

Advice to Missionary Candidates

Adoniram Judson

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Advice to Missionary Candidates

To the Foreign Missionary Association of the Hamilton Literary and Theological Institution, N. Y.

DEAR BRETHREN: Yours of November last, from the pen of your Corresponding Secretary, Mr. William Dean, is before me. It is one of the few letters that I feel called upon to answer, for you ask my advice on several important points. There is, also, in the sentiments you express, something so congenial to my own, that I feel my heart knit to the members of your association, and instead of commonplace reply, am desirous of setting down a few items which may be profitable to you in your future course. Brief items they must be, for want of time forbids my expatiating.

In commencing my remarks, I take you as you are. You are contemplating a missionary life.

First, then, let it be a missionary life; that is, come out for life, and not for a limited term. Do not fancy that you have a true missionary spirit, while you are intending all along to leave the heathen soon after acquiring their language. Leave them! for what? To spend the rest of your days in enjoying the ease and plenty of your native land?

Secondly. In choosing a companion for life, have particular regard to a good constitution, and not wantonly, or without good cause, bring a burden on yourselves and the mission.

Thirdly. Be not ravenous to do good on board ship. Missionaries have frequently done more hurt than good, by injudicious zeal, during their passage out.

Fourthly. Take care that the attention you receive at home, the unfavorable circumstances in which you will be placed on board ship, and the unmissionary examples you may possibly meet with at some missionary stations, do not transform you from living missionaries to mere skeletons before you reach the place of your destination. It may be profitable to bear in mind, that a large proportion of those who come out on a mission to the East die within five years after leaving their native land. Walk softly, therefore; death is narrowly watching your steps.

Fifthly. Beware of the reaction which will take place soon after reaching your field of labor. There you will perhaps find native Christians, of whose merits or demerits you can not judge correctly without some familiar acquaintance with their language. Some appearances will combine to disappoint and disgust you. You will meet with disappointments and discouragements, of which it is impossible to form a correct idea from written accounts, and which will lead you, at first, almost to regret that you have embarked in the cause. You will see men and women whom you have been accustomed to view through a telescope some thousands of miles long. Such an instrument is apt to magnify. Beware, therefore, of the reaction you will experience from a combination of all these causes, lest you become disheartened at commencing your work, or take up a prejudice against some persons and places, which will embitter all your future lives.

Sixthly. Beware of the greater reaction which will take place after you have acquired the language, and become fatigued and worn out with preaching the gospel to a disobedient and gainsaying people. You will sometimes

long for a quiet retreat, where you can find a respite from the tug of toiling at native work -- the incessant, intolerable friction of the missionary grindstone. And Satan will sympathize with you in this matter; and he will present some chapel of ease, in which to officiate in your native tongue, some government situation, some professorship or editorship, some literary or scientific pursuit, some supernumerary translation, or, at least, some system of schools; anything, in a word, that will help you, without much surrender of character, to slip out of real missionary work. Such a temptation will form the crisis of your disease. If your spiritual constitution can sustain it, you recover; if not, you die.

Seventhly. Beware of pride; not the pride of proud men, but the pride of humble men -- that secret pride which is apt to grow out of the consciousness that we are esteemed by the great and good. This pride sometimes eats out the vitals of religion before its existence is suspected. In order to check its operations, it may be well to remember how we appear in the sight of God, and how we should appear in the sight of our fellow-men, if all were known. Endeavor to let all be known. Confess your faults freely, and as publicly as circumstances will require or admit. When you have done something of which you are ashamed, and by which, perhaps, some person has been injured (and what man is exempt?), be glad not only to make reparation, but improve the opportunity for subduing your pride.

Eighthly. Never lay up money for yourselves or your families. Trust in God from day to day, and verily you shall be fed.

Ninthly. Beware of that indolence which leads to a neglect of bodily exercise. The poor health and premature death of most Europeans in the East must be eminently ascribed to the most wanton neglect of bodily exercise.

Tenthly. Beware of genteel living. Maintain as little intercourse as possible with fashionable European society. The mode of living adopted by many missionaries in the East is quite inconsistent with that familiar intercourse with the natives which is essential to a missionary.

There are many points of self-denial that I should like to touch upon; but a consciousness of my own deficiency constrains me to be silent. I have also left untouched several topics of vital importance, it having been my aim to select such only as appear to me to have been not much noticed or enforced. I hope you will excuse the monitorial style that I have accidentally adopted. I assure you, I mean no harm.

In regard to your inquiries concerning studies, qualifications, etc., nothing occurs that I think would be particularly useful, except the simple remark, that I fear too much stress begins to be laid on what is termed a thorough classical education.

Praying that you may be guided in all your deliberations, and that I may yet have the pleasure of welcoming some of you to these heathen shores, I remain

Your affectionate brother,

A. JUDSON

Maulmain, June 25, 1832

Autobiographical Record of Dates and Events by Adoniram Judson

Adoniram Judson, senior, was born at Woodbury, Connecticut, June, 1752, the youngest son of Elnathan and Mary Judson, and was married Nov. 23, 1786, to Abigail Brown, who was born at Tiverton, Rhode Island, Dec. 15, 1759, the eldest daughter of Abraham and Abigail Brown.

1788 | Aug. 9, Adoniram Judson, junior, was born at Malden, Massachusetts

1791 | March 21, Abigail Brown Judson was born at Malden, Mass.

1793 | Jan. 10, the family removed to Wenham, Mass.

1794 | May 28, Elnathan Judson was born at Wenham.

1796 | Feb. 18, Mary Ellice Judson was born at Wenham.

1796 | Sept. 12, Mary Ellice Judson died, aged 6 months and 24 days.

1800 | May 22, the family removed to Braintree, Mass.

1802 | May 11, removed to Plymouth, Mass.

1804 | Aug. 17, Adoniram Judson, junior, entered Providence College, subsequently Brown University, one year in advance.

1807 | Feb. 23, closed a school of thirty pupils, taught six weeks in Plymouth.

1807 | April 30, received the highest appointment in the ensuing commencement exercises of the class -- an appointment to pronounce the last English oration, and the valedictory addresses.

1807 | Sept. 2, received the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

1807 | Sept. 17, opened a private academy in Plymouth.

1808 | Feb. 25, completed "The Elements of English Grammar."

1808 | July 28, completed "The Young Lady's Arithmetic."

1808 | Aug. 9, closed the "Plymouth Independent Academy."

1808 | Aug. 15, set out on a tour through the Northern States.

1808 | Sept. 22, returned to Plymouth.

1808 | Sept. 29, became an assistant teacher in a private academy in Boston.

1808 | Oct. 12, entered the Theological Institution at Andover, Mass. one year in advance.

1808 | Nov., began to entertain hope of having received the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit.

1808 | Dec. 2, made a solemn dedication of himself to God.

1809 | May 28, made a public profession of religion, and joined the Third Congregational Church in Plymouth.

1809 | June, received an appointment to a tutorship in Brown University, but declined it.

1809 | Sept., read Buchanan's "Star in the East," and began to consider the subject of missions.

1810 | Feb., resolved on becoming a missionary to the heathen.

1810 | May 17, received a license to preach from the Orange Association of Ministers in Vermont.

1810 | June 28, united with Messrs. Nott, Newell, and Mills, in submitting to the General Association of Ministers, convened at Bradford, Mass., a statement of views and desires on the subject of missions, which originated the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

1810 | July 28, commenced an acquaintance with Ann Hasseltine.

1810 | Sept. 5, received the degree of Master of Arts from Brown University.

1810 | Sept. 24, completed my course of study at the Theological Institution.

1811 | Jan. 11, embarked at Boston on the ship Packet, bound to Liverpool, to visit the London Missionary Society.

1811 | Feb. 2, the ship was taken by the French privateer, L'Invincible Napoleon, and myself, passengers and crew transferred to the privateer.

1811 | Feb. 15, put in at Le Passage, in Spain.

1811 | Feb. 23, was conveyed to Bayonne, in France, where, after a short imprisonment, I was permitted to remain at large.

1811 | April 16, arrived in Paris.

1811 | May 3, crossed the English Channel from Morlaix to Dartmouth.

1811 | May 6, arrived in London.

1811 | May, June, visited the Missionary Seminary at Gosport.

1811 | June 18, embarked at Gravesend, on the ship Augustus, bound to New York.

1811 | Aug. 7, arrived in New York.

1811 | Sept. 19, was appointed by the American Board of Commissioners a missionary to the East, in company with Messrs. Nott, Newell, and Hall.

1812 | Feb. 3, took a final leave of my parents in Plymouth.

1812 | Feb. 5, was married to Ann Hasseltine, born at Bradford, Mass., Dec. 22, 1789, the youngest daughter of John and Rebecca Hasseltine.

1812 | Feb. 6, received ordination at Salem, in company with Messrs. Nott, Newell, Hall, and Rice, from the Rev. Drs. Spring, Worcester, Woods, Morse, and Griffin.

1812 | Feb. 7, took a final leave of my sister and brother in Boston.

1812 | Feb. 19, embarked at Salem, with Mrs. Judson and Mr. and Mrs. Newell, on the brig Caravan, Capt. Heard, bound to Calcutta.

1812 | June 17, arrived in Calcutta.

1812 | Aug. 8, Messrs. Nott, Hall, and Rice, with Mrs. Nott, arrived in the ship Harmony, from Philadelphia.

1812 | Sept. 1, announced to the Secretary of the A. B. C. F. M. my change of sentiment on the subject of baptism.

1812 | Sept. 6, was baptized in Calcutta, with Mrs. Judson, by the Rev. Mr. Ward.

1812 | Nov. 1, Mr. Rice, on a similar change of sentiment, received baptism.

1812 | Nov. 30, fled from the arrest of the East India Company's government, and embarked privately with Mrs. Judson and Mr. Rice, on the ship Belle Creole, bound to Port Louis, Isle of France.

1813 | Jan. 17, arrived in Port Louis.

1813 | March 15, Mr. Rice took passage for America.

1813 | April 1, completed the sermon on "Christian Baptism."

1813 | May 7, embarked at Port Louis with Mrs. Judson on the ship Countess of Harcourt, bound to Madras.

1813 | June 4, arrived in Madras.

1813 | June 22, embarked with Mrs. Judson on the ship Georgiana, bound to Rangoon, in Burmah.

1813 | July 13, arrived in Rangoon, and joined the mission conducted by Felix Carey.

1814 | Aug. 20, Mr. Carey and family removed to Ava, and soon after seceded from the mission.

1815 | Jan. 25, Mrs. Judson embarked for Madras, to obtain medical advice.

1815 | April 13, returned with Emily Vansomerén, to be brought up in the family.

1815 | Sept. 5, received information of the establishment of the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions in March, 1814, and their appointment of me their missionary.

1815 | Sept. 11, Roger Williams Judson was born in Rangoon.

1816 | May 4, Roger Williams Judson died, aged 7 months and 23 days.

1816 | July 13, completed "Grammatical Notices of the Burman Language."

1816 | July 20, completed Tract No. 1 in Burman, being a view of the Christian Religion, in three parts, Historical, Didactic, Preceptive.

1816 | Oct. 15, Mr. Hough and family arrived and joined the mission.

1817 | May 20, completed a Burman translation of the Gospel of Matthew.

1817 | May 22, began to compile a Burman dictionary.

1817 | Aug., wrote "A Letter to the 3d Church in Plymouth, Mass.," on the subject of baptism.

1817 | Dec. 24, embarked at Rangoon, on the ship Two Brothers, bound to Chittagong.

1818 | Jan. 26, the ship's destination was changed from Chittagong to Madras.

1818 | March 18, landed at Masulipatam.

1818 | April 8, arrived in Madras by land -- distance 300 miles.

1818 | July 20, left Madras.

1818 | Aug. 4, arrived in Rangoon.

1818 | Sept. 19, Messrs. Colman and Wheelock and wives arrived and joined the mission.

1818 | Nov. 1, Mr. Hough and family departed from Bengal.

1819 | April 4, commenced public worship in the Burman language.

1819 | April 25, commenced occupying a public zayat.

1819 | May, wrote "A Letter, Relative to the Formal and Solemn Reprimand."

1819 | June 27, baptized MOUNG NAU, the first Burman convert.

1819 | July 29, completed a revision and enlargement of Tract No. 1, and a revision of Tract No. 2, being a Catechism in Burman by Mrs. Judson.

1819 | August 7, Mr. and Mrs. Wheelock departed for Bengal.

1819 | Nov. 30, completed a revision of the sermon on Christian Baptism, for fourth edition.

1819 | Dec. 21, left Rangoon on a visit to Ava, in company with Mr. Colman.

1820 | January 27, appeared before the king, and was refused liberty to propagate religion in his dominions.

1820 | Feb. 18, returned to Rangoon.

1820 | March 27, Mr. and Mrs. Colman embarked for Arracan.

1820 | July 18, baptized the tenth Burman convert.

1820 | July 19, embarked with Mrs. Judson for Calcutta.

1820 | Aug. 18, arrived in Calcutta.

1820 | Nov. 23, embarked with Mrs. Judson for Rangoon.

1821 | Jan. 5, arrived in Rangoon.

1821 | Aug. 21, Mrs. Judson and Emily embarked for Bengal, and ultimately America.

1821 | Dec. 13, Dr. Price and family arrived and joined the mission.

1822 | Jan. 20, Mr. Hough and family returned.

1822 | May 2, Mrs. Price died.

1822 | Aug. 21, baptized the eighteenth Burman convert.

1822 | Aug. 28, left Rangoon on a visit to Ava, in company with Dr. Price.

1822 | Sept. 27, arrived in Ava.

1823 | Feb. 2, returned to Rangoon.

1823 | July 12, completed the translation of the New Testament in Burmese, together with an epitome of the Old.

1823 | Dec. 5, Mrs. Judson returned to Rangoon.

1823 | Dec. 13, left Rangoon for Ava, in company with Mrs. Judson.

1824 | Jan. 23, arrived in Ava.

1824 | June 8, was fettered and imprisoned by the king's order, in consequence of war with Bengal.

1825 | Jan. 26, Maria Elizabeth Butterworth Judson was born in Ava.

1825 | May 2, was removed from the king's prison in Ava to the prison in Oung-pen-la, a few miles distant.

1825 | Nov. 5, was taken out of irons and reconducted to Ava.

1825 | Nov. 7, was sent under guard to Maloon, the headquarters of the Burmese army, to act as interpreter.

1825 | Dec. 17, was sent away from Maloon, in consequence of the advance of the British army from Prome.

1825 | Dec. 29, reached Ava and was recommitted to prison.

1825 | Dec. 30, was released from prison and put under charge of the North Commandant of the palace.

1826 | Feb. 21, left Ava, with Mrs. Judson and Maria, for the British camp at Yantabo.

1826 | Feb. 24, the treaty of peace was signed by the British and Burman Commissioners.

1826 | March 6, left Yantabo for Rangoon on the Irrawaddy gun-boat.

1826 | March 21, arrived in Rangoon.

1826 | March 31, left Rangoon, on a visit to Martaban, with the Civil Commissioner, Mr. Crawford.

1826 | April 6, landed at Hyaikamee, where the Commissioner selected the site of a new town to be called Amherst.

1826 | April 10, arrived in Rangoon from Amherst.

1826 | June 29, embarked with Mrs. Judson and family on the Phoenix, bound to Amherst.

1826 | July 2, arrived in Amherst.

1826 | July 5, left Mrs. Judson and family at Amherst, and re-embarked on the Phoenix for Rangoon.

1826 | July 9, arrived in Rangoon.

1826 | Sept. 1, left Rangoon for Ava with the Envoy, Mr. Crawford.

1826 | Sept. 30, arrived in Ava.

1826 | Oct. 28, the Embassy removed to Chagaing.

1826 | Nov. 24, heard the news of Mrs. Judson's death at Amherst, Oct. 24, 1826, in the 37th year of her age.

1826 | Dec. 12, left Chagaing on return to Rangoon and Amherst.

1827 | Jan. 24, arrived in Amherst, and joined the family of Mr. and Mrs. Wade, who arrived Nov. 23, 1826.

1827 | April 17, Mr. and Mrs. Boardman arrived in Amherst.

1827 | April, 24, Maria died at Amherst, aged 2 years and 3 months.

1827 | May 28, Mr. and Mrs. Boardman removed to Maulmain.

1827 | July 11, heard of the death of my father, Rev. Adoniram Judson, senior, at Scituate, Mass., Nov. 25, 1826, in the 75th year of his age.

1827 | August 10, and 11, left Amherst and joined the Boardmans at Maulmain.

1827 | Nov. 14, Mr. and Mrs. Wade also and the native Christians removed to Maulmain.

1827 | Dec. 28, finished translating thirty psalms, begun July 16.

1828 | Jan. 11, commenced occupying a public zayat in Maulmain.

1828 | March 29, Mr. and Mrs. Boardman removed to Tavoy.

1828 | May 9, renounced the title of D.D., conferred on me by the corporation of Brown University, Sept., 1823.

1828 | May 29, gave away my private property to the Board.

1828 | Oct. 24, removed to the Hermitage.

1829 | Feb., wrote "The Threefold Cord" in English.

1829 | March, wrote "The Golden Balance," Tract No. 3, in Burmese.

1829 | Nov. 14, finished revising the New Testament, the epitome of the Old, and the Septenary, or Seven Manuals, in Burmese.

1829 | Dec. 15, heard of the death of my brother, Dr. Elnathan Judson, at Washington, D. C., May 8, 1829, aged 35 years.

1830 | Jan. 14, Mr. and Mrs. Bennett arrived in Maulmain.

1830 | Feb. 21, Mr. and Mrs. Wade removed to Rangoon.

1830 | April 26, left Maulmain.

1830 | May 2, arrived in Rangoon.

1830 | June 11, arrived in Prome.

1830 | Sept. 25, returned to Rangoon.

1831 | July 19, finished the translation of Genesis, twenty chapters of Exodus, Psalms, Solomon's Song, Isaiah and Daniel.

1831 | July 31, arrived in Maulmain from Rangoon.

1831 | Oct., wrote the Letter on Female Dress.

1832 | May 21, retired to the rooms adjoining the native chapel, with a view to prosecuting [pursuing until finished] the translation of the Old Testament.

1832 | Nov. 27, Mr. and Mrs. Wade sailed for America.

1832 | Dec. 15, sent to press the last sheet of the New Testament in Burmese.

1833 | Jan. 1, Mr. and Mrs. Hancock and others arrived from America.

1833 | Sept. 8, baptized the one hundredth Karen convert north of Maulmain, the first fourteen of whom were baptized by Mr. Wade.

1834 | Jan. 31, finished the translation of the Old Testament.

1834 | April 1, left Maulmain for Tavoy.

1834 | April 10, was married to Mrs. Sarah H. Boardman, who was born at Alstead, New Hampshire, Nov. 4, 1803, the eldest daughter of Ralph and Abiah O. Hall; married to George D. Boardman, July 4, 1825, left a widow Feb. 11, 1831, with one surviving child, George D. Boardman, born Aug. 18, 1828.

1834 | April 16, arrived in Maulmain from Tavoy.

1834 | Dec. 7, the Cashmere arrived from America, with Mr. and Mrs. Wade, Mr. and Mrs. Osgood, and several other new missionaries.

1834 | Dec. 13, George D. Boardman embarked on the Cashmere for America.

1835 | Jan. 4, the Wades removed from Maulmain to Tavoy.

1835 | Sept. 26, finished the revision of the Old Testament.

1835 | Oct. 31, Abby Ann Judson was born in Maulmain.

1835 | Nov. 29, baptized the one hundredth member of the Burman Church in Maulmain.

1835 | Dec. 29, sent to press the last sheet of the Old Testament.

1836 | Feb. 21, the Louvre arrived from America with Mr. Malcom, agent of the Board, and several new missionaries.

1836 | May 23, moved into the new chapel.

1836 | Nov., visited the Tavoy station in company with Mrs. Judson and Mrs. Vinton.

1837 | Jan. 31, finished a new revision of the New Testament.

1837 | March 22, sent to press the last sheet of the revised New Testament.

1837 | April 7, Adoniram Brown Judson was born in Maulmain.

1837 | April 30, Mr. and Mrs. Howard arrived from Rangoon, and joined the Maulmain station.

1837 | Nov. 18, finished "A Digest of Scripture," in Burmese.

1837 | Nov. 27, the Hancocks removed from Maulmain to Mergui.

1838 | Feb. 19, Mr. and Mrs. Stevens arrived from America, and joined the Maulmain station.

1838 | July 15, Elnathan Judson was born in Maulmain.

1839 | Feb. 19, embarked for Calcutta.

1839 | March 9, arrived in Calcutta.

1839 | March 30, embarked for Maulmain.

1839 | April 13, arrived in Maulmain.

1839 | Oct. 27, began to preach in the native chapel,
after an interval of ten months.

1839 | Dec. 31, Henry Judson was born in Maulmain.

1840 | Oct. 24, finished the revision of the quarto edition
of the Burmese Bible.

1841 | March 8, Luther Judson was still-born.

1841 | June 26, embarked with Mrs. Judson and family
for Bengal, on account of their health.

1841 | July 11, arrived in Bengal.

1841 | July 30, Henry Judson died at Serampore, aged 1
year, [7] months.

1841 | Aug. 16, embarked with my family on the Ramsay,
Capt. Hamlin, bound to the Isle of France.

1841 | Oct. 1, arrived at Port Louis.

1841 | Nov. 1, re-embarked on the Ramsay for
Maulmain.

1841 | Dec. 10, arrived in Maulmain.

1842 | Feb. 23, moved into the new house.

1842 | July 8, Henry Hall Judson was born in Maulmain.

1842 | Aug. 29, heard of the death of my mother at
Plymouth, Mass., Jan. 31, 1842, in the eighty-third year
of her age.

1843 | Dec. 18, Charles Judson was born in Maulmain.

1844 | Dec. 27, Edward Judson was born in Maulmain.

1845 | Feb. 15, Mrs. Judson left Maulmain on a voyage down the coast, for the benefit of her health.

1845 | April 3, Mrs. Judson returned.

1845 | April 26, embarked with Mrs. Judson and the three elder children on the Paragon, bound to London.

1845 | May 3, sailed from Amherst.

1845 | July 5, arrived from Port Louis in the Isle of France.

1845 | July 23, embarked on the Sophia Walker, Capt. Codman, bound to the United States.

1845 | July 25, sailed from Port Louis.

1845 | Aug. 26, arrived at St. Helena.

1845 | Sept. 1, Mrs. Judson died at 3 A.M., was buried at 6 P.M., and we sailed from St. Helena in the evening.

1845 | Oct. 15, arrived in Boston.

1845 | Nov. 13, parted with my children, leaving Adoniram and Elnathan at Worcester, and sending Abby Ann to Plymouth.

1845 | Nov. 28, heard of the death of little Charlie at Maulmain, August 5, 1845, aged 1 year and 7 ½ months.

1846 | Jan. 5, commenced an acquaintance with Emily Chubbuck.

1846 | April 6, removed Abby Ann from Plymouth to Bradford.

1846 | June 2, was married at Hamilton, New York, to Emily Chubbuck, born at Eaton, New York, Aug. 22, 1817, the daughter of Charles and Lavinia Chubbuck.

1846 | July 4, took leave of Adoniram and Elnathan at Worcester.

1846 | July 9, took leave of Abby Ann at Bradford.

1846 | July 11, took leave of George D. Boardman, the Lincoln families, the Colbys, the Gillettes, Anne Maria Anable, and numberless other friends, and embarked with Mrs. Judson, Miss Lillybridge, the Beechers, and the Harrises, on the ship Faneuil Hall, Capt. Hallet, bound to Maulmain.

1846 | Nov. 30, arrived in Maulmain.

1847 | Feb. 15, embarked with my family for Rangoon.

1847 | June 1, Mrs. Judson finished the memoir of the late Mrs. Judson [Sarah Boardman]

1847 | Aug. 31, re-embarked for Maulmain.

1847 | Sept. 5, arrived in Maulmain

1847 | Dec. 24, Emily Frances Judson was born in Maulmain.

1848 | Feb. 25, removed into the old house.

1849 | Jan. 24, finished the English and Burmese dictionary.