

for that." For indeed the dear young girl was as much in earnest to spend and be spent in Christian service as the mother, and the story of her self-denying labors among the young is a pleasant one to read.

So the notes were written and sent out on Saturday. On Sunday, after the morning service, Mrs. Gray, as was her wont, stopped to shake hands with and give a friendly greeting to one and another, and while doing so whispered in the ear of each one, "Take your fancy work or stocking-mending and come down and sit with me to-morrow evening, from seven to nine. I am going to read for an hour to a few of my friends."

Monday afternoon Clara and her mother swept and put in nice order the cosy sitting-room at No. 75, made a cheery fire in the grate, arranged flowers on the mantle, brought together all the nice comfortable chairs the house afforded, and disposed everything as attractively as possible.

As the hour approached, Mrs. Gray found herself often looking up for guidance to Him who had bidden her "sow beside all waters," asking Him to point out the path so plainly that she might not err. Notwithstanding she had thought over this matter long and carefully, it was with a start of somewhat surprised pleasure that she heard the door-bell announce the first comer, quickly, followed by another and another, and by the time the hour for meeting arrived thirteen were present.

After a little social conversation each one settled down to her work and seemed ready to listen. Mrs. Gray gave a few words of welcome and the reading began. I cannot describe to you what a pleasant audience it was. With fingers actively employed, ears were open to words of wisdom and good cheer, and minds free to receive new thoughts and impulses.

Mrs. Gray read first "The Packing of the Barrel," which is full of suggestion to those who have but little to give yet possess the willing heart. "Go thou and do likewise," seemed to ring from every sentence.

Then followed a little chat over what had been read, and some curiosities sent from Japan were brought out and examined. Attention was then given to the reading of "Eleven Reasons for not Going to the Missionary Meeting." Not one who listened could fail to see how weak and futile were the excuses she herself had often given for remaining at home. Many new resolves were made, and we shall be surprised if the meetings are not more fully attended in the future than in the past.

Mrs. Gray had quite a gallery of missionaries' pictures; these she passed about, telling little incidents concerning each person represented, in the endeavor to enlist personal interest in each one.

Reading was then resumed, and now it was "By the Wayside," a leaflet full of practical thought.

By this time it was 9 o'clock, and the ladies dispersed to their homes. The tired young mother leaves with an elastic step, a restful look in her eyes and an encouraged feeling in her heart. For has she not passed a pleasant evening away from the routine of family care, has she not made all the buttonholes in Helen's apron with scarce a thought of her tired fingers; and besides all has heard more reading than she would have been able to do for herself in a month!

Miss Fanny Vernon has done a full two hours of uninterrupted work on the table-spread she was making for her sister's Christmas present. Nervous Mrs. Linsey, whom thoughtful Mrs. Gray had in mind when she placed that large, easy-chair in a retired corner of the room, has not been so quietly at ease for two hours in many a day. And thus, in spite of Clara Gray's forebodings, this little

social and literary gathering, even on a Monday evening, was a success. Indeed, so sure of this was Mrs. Gray herself that with tears of joy and gratitude she thanked her heavenly Father for the thought that came to her in the still hours of the night.

And Clara too, when she saw what pleasure it gave her mother, said, "After this, mother dear, I will never try to discourage the plans that come of your thinking."

But this was not the last of it. On eight following alternate Monday evenings a group of interested listeners gathered in Mrs. Gray's cheery sitting-room and library. One evening, when the snow had been falling fast since four o'clock, Clara said to her mother, as she was putting the finishing touches to her preparations, "Mamma, why bring so many chairs and do so many extra things this stormy evening? I can think of but three who would dream of braving such a storm as this, and I shall be surprised if even they come."

"Oh, Clara, this is just the time to take most pains. They who come must find it so pleasant they will be heartily glad they did not mind the snow. I'm going to read just the newest, most entertaining and instructive story I have to-night."

Stamping on the front doostep and a quick pull at the bell announced an arrival. Joyous voices outside revealed the coming of more than one, and in at the open door came five, among them one who for years had been marked as an invalid. Amid the cordial greetings were words of surprise to see Miss Hilton, wrapped to her very eyes in mufflers.

"And you here too this stormy night?"

"Oh yes; I could not stay away. This friend was visiting me, and I did want her to come to one of these readings, so here we are."

And before the hour for reading arrived a merry party of fourteen had gathered, and the hour was delightfully spent listening to the sweet story of innocent Miss Toosey, who builded better than she knew when in her eagerness to do something for her Master she sought advice of young Mr. John Rossier. "She did what she could," unwittingly planting a tiny seed which sprang up and brought forth fruit an hundredfold.

In the words of the author, "It was a very contemptible barley loaf which she had to offer, compared with your fine white wheat cake of youth and riches and strength and learning, but remember she offered her best freely, willingly, faithfully; and when once a thing is offered it is no longer the little barely loaf in the lady's hand, but the miraculous, satisfying bread of heaven in the hand of the Lord of the harvest, more than sufficient for the hungry multitude."

On another Monday evening Mrs. Snow brought with her a young lady from New York. The stranger listened with intense interest, and when she left expressed much more than the usual pleasure in the enjoyment of the hour. Next time Mrs. Snow met Mrs. Gray she said, "I want to tell you how much my friend enjoyed the Monday evening at your house. She writes it has shown her a way in which she can do something to help others, and she is going to have Monday evening readings at her home, to which she will invite her young lady friends."

The journal letter of Mrs. Robert Logan, written on her way to Micronesia, furnished the reading for one evening. Mrs. Gray had procured duplicate copies of the *Missionary Herald, Life and Light and Gospel in All Lands*, in which were pictures of Micronesian natives, homes and scenery. These she cut out carefully and mounted on a cardboard, furnishing thus, at trifling expense and trouble, illustrations for a little talk on the