

strength on many occupations which profit little, and if you, dear mothers, would implant within them some of your own love and zeal for missions in their early days, and then make their meetings so bright that they will enjoy them, just as you make them delight in their Sunday above all other days, surely their health would not suffer from the occasional confinement of a pleasant missionary meeting.

Secondly,—what are we all doing to show we believe in so grand a work, beyond our sacrifices in gifts of money? A few common-places are very inadequate to meet the universal query—How can we make our meetings more interesting? But let us only mention them as the time is short. A large attendance is an important element of success, careful attention on the part of those present, earnest prayer by more than one voice, free participation in the exercises by a number of the audience, the programme being first carefully considered by the one in charge, and including a variety,—with if possible parts assigned previously. Each Society can best adapt to its own needs especial features, suited to its local habits and preferences. This is mere generalization, and in the plain-dealing to follow we present some details.

Are we all ready to take our own share in these meetings? Let us introduce Mrs. —, as not by any means a representative woman with whom we have to deal, but one we sometimes meet. "Dear Mrs. —, will you kindly offer prayer at our next meeting?" "Oh! I'd rather not." We don't reply, but we want to, "Of course you'd rather not, who wouldn't?" Not many have so far attained that they really would rather render such service. But do you remember the homely thrust in a certain story book, "we can't always have our d'rathers!" This is only a sample of the leader of a meeting, but dear friends, remembering that Christ "pleased not Himself," and "gave His life" for this cause, are we to draw back from our part in it, simply because of our preferences? The next time, Mrs. — is asked for intelligence from some mission-field, but she "did not expect to be called on, though the president of the Society always provided information for the meeting." If she were Miss —, we should be tempted to remind her of the "five foolish virgins"—who said "give us of your oil" but the wise answered "I not so." As no one supposes Mrs. — belongs to any of our Societies, we may criticize her to our heart's content, only be sure we do not "go and do likewise."

There are other means of sharing the cares and duties of a few heavily burdened ones, besides the above.

Does God count steps, do you think? If so, with what measure does he reckon the miles walked by some weary woman, first to secure a missionary to address a meeting, then to secure her accommodation afterwards, not to mention the further impossible effort to secure a day and an hour to suit every one. (Of course this same weary woman must be considered foolish for such an effort, weak she would undoubtedly admit herself, physically no Samson, and mentally not a Solomon.) Do you say, we never thought of these things? 'Tis true

"That evil is wrought by want of thought,
As well as want of heart,"

but, dear friends, as Christian women, ought we to excuse ourselves for either of the wants in such a work? It is a singular fact that the weather is not always in accord with missionary meetings "it is not so, but so it looks," as rain, snow, heat or cold so often attend such an appointment. If these same extremes occur when

other engagements claim us, are they as noticeable? And if we brave them for a scene of mere pleasure, shall we claim a less return for our exertion in this higher service? And does any law hold good for the attendance of officers at such times, that is not equally binding on the other members of the Society?

Now for the practical application to mothers on this second head. We must make the children's meetings attractive to insure their attendance. But are their little gatherings always models of what might be called good meetings? It has been said that a child's pleasures are what a mother chooses to make them, therefore could not a pleasant missionary meeting be at the same time one to profit and instruct them? If the mothers should contribute their portion of effort to this end, better results would doubtless be witnessed by them and their children, and we could all take comfort in the prospect of a young generation arising to more than fill our places.

Will the court decide, as to whether this writing has turned out a song or a sermon? Probably it would be decreed a sermon, and perhaps a scolding one at that, and "pity 't is 't is true" that so it sounds, for such was not the writer's intention; rather by a common-place plain-dealing with some of our possible faults and failures, practically to apply them for our future benefit.

Let us so exalt this grand, noble work which connects us closely with such devoted women, working with us "for Christ's sake and the gospel's," on the mission-field, that it shall raise us to its level. Then shall it take us out of ourselves, and clothe us with His spirit who hath said "Whosoever"—(that means you, me, or anybody else)—"Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow Me."

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"I Pray Thee Have Me Excused."

Oh, don't say that! Rather say those other beautiful, inspiring Bible words, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" "Lord, here am I, send me." "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

How beautiful was Christ when he answered to the call for a Redeemer, "Lo, I come—I delight to do Thy will, O my God."

Suppose you should be called on to say a word at a missionary meeting, or lead in prayer. Suppose your part was needed and the meeting would suffer without it. Would you say, "I pray Thee have me excused," or would you remember that Jehovah put that very responsibility and dignity on you when he declared, "Ye are My witnesses,"?

Are you timid? There is a special promise for you in fulfilling this duty. It seems as if the Lord had you specially and personally in mind when he wrote (*Mal. iii., 16, 17*): "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name. And they shall be Mine saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

Do you ask, What shall I say? The Bible answers explicitly. "Mention the loving kindness of the Lord. Call on the name of the Lord. Keep not silence and give Him no rest till He establish and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. Ask of Me and I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance. Ask and ye