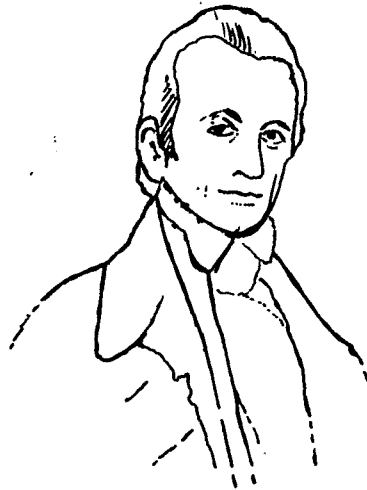


On January 17, 1813, missionaries Adoniram Judson, Luther Rice, others, and their wives arrived at Port Louis aboard the *Créole*. Sent by the *American Baptist Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to Burma, the missionaries familiarized themselves with the French language prior to disembarking in Mauritius.

It is recorded that they worked tirelessly among the soldiers; as well as among the sick in the hospital at *Port Louis*. Unfortunately, slave-holding Mauritius at the time was opposed to evangelizing and instructing the slaves. On May 7th, 1813, after three months' fruitful work, they departed aboard *The Countess of Harcourt* for Burma.

It is said that Judson's sermons abounded in word-pictures, which take the taste of the Eastern mind. Historically captured for us, is this account:

When he preached, every hearer sat motionless, every eye was fixed immovably upon the preacher, and every countenance seemed to change with every varied expression of sentiment; now beaming forth joy as though some joyous news from the other world had just reached them, which before had never gladdened their hearts; now depicting a feeling of anxiety, as though their immortal all, or that of their friends, was at stake; and next showing a deep solemnity, as though standing before their final Judge.¹



Adoniram Judson



Ann Hasseltine Judson

A visitor recounted the following, "though I did not know the meaning of a single sentence he uttered, still my attention was never before more closely riveted on any sermon I ever heard. It was impossible to escape the conviction that his whole soul was in his work."

In 1828, Judson, after labouring many years with little success, heard of the *Karens* deep in the interior of Burma. He encountered one, KO THA BYA, a 50-year-old slave, who, as a youth, had been vicious and brutal, and as a man had killed 30 men with his own hands. Judson paid his ransom and took him into his own home. This blasphemer was soon sitting clothed and in his right mind, his darkened understanding lightened by the story of the cross of Christ. He was baptized, and going immediately



*Ordination of 1812 in Tabernacle Church,
Massachusetts*



Sailing of the "Caravan"

to his own nation to preach, found a people ready for the Lord. For 12 years he laboured among the 600,000 *Karens*; whole villages being converted. Soon there were tens of thousands of native Christians, besides those added to the church of the redeemed in heaven. "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God," was Judson's established spiritual order. The governing principles of his daily life were:

- I. Be diligent in secret prayer, every morning and evening.
- II. Never spend a moment in mere idleness.
- III. Restrain natural appetites within the bounds of temperance and purity.
- IV. Suppress every emotion of anger and ill-will.
- V. Undertake nothing from motives of ambition or love of fame.
- VI. Never do that which, at the moment, appears to be displeasing to God.
- VII. Seek opportunities of making some sacrifice for the good of others, especially of believers, provided the sacrifice is not inconsistent with some duty.
- VIII. Endeavour to rejoice in every loss and suffering incurred for Christ's sake and the Gospel's, remembering that though likely they are not to be wilfully incurred, yet, like death, they are a great gain.
- IX. Rise with the sun.
- X. Read a certain portion of Burman every day, Sundays excepted.
- XI. Have the Scriptures and some devotional book in constant reading.
- XII. Read one book in English that has not a devotional tendency.
- XIII. Suppress every unclean thought or look.



After hearing Judson's petition that all Christians might be exempt from molestation, the Emperor disdainfully threw it to the ground

God give me grace to keep the above rules and ever live to His glory, for
Jesus Christ's sake.

- Adoniram Judson



The arrest of Mr. Judson

Judson's translation of the New Testament

The story of the preservation of Adoniram Judson's translation of the New Testament of the Bible into Burman, is a story of great wonder. The manuscript was taken to Ava. When Dr. Judson was thrown into prison, it was secretly sewed up by his wife, who was driven away by the jailers from the prison door, and she gave him the bundle which she had made into the form of a cushion, too hard and unsightly to tempt even his jailers. It was used by the prisoner as a pillow. After 7 months, he and his fellow-sufferers were rudely thrust into the inner prison, and the old pillow fell to one of the jailers. Finding it too hard for his use, he threw it back, and it fell once again into its owner's hands. When Judson was marched from one prison to another over the blood-tracked way, it was lost. Stripped of the mat which was tied about it, the roll of hard cotton containing the paper was again flung back into prison. Here it was found by a disciple, MOUNG ING, who took it home as a memorial of his teacher, without suspecting its priceless contents. Several months later, the manuscript, which now forms part of the Burmese Old and New Testament Bible, was found intact and undamaged.²

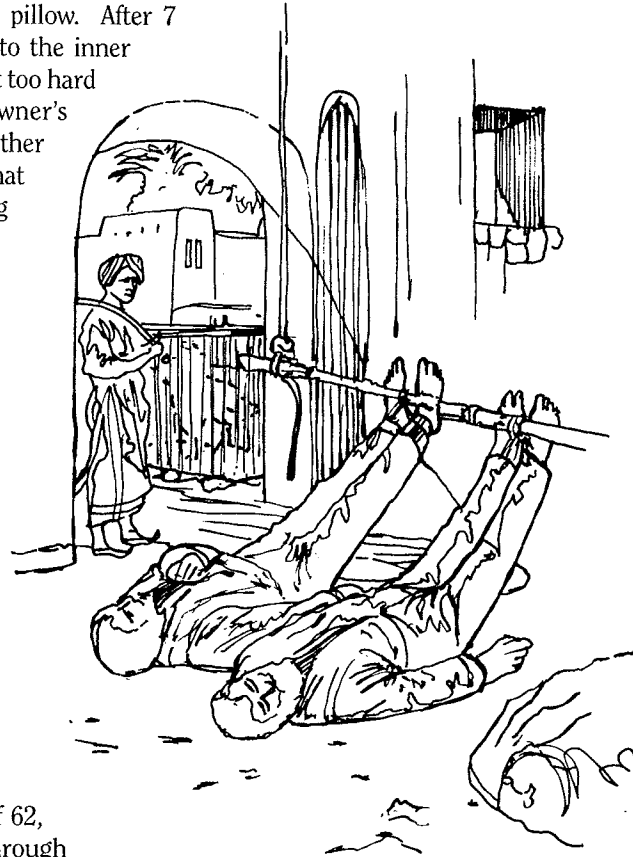
The table upon which Judson wrote his translation is preserved in a room of the *New York Bible Society*.³

On October 1st, 1841, Adoniram Judson returned to Mauritius on board the *Ramsay*, preaching the Gospel each Sunday on board ship, until their departure on November 1st, 1841.

A last trip to Mauritius was made by the Judsons on July 5th, 1845 on board *The Paragon*.

This great missionary died at sea in 1850 at the age of 62, having spent 37 years bringing the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ to Burma, as well as to Mauritius.

The month of March, 1838 saw another group of missionaries disembarking in Mauritius. Their historic visit with the Governor, Sir William Nicolay, and their subsequent meeting with "a little company of Christians" is described in detail:



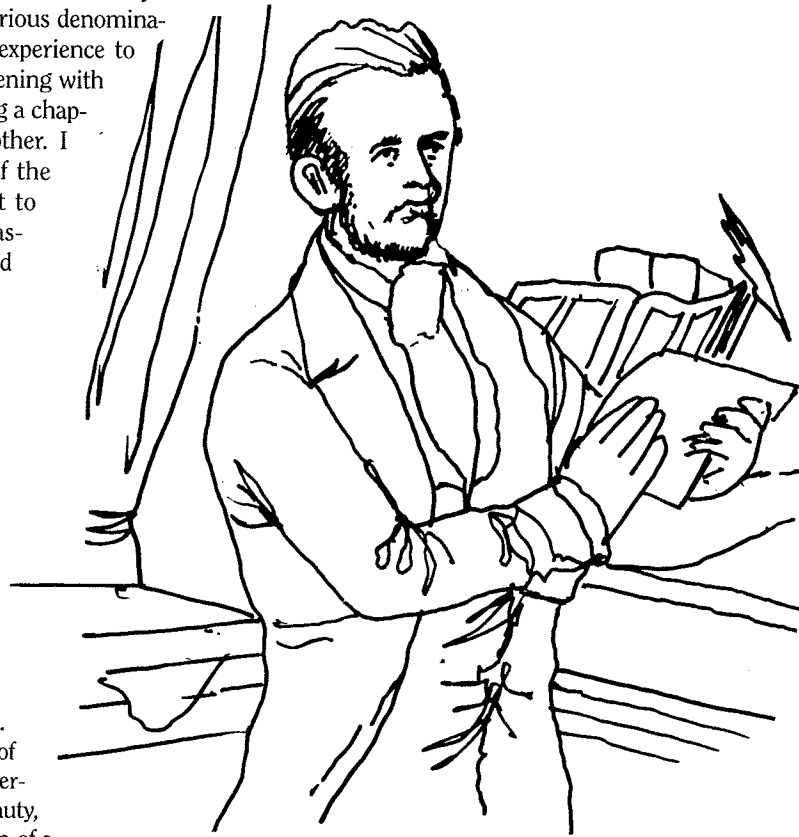
DR. JUDSON IN A BURMESE PRISON

...12th. We returned to *Port Louis*, and according to previous appointment, called upon the Colonial Secretary, who introduced us to Sir William Nicolay, the Governor of the Mauritius and the numerous little islands which are its dependencies, some of which are nearly 1,500 miles distant.

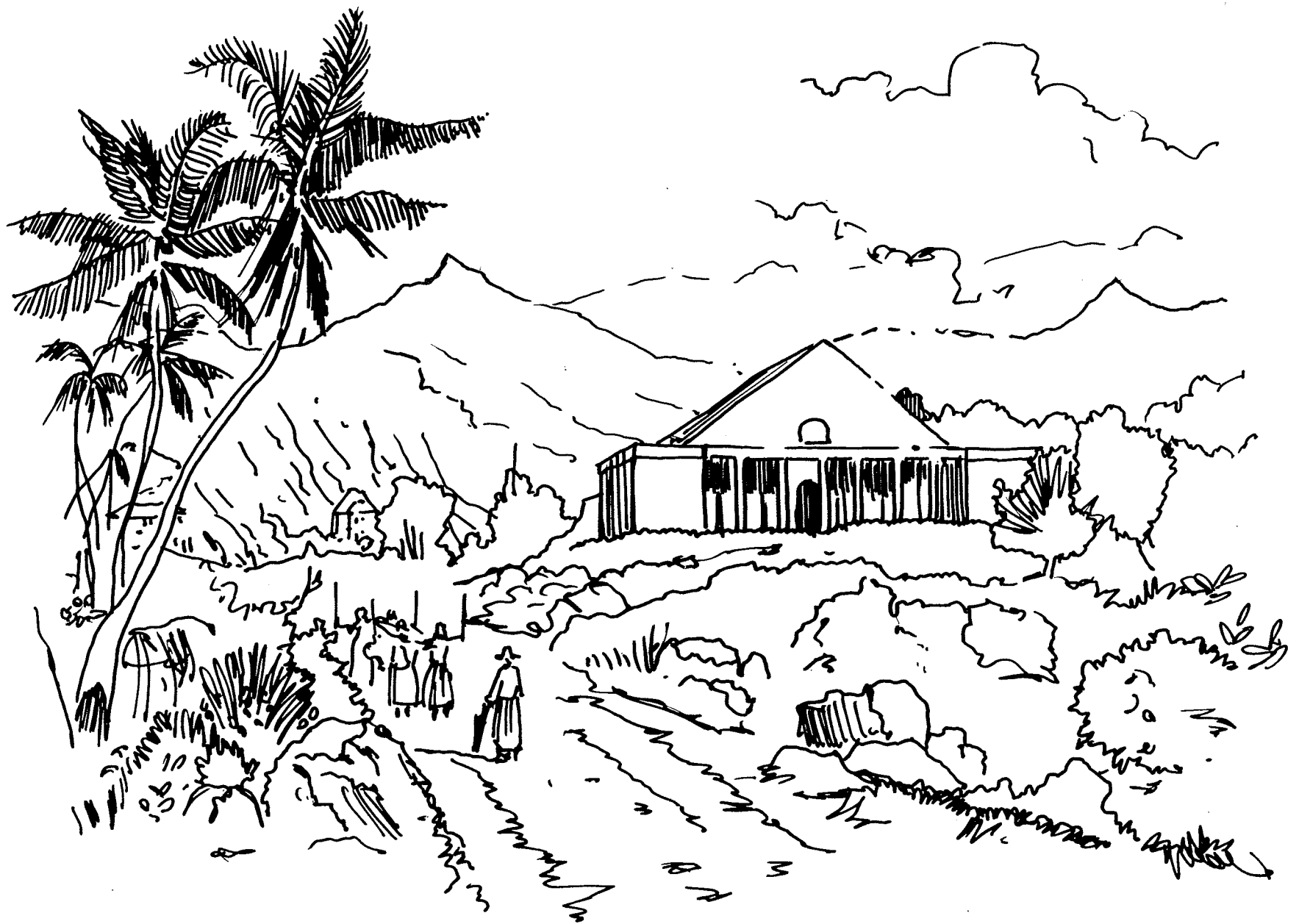
The Governor received us courteously, and read my certificate from the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders of our Society, in London. We presented to him a petition, to be allowed to land our books, &c. free of duty. We took tea with a little company of Christians, of various denominations, varying also in the measure of light and experience to which each had attained, and spent a pleasant evening with them. The visit was closed by one of them reading a chapter of Isaiah, and by a devout prayer uttered by another. I also addressed them, acknowledging the sense of the Divine presence, and extending encouragement to them, in connection with the revival of the passage, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."⁴

T. Bradshaw Esq.'s 1832 book, entitled *Views in the Mauritius, or l'Isle de France...*, and dedicated to His Majesty King William IV, gives the following interesting description of *The Protestant Church*, Port Louis:

The building appropriated to Divine Service, of which a view is here given, was originally a powder magazine, built under the French Government; it has been fitted up with a pulpit, reading desk and pews for the purpose, though in its external appearance, when this view was taken, there was nothing to indicate that it was a place of worship. The building is of great strength: its walls are of immense thickness, on which account it is always perfectly cool. It has no pretensions to architectural beauty, but it was very unobtrusive until the recent addition of a tower and steeple, which must be so out of keeping with the tower and the structure, that, although it may fail to excite admiration, it cannot escape notice. It is however said that, if the appearance of the church itself has gained nothing by this addition, it has much improved the view of the town from the harbour, which no doubt is the case. On the establishment of the Colony there are two Protestant clergymen, a civil and a garrison chaplain. The background of this view is, of necessity, nearly a repetition of that which occurs in one of the views of the town, the "Pouce" in the centre, and the adjoining range stretching to the N.W.; part of the latter is enveloped in low clouds, which, upon the clearing away of storms that during the hot season are of almost daily occurrence, are generally left resting upon the mountains, until dispelled by the returning north-easterly breeze...



*Judson with the last leaf
of the Burman Bible*



*The Protestant Church, Port Louis
Taken from T. Bradshaw's 1832 drawing*

Copyright 2002 by Catherine Millard