

A SUCCESSFUL MISSIONARY SOCIETY.



YOU would have supposed she would cry; but she was curled up under the old willow sobbing woefully when her four sisters entered the gate from school.

"What can be the matter?" they cried, and all swooped down upon her, telling her how they were sorry, and asking her what could be the trouble.

"It's all because of that bad, wicked old grandma," came the tearful answer.

"W-h-a-t!" in varying tones of astonishment.

"It's about a wicked old grandma who threw a little baby girl out for the dogs to eat."

"Avis Sweet, what are you talking about?"

Avis sat up and dried her tears to tell them.

"A letter just came from Miss Ellis, telling mamma about a cruel old China grandma who took a little baby just as soon as God sent it and threw it out for the dogs; and one of the mission people found it and brought it in. And mamma is going to ask our church to adopt it."

"Well, they won't," said Violet, grimly. "If there is anything this church is absolutely hardened upon, it is the subject of foreign missions."

Violet was right. To all Mrs. Sweet's pleading they turned a deaf ear.

Deacon Coldstream was most emphatically against it; and he was the most influential man in the church except Mr. Grace, who was very wealthy and well liked. But he was a very quiet man, so Deacon Coldstream usually had his way.

"Oh—oh—oh!" wailed Avis, to whom the little waif seemed strangely near and dear. I am just going to take care of her myself."

"So you shall, darling, and we will all help you," said Dot, hugging their pet.

After a great deal of planning with father and mother, the five girls actually assumed the responsibility of providing for the little "China baby," as Avis called her.

Violet was seventeen. Dot fifteen, the twins, Ruth and Rose, thirteen, and Avis eight.

Quite an undertaking, truly.

"Another begging society," said Deacon Coldstream.

Dot shut her teeth with a little click to keep the funny, saucy answer that rose to her lips from flying out.

"We will not beg one cent," she said.

"No," said Violet, "we will save what little we can, the rest we will earn; but how?"

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A year rolled swiftly by. One Sabbath morning Mr. Rushton preached a missionary sermon to his hearers. At the close he said, "I think there has been a feeling of interest in Foreign Missions growing among us, and I thought I would speak on the subject and ask you if you would not like to organize a society."

Deacon Coldstream sprang up to reply, and everyone felt the cause was about to receive its death-blow.

He began by telling what a terrible time they had raising the minister's salary, and enlarged upon the subject until Mr. Rushton felt he was a worm of the dust, unworthy of his hire.

Then he went on saying how hard the times were, etc., until everyone felt as if he were well started toward the poorhouse when he sat down.

To everyone's amazement Mr. Grace immediately arose.

I am going to tell you of a Missionary Society already in our midst. I hope the young members will forgive me telling of their brave efforts and entire success. Most of you know that Mr. Sweet's girls are taking care of a Chinese baby; but I am sure you do not know how they have done it. Violet has been every Saturday into a neighbor's kitchen and done her cooking. Dot has done plain sewing for anyone who wished it. Rose has washed her aunt's dishes all the year when required, and Ruth has made a day-nursery of her mother's sitting room and taken care of babies at five cents an hour. And little Avis has run errands for a lazy old neighbor and earned her full share."

Everyone knew Mr. Grace meant himself, but they did not know he had actually lain awake nights thinking up errands suitable for an eight-year old.

"When I tell you these girls have neither neglected school or home duties, you will understand how faithful and unselfish they have been; and Avis says, 'We are going to do it again next year, we are so happy helping Jesus.' My friends, how many of you want to organize a Church Missionary Society and share this happiness?"

Almost the entire congregation arose to their feet, signifying their desire to do so.

Oh, those dear girls! They builded better than they knew.—*Children's Missionary Friend.*