

SKETCH—PLANS FOR WORK.

(Concluded.)

As a young lady came to the front, with a paper-covered book in her hand, Helen noticed for the first time that almost every one present had a similar one. She immediately became curious to know the contents. Helen's newly-formed acquaintance placed this within her power by handing her the book she had. On the cover Helen read, "Ninth Annual Report of the Woman's Missionary Society;" below this, "Price five cents," and she was soon very much interested in the questions being asked by the young lady at the front and answered by the members. They seemed to be perfectly familiar with the Constitution and names of General Board Officers and were rapidly gaining a thorough knowledge of the different fields of work, also the names of missionaries engaged in these fields. This interesting exercise was concluded with a short account of the pitiful condition of the Chinese girls in British Columbia.

It was all new to Helen and Marjorie. Having lived in an atmosphere of worldly comfort, for the first time they realized the unutterable misery and awful degradation that they were not lifting a finger to lessen.

With flushed face, dark eyes, beautiful with eager purpose, and feelings in a turmoil of indignation, Helen was conscious only of a wild desire to have the wretches of men who produced these distressing conditions condemned to suffer the extreme penalty of the law.

Marjorie shivered nervously as the deplorable facts were being related, and after a sorrowful thought for the suffering Chinese girls, mentally decided to take the cars home and avoid that long, dark block between the church and her house. She was startled by Helen's intense voice:

"Wouldn't I just like to be a man though? To go out there and teach these despicable creatures a lesson!"

The abused Chinese girls had one champion at that meeting, that was evident. But they had another, a more powerful one, in the owner of the sweet, clear voice previously heard that evening. She was now addressing the President.

"Mrs. James, I have been thinking a great deal lately upon one particular subject. May I mention to the young ladies some of the ideas that have occurred to me?"

"We are always pleased to hear you, Miss Robson. Your spoken thoughts have in the past proved such a valuable aid to our work," the President answered with a loving look, which caused the quiet face of the standing girl to brighten visibly.

That face had no claim to the world's idea of beauty, was decidedly thin, and the features imperfect in many respects, yet there existed a peculiar attraction of which all were conscious.

"I have been asking God to open a way for us, as a circle, to raise money," she proceeded. "While reading a particular verse in 2nd Timothy, I was forcibly impressed that the words came to me in the form of a command. The words were, 'Stir up the gift of God which is in thee.' I felt that I must be in possession of some gift from God which He desired me to 'stir up' for the purpose of using it to add some money to our circle treasury. Then the modesty that so hinders the Lord's work, suggested 'do not be so conceited as to imagine *you* are a gifted girl, Janet Robson,' and yet, do I not cast a slur on my Creator, when I persist in declaring I am not capable, am not gifted? Right there and then I realized a certain pleasure in acknowledging one gift I knew God had given me, that of being able to write rapidly, in a clear, business hand. How could this avail me? Never mind, it was my 'gift,' I had stirred it up and the Lord would show me in what way He specially wanted me to use it for Him. The apostle Paul's words, 'covet earnestly the best gifts,' flashed into my mind. I felt my one gift sink into insignificance, as I thought of and long-

ed to be one of the chosen few with finished educations, painting, music and other accomplishments at their command. But I knew that was not coveting gifts as the Bible taught. Then it seemed to me, if I used faithfully in my Master's service this 'one gift,' it would be the true way of showing Him I coveted the 'best gifts,' that I might be a more useful worker in the cause of missions. I went to the office yesterday," most of the young people knew Janet was copyist in a lawyer's office, "wondering how God wished me to use this one gift for him. My employer met me at the door with these words, 'Miss Robson, do you think you can arrange to write two extra hours, say twice a week? The busy season will last twelve or thirteen weeks, and at fifteen cents an hour will amount to a little over seven dollars.' I cannot explain to you how thankfully I accepted this offer. This morning I went one hour earlier and remained one hour later, and they were the brightest hours during the entire day. They were hours fraught with so much blessing to my own soul, that I cannot refrain from telling the members of this circle how the Lord taught me the meaning of the words, 'stir up the gift of God which is in thee.'"

The peculiar pathos and love in the girl's voice, appealed to the hearts of her listeners. With moist eyes and quivering lips the President said, solemnly, "Let us bow our heads for a few moments in silent prayer, that God may teach us 'the spirit of missions is the spirit of Christ.'"

And in that perfect stillness, the noiseless work of the Holy Spirit would tell through all eternity.

As the heads were raised many eyes were turned in the direction of the tall girl standing near the back, with dark hair in heavy braids, so arranged that the shapely head was defined rather than concealed. Large, observant eyes that combined with the mouth in suggesting that even the suspicion of a joke would be appreciated. But the face is now earnest and animated by beautiful thoughts and desires. It is Helen Livingston.

"I have one gift. I can recite, and though I never thought of using it as a means of raising money, I know I can." She was hardly in her seat before another young lady, the choir soloist, was upon her feet.

"Once in each quarter of this year, I shall devote the money raised in singing at some concert to the circle." The young lady sitting next to Helen followed.

"Mrs. James, I do not know how to do anything very well, except cook and keep house, so that must be my gift. I am rather famous for my tea-buns and gingersnaps. I know I shall not have any difficulty in selling a good large batch of both once every month for the next six months."

"I'll take them this month," whispered Helen.

A teacher in one of the public schools was the next to speak. "After four, two days in the week, I teach a few pupils special subjects at thirty cents an hour. I shall either secure one more scholar during the coming term, or devote the proceeds from one I already have to the cause of missions."

One after the other rose and signified a desire to use in some way the gift God had given them. Finally it was decided to have a volunteer committee called Personal Work for the Lord, with the motto, "Stir up the gift of God which is in thee." Miss Janet Robson was appointed chairwoman, and that evening the majority of those present wrote their names in her note-book. At the end of every quarter they promised to report to her the results from the gift consecrated to the cause of missions. Why did not Helen place her name in that book?

"Personal work for the Lord," she thought, and the words seemed to stand out in bright glaring letters before her eyes. The president and most of the young ladies shook hands cordially and gave Marjorie and Helen a hearty welcome.