

ed of hearing about the heathen!" Isn't that awful? Think of the impiety of it!

'I don't think the impiety is so great as in some of the other cases. She is pious enough to tell the truth, at least.'

'But, to think of being tired of hearing about the heathen!'

'She forgets, you see; that they are God's heathen.'

'That is true. I verily believe she thinks they are my heathen. She acted as if I was disposed to force them on her for my own private ends.' And Mrs. Chester smiled as she recalled the conversation.

'Mrs. Hobbs lacks imagination,' remarked Miss Montague. 'You see, she can't put herself in the place of a Chinese, or a Hindu, or an African woman. That is where she fails; and I think it is so with many others. You know Ruskin says that without imagination it is impossible to be reverent or kind.'

'I think it is conviction that is needed more than imagination—thorough-going conviction of personal duty—but I must go on with my roll. Mrs. Davis never comes; she has to give all her time to her music. Mary Pierce would come if she could; she does all in her power for us, and is a real comfort. Mrs. Gilman is learning Christian science, and therefore she cannot come! Mrs. Finch—oh, that is too absurd!—you never could guess why she stays away from the meetings! Mrs. Morris called on all the neighbors on the other side of the street and did not visit her. When the minister's wife cuts you direct what remains but to cut the missionary meetings? There seemed to be no other course open to her. I happen to know that Mrs. Morris had planned to make all the calls on the other side of South street the next afternoon, but took cold that damp day, and was confined to the house for a number of weeks.'

'Of course, you told Mrs. Finch.'

'O yes, but she still feels that the missionary circle is responsible.' And they both laughed.

Mrs. Chester proceeded with her roll-call, and closed her book at the end with an air of justifiable depression.

'You feel as if you and Mary Pierce, and half a dozen others were about all who have not bowed the knee to Baal, don't you?' asked Miss Montague, smiling.

Mrs. Chester did not reply.

'Come, my dear, don't establish yourself permanently under a juniper tree; it is a poor place for even a night's lodging. The question in point is, what is to be done? If all these good Christian women are neglecting service and privilege in this matter of foreign missions, there must be some one underlying reason. What is it?'

'Amy Montague,' Mrs. Chester exclaimed, 'the reason is that they don't read, and don't know the work, the workers, or the field.'

'But there are the papers and the magazines for this very purpose.'

'Yes, and they read everything else first, and once a year or so they have a missionary spasm, and race through everything they can find on some given subject, get up quite an enthusiasm, feel as if they had done God's service, and had placed missionaries and heathen under some obligation, and then they relapse into the old neglect.'

'You are very severe. It hardly seems as if this could be quite so,' returned Miss Montague, thoughtfully.

'It is not so with all, but it is so with very many,' said Mrs. Chester, rising. 'I must go, I have given you too much of my burden now. I am afraid it was selfish my coming.' And she looked anxiously into the face of her friend.

But there was no cloud there.

'I am particularly glad you came to me about it, because I know better how to pray now, and how to do a little work in my own line; you know my range is narrow. But you see, I can keep the papers at hand, and when people come in I can read them a bit here and there, and talk about the news from Asia and Africa occasionally. Isn't it strange how much more we discuss the contents of all other periodicals?'

'That is just the thing to do. Let people feel your enthusiasm, and they can't help taking fire. Good-bye! It is later than I thought, and I have to stop at Ethel Craig's for a moment to ask her to write a paper on Assam for our next meeting.'

'And you won't resign?'

'No, I'll go to praying instead.'

'It will be so much more useful. You know Paul didn't resign when word came through Chloe of the way the Corinthians were behaving. He thanked God first of all for the good and beautiful things about them—and he found so many, you know—and then he set to work to help them see their calling a little clearer. Patience, love.'

'Thank you,' and Mrs. Chester went out to her carriage.

This was on Friday. The Monday following, Mr. Morris, pastor of Unity Church, entertained the Ministers' Club at dinner. Consequently, we find Mrs. Morris vibrating between her kitchen and pantry, on Monday morning, in a state of activity which would have gladdened the expectant minds of the brethren, could they have seen it. While thus engaged she was interrupted by the announcement of a caller; and with the hope that the call might not be a long one, she hastened to the parlor, where Miss Ethel Craig awaited her.

Now, Miss Craig was of a literary turn of mind, and slightly touched with Anglo-mania. She belonged to the Browning Club, found Occultism delightful, and the 'Light of Asia' soul-refreshing. Miss Montague would have found no reason to complain that a lack of imagination disqualified her from taking an interest in the heathen; indeed, Miss Craig often said that there was something in the genius of the Hindu philosophy and poetry which peculiarly appealed to her, which is more than can be said of the average Anglo-Saxon. Miss Montague might perhaps have wished that Hinduism appealed to her less and Christianity more. The difficulty with Ethel Craig's imagination was simply that it had not been brought into captivity to Christ, whose name she professed.

Miss Craig now advanced to meet Mrs. Morris with both well gloved hands extended, a smile in her large soft eyes, and a word of apology on her lips.

'You must excuse my interrupting you at this time in the morning. So busy I know. I can quite imagine how it must be; which, however, she could not in the least, as Mrs. Morris was distinctly aware. 'I won't detain you a moment, Mrs. Morris; I only want a little help. I have such an undertaking on my hands. Mrs. Chester insists on my writing a paper for the Missionary Society.'

'O I see,' replied Mrs. Morris, in a somewhat brief and business-like way. 'That will be very congenial work for you, I should think.'

Ethel Craig looked doubtful.

'Well, of course, it is not difficult for me to write; but I have a paper on hand now for the Browning Club, and it requires so much thought, you know; it is such a responsibility to touch one line of his. One fears so to misinterpret even a syllable or a comma, don't you know? Why, it will utterly destroy an entire passage. I feel my own—unworthiness, and that—you know how I mean—one seems so small and weak.' As

she paused slightly, Mrs. Morris remarked—

'I don't think I should allow the commas to absorb too much time. I fancy Browning scattered them somewhat accidentally. About what are you to write for the meeting, may I ask?'

'O certainly. This is the object of my coming. I knew you could help me. Of course you have all the missionary literature; and I must begin reading now. It is Assam—missions and all that, you know, in Assam. Now, what would I better read?'

'You have the "Helping Hand," of course?'

'Well, that is just the trouble. Of course I subscribe, and it comes to the house, but really, I am so full of everything that it does get put aside—don't you know how that is so many times?—and I can't find the numbers now. I don't seem to recall anything about Assam. Of course, I have known about it.'

Mrs. Morris had risen, and now said cheerfully, although her mind was reverting somewhat longingly to the kitchen—

'If you will come up with me to the study, we will look over some files of different magazines and try to find what will help you.'

Accordingly the two ladies went upstairs, and while Mrs. Morris plunged into the depths of the closet where magazine files were kept, Miss Craig took up a volume of Matthew Arnold's poetry which she found upon the desk, and soon became absorbed in it.

Mrs. Morris thought she had never seemed so helpless as she did that morning, and half provoked, the little woman emerged from the closet with her arms full of pamphlets, and said—

'Now, if you like, you can help me to run these over and see which numbers have anything in point.'

'Yes, indeed,' said Ethel, springing to her feet. 'It does seem too bad to make you so much trouble. I recall more about Assam now; it seems to come back to me. It is in Africa, isn't it? I remember. They wear so few clothes, and all that, don't you know?'

Mrs. Morris smiled.

'I shall have to make you a present of a missionary map. No, Assam isn't in Africa, my dear. It is in your beloved India.'

'O so it is! I thought it would all come back to me. The people are Buddhists, you remember,' added Ethel, with a smile of misplaced confidence.

'Brahminists, I believe. Here is an article which you will find useful.' And Mrs. Morris laid aside a copy of the magazine.

Ethel was mortified, but still cheerful, and in about half an hour went her way, leaving Mrs. Morris to return to her work and hurry all the morning to make up for the delay.

Ethel had exacted a promise that she would come in the week before the missionary meeting to hear her paper and criticize and—but this understanding was, tacit—admire.

Hence, a fortnight later, being in the neighborhood of Ethel Craig's home one afternoon, Mrs. Morris ran in to see her, saying, as she found her in the library—

'How about that paper? Is it ready to read, and are you at liberty? I have just half an hour before a committee meeting at the Association rooms, and I can give this time to it if you can.'

Ethel wore a long and very aesthetic-looking tea gown of heliotrope-tinted cashmere that afternoon. Her cheeks were flushed, her eyes dreamy and moist, as if with recent tears. A thick volume lay in the great easy-chair from which she had risen when Mrs. Morris entered the room. The latter lady's alert manner and clear-cut speech brought