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Calling to the Ministry.

Dear Bro. Bailey:—I have been reading the dear old BIBLICAL RECORDER more or less from the days of its being edited by Bro. J. J. James, and I must say that it seems to me to improve with every number. I see so many good, rich articles in it, I asked a brother not long since to give me his name and the sum of two dollars, and I would see that he should have the next week's issue of the RECORDER to read. "O," said he, "I want it, but I don't see how I could spare two dollars just now." I told him if he would read the RECORDER one month, I felt quite sure that he would find out how to raise and spare two dollars for it each year as long as he should live. He promised me to come and see me soon and bring the cash. Among some of the good things which I read are the articles written by Bro. Harman and Brother Brown on the call to the ministry. But while Bro. Brown demurs to the opinions of Bro. Harman, I must say that I don't see that his idea of getting the preacher into the field, properly authorized, is any better. The only one point in Bro. Harman's article, which Bro. Brown admits to approximate his idea, is "a deepening, growing, abiding conviction that it is God's will that one should devote himself to preaching the gospel as a lifework." Now, I cannot see how the church could know this to be a fact, and settle down upon it, as

Gains and Losses.

PROGRESS OF THE WORK IN SOUTH CHINA.

Canton is the capital of Kwang Tung Province. This Province is about as large as North Carolina, with a population more than ten times as large, Canton itself having almost as many people as the whole State of North Carolina. Our work lies mainly in the northwestern part of the Province. There are two or three stations south of Canton, where there are many Chinese returned from California. These are constantly coming and going, so that the work has never taken such permanent shape as in other places. Misses North and Hartwell have just returned from a stay of two months in that district. They visited several villages, and at some remained two or three weeks. During the day they went from house to house reading the Bible and telling the story of the gospel. At night they gathered the girls and women in their temporary residence and tried to teach them the way of the Lord. They came again and again night after night, from twenty to fifty, and many of them seemed to grasp the truth and to believe in Jesus as their personal Saviour. At another village they found a man converted in California who was previously unknown to the members of our mission. He entertained them and greatly helped them in their work. Miss White was with them part of the time, but the work in Canton was pressing too heavy on Mrs. Graves, and she returned to her help. Misses Whilden and McMinn have spent some weeks at Shiu Hing and in the neighboring villages. In the villages they were able to do much work that promises results in the future. Sometimes women would get them into a room and shut the door to prevent the crowds gathering, so that they might have quiet to learn more fully the way of salvation through Jesus.

Negotiations are in progress for the purchase of a lot in Shiu Hing and the building of a residence, so that some of us may reside there permanently. We are looking for a physician to join us there and open a hospital, for which there is a fine opening. Is the man we want to be found in North Carolina?

Bro. Simmons has recently returned from a visit to Shek Kak and Tsing Yen. In the latter city he spent nearly two weeks, preaching to crowded houses of interested hearers, and explaining the Scriptures to the brethren. The work there, where there has been much persecution, grows more hopeful with every visit.

West of this Province is Kwong Sai, in which no missionary has ever yet been permitted to reside long at a time. But our native preachers and colporteurs have gone to and fro in the Province, and several have heard and believed, and the converts have built a chapel in one of the smaller towns. Bro. McClay recently spent several days at this chapel, gathered the brethren and sisters for the study of the truths of the gospel, and at the close baptized seven believers. One of these came a journey of four days on foot to meet Bro. McClay and receive baptism. The opposition is not dying out, but the officials have been instructed to suppress any hostile outbreaks against Christianity. While the government of the United States, a model for its principles of freedom, is putting new restraints on the resident Chinese, the Chinese government, the synonym for unreasoning despotism, is manifesting greater willingness to protect foreigners who come bringing a foreign religion. The Chinese in the United States are interfering with the power of some to make money, and letting their religion alone; so "the Chinese must go." It is becoming evident that the missionaries are here, not for money, but to preach religion, and so they may receive protection. The money is worth more than the religion, in the eyes of a few voters, and so both political parties are afraid to carry out national pledges to the "half-civilized Chinese." Are the right thinking people of the United States content that the contrast between the two governments should continue thus?

But while there are signs of progress in the work, we have recently suffered serious loss in the death of two of our most useful preachers. Bro. Au Yung Hong was converted more than twenty years ago. Against great opposition he was baptized and had to flee from home to save his life. For ten years or more he has been an earnest and effective preacher. He was living at Tsung Fa, his native village, and looking after the work there, but had gone on a preaching tour far up the Sz Wai river, and was taken sick and died there. The church in Canton raised the money to have his body brought down and buried here.

Bro. Tso Fat Tsuen was the pastor at Tsing Yen. He was converted in South America, where he saved some money. Coming home, he preached without salary as long as his money lasted. He was with Bro. Simmons in his meeting at Tsing Yen, and came a day's journey down the river with him, and then turned up the West River to visit his native village. There he died after a very brief illness.

Mrs. Graves has been quite sick with typhoid fever for some time, but seems to be slowly improving.

Not long ago Dr. E. P. Thwing, of the Northern Presbyterians, died here. He was not officially connected with their mission, but had accompanied his son and daughter who recently joined the mission. He was looking after a proposed insane asylum to which, I think, he had given a considerable

amount of money, and was constantly striving to do good. His wife, also, nearly sixty years old, was studying the language and trying to do missionary work, when she was stricken with fever, and is still far from well.

The Presbyterians have recently suffered losses, sickness necessitating the going home of several. Two prominent physicians, Drs. Kerr and Thompson, had worked long and needed a rest. Dr. McCandlish, working on the island of Hainan, has recently been ordered home on account of his wife's health. Dr. Macey has broken down at a distant inland station, and has gone to Macao, hoping to avoid going home. He left at that station Miss Johnston, his adopted mother, who remains alone, far away from any foreigner, to look after the work.

A few days before our arrival in Canton, Mr. Lingle and his wife left for this station. They remained a few months and Mrs. L. was stricken with heart-disease and they had to go home just as they were ready for work. It was not thought she could survive the voyage, but I hear that she is improving. Mr. Lingle is a native of Rowan county, N. C., and I hear that he is now at the home of his father near Salisbury.

G. W. GREENE.

Canton, May 29, 1893.

Letter from Sister Nannie S. Britton in China.

Bro. Bailey:—This beautiful spring weather affords many good days for country work. Mr. Britton is giving much of his present time to preaching and personal work among the people in the numerous villages and hamlets northeast of Soochow. He usually starts in the early morning, spending the day out, and returns at night. After supper he goes immediately to the chapel where he or Mr. Tsu preaches. This night preaching was begun about a month ago with the hope of giving to our neighbors, who on account of their work cannot attend the afternoon services, an opportunity to hear the gospel. The congregations are often large and quiet for a collection of heathen, but at other times they are quite noisy.

We are thankful to note a few hopeful cases among those who attend our meetings more regularly. I will mention one who is the son of a blind widow. His mother was baptized by Mr. Britton in the summer of 1891. Ever since her baptism she has shown that she is happy in the hope she has in the Lord. May the son soon rejoice in the same blessed hope.

We returned yesterday from Wongdai and Leku. At Wongdai lives one Mrs. Tun, who was in Mrs. Yates' boarding-school five years. She was baptized by Dr. Yates while in Shanghai. On marrying (seven years ago), she moved to her present home. There she has remained the only Christian in her town these years, having no one to worship with her, but many to deride her trust in Christ. She has seen very few Christian people since she left Shanghai, but she speaks with great pleasure of the time Dr. Yates visited her before his death. It is encouraging to hear her talk of God, her ever-present Friend, and Jesus, her Saviour.

The people of Wongdai were making elaborate preparations to bring out one of their idols and give him an airing with a parade on the streets, so they were too busy to listen to the gospel of our Lord and Master.

We pushed back to Leku, where more attentive ears awaited us, and there many, both young and old, heard of Christ's love for them.

Mr. Tatum was with us not long ago and did some good preaching. He was taken sick and had to leave after only a short stay. We are glad to learn that he is better now.

We keep hoping to hear soon of newly appointed missionaries to share in the work of this great city and surrounding country.

Mr. Britton is working in Lo-mg and vicinity to-day. T. C. B., Jr., now six months old, is well and grows fast. He adds much joy and sunshine to our home and hearts.

With best wishes for all of our North Carolina friends, I am sincerely,

NANNIE S. BRITTON.

Soochow, China, May 26, 1893.
Post-office, Shanghai, China.

Many brethren are inclined to criticize the sayings and doings of others, and many are inclined to be sensitive to criticism. It is well, therefore, to consider the proper limits of the criticism of people.

Every public act and utterance of any man is a legitimate subject for criticism. Whatever a man utters in a sermon or public address, whatever he puts in print, and whatever he does, either as a representative or in a public manner, may properly be criticized, and he has no right to be offended at such criticism. His private affairs, however, and his private conversation and correspondence, are not proper subjects for public criticism, and no one has any right to drag these things before the public.

On the other hand, the critic has no right to assail the motives of the one criticised. Every man has a right to have his motives respected, however much his acts and utterances may be condemned. Just here is where most critics fail. They condemn, not simply the act or utterance, but the man. They either charge or intimate that he is prompted by some bad motive. And when he becomes offended, as should have been expected, they turn round and say that he is not above criticism, that they have a perfect right to express their opinions, etc. His taking offense at one insult is made the oc-

casional of giving him another. Such criticism should be ruled out of decent society. It has no place among right-thinking people.

Then, even if the man's motives are respected, the critic should consider what will be the probable effects of the criticism—whether it will help or hinder the cause of truth and righteousness. We have no right to use even legitimate criticism to the injury of the cause we ought to promote. If the man criticised is in charge of important interests whose success depends on his having the sympathy and co-operation of the people, no criticism which would interfere with that sympathy and co-operation, should be offered. It is wrong to strike a blow at a good cause.

And, besides, the motives of the critic should be pure. He should have no personal end to gain. Criticism must not cover up personal ambition or personal ill will. Indeed a man ought to be very careful how he trusts himself to criticize the public sayings and doings of one he dislikes. The person equated is sure to show itself in the result. And nothing discounts a man in the estimation of thinking people, more than his seeking to use criticism to promote his personal ends.

Let the critic always consider whether it be the design of his criticism to help or to hinder the man criticised, i. e., whether it be friendly or unfriendly. Let the critic pray for the brethren criticised before writing his criticism, and let him be very sure he does unto them as he would have them do unto him. Let the brother criticised stop and consider what the criticism contains which may be made helpful to him, even though the criticism be unjust. The impression made upon the critic's mind, though an unjust one, may have been made upon the minds of many others, and this may render it desirable for something to be said or done to remove this impression, and care should be exercised against making such impressions in the future. Napoleon said he got more profit from the criticism of enemies than from the compliments of friends, since thus his faults were revealed to him.

In replying to criticism, also, let not the motives of the critic be assailed. He has an equal right with the man criticised to have his motives respected. Not every criticism is worth a reply, but if a reply is made let it be of the right kind.—Western Recorder.

Freting.

There is one sin which seems to me to be everywhere and by everybody underestimated, and quite too much overlooked in valuations of character. It is the sin of fretting. It is as common as air, as speech; so common that unless it rises above its usual monotone we do not even observe it. Watch any ordinary coming together of people, and see how many minutes it will be before somebody frets—that is, makes more or less complaining statement of something or other, which most probably every one in the room, or in the car, or on the street corner, it may be, knew before, and which probably nobody can help. Why say anything about it? It is cold, it is hot, it is wet, it is dry; somebody has broken an appointment, ill-cooked a meal; stupidity or bad faith somewhere has resulted in discomfort. There are plenty of things to fret about. It is simply astonishing how much annoyance may be found in the course of every day's living, even at the simplest, if one only keeps a sharp eye out on that side of things. Even Holy Writ says we are prone to trouble as sparks to fly upward. But even to the sparks flying upward, in the blackest of smoke, there is a blue sky above, and the less time they waste on the road the sooner they will reach it. Fretting is all time wasted on the road.—Helen Hunt, in The Watchman.

Christ and His Sheep.

An American who was traveling in Syria saw three native shepherds bring their flocks to the same brook, and the flocks drank there together. At length one shepherd arose and called out, "Men-ah, men-ah," which is the Arabic word for "Follow me." His sheep came out of the common herd and followed him up the hillside. Then the next shepherd did the same, and his sheep went away with him, and the man did not even stop to count them. The American said to the remaining shepherd, "Just give me your cloak and turban and crook, and see if they won't follow me as soon as they will you." So he put on the shepherd's dress, and called out "Men-ah, men-ah," but not a sheep moved an inch. They knew not the voice of a stranger. Is it not just so with the flock of Christ? Christ is the Good Shepherd and knows his sheep, and is known of them.—The Worker.

Amidst the whirl of machinery, in the bustle of the street, even in the midst of conversation, we may be able mentally to disappear out of time, and stand for an instant in eternity face to face with God; and few prayers are more precious than the momentary ejaculations offered in the course of daily occupations. He who has acquired this habit has a strong tower into which he can retreat in every time of need.—The Stalker, D. D.

Thank God for sympathy; it has a wonderful power of turning keys in rusty locks.—N. Y. Observer.