

“that I had declined to serve as collector, but they were all so anxious, and spoke so appreciatively of my influence and ability that I thought I wouldn't—especially as I saw Alice Bennett had no notion of declining. If such a shrinking timid girl, with as little force of character as she has, can be collector, I guess I can,” and Miss Burns smiled complacently.

“'Tis true I haven't seen much of her this last year, but she doesn't look as if she had changed much; such girls rarely do. I must say, Mrs Wade can't be very discerning, if she is our pastor's wife, or she wouldn't have proposed her for a collector. As for Mrs Foster I don't know her personally. She looks bright and intelligent enough, but she seems so nervous and hurried all the time. I don't much wonder, for someone said she had done her own work ever since she was married, and her sewing, too.

“Poor woman! How does she think she's going to find time for anything more? Well, I shall have to do all the more if they don't get much, and it's quite evident they won't.

“Where is that list of names they gave me? I wonder if I know them all! Ah, here it is! Let me see, thirty-two names—thirty-two dollars—I may as well say thirty-five, it sounds better, and I can get the other three dollars easily enough. If those other two collectors were only a—a little different, somehow, we might do something; Three times thirty-five—why, over a hundred dollars! Dear me! they only raised last year fifteen dollars in all!

“What could have been the reason? I wonder who they had for collectors. Some one said they'd moved away, married, died, or something, I don't remember which, and it's a good thing they did, for they couldn't have amounted to much.”

“Fifteen dollars” she repeated a little later as she adjusted her bonnet before the mirror, “just think of it! I don't wonder that the President felt that something must be done. I'm sure I hope, with her, that the three new collectors will bring life and vigor and money to the society, but I doubt it somewhat in Alice Bennett's case. I shall do all in my power, however.”

“It is pleasant to work when one's efforts are appreciated. Undoubtedly I shall collect much more than a third of the whole, whatever that may be, for I certainly believe, with Mrs Wade, that a great deal depends upon the collector.”

So with an air of assurance, Miss Laura Burns drew on the gloves that so exactly matched the stylish costume, and passed out of the house to begin to walk the rugged way of