

missionary goes to them in the bazaars, on the roads, and particularly in the coffee shops which always provide an audience. Occasionally the missionary has been refused permission to sit and drink coffee in these shops, but usually he is welcomed, although his cup is afterwards taken to the river to be washed ceremonially. Curiosity is a powerful motive with the Arab and leads to many an interesting conversation. The missionary may read aloud to the colporteur and soon has a growing audience. Later, some of them ask for tracts or Gospels and take them away to read or to ask others to read to them. The story of the feeding of the five thousand is very popular in a country where few have even eaten so as to "be filled" or to have anything left over. At times some interested listener in the crowd will quiz the others on what has been read. The missionaries also find that personal testimony as to what Christ has done for them is effective as it was in the days of the apostle Paul. It is a pioneer field and no braver, more cheery Christian ambassadors will be found than those laboring here against many adds, physical and religious.

The Friends of Arabia Mission has also its station in Hilleh. It was started a few years ago by Miss Grace O. Strang and has now six missionaries. Its principles and practice are similar to those of the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

Leaving Hilleh, with pleasant memories of a faithful group of intrepid pioneers, we stopped at Ur of the Chaldees, where Professor Wooley is carrying on excavations and has recently unearthed very interesting temples, houses and graves of men and women who lived over a thousand years before

Abraham left at the call of God to leave home. Our next stop was at Busrah, the ancient Bassorah from which Sinbad, the Sailor, was reputed to set out on his eventful voyages. Here the Reformed Church in America has one of its principle Arabian stations. The Rev. John Van Ess is in charge of the school for boys where each of the 430 pupils is brought face to face with the Gospel for at least half an hour each day. Instruction of high grade is given, but the whole purpose is evangelistic.

The Busrah girl's school, also under the Arabian Mission, is enjoying the fine new buildings recently erected. It is strictly "purdah" and is in high repute. It also is playing an important part in the building of Christian character. There are 130 girls enrolled of whom about one half are Moslems. A Bible shop, itinerating work, literature distribution, home visitation and Arabic preaching services are used as other means of giving the Gospel to the Arabs of Busrah.

The influence of Christian missions in Arabia is clearly shown in the changed attitude shown by the Arabs toward the missionary and the message. Formerly the attitude was almost wholly antagonistic; this year there is a spirit of inquiry rather than of controversy. We were told that even pilgrims to the sacred Shiah shrine tours, such as Kerbela and Nejef, show less hostility. Large areas of Iraq are now open to the Gospel and only wait for ambassadors of Christ to go in and occupy the field. There are requests for extended work and there is no need to camouflage the Gospel. Now is the time to go up and possess the land in the name and power of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world.

H. R. H. PRINCE DAMRONG

ON AMERICAN MISSIONS IN SIAM

The celebration of the Centennial of Protestant Missions in Siam, which aroused widespread interest, has been commemorated by an attractive illustrated volume entitled "Historical Sketch of Protestant Missions in Siam." A notable feature of the volume is the introductory chapter which was written by His Royal Highness, Prince Damrong, a brother of former King Chulalongkorn, an uncle of the present King, long a Cabinet Minister and one of the most influential men in modern Siam. He is a Buddhist, but his loyalty to his ancestral faith has not prevented him from recognizing the large value of missionary work and from forming personal friendships with many missionaries. The editor met him during his visit in Siam, and was profoundly impressed by his ability, character and breadth of outlook. The introduction to the volume referred to is a remarkable statement about Christian missionaries from a man of royal rank in a non-Christian land. We regret that we have not space to publish it in full, but we are sure that the following extracts will be read with keen interest.

A. J. B.

I APPRECIATE the request to write an introduction as one arising from friendship based on mutual respect and confidence. It is a great pleasure to me to contribute a small share to the celebration of this important anniversary of the American Missions in Siam.

The American missionaries came to Siam thirty-three years before my birth. I came into contact with them for the first time when, by command of my August Father, H. M. King Mongkut, I was vaccinated by a medical missionary. I have the marks of that contact on me still. When I began to learn to read and write Siamese, the first schoolbooks were in manuscript, but later on printed first lessons in Siamese were published by Bradley's Press and were used

in our school. We boys liked them better, for they contained pictures.

I was about ten years of age when I came face to face with an American missionary for the first time—apart, of course, from the medical man who vaccinated me as a baby. H. M. King Chulalongkorn



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had then established an English School within the precincts of the Grand Palace, and, outside the school building, there was a lawn on which we played during the interval between school hours. Close to the playground was occasionally to be seen a tall, spare man with a beard similar to the traditional Uncle Sam himself. He wore a gray helmet with a chimney-looking means of ventilation, a long black alpaca coat reaching almost to his knees, a pair of duck trousers, with an umbrella in one hand and a number of books in the other. It was an American missionary,

and he was distributing books and pamphlets to bystanders and passers-by.

It was thus that at ten years of age, I first made friends with a missionary. In later years, when I had learned to speak English, and when my English tutor desired me to practice conversation, he took me to English-speaking households to give me as much opportunity as possible. Roads were few at the time, and communication was mainly by boat. Of the missionaries whose houses were within easy reach were Dr. and Mrs. Chandler and Dr. and Mrs. D. B. Bradley. We paid frequent visits to their houses. I remember meeting Dr. Bradley once or twice in the later years of his life, but after his death we continued to visit his family, of which Mrs. Bradley was then the head. The lady lived long after the death of her husband, and once she said to me, "I am old, and it matters little when I die. Only one thing weighs on my mind and it is that the King of Siam is not a Christian yet. When he is converted, I shall die happy." I must confess that, being young, I felt amused at the time, but subsequent reflection convinced me of the most earnest good will on her part.

Apart from the Bradleys, the McFarlands were a family with whom I was on terms of friendship from my youth. After leaving school, I became an officer of the King's Bodyguard and accompanied His Majesty on most of his trips into the country. At Bejraburi I met the McFarlands for the first time. Dr. S. G. McFarland was in charge of the Mission in that town, and with him I visited the mission schools for boys and girls, little thinking that we would, in time to come, become colleagues

in the same Government Department. Some years after, when I was in charge of the Department of Education, Dr. McFarland served as headmaster in a Government School under the direction of my department. The doctor impressed me, as he impressed all who came into contact with him, by his excellent pronunciation of our language. To hear him speak without seeing him, we would not recognize the voice of a foreigner. Of the Europeans or Americans who have come to Siam, many study the language of the country and know it very well, but I have not met one with a pronunciation superior to that of Dr. S. G. McFarland.

Other missionaries I met in that day were, among others, Dr. House, Dr. N. A. McDonald, Dr. Dean and Dr. D. McGilvary. With the last named I came into contact again later, when, having become Minister of the Interior, I visited Chiengmai during the course of my inspection of the provinces, and there renewed the friendship which had started many years before.

My acquaintance with the missionaries began, as above stated, in my boyhood. As I came to know more of them, I began to learn the value of their work. Many of the American missionaries, notably Dr. MacDonald, Dr. Chandler and a son of Dr. Bradley, acted as English interpreters to the Government. As A. D. C. to King Chulalongkorn, it was my duty to attend on His Majesty at private audiences granted to foreigners, and it was such occasions which increased my friendship with the missionaries who came to interpret. The King understood English, but did not care to speak it. The interpreters knew this, and usually remained silent when a foreign



PRINCE DAMRONG ADDRESSING THE LEPERS AT CHIENGMAI ASYLUM

visitor spoke to the King, only translating H. M.'s words each time he spoke. There was, however, an interpreter who did his work conscientiously, and tried to translate everything said in English into Siamese, and vice versa. The careful interpreter was Dr. Chandler, who always spoke Siamese with the utmost deliberation, and in spite of his thorough knowledge of our language, took more time to utter a sentence than any other one I have met. It was amusing when Dr. Chandler, having got half-way with his translation from English into Siamese, the King started to reply, and the interpreter had to stop his translation to the king and begin translating His Majesty's words to his guest.

When I was appointed to take charge of the education of the country, it was necessary for me to pay greater attention to the work of the American missionaries. In Siam the work of imparting knowledge in the vernacular has always been entrusted to the Buddhist

monks, who have from time immemorial instructed the youths of the country. But the teaching of a European language and other forms of education based on such language had been introduced by the American missionaries (the Catholics had not yet started the Assumption College). For the immediate future, education in Siam, as I saw it, depended not alone on continuing to utilize the services of the monks but also in enlisting the aid of the missionaries. Would it be possible, considering the divergence of their religious points of view, to induce the two classes of people to cooperate so far as the temporal education of the youths of the country was concerned. It behooved me, as organizer of a new system of education, to study the work of the missionaries.

The primary object of the establishment of the American Missions in this country is, of course, the propagation of the Christian faith. But while the aim is common to all Missions, methods ap-