

Comment on the Visit to Burma of
Lord & Lady Chelmsford, Viceroy & Vicereine of India, 1916-1921.

The climax of our stay was reached when Lord Chelmsford, the viceroy of India, visited Rangoon, and the lieutenant governor invited us to an afternoon-tea in his honor. The pandal, or reception pavilion, erected at the dock where the viceroy landed and where he was received with a salute of thirty-one guns, had been filled that morning by the elite of Burman society, fifteen hundred in number, and the address of welcome had drawn from the viceroy a fitting response. All Rangoon was a wonder of decoration. Arches with Sarascenic domes built by the Moslems, pagodalike structures built by the Buddhists, Parsee towers, and Hindu temples, appeared at many street-crossings, and one long avenue was lined on either side with elevated rows of benches upon which were seated thousands of children from the schools. The viceroy passed in triumphal procession between files of soldiery, with cavalry for a body-guard and a dense mass of humanity thronging the sidewalks, looking on and cheering. At night, the streets and public buildings were brilliantly illuminated, and the great pagodas glittered like gems from top to bottom, encircled with rings of electric lights.

We reached the Government House, the scene of the afternoon lawn-tea, through clouds of dust raised by four lines of vehicles that struggled for precedence. At last we emerged in the grounds before the stately edifice where the lieutenant governor resides, and we were presented to Lord and Lady Chelmsford. The viceroy and his wife were simple and gracious in manner, and they made us feel that we were conferring as well as receiving honor. A group of forty dancing-girls, in antique Burmese costumes, were giving a performance on one part of the emerald lawn, while on another white-robed servants were setting before the guests all manner of refreshments. So, amid music and feasting, the day ended. With the oncoming darkness the viceroy and his lady retired to their apartment in the great government residence, at the same time the whole company joined in singing "God Save the King!" It was a striking close to our experiences in Burma, for fully half of the guests that day were Hindus and Mohammedans, each one of them arrayed in gorgeous garments and decorated in jewels. It left in our minds the fixed impression that the hold of Great Britain upon Burma and indeed upon all India is largely due to the Christian character of British rule, and that missionary work of evangelization and of education is to be given large credit for India's present universal loyalty to the British Crown.