

## How Can the Co-operation of all the Sisters in the Church be Secured for Missions.\*

In the life of our dear Lord, we have many examples of the value He set upon His time for teaching and preaching the Gospel, during His sojourn upon earth. At the early age of twelve, He was found in the temple surrounded by many learned doctors, both hearing them and asking questions, and when He was informed of the sorrow of His mother and Joseph, caused by His detention He regarded it as nothing, in comparison with the great work of His Father, God. "Know ye not I must be about My Father's business?" To His disciples He showed that every opportunity for doing good must be improved. "I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work." When He sent out the twelve, He gave them power against unclean spirits, etc., telling them to preach, saying "the kingdom is at hand." In like manner He sent out the seventy, assuring them that "he that heareth you, heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me." Did our Saviour not confer great honor upon His disciples when He entrusted them with the message of divine truth? They were not to issue the proclamation of peace, they must go and preach the Gospel to every creature. It is now given to their successors, the ministers and teachers of the Gospel, whose prerogative it is to declare the truth from age to age to the end of time. The sisters who were so active in carrying the news of the resurrection to the disciples filled an important part and it appears as if others were specially qualified for Christian work on the day of Pentecost. From that time to the present there have been Christian women telling the same Gospel story and thousands have received Christ as the hope of glory. Yet in examining our church record we find that only about one quarter of our female membership is identified in the work of Christian Missions. How can this deplorable state be overcome? How can we secure the co-operation of all. First, we believe by our seeking and living a more spiritual life, and is not this the great desire of every Christian woman? There are many tendencies all around to quench our zeal, and keep our work on the dead level, so many little anxieties and burdens. We almost forget to cast our care upon Him who careth for us, and that there is a sufficiency of grace for every time of need, thus allowing our spiritual life to suffer thereby. When Martha came to Jesus cumbered by her domestic cares, thinking Mary should be partaker in the burdens instead of sitting at the Master's feet; he said, "Martha, Mary hath chosen the good part which shall not be taken from her." Whilst we may at times serve the Lord as acceptably by giving a cup of cold water to one of His little ones, as if the service were greater; we must not remain contented by only giving the cup of cold water. The newly born soul is seldom asleep in Christian work. Every impulse of the heart is drawn out in gratitude to God for his redeeming love. He is all alive with zeal, and the early question is, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" He can speak to any one about God's love for the lost. He can testify to God's saving and keeping, whenever an opportunity is presented, and he can make an opportunity mostly any time. But, let the first barrier come in between the soul and God, non-activity immediately ensues. Burdensome crosses appear, excuses frame themselves in the most attractive forms, and step by step, ere we know it, indifference to

God's cause is manifest. One step from God is a serious draw back to Christian work. Paul says, "whether one member of the body suffereth, all the members suffer with it," or "one member rejoiceth all the members rejoice with it." By our living in daily communion with God, we abide in Him and if we abide in Him and He in us, we shall ask in accordance to His will. We shall bear much fruit, for he says "He that abideth in Me and I in him the same beareth much fruit. \* \* \* Herein is My Father glorified that ye bear much fruit."

Secondly, by a knowledge of the work: The field for Christian work is the world and yet some are unwilling to move in this large field. Many are uninterested in missions simply because they have no conception of the needy condition of those sitting in spiritual darkness, whether it is in our own country or in distant countries. To get a fair view of such a state, read what Paul says in Romans I: 18-32: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness, etc., etc." Those uninterested in the needy, may be tender, affectionate parents, whose sympathy could be easily moved if they were to hear of the distress of a neighbor, or if a family in a certain district were suffering for the common necessities of life. They are full of sympathy and charity when the cases are brought before their eyes, but to seek those cases never enters their minds. Whilst they with their families around them enjoying the comforts and blessings of a Christian home, they never think of their needy neighbors in India, China, Japan, Africa and elsewhere, suffering for the Bread of Life, living their dark lives of degradation with no knowledge of the happiness of a Christian, or the joys of the home beyond. Let us look beyond the limits of our own homes; let us go out into the byways and search for the needy; let us read about the ignorance of the inhabitants of those countries, bound by the chains of idolatry. Let us become familiar with their manners and customs, remembering too, that they have immortal souls, either to be saved or lost, and how can they hear the Gospel without a preacher, and how can they preach except they be sent. Then when we pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," let us mingle works with faith and do our part faithfully, knowing God will do His.

Perhaps there is no way we can get a better knowledge of the work of Foreign Missions, than by reading. It is necessary to have missionary literature in every home, in our Sabbath schools, and in our missionary societies. Let us provide juvenile missionary papers for our children. Tell them missionary stories, not only teaching them of the needy heathen children, but also of the true heroism of our missionaries, and the self-sacrifices they make. Thus we can enlist their young sympathy in this work; then when the grace of God renews their hearts, they are ready to take hold of the work.

Another means of dispelling the lethargy and indifference to the cause of Missions is, by united effort, "Union is strength." Smiles says, "Though only the generals' names may be remembered, in the history of any campaign, it has been in a great measure, through the individual valor and heroism of privates that victories have been won."

In the organization of the W. M. A. S., we want every woman in the church to come forward, and with her individual valor, and a heart full of love, do her part in advancing the Saviour's claims. Too frequently this is left for the pastor's wife, with two or three others to hold up her hands. We don't wish to take from any sister the satisfaction there is in doing what she can, whether it is

\* Read before the Annual Meeting at Wolfville, N.S., August, 1888, by Mrs. Martell.