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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

Tripocema.

By REV. J. HUNT COOKE.

1. WHAT THE ARMINIAN THINKS THE CALVINIST THINKS.

Ere God a single world had planned,
Or woke a thrill of light,
He chose the beings who should stand
For ever in His sight.
From out the coming human race
A certain few selected
Who only should receive His grace,
And I was one, elected.

For these the universe was built,
And sin allowed to reign.
Though they may plunge in streams of
guilt,
Their souls they cannot stain.
Whilst other souls, a mighty host,
In vain their high endeavour,
In righteous justice will be lost,
And dwell in darkness ever.

Such may seek favour to obtain
By pure and fragrant deeds,
And look to promises in vain;
Man's reason still misleads.
How dare a creature weak as I
With such a marvel wrestle?
The whole is one great mystery:
I am a chosen vessel.

2. WHAT THE CALVINIST THINKS THE ARMINIAN THINKS.

The Gospel trumpet soundeth still
In every land and nation,
For God can never tell who will
Accept His free salvation.
No plan hath He by His own might
His Kingdom to advance,
But calmly on His throne of light,
He waits and takes the chance.

And yet he yearns in mighty love
That souls may share His grace,
But sends no bias from above
To guide men to His face.
In my free will I sought the Cross,
The heavenly path discerning;
I press along and suffer loss,
A crown of glory earning.

And whilst such multitudes decline
To make the least endeavour,
I, who so strive, deserve to shine
A precious jewel ever.
Then sound the welcome full and free,
Nor let the voice be stilled,
Or Christ will ne'er rewarded be,
And heaven be never filled.

3. WHAT BOTH THE CALVINIST AND ARMINIAN THINK THEY THINK.

As one who climbs a mountain height,
In midnight darkness wending,
Joys in a flood of calm moonlight,
Through rifted clouds descending,
Which gives enough the path to guide,
But not for observation
Of lofty rocks on either side—
Just such is revelation.

On an eternal rock I build;
God knows and loves His own;
His purposes must be fulfilled:
Unchanging is His Throne.
And all His Spirit's power who feel,
In every land and nation,
Must far and wide proclaim with zeal
The Gospel invitation.

I know a great and wondrous plan.
All human actions guided,
But that a will is given to man
That ever free abideth.
Not in our present weak estate
Can we know all the story;
I simply trust, obey, and wait
The light of future glory.

Religious.

At Ease in Zion.

TO THE REVEREND LEVI PHILETUS DOBBS, D. D.

Honored Sir,—I know that you love to hear the story of the life-toil of those who, through a favoring Providence, have been able to do a great and good work for their fellow-men and for the precious cause. This be my apology for venturing into your revered presence. Let me go back to the very origin of my great and beneficent work.

I flatter myself I was endowed by nature with some fitness for the task to which, as will hereinafter appear, I was subsequently called. I had, I think, naturally, a good deal of faculty for setting people by the ears, and for making them long for a better world. How often have I heard my sainted mother say, when I was as it were in my cradle, "I wish to gracious I was dead!"

But for fear of appearing prolix, I

will pass on. Some years ago, I was favored with hearing a sermon from the text, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." The preacher showed that, if people were too comfortable here, they would cease to long for a higher and better state; it was a bad thing for churches and ministers to be too happy; there were many other points which have escaped me; but I remember that the text came to me as a revelation; I felt that I had found my destiny and my sphere. I was away from home when I heard the sermon; but as soon as I reached home, I began to put the lesson in practice.

Our minister was a quiet man, not perhaps the greatest genius in the world; but he was doing a good and useful work, and the people were much united in him. His wife was a sweet, pleasant woman, very fond of her home and of her children. They had bought a little home and were gradually paying for it, and were living in all respects very comfortably. Conversions were taking place pretty much every month, and all was harmonious and hopeful.

I saw at once that they were at ease in Zion, and that I had a field of labor right at hand. It was my duty to put an end to the state of ease in Zion. I called on one of the deacons, and got him into conversation about church matters. Presently I said, "Did you hear of the great work in Whartonville? A thousand souls converted; house crowded every evening; the people all in tears; ah! the boy-preacher is a wonderful man." The deacon said, "I am very glad if good is being done. I hope we shall see a great work here one of these days."

Well, we had a pretty long talk; and no sooner had I left the house than I went right over to the minister's. I found him fortunately at home. After a little talk, I said: "I was just in at Deacon Brown's. He is very much interested about the great work over at Whartonville, and wishes that we had such a state of things here." The pastor said nothing but moved rather uneasily in his chair. I went on, and by mixing up what the Deacon had said and what I had said, I filled the pastor up pretty full and made him and his wife quite uncomfortable.

The next day, I took occasion to drop in at the deacon's again, and told him that I had had some talk with the pastor about the state of Zion. I repeated a good deal of what he had said, and threw in some suggestions of my own, which had all the effect of coming from the pastor without my saying so. I quoted now and then a remark of his, and found that, by a change of tone and manner, I could change the whole force of it, while using just his words.

Cheered by the results of my efforts to dissipate the ease that was prevailing in Zion, I visited all the deacons, and several other of the members. I found that by repeating to each what I heard said by each of the other, and especially if it was said more or less in confidence, much could be accomplished.

I also found it very useful to put people on their guard one against another. I said to the pastor, "Dea. Smith, or Bro. Brown, is not friendly to you; you had better not go to his house, or have any talk with him." Of course, presently Dea. Smith and Bro. Brown, seeing that the pastor did not notice them, began to be cold toward him; and he regarded what I had said as corroborated.

Sometimes there would be a meeting of a confidential character, at which, persons would talk rather freely as to matters and persons. I always made it a point to tell all that was said and done at these meetings, with such additions and modifications as might make it better worth telling. This I found a very great help.

I do not wish to be vain or to deny to others the praise that is their due; and I ought to say frankly that I was much aided by one of our (unmarried) sisters, Miss Briskbody, who has pursued a course much akin to my own.

Well, I may say that a blessing has rested on these labors. There is no

more ease in Zion. The pastor became gradually estranged, and at last left us. The members of the church are pretty generally at loggerheads. And I believe that all, without exception, are prepared to welcome a release from entrance into the world of peace.

Any suggestions that you may have, looking toward more complete success, will be very welcome.

With great reverence, yours,
BUSY ASA BEIGH.
National Baptist.

For the Christian Messenger. Foreign Missionary Letter.

FROM MISS HAMMOND, TO THE SECRETARY OF THE N. S. CENTRAL BOARD W. M. A. SOCIETY.

My Dear Mrs. Selden,—

It was a real joy to hear of your successful Missionary Meeting. A knowledge of warm hearts at home is a great encouragement. Then the fact that money came for our house and that it was through the kindness of the ladies, has brightened every day since. We who have lived in the house and endured its discomforts, can appreciate the rich blessing.

The work is progressing rapidly. We hope it will be done by the first of May. Possibly we may be able to occupy it before that, but we must be careful about dampness in floors, walls, and matting.

I presume Mrs. Sandford has told you of the prayer meeting we started a few weeks ago for Telugu women. I find it rather difficult to conduct one; that is, to explain a few verses and pray. I can do it in an imperfect manner; my explanations are not what I desire they should be, and my prayers are short. Yet I am very grateful that sufficient health and strength have been permitted me to acquire the language, even to this degree. A large part of this present year must be spent in study. I daily pass several hours, five, or six, in this way. My visiting in the town has been quite given up of late. I must study hard while the weather is comparatively cool. In a few weeks it will be too hot to be with my books as much as I now am, then nearly every afternoon, will find me in the town. At least that is what I hope to do. We feared that no women would come to our meeting, but God does better than we dared hope, and if He will only meet with us and bless our weak efforts, we shall be more than satisfied. These words of Christ come to me very often, "If thou canst believe; all things are possible to him that believeth." I hope that by visiting in the town, others may be induced to attend. I do desire that the seed may be sown here. The germinating, the necessary sunshine, and the watering, I can leave in the hands of Him, to whom this work belongs.

My school of late has been doing rather better. It has been in a very low condition, and sometimes when I had said to some of the natives, this school will flourish in time, because it belongs to the Lord, I could not help thinking, what if His blessing did not rest upon it? But somehow I feel that He knows about it; understands perfectly what a hard matter this question of pay is, and at present, whether it be prosperous, or otherwise, it is ultimately to do good. The number of pupils is slowly increasing. The girls did not come in as fast as I desired and several little boys wished to come, so I admitted them. They seem to enjoy it very much; they buy their own books and never think of such a thing as pay. The Hindoes like to have their sons educated, but their daughters are of no consequence, so it is those we especially desire, and I believe they will come, perhaps as fast as I acquire the language, so that I can give them proper care and teaching. I daily spend two hours in the school, sometimes more. I try to teach a Bible lesson to one class while the others are similarly engaged with their teachers. I can see that they are improving; see the light flash

into the dark faces as they grasp one of my imperfectly expressed thoughts. I cannot close my letter without saying PRAY. Pray for all our work here. I believe that prayer is the power which brings great blessings, and in a peculiar sense is the work of our people at home.

Money consecrated and followed by prayer will not fall short of the desired end.

Yours with much love,
CARRIE HAMMOND.

Christian Work in China.

Miss Sophia Norwood, now engaged in Missionary work at Swatow, in China, in connexion with the Rev. Dr. Ashmore and Miss Fielde under the auspices of the American Baptist Missionary Union, is the daughter of Mr. Charles Norwood of Berwick, N. S., and known to many of our readers. We have been pleased in the perusal of letters from her to her parents, sent us by a friend. We believe that many will be interested in a few extracts from them. It was only a few years ago that China was regarded as closed to Christian mission work, and the Christians were exhorted to pray that an opening might soon appear by which an entrance for the Gospel might be secured.

It is only by comparing the present with the past in this way that we can perceive how the Gospel of Christ is winning its widening way and so the world is brought under its benign influence:

Miss Norwood writes from Swatow, October 12, 1878:

"The difficulties that other single women have, make me feel very thankful for the kind providence that has given me a home with Dr. and Mrs. Ashmore.

Miss Fielde is now living entirely with us, while she is having a new roof put on her house. It had become quite uninhabitable owing to the ravages of the white ants.

Miss Thompson left ten days ago, for a visit to a part of her district, accompanied by two of her Bible women. I hear she is having quite a warm time of it. Yesterday was quite as warm as any day during the summer.

At the last communion, three of the Bible women were assigned to me—Sister Long, Sui Lang and A. Pio. I was feeling very happy in the prospect of being able, by means of some others whom I thought of pressing into the service. To supply three of the out-stations in my field with Bible women, when it turned out that 'Sister Long,' whom I counted as my most efficient helper must be suspended for the present from her work. She was charged with having secretly betrothed her daughter, Sun Kuang, to a heathen. Upon inquiry she confessed that she had done so, and had received twenty dollars of the betrothal money. Her case was made a matter of discipline by the Church, and resulted in her confessing the wrong she had committed. Hence I am beginning with two instead of three experienced Bible women, and I have employed Sister Lotus (the former interpreter for the gods of whom I have written you before) and another old sister to go with these women. I send Sin Lang with the sister called A. Sok and A. Pio, with Sister Lotus. You will be interested in what I have to tell you of the latter—illustrating her simple faith. She had one unmarried son and was unable to pay the price necessary to obtain a wife for him. In this district wives are now very scarce, and consequently very high, costing in the neighborhood of one hundred dollars each. Besides the family of Sister Lotus being now a Christian family, the difficulty was much increased. Three months ago she learned the following case: A young girl had been married, as it frequently happens, into a family of which she knew nothing, to a man whom she had never seen. She was a bright intelligent girl; when she was taken to her husband's home, she found that she had been married to a most

stupid kind of a man, and that she had a most unkind mother-in-law. The circumstances were so painful to her that she spent her time crying, and finally became deranged; then the family. When Sister Lotus heard these particulars, she talked them over with her son, Pio Heng, the preacher, and her daughter Yong, the Bible-woman. They reasoned thus: If ill-treatment had caused this young woman to become crazy, kindness would do much towards restoring her reason, and besides, if they would all unite in prayer to God for her recovery their prayer would be answered. On the strength of this, their faith, they decided to have her brought home as a wife for the son and brother. Sister Lotus, who was at that time here, studying, was obliged to go home to attend to the matter, and to remain with and take care of the unfortunate girl. The newly made husband, though a member of the church, had not so strong faith as the other members of the family.

When he saw his crazy wife he was much vexed and at once left home for foreign parts. Miss Fielde asked sister Yong what they would do now? "O that is nothing," she replied, "when the wife recovers God is able to bring him back." When I heard this story, I must confess my faith was rather weak, and I feared that with a crazy daughter-in-law, Sister Lotus would be of little service to me as a Bible woman. But at the recent communion I felt rebuked for my lack of faith. Sister Yong reported that the young woman was perfectly sane, and that her mother would rejoice to do Bible woman's work. She would have been in to attend the communion only it would not be in accordance with Chinese notions of propriety to leave a young married woman for several days alone. At the Sister's prayer-meeting one of the requests was that the young man would now return from foreign parts. I think you will agree with me, that this is indeed a wonderful family. All three of them seem perfectly sure that whatever they pray for will be granted them—and so far they have not been disappointed. I am not sure but that we might with much profit to ourselves spiritually emulate their example.

At the last communion twenty were baptized. I was made very happy by three of my school girls being among the number; two of them are daughters of two of Miss Fielde's Bible women, and one the daughter of Po Heng the preacher, and grand-daughter of Sister Lotus. The elder daughter of the nun was also a candidate, but it was thought best, much to her disappointment, to defer her case for a few months. As I look back over the years that I have had the school, I am filled with thankfulness for the many answers to prayer that have been granted me. I cannot doubt that God's hand has been leading me in this my first undertaking in this heathen land.

Oct. 16th. This morning our mail came bringing a number of letters but none from my dear home friends. I take the *Messenger* and *Visitor*, and am thus kept posted as to the denominational home news.

I fear by the time I return to you I shall have become so unused to ice and snow as to be unable to enjoy the Nova Scotia winters as I once did.

John Wesley said of one of his congregations:—

"Many of them were gay, genteel people, so I spoke on the first elements of the Gospel, but I was still out of their depth."

How shallow must the minister be, not to be "out of the depth" of the fashionable hearers before him?

Why is the letter G like the sun?—Because it is the centre of light.

How does a stove feel when full of coals?—Gratefull.

When is a doctor most annoyed?—When he is out of patients.

To change and do better, are two different things.