

have appealed to them, as Barak of old did to Deborah, to come with them to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

Like many other useful organizations, the W. A. of the Church to-day had a very humble beginning, and for us in a new country, this ought to be a thought for great encouragement. We may only be permitted to see the day of small things, and to work on in faith and hope, sowing a seed here and a seed there, trusting to the great Gardener to water and nourish our plant and make it grow into a great and noble tree, the shadow and influence of which may be a blessing to many.

As a rule, Churchwomen in America are indebted to their English sisters for example and leadership in all good works, but the W. A. is a thoroughly American institution—its distinctive features are original. To follow up all the steps which led to it would take too long, but in 1862 the movement began, small as a snowflake, to assume its shape, when good Bishop Stevens, of Pennsylvania, urged "the consideration of the subject of the best manner of incorporating more formally into the working of the Church the services of women, whose hearts God had moved to devote themselves to works of piety and charity."

Slowly the ball rolled on, until in 1869 the organized service of women was recognized as a most important feature of missionary work, and in 1871 the whole subject of woman's work in the Church was reported upon fully and elaborately. At last in 1872 the W. A. began its distinctive career. Growing slowly and surely, working its way into one parish after another, until to-day it stands before the Church of England *as a success*, and we may safely say that the parishes that have been engaged in this good work have received as much as they have given, and that the return to them in the increased life of their own parochial organizations, from their connection with this effort to aid and encourage missionaries, has been more than an equivalent for all that they have contributed. Many a parish that is suffering from exhaustion, its money and stamina gone to serve no useful purpose, has been helped to a cure by the virtue going out from a branch of this society. Thorough, earnest, persistent effort by a number of parishioners to do good, stimulates and invigorates the whole parish. Our life is never drained by gifts to missions, or by efforts to alleviate the hardships of those who are bearing the cross of poverty for Jesus sake. A zealous, live, missionary society will bring with it benediction and power, and a zeal for home work also, as naturally as fire brings heat.