

and the work begun in his transformation was the auspicious forerunner and foretaste of a success which has in all Christian history scarce any superior or even equal as a demonstration of divine power. These "wild men," upon whom even the Burmans looked down with haughty contempt as servile inferiors, weaker in body and mind than their oppressors, the victims of intemperance and disgusting vices, were cruelly trodden under foot and virtually enslaved by the Burmese, who forced them to till the land, pay exorbitant taxes, and do all kinds of slave labor. To escape their persecutors they became half-nomads, wandering into remote and inaccessible regions that they might not be kidnapped and reduced to bondage. Though they had some crude belief in deity, and a future state with its awards, they had neither a definite religious faith and form of religion nor a priesthood. Yet these were the people whose unbounded enthusiasm in receiving the gospel has proved that none are so low that the good news may not at once reach to their deep degradation and accomplish their moral uplifting and utter transformation. Soon after Mr. Boardman settled at Tavoy, Ko-Thah-byu brought to him several Karens of the city. This first convert not only evinced a true and deep interest in Christ, but a passion for other souls that proved how the degraded pagan may not only be converted, but take up the work of winning souls with avidity and constancy.

At one of the Karen villages, twelve years before, a traveling Mussulman had left a mysterious book, which he told the Karens was sacred and entitled to divine honors. The superstitious party who had charge of it knew nothing of its contents, but wrapped it in muslin and encased it in basket-work of reeds covered with pitch, like the Nile cradle of Moses. The mysterious book became a *deified object* and religiously venerated. The keeper himself became a kind of high priest and sacristan combined, and it was vaguely believed that a treasure had been sent them from above which some future messenger would claim and explain. When Mr. Boardman came to the village he was visited by the guardian of the holy book to ask concerning its character. He could give no opinion till he should examine the book. So the keeper of it returned to his own village and came back after several days bearing the revered book and followed by a numerous train of interested people, all eager to know Mr. Boardman's verdict concerning this unknown volume. The wrappings were removed, and an old, torn, worn-out copy of *The Book of Common Prayer and Psalms* was revealed. It was an Oxford edition in English. Mr. Boardman, like Paul at Athens, told the people they were, in their way, very religious, but their devotion was misplaced. They had been ignorantly worshipping an unknown god, and he took opportunity now to declare to them the message of the true God. "That book," said he, "is a good book, and teaches of the true God in heaven." The docility of the