

Five years ago, realizing the importance to the Society's work of some recognized means of communication, it was my privilege to introduce into the First St. Thomas Auxiliary a resolution memorializing the General Board of the Women's Missionary Society to seek a department in the OUTLOOK, and appoint an editor—little, indeed, thinking that I should have anything further to do with it. About the same time, a similar request was preferred by the General Secretary. When officially notified that this request had been acceded to, and that I had been appointed to the duty, I accepted it as, from God, an opportunity for usefulness, in a way my heart approved, and in which I was not without experience. At that time the work of our Society was not much known, and was, by ministers and people, much misunderstood. We had not then attained any great hold on the body of the Church, and a strong fear existed that in many quarters we would encroach on the resources of the parent society. Our Auxiliaries numbered but 138; our income but \$13,939.62. Up to that time only occasional notices of auxiliary or band work appeared.

In undertaking the department of the Women's Missionary Society, I felt that to make it a medium of general interest to the Society it should cultivate all sides of the work. The Auxiliaries, being the foundation on whose upbuilding depended our financial results, must be encouraged. I therefore made it a point to invite correspondence reports, and also to stimulate Mission Band work by a similar plan. We have now a frequent showing of twenty a month; indeed, as high as thirty-five have been reached, manifesting constant and interested activity. Objection has been made to the length of the reports, on the ground of the large space occupied. I am free to say, some objectors forget this in reporting themselves. I prefer to leave the condensing to the good sense of the correspondents. Reviewing back numbers, I find suggestions offered editorially to have been accepted. Original papers, prepared by members for their meetings or conventions, have been published in our department, many of which have shown spiritual insight and intellectual power. I feel that we cannot too highly estimate original work in our Auxiliary meetings. It is ennobling to the workers; it stimulates to missionary knowledge, promoting research; and best of all, perhaps, it gives something to do, developing God-given power, and maintaining Auxiliary life and energy.

The correspondence connected with our department has grown from year to year. I am in receipt of between thirty and forty letters a month, especially in the winter season, including reports, applications for reading matter for Auxiliaries, and questions of one sort or another pertaining to our work. The revising and correcting oftentimes of reports, reading of papers, besides my own review of exchanges, for the selection of a few thoughts each month; the reading of proofs before publication, and the writing of my own editorial notes, forming the duty devolving on me; and such as it has been, it has been done in the love of it, and I would fain hope not altogether in vain. My notes echo the promptings of a heart full of love for women, full of sympathy for woman's work in its broadest range for humanity, and full of strong desire for the development of knowledge, zeal and enthusiasm. With my conceptions of editorial duty, be it in ever so small a compass, a prime necessity is to send out fresh, pure, stimulating thought. In my own reading this is what I covet, and I fail to see why the grand missionary question, so intertwined with all that is uplifting, holy, beneficent and active in the world's evangelization, should be played only in one key. Every one tires of monotones, and our question is not a plaintive dirge; it is a magnificent, inspiring chorus of sweet harmonies loud-ringing the needs of a lost humanity, and the supplies of a plentiful Christianity.

And now, dear ladies, in view of the censure with which I have been visited during the past year, kindly allow me a few words of explanation. From somewhere, a year ago, a request was preferred that my "duties be defined." Inquiry on my part, as to the cause of this, resulted in the discovery that there was some dissatisfaction at my inserting in our department the "Women's World's Petition" to the Governments of the world for the abolition of liquor, opium, etc. Allow me to remind you that this was done in harmony with the decision and action of all the Women's Missionary papers, and by special request. I regret to learn that some of our women think a temperance item out of place in our columns; but, so long as rum accompanies Bibles and liquor-sellers follow missionaries; so long as missionaries and converted heathen cry out to us to stop the flow of rum into their lands, and Christian Chinese women appeal to Christian English women to stay the devastating flood, so long, certainly, the attention of Christian workers may be profitably called to this matter. When the great Methodist Church goes back on her temperance record, when the Conferences are silent, and Methodist missionaries no longer meet the rum fiend on their fields of toil, I shall gladly apologize for any editorial notes on the subject. Till then, in common with most missionary magazines, in common with the voice of the Ecumenical Conference just closed, and with my honest conviction, we have a *work to do*, and a sentiment to create on this question, at home and abroad because, as with one voice, ministers and missionaries of all denominations, in all lands, pronounce intemperance the greatest of all foes to the advance of Christ's kingdom on the earth. If to remark on this subject be "running a paper in the interests of temperance," then all our best missionary periodicals are doing this good missionary work to a greater or less extent. I find it necessary here to ask your indulgence for a few minutes, that I may present my position, in view of recent events.

From an experience of five years in this work—an experience of familiarity with the papers of several Women's Missionary societies—some acquaintance with the trend of modern missionary thought, and the stress laid upon the diffusion of knowledge and the cultivation of a live missionary spirit in the homes and churches, together with my appreciation of a great deal of unemployed talent among our workers, I resolved to present to you in an "open letter," in all kindness, the subject of the establishment of a paper of our own. I begged for a kind and patient thought and discussion. Could I have surmised that so much personality and impugning of my motives would be turned on me by certain anonymous writers, I might well have hesitated. Did I go outside of my province? Certainly not, since liberty of thought and utterance are our precious inheritance. Why, then, such a furore of hasty opposition? To differ in opinion is honorable; to be candid and kind is imperative in our work. Had there never been differences of opinion, innovations of thought and action, we should still be dwelling in the darkness of the middle ages. "To think and to let think" is a cardinal doctrine of our holy Christianity; but our anonymous opposers were unwilling apparently to let us think for ourselves.

I am sure, dear ladies, in this meeting we are cognizant of a strong desire to promote the greatest good, to preserve the kindest spirit, and to honor God; and I am not willing to believe that this Board, looking at those anonymous letters, can give them the sanction of silence. One point I feel compelled to emphasize. Let no one think I expected or hoped to become your permanent editor. Many among us are far more capable than I, and no such thought inspired my letter. But, so far, to me the work has been given to do, and I have done it in all love and godly fear. From somewhere the report spread that I was working to get a salary.