr. Beecher had entered upon the work the sainted Abbott had laid down, but his health failed from overwork, his wife had died on her way to America, and an unfortunate misunderstanding with the Missionary Board, or rather the deputation it had sent out in 1852-53, rendered it necessary for him to return to America in February, 1855. He returned in 1857 with a second wife, a noble and excellent woman; but he came back as a missionary of the American Baptist Free Mission Society, and not of the Missionary Union. Messrs. Van Meter (the missionary to the Pwos) and Douglas (missionary to the Burmans of Bassein) had given their counsel and assistance to the native pastors during his absence, and the mission had not seriously suffered. The Missionary Union had sent other missionaries to take Mr. Beecher's place, but the Karens would only have their old teacher, and from September, 1847 to 1866, he devoted all his powers to their service. While maintaining discipline and correcting errors and abuses which had sprung up in his absence, and endeavoring to promote a higher spiritual life, Mr. Beecher recognized as the great duty before him the necessity of promoting a higher education and a greater social and industrial progress than the Karens had yet made. They were now free from the Burman yoke, and while in their villages and churches they should be first of all Christians, he deemed it necessary that they should be also intelligent Christians and should make such progress in social life and industries that they might be qualified to hold their own with the Burmans who had hitherto affected to despise them. Mr. and Mrs. Beecher selected a site for their new mission compound near the city and overlooking it; the British commissioner granted them ten acres, and friends sixteen more, and here, besides the necessary dwellings, Mr. Beecher proceeded to erect the "Sgau Karen Normal and Industrial Institute," in which there should be a vernacular high school, an advanced English school, in which native teachers and assistants should be educated, and an industrial department, in which the pupils should spend three or four hours each secular day in the practice of some of the more useful arts and trades. He had previously greatly encouraged and increased the attendance upon the elementary schools, which now numbered over eleven hundred scholars, had caused the establishment of four academies, advanced, or, as we should say, grammar schools, in the vernacular tongue, and these, as well as his Normal and Industrial Institute, were erected and supported by the Karens themselves. The cost