

energetic efforts are made to accumulate a sum sufficient to correspond with the presumed wealth and influence of each respective denomination. In this connection what is called a "laudable rivalry" is encouraged, and graduated honors are in due time awarded on the credit side of the published accounts. There are some, alas! who in religious as well as in secular affairs, cling to the idea that the most money ought to have the most merit, and persons most liberal in endowments are generally awarded the highest place.

To obtain as large an amount as possible, the most thorough and ingenious methods, have been devised. Sunday-school children are lectured to importune for missionary pence, and to reserve their own petty accumulations of the most humble produce of the mint for the "missionary box;" and seldom indeed will either painted toy or tempting candy induce the juvenile collector to withdraw the little donation from its place of deposit. The money is looked upon as belonging to the treasury of the Lord; and if the infant Protestant mind should happen to tolerate a little superstition in this respect, no objection has yet been offered. A public recognition of such services by children is highly satisfactory to religious parents, and is naturally found to be a powerful stimulus to entice and actuate younger disciples.

Then, again, there are "Young Men's Associations," and therein persons are appointed to perambulate certain places and localities for help for the heathen—haunts and parlous where it would not be always safe and never proper for respectable religious females to be seen.

Thus the dissipated and abandoned are often besought, and, strange to say, are often donors to this great fund. It may be that at stated periods many recklessly rushing to sin and shame feel a degree of satisfaction in being solicited, as if the solicitation and the gift were still proofs, though ever so weak, that the poor dissipated wanderer was not as yet disowned by society, or considered as hopelessly sunk among the outcast and degraded.

Matrons have also an allotted task. Mature members of wealthy mercantile companies, ancient annuitants, gray-headed state pensioners, and musty officials are sought and softened by importunate appeals which will take no denial; and the flinty man, wrapped up in freezing dignity, is generally unfolded, even to prove to himself that, mummy-like as he may appear to others, "a heart still throbs within his leathern breast," and that its pulsations are yet human.

Stewards, deacons, lay-preachers, and ministers have a peculiar field of labor, and are often more successful with wealthy or well-to-do-widows, and comfortable spinsters of an uncertain age, than other persons. The pleading, however, of ministers with all classes has a drawing effect; but as their duties are too multifarious, their visits for such purposes are necessarily circumscribed. The potency of a minister's influence is more particularly in a general and pathetic appeal to a congregation,

or in private whispers at the bedside of the man who has walked the earth for the last time, and who, previous to settling his last account, is earnestly reminded of his final and most important duty of "honoring the Lord with his substance"—it would not be needed in the grave.

But by far the most invincible and successful collectors are the young and beautiful female members of the church. Such persons are classified as the "young lady collectors," and they prove themselves to be by all odds the most daring and triumphant. In this respect it has been asserted that one young lady is equal to thirteen and a half gentlemen; and pecuniary results have justly entitled the adolescent of the softer sex to this proportionate superiority. In collecting tours, the young ladies generally go in pairs, the more attractive and accomplished the better. As the duty is readily undertaken, every suitable place is visited with the most unflinching determination. Shopkeepers, office-clerks, young business-men, and men of fashion—the grave and the gay, the great and the humble, and all classes within reach that may with propriety be called on, are made to yield to solicitations which in nine cases out of ten are irresistible; and if figures are facts, the returns ever prove that young lady collectors are far in advance of all others in this particular line of pious usefulness. The rocky, sordid hearts that can not be softened by apostolic prayers or sighs, seem to melt and bubble up beneath the missionary fervor of youth and beauty.

Thus it is, that by a peculiar and systematic organization almost every individual connected with a church or religious society, from the mere child to the man or woman with gray hairs, may be made an active agent for the collection of small sums for missionary or other religious purposes, and which sums in the aggregate annually swell to an immense amount; and thus it is that without ostentation or an apparent effort the greater portion of the annual princely revenue of the British and Foreign Bible Society is obtained from the people by a mild but determined enforcement of the "voluntary principle."

The orthodox Englishman is proud of Exeter Hall. In the rustic church or great cathedral he had heard of the wonderful success of the primitive apostles, and had been instructed in the mystic doctrines of Christianity, and told of its superiority over more ancient Pagan creeds. While the Bible had been held up as the great mirror of truth, he had been cautioned against various modern interpretations of the "unlearned," leading to false doctrine, heresy, and schism; and in the sanctuary, while often bewildered by contradictory tenets, or led into a maze of doubt and theological speculation by seeming contradictory texts, in Exeter Hall he seldom or never heard a conflicting opinion. In this place, the history, the contests, the persecution, and the triumphs of Christianity were mapped out before his mind in interesting recitals. There he had heard of the adventures of primitive Christians in their endeavors to propagate the "truth" in the midst of powerful and imperial heathenism; and had been told how au-