

the first one of the kind in the United States of America. At the first meeting of this new-born Society she pledged one dollar as her free-will offering to the cause. To obtain that sum she walked four miles to Schenectady, secured some vests to make at one of the shops, and then walked home again with her work. And at every meeting of the Society she never failed to bring an offering for herself and each of her children, while they were small. One of her daughters died, but the gift was still continued with the words, "this is for Ann." Her yearly offering sometimes amounted to \$20, and was sent, now to the American Board, and then to another foreign missionary society in which she was also interested.

For this sacred purpose Mrs. Clewe sometimes reared missionary chickens, sometimes planted a piece of ground, or set apart a portion of her butter and eggs.

And during all these fifty or more years of her consecrated life, this "Mother in Israel," continued to hold the missionary meeting of the Society she had originated in her own home, even if none were present but herself and one of her children. A chapter was read, a hymn sung, and prayer offered, and this, not monthly, but every week. One of the original members of the little Society is still living, and testified that when Mrs. Clewe was to ill to rise from her bed, the same order was observed, and that she would turn herself and offer a fervent prayer for missions and missionaries throughout the world, pleading that some of her descendants might be thus used of God. September 9th, 1889, she was called from the earthly to the heavenly kingdom, being 88 years of age, and like a shock of corn, fully ripe. And now, within two years of her death, a grandson of this noble Christian woman, of whom the world has never heard (a young physician), is appointed as a missionary of the American Board for West Central Africa, soon to depart with his young wife and little child for that "dark continent."

To the successful conducting of a ladies' missionary meeting, something more is needed than an able leader; we want also, a state of preparation in all making part of that meeting.

I suppose there is no lady here who does not think she can light a fire—see; here is one ready laid, you only need to apply the match. But what is wrong—is not the match good? Try again; yes, the match is all right; touch it to this fair bit of paper, does it catch? No—a little fizzle, a burnt black hole, and all is out again. Try this little shaving of wood, it looks promising; no, it won't go; try in half a dozen places, it may catch somewhere; fan carefully; touch tenderly—no use; a tiny tongue of flame, which leads to nothing, a slight crackle, a sullen red spot here and there, for a moment, with little puffs of pungent smoke that catch the breath and fill the eyes with tears, that is all the result of your efforts; the wood is damp, the kindling ill-chosen, ill-prepared, not properly put together—no fire here to-day.

Now, come with me to my old-fashioned open kitchen fireplace—"No fire here," you say, only a few half-burned logs, and a heap of white ashes; wait a bit till we carefully push aside those ashes, and stir up the dark bed of charcoal beneath; ha! see! a spark! a bright red coal! yes, lots of them! Now we will take of that carefully prepared light-wood; lay it down tenderly, gingerly, stick by

stick, upon that glowing hearth; see the little tongues of flame leap up; how daintily they curl around those bits of resinous pine; how they steal into the very heart of the dry fragrant cedar, till the whole mass is wrapped in its embrace, and now the joyous blaze fills the room with its ruddy light, leaping, dancing, laughing in its glee, as if the imprisoned sunlight of a dozen summers were bursting into happy freedom. Now pile on the heavier wood; hang the kettle over the heat; this is a fire for work, as well as pleasure; 'twill cook the family meals; 'twill bake the family bread; 'twill wrap the whole household in warmth and cheerfulness, and when the evening shadows fall about the hills and swaying forest trees, when the fast falling snow covers up paths from settlement to settlement, its beacon light will stream out through the window panes, and tell the weary, half-frozen traveller of home-welcome, of home rest and comfort.

In histories of the past we read of old heathen temples, where the altar-fire was never allowed to go out night and day; through storm and shine, the bright clear flame must ascend ever, casting back to the great sun-god some faint reflection of his beneficent, unchanging, all-pervading power. No expense was spared, no trouble was too great for this end; busy hands were ever active, feeding, trimming the precious fire. Should it burn low, *conspiration ran through the city*. Should it go out—nay, it could *never* go out, while there were still hearts left to care for it, hands to minister to it; its extinction meant ruin, desolation, destruction.

Christian friends, the altar-fires in our hearts should never be forgotten; they need constant tending, or they will burn low, perchance be covered with the ashes of pride, ambition, selfishness, which flares up, and leaves nothing good behind. Let us persistently, penitently, put aside those ashes, and search for the sacred spark; feed it tenderly with divine truth, fan it patiently with the breath of prayer and praise, and as the flame grows clear and strong, let it shed its light abroad for the welfare of others, the glory of God. "Let your light so shine," says our Lord. Oh! if every Christian's light shone out as Christ would have it shine, what a warmth and glow would there be through all the length and breadth of Christendom! Nay, would not the radiance spread far over distant land and sea, piercing the dark clouds of heathen ignorance and superstition, heralding the speedy rising of the glorious Sun of Righteousness, who comes with "healing in His wings?"

It is to this end that we hold the stated meetings of our Missionary Auxiliary, that we may strengthen one another, with mutual sympathy and mutual prayer; stimulate each the other with