

to offer a prayer than to sew or cut a garment. In this you know you are going to succeed; in that you are sure to fail."

"Thanks, Mrs. Rand, for your frank confession," smilingly returned the president, "for I see by the general air of assent that you speak for more than yourself. But you should not forget that there are more ways than one in which you can help. You might play the organ for us."

"Oh," she exclaimed, "I'm too nervous. I should make all sorts of mistakes."

"Well, there are also needed writers of five minute articles on the country under consideration for the month, item gatherers, a committee to furnish pictures or curiosities, one on maps, another on invitations to remind the forgetful ones when the day for the meeting comes round, singers"—

"Some interested listeners I presume," added a timid voice.

"Yes, a very important part of the needs. So, you see, there is scope for every one to work according to her several ability. I believe Mrs. Rand has unconsciously discovered to us the root of the difficulty. We are interested in and stand ready to do any work for the Lord which we are sure we can do with credit to ourselves, but we are not willing yet to fail for His dear sake. Now, to my mind, failure is sometimes more helpful than success. You all know me well enough to believe that I speak whereof I know when I touch upon this timidity in speaking for the Lord. The better the prayers offered by others the more hopeless it seemed for me to attempt the same, and I owe my first victory over self in this matter to a timid disjointed prayer, full of repetition, offered in a trembling, tearful voice by one who thus proved her willingness to do what she could. No prayer ever so touched my heart as that apparent failure, and I resolved that I would no longer wait until I was sure of success before doing anything.

"I believe you are right, Mrs. Egerton," said a lady at her side. "I once heard a young girl try to pray and fail, and it sent a thrill of sympathy through all present that utterly broke up the cold formality and turned the meeting into a regular love-feast."

"Perhaps that is the reason our meetings seem to be more successful since we took our young minister's wife for leader," said a visitor from a neighboring town. "Our former president was so self-possessed, so efficient, we all felt she could get on whether we helped or not, but our present one is so anxious to do all she can, yet so evidently conscious of her inexperience, so brave in spite of her natural timidity, that we rallied around her, at first out of sympathy, and now help because we really enjoy it."

"I was reading only the other day," said one, "that David Livingstone, after three months of probation as

a missionary student, was judged incompetent because of hesitation in prayer and complete failure in preaching, and it was only on the earnest entreaty of one member of the Board that his probation was extended. If he had withdrawn in false humility or through discouragement, what a grand work would have been lost to the cause."

"My impression of those women who lead with such efficiency in our great annual conventions is that they are able to do so, not so much because of any natural fitness, but because, through force of circumstances, they have been pushed to the front, and casting themselves upon God's promise, 'I will be with thy mouth, despairing of self, they let him speak through them, and so become, in the grandest sense of the word, successful. Do not think," the president added, "that I underrate success. I only wish now to emphasize the mission of failures because I feel that if we reach a degree of consecration that makes us willing, if need be, to fail for the dear Lord's sake, we have taken the first step toward assured success."

"Mrs. Egerton, I will play the organ for you at the next meeting," courageously volunteered the nervous musician.

"I'll come and help sing," said another.

"I trust that by the time another month rolls around," said a trembling voice, "the Holy Spirit will have made me willing to fail if I cannot do anything else. I can promise to pray that he will."

"And I'll come and make one of the sympathetic listeners, at least," promised a modest little woman.

"You have helped us solve the problem," Mrs. Egerton concluded. "Now let us all resolve to be of service, whether as vessels of honor or dishonor, to the Master who 'made Himself of no reputation' for us."

Need we follow the history of this society? The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, and its members having offered themselves as empty vessels for His service, do you doubt that they were filled and made meet for the Master's use?—LIZZIE DAY HOWELL, Burlington, N. J., in *Woman's Work for Woman*.

NOTHING of enduring worth comes to be in our world without sacrifice and toil, and weariness of heart or brain. Not can any woman excuse herself in this matter because she can't give large offerings. It was the giving of two mites in love which the Lord commended. To serve Christ is lose the love of self, to find a joy in small economies, a reward in little self-denials. "A piece of neck ribbon," cried the eloquent Robertson, "may save a soul," and the saving of one soul may be the saving of a score. "I am only one," said a Greek woman to her American teacher, "one poor soul; but I can teach ten, who are the better for the good you do me."—(Extracts from a paper by Mrs. G. D. Boardman.)