

Missionary Society.

MONMOUTH, OR.,
Jan. 6, 1884.

To the Christian Woman Missionary Society

DEAR SISTERS,—According to our usual custom, we have met to-day at the beginning of another year to review the past; and I trust every one will bear in mind that each year as it passes must furnish its own lessons of encouragements or admonitions. No extraordinary events have taken place I believe in the past year in our mission work, except the increased interest and membership, and new auxiliaries being organized, which denotes success and growth in our every undertaking in the Master's cause, for which blessings our hearts should be filled with gratitude to our Heavenly Father, who has so richly blessed our efforts to honor his name and extend his kingdom in the earth. The auxiliary work is progressing and is very gratifying. The church is beginning to feel that missionary work is an essential part of the Christian life. This influence is extending and is being felt already in congregations that have seemed to be indifferent, until the organization of a missionary society in their midst, becomes an obligation recognized as a duty and a ruling power for good. Still we must expect and will have opposition to contend against in some localities, although opposition to woman's work is fast giving away and will soon be numbered with things of the past. But the greatest and most formidable opposition, and by far the most disheartening, is the indifference of so many of the sisters to a work of such importance to them, a work so dear to every one who enters into it with a whole heart. It seems as though they want something new or exciting to take place at every meeting, or they cease to even favor us with their presence. But even this should not discourage us too much; and we need not expect to be exempt from annoyances and vexations in this work, for the whole Christian life is a warfare, and we should remember that it is not by escaping trials, but by meeting and overcoming them, that we are made stronger and better, and more able to contend for the cause of Christ and his religion.

It has been now about eight years ago since our first Woman's Christian Missionary Society was organized in Monmouth, and since that time we have not changed the

simple principles and purposes thus adopted. These are well understood by those who were engaged at the outset; but for the information of those who have come into the work since, I have a few words to say. It has been said that the church should carry on this and similar work, that societies are unnecessary and unscriptural. We will admit that the conversion of the world is indeed the work of the church, intrusted to her by our Master in the very last hour of his earthly existence; and if all who call themselves by his name would join in it, then, indeed, would no other organization be necessary; but this is not so. Some are indifferent, some undecided; meanwhile coöperation of individuals is necessary to accomplish what cannot be done by one or two or a few alone, and for convenience sake this coöperation or association together has a name. In modern language it is a society, which is as near Scriptural as anything we can get. My knowledge of Scripture is limited, but I think that the meetings of the disciples is in phrases like, "When they had come together; they were all with one accord in one place," &c., which I believe means to convene, or assemble themselves together to teach or to be taught, or attend to any business. I wish also to call attention to the fact that mere raising money is not our only or prime object; or if it is, we propose to reach it as a natural result of other objects clearly set forth in the constitution for the furtherance of the gospel, and to cultivate a missionary spirit, to encourage missionary effort in our churches, to disseminate missionary intelligence among our sisters, and secure systematic contributions for missionary purposes; these are some of the things we wish to do in order to raise money. It is an encouraging thing to see how large an amount can be raised in a short time by a steady contribution of small sums; and every one who gives as much as ten cents a month even, has a right to vote and a full participation in the work of all our meetings; and as all know, for these eight years we have moved on quietly striving to avoid sensation or display, or anything in manner or speech, or conduct, unbecoming to women professing godliness, always conscious, too, of our weakness and ignorance, we have constantly called upon our Heavenly Father for strength and wisdom, we

have rarely made direct public appeals for money; believing it injurious to steady growth, nor have we felt the necessity of resorting to such means to carry on the work on a limited scale or to sustain the society and keep it alive, and thus far have had a balance in the treasury at the end of every year; with some good accomplished during the year. Now it seems to me we have the members and the means to push forward the work with greater zeal the coming year, and the time has come for increased activity in the missionary work. We have men and means to accomplish great good in this State, if we can only get rid of that want of liberality, and get more zeal infused into the hearts of earnest men and women. We are all servants, and there is something for us all to do. If this were not so we would not have been brought into existence. Yes there is a place somewhere for us all to fill that is our own peculiar work, and if we would be true servants of Christ the Lord, we must be willing servants, ever ready to serve in whatever sphere we are placed, in business, in church, or in our families as he has called us without ever thinking of applause or gain in this world to self. We should not wish our good deeds to be heralded abroad, or praised and lauded to the skies, before we do anything worthy of such praise. But let our prime motive be to work for him who has died to redeem us from a world of woe. If we are not ready and willing to be misunderstood and unappreciated in our labors and motives, we are not like the Lord whom we profess to serve. He was willing to be despised and rejected, misunderstood, abused, and even put to death for our eternal redemption. Then let us set our hearts on the things which is in our own power—that of being better than we have been, and doing more for the cause of Christianity and the church in the coming years than we have done in years gone by; and we should remember in ministering to others we enter into the true order of life, and that our life comes from God, who is the universal giver of all good, which should prompt us to give, both in words and deeds of use to others. If we are not conscious of this feeling and impulse towards our God and fellowman, it is because we have become perverted in the reception of it, because the more we retain of the Divine character, the

more it must impel us to act in a God-like way and give, for we are told that he loves a cheerful giver, and certainly all things go to prove it, as he gives to us freely all things we have and are. Then perish luxury, ambition and every earthly interest if need be, for the accomplishment of this object. Come what will, we cannot afford to, we must not neglect this great work. Have we done what we could? Have we made any great sacrifices? Are we not under any obligations to the Lord? Come, let us awake out of our sleep and go to work in earnest for the Lord and his cause, my sisters, in this year, 1884.

MRS. A. M. BEDWELL.

There are few men to whom the duty does not come, sooner or later, of having to sit in judgment upon the deeds of others. And there is no duty which involves more responsibility than this, for he that judges his fellows lays down principles by which he himself must also be judged. To speak for God is never a task to be lightly undertaken; still less is it so when one has to speak words of condemnation or of acquittal, whose consequences for good or for evil may be never ending. Mr. Edwin Arnold has finely phrased this truth in his poem, *Al-Hakim*:

"The Prophet said: 'At the great day of doom
Such fear on the most upright judge
shall come,
That he shall moan, 'Ah! would to God that I
Had stood for trial, and not sat to try.'"
"He said: 'The Angels of the Scales
will bring
Just and unjust who judged before
Heaven's King,
Grasping them by the neck; and, if it
be,
One hath adjudged his fellows wickedly,
'He shall be hurled to hell so vast a
height
'Tis forty years' fierce journey ere he
light;
But if one righteously hath borne the
rod,
The Angels kiss those lips which spake
for God.'"

If one has a *duty* to pass judgment, he must take the responsibility, in the fear of God; but what shall be said of one who assumes such a responsibility needlessly?—*S. S. Times*.

The Christian was not meant merely to be an armor-keeper, but an armor-bearer; not to keep his armor bright for show, but ready for battle.