THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN IN CHINA

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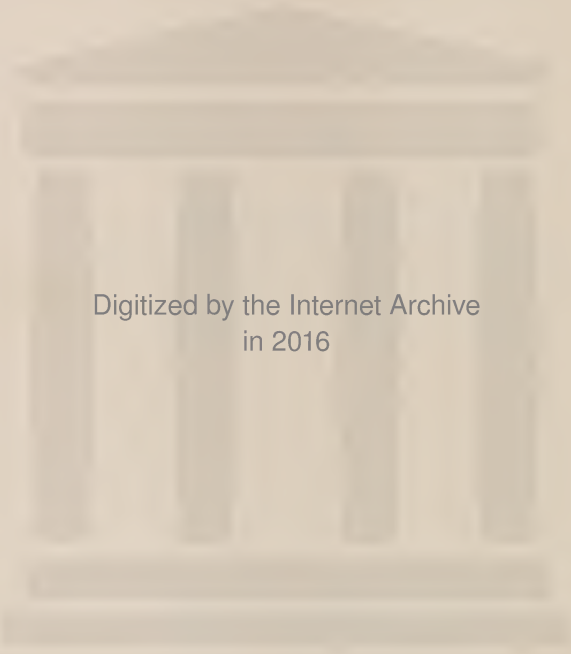
TO

My Mother and Father

IN LOVING RECOGNITION OF GIFTS

TOO GREAT FOR THANKS



PREFACE

Of all the remarkable changes which have taken place in China within the last decade, none is more significant than the change of attitude toward the education of women. Active interest and even enthusiasm have taken the place of the indifference or disapproval of the past centuries. China is coming to recognize that if she is to be genuinely strong, in the new era of her history upon which she is entering, her women must be given such education as will purify and elevate national life at its very source, the home. The character of the great new China will be determined in no small measure by the women of the nation, and what these women will be depends very largely upon whether they receive education, and upon the type of that education.

During a stay of six months in China in 1909 I was much interested in a study of the present conditions in woman's education, and visited several of the schools for girls, both those conducted by the Mission Boards and

those recently established by the Chinese. Since my return to this country I have continued my study, seeking to learn from the best available authorities the character of such education for women as existed before the entrance of Western influences, and to trace the history of modern education, using, as far as possible, original sources. Although these studies have been by no means exhaustive, I have put the results into their present form in the belief that they may be of interest to others as well as to myself. It is with the earnest hope that it may help to a clearer understanding of the power which the Chinese women are capable of exerting, and of their importance to the future of the oldest and most populous of the nations of the world, that this brief sketch of the history of the education of Chinese women is sent forth.

M. E. B.

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I

WOMAN'S EDUCATION BEFORE 1842

PROBABLY no nation of the world has ever reverenced education more profoundly, or been more influenced by it, than has China. "Education is the highest pursuit a man can follow" is a favourite maxim, and the genuineness of the people's belief in this statement is evidenced by the respect everywhere accorded to the educated man. During a visit to Canton, I one day accompanied a medical missionary on a visit to a patient in a small village some miles from the city. It was an unattractive village, dirty, squalid and isolated. But in that little village were erected, in a prominent position, three long slender poles, widening at the top, which I was told were the pride of the village, the visible evidence that three of its residents had received the coveted literary degrees which gave them a place among the "literati," the only aristocrats in democratic China.

This aristocracy is itself very democratic in character. The examinations for the literary

degrees have always been open to men of every rank. And although the holders of degrees may be of very humble families, it is they, rather than the men who have merely wealth or birth to recommend them, who are the influential members of a community. "They originate, shape and control public opinion. It would be difficult to overstate the respect in which they are held and the deference shown them everywhere and by all classes. They are the unofficial judges, the arbitrators in village or family differences, the disseminators of public news and commentators upon it, the authority in matters of etiquette and propriety, the leaders in feasts and amusements, the censors of morals, the writers and readers of letters for the illiterate, the teachers of the village schools. They draw contracts, business agreements of all sorts, and petitions to the authorities. They are the leaders of thought and action." [1]

In view of this universal reverence for education in China, it may not seem surprising that the earliest book on the subject of woman's education of which we have any knowledge was written in China, and by a Chinese woman, Lady Tsao. The subject has not been an uncommon one among Chinese writers, for

[1] Holcombe, *The Real Chinese Question*, p. 63.

they have not failed to realize the mother's influence on her children, and thus on the life of the nation, and with this in mind have recommended that women be educated. For example, Luhchau, one of the most distinguished Chinese essayists of the last century, published a book some years ago called the "Female Instructor," in the preface of which he says:

"The basis of the government of the Empire lies in the habits of the people, and the surety that their usages will be correct is in the orderly management of families, which last depends chiefly upon the females. In the good old times of Chau, the virtuous women set such an excellent example that it influenced the customs of the Empire, an influence that descended even to the times of the Ching and Wei states. . . Females are doubtless the source of good manners. From ancient times to the present this has been the case. The inclination to virtue and vice in women differs exceedingly; their dispositions incline contrary ways and if it is wished to form them alike there is nothing like education."

But the ideas of what should constitute woman's education have been somewhat different from those which we usually associate today with the word education. Luhchau goes

on to expound his ideals in the matter by quoting the ancient Ritual of Chau, according to which "the imperial wives regulated the law for educating females in order to instruct the ladies of the palace in morals, conversation, manners and work." After pointing out the great dissimilarity which he felt should exist between the education of men and that of women he speaks of the subjects in which he felt it was especially important that women should be instructed.

"First concerning her obedience to her husband and to his parents, then in regard to her complaisance to his brothers and sisters, and kindness to her sisters-in-law. If unmarried she has duties to her parents and to the wives of her elder brothers; if a principal wife a woman must bear no jealous feelings; if in straitened circumstances she must be contented with her lot; if rich and honourable she must avoid extravagance and haughtiness. Then teach her in times of trouble and days of ease how to maintain her purity, how to give importance to right principles, how to observe widowhood, how to avenge the murder of a relative. Is she a mother let her teach her children; is she a stepmother let her love and cherish her husband's children; is her rank in life high let her be condescending to her in-

feriors. . . . In conversation a female should not be froward and garrulous, but observe strictly what is correct, whether in suggesting advice to her husband, in remonstrating with him, in teaching her children, in maintaining etiquette, in humbly imparting her experience and in averting misfortune. The deportment of females should be strictly grave and sober and yet adapted to the occasion; whether in waiting on her parents, receiving or reverencing her husband, rising up or sitting down, in times of mourning, or fleeing in war she should be perfectly decorous. Rearing the silkworm and working cloth are the most important of the employments of a female; preparing and serving up the food for her household and setting in order the sacrifices, follow next, each of which must be attended to. After them study and learning can fill up the time." [2]

Another well-known book for women, called the Nü-rh Yü, or "Words for Women and Girls," written early in the last century by a Manchu official, sets forth instructions for women along much the same lines. It is written in metrical form so as to be easily memorized, and gives what are in the main sensible suggestions as to behavior, neatness, household management, the care of children and similar

[2] Williams, *The Middle Kingdom,* Vol. I, p. 574 f.

topics. A few extracts will show its general purport.

"When wives and girls are still in youth
Much need they have of constant heed.
At morn their place is first to rise,
At evening last to seek their couch,
To strive that all the work be done
And yield till others' meals are o'er. . . .
Are unused food or tea grounds left
She lays them by with careful thought
For those poor folk who come around
Compelled to live on chaff and earth. . . .
With filial duty serve the old
As if they were your household lords,
Help them in kindly patient acts
Without a word of grudging scorn. . . .
Serve great and small with equal zeal
And always let your will give way.
If lord or lady ask your help
First with your husband counsel take
For he to you must heaven be . . .
A wayward spouse with aims depraved
Can oft be urged to mend his way
By earnest words and constant talk,
And quickened thus to higher life. . . .
In all your care of tender babes
Mind lest they're fed or warmed too much;
The childish liberty first granted
Must soon be checked by rule and rein. . . .
All flesh and fruits when ill with colds
Are noxious drugs to tender babes
Who need a careful oversight,
Yet want some license in their play.
Be strict in all you bid them do,
For this will guard from ill and woe."[1]

[1] Williams, in *The Chinese Recorder*, Jan.-Feb., 1880.

Little Girls of Old China

The Nü Kiai, or "Rules for Women," written by Lady Tsao nearly seventeen centuries before the two books just referred to, is very similar to them in its general character. Lady Tsao says: "The virtue of a female does not consist altogether in extraordinary abilities or intelligence, but in being modestly grave and inviolably chaste, observing the requirements of virtuous widowhood, and in being tidy in her person and everything about her; in whatever she does to be unassuming, and whenever she moves or sits to be decorous. This is female virtue." [4]

The headings of the seven chapters of Lady Tsao's book will show what were, in her opinion, the most important features of a woman's education.

1. The state of subjection and weakness in which women are born.
2. The duties of a woman when under the power of a husband.
3. The unlimited respect due to a husband, and constant self-examination and restraint.
4. The qualities which render a female lovable, divided into those relating to her virtue, her conversation, her dress and occupations.

[4] Williams, *The Middle Kingdom,* Vol. I, p. 574.

5. The lasting attachment due from a wife to a husband.
6. The obedience due to a husband and to his parents.
7. The cordial relations to be maintained with her husband's brothers and sisters.[5]

It will be seen from these glimpses at three of the most important of the Chinese books on the education of women that the emphasis was laid almost exclusively on conduct, and that instruction in the three Rs and kindred topics was not considered at all an essential part of a woman's education. As Dr. Williams points out, these books "are rather to be compared to works like Sprague's 'Letters to a Daughter' or Hannah More's 'Education of a Princess,' than to what we call school books; for such branches as arithmetic, geography, ancient or modern history, philosophy and physics are not yet taught in any native school in China."[6]

The opinion of Confucius in regard to the education of women seems to have been generally held by the Chinese people until very recent times. Writing five hundred years before Lady Tsao, he said: "Women

[5] Williams, in *The Chinese Recorder*, Jan.-Feb., 1880.
[6] *The Chinese Recorder*, Jan.-Feb., 1880.

are as different from men as earth is from heaven. . . . Women indeed are human beings, but they are of a lower state than men and can never attain to full equality with them. The aim of female education therefore is perfect submission, not cultivation and development of the mind." To us who are accustomed to the ideals regarding the education of women which are prevalent in Christian nations to-day, such a standard may seem low indeed, but if it be compared with the ideas which have been held on the subject among other non-Christian nations, it will appear in a very different light, and we shall count it greatly to China's credit that she had any ideals at all regarding the instruction of women. Dr. Williams points out in the article already referred to that " the comparatively high position among pagan nations which has been accorded to women in China even from its earliest history has been due in a great measure to the conviction that they must be properly taught."

After all, however, the true status of woman's education in a nation cannot be determined merely by studying the theories advanced on the subject in the nation's literature. Theory and practice are not always perfectly in accord, and Dr. James S. Dennis has pointed out

that they are not so in China. "There seems," he says, "to be an incongruity between the theoretical ideal regarding women which is found in the literature and philosophy of China, and the every-day practice which has prevailed for centuries in Chinese society. There are famous books of instruction about woman, and especially addressed to her, such as 'The Four Books for Girls,' 'The Classics for Women,' as well as 'The Records of Illustrious Women of Ancient Times,' but these literary monitors seem to wield only a feeble influence in real life, either over the minds of men or in moulding the lives of women." [7]

Doubtless the great reason why these books of precepts have done so little in moulding the lives of those to whom they were addressed is that the vast majority could not read. Women who could read have not been unknown in China. Lady Tsao, to whom reference has already been made, is a striking example of the extent to which the education of women has sometimes been carried. Her book on woman's education has been one of China's classics for centuries; she completed the history of the Han dynasty when her brother died, leaving it unfinished; and when she herself died she was

[7] Dennis, *Christian Missions and Social Progress*, Vol. II, p. 191.

honoured by the Emperor, with a public burial, in recognition of her attainments, and was given the title by which she has ever since been known, Great Lady Tsaö. Dr. Williams says that it was not unusual for literary men to be desirous of having their daughters accomplished in music and poetry, as well as in the classical lore, and cites the example of one Yuen Yuen, the governor general of Canton, who in 1820 published a book of poems written by his daughter. He points out that the names of women writers mentioned in Chinese literature would make a long list.[8]

In his book on "Court Life in China," Dr. Headland of Peking says:

"Dr. Martin, expressing the sentiments then in vogue, said, as far back as 1877, 'that not one in ten thousand women could read.' In 1893 I began studying the subject and was led at once to doubt the statement. The Chinese in an offhand way will agree with Dr. Martin. But I found that it was a Chinese woman who wrote the first book that was ever written in any language for the instruction of girls, and that the Chinese for many years have had 'Four Books for Girls,' corresponding to the 'Four Books' of the old régime, and that they were printed in large editions and have been

[8] Williams, *The Middle Kingdom,* Vol. I, p. 573.

read by the better class of people in almost every family. In every company of women that came to call on my wife from 1894 to 1900, there was at least one, if not more, who had read these books, while the Empress Dowager herself was a brilliant example of what a woman of the old régime could do. Where the desire for education was so great among women that as soon as it became possible to do so she launched the first woman's daily newspaper that was published anywhere in the world, with a woman as an editor, we may be sure that there was more than one in ten thousand during the old régime that could read." [9]

The conclusion which Dr. Headland draws is doubtless a correct one, but taking China as a whole the consensus of opinion is to the effect that educated women have been exceptional.

In one of the earliest books written on China, published in 1859, by Mr. Dean, the first American Baptist missionary to China, we read: "The Chinese classics say that among the ancients, villages had their schools, districts their academies, departments their colleges and principalities their universities. These are for the benefit of the boys, for while

[9] Headland, *Court Life in China,* Chap. XXII, pp. 365 f.

Chinese writers speak of the importance of female education we never see their girls in school, and have seldom seen a Chinese woman who could read her own language. . . . The very few Chinese women we have met who could read have learned from a brother or father at home. A few are instructed in music and embroidery, but the great mass of women in China are employed in the servile occupations of home or the toils of the field." [10]

Miss Adele Fielde, one of the earliest of women missionaries to China, says: "The attainments of women in literature are much lauded and respected. Practically such attainments are uncommon; but historians refer with pride to the scholarship of a few, and novelists are fond of representing their heroines as skilled in writing both poetry and prose. . . . Native girls' schools are almost unknown. . . . Of women I have seen few outside Christian mission schools who could read except those despised little girls who act in theatres. In the whole empire probably not more than one woman in a thousand knows how to read." [11]

Mrs. Calvin Mateer's estimate is even smaller. "With very rare exceptions women are never educated. Of heathen women possi-

[10] Dean, *The China Mission*, p. 22.
[11] Fielde, *Pagoda Shadows*, p. 3.

bly one in two or three thousand can read." [12] "Among the thousands of women whom we have met," said Mrs. Arthur H. Smith at the Shanghai Missionary Conference of 1890, "not more than ten had learned to read. The daughters of the rich or of scholars, instructed for mere amusement, and the trifling number of those who have acquired a slight knowledge of characters in order to study Buddhist books, or for use in the minor sects;—these comprise the fortunate few."

Mrs. Ing, a missionary in Kiukiang, wrote home in 1874, "When we came to Kiukiang three years since we could not by diligent inquiry find a woman who could read. There was indeed a vague rumour of one thus distinguished, but where we could not learn." [13] Miss Howe, telling of her visits to the homes of the same city, wrote, "Having seated myself I open my book and remark, 'These are Chinese characters. Can any of you read?' Some appear amused, others surprised at the question, while one or two put on an air of offended dignity, intended to very impressively convey the impression, 'No, indeed; I am not so strong-minded as that.'" [14]

[12] Quoted in Dennis, *Christian Missions and Social Progress*, Vol. II, p. 190.

[13] *Heathen Woman's Friend*, May, 1874.

[14] *Heathen Woman's Friend*, April, 1881.

The testimony of the Chinese themselves is to the same effect, from the Chinese gardener in San José, who when asked by his mistress what seemed to him the most remarkable of all the new things he had seen in America, replied, "The women leadee, litee"[15] (the women read and write)—to one of the gentlemen of the Chinese commission to the Philadelphia Centennial in 1876, who lamented the fact that the education of Chinese women had "fallen into disuse" and attributed America's progress to the fact that the mothers were able to train their sons and daughters intelligently.

One catches interesting glimpses of the situation in regard to woman's education in records of the missionary work of the early days. For example, the account of the establishment of the Anti-foot-binding society, which was formed by the missionaries of Amoy in 1874, states that those women who were willing to promise not to bind their daughters' feet "put their marks" to a pledge to that effect.[16]

Mr. Dean tells of a little Chinese girl from one of the villages near Hongkong, who had been taught to read by Mrs. Johnson of the Baptist mission, and had become a Christian

[15] *Woman's Work for Woman,* Feb., 1880.

[16] Dennis, *Christian Missions and Social Progress,* Vol. II, p. 356.

under her influence. "This youthful disciple, on returning to her friends in the interior, attracted great interest," he writes, "and it was the wonder of all that region that here was a girl who could read. And when they came and listened to the doctrines which she read and explained from the Bible, they were awestricken and looked upon her as something superhuman. It was at first feared that her friends and kindred, when they came to learn that she had forsaken the religion of her fathers and adopted the creed of the foreigners, might beat or abuse her; but when they heard the words which proceeded from her lips they were afraid of her and treated her with the greatest respect." [17]

In another place Mr. Dean speaks of a young Chinese gentleman, named Ko A Bak, who had made a trip to the United States, an almost unheard of proceeding at that time. "Soon after the visit of Ko A Bak to the United States," writes Mr. Dean, "he was fortunate enough to find, on his return to China, a Chinese woman who had learned from her father how to read. This woman, thus distinguished from the generality of her sex, was attracted by curiosity to converse with one of her countrymen who had travelled abroad, and he by

[17] Dean, *The China Mission*, p. 118.

nearly an equal curiosity to converse with one of his countrywomen who could read and write her own language." This acquaintance resulted in marriage, and both became members of the church of which Mr. Dean had charge. Mrs. Ko A Bak at once asked permission to form a school for Chinese girls under the direction of the mission. "This request was joyfully granted, but with the thought that it could not be put into execution," Mr. Dean says. "The Chinese girls had often been seen in servile labour or idly wasting their time, and when asked by the missionaries if they would come to school, would answer, 'I am a girl,' as much as to say, 'You don't expect a *girl* to learn to read!' We therefore had little expectation that this Chinese woman would get up a Chinese girls' school. But she did—and so far as we know it was the first of its kind in China. Foreign ladies had taught schools of Chinese girls, but for a Chinese woman to teach a Chinese girls' school was something new under the sun. . . . The school went on and prospered, and the example of this woman stimulated the zeal of others." [18]

"For all practical good," says Dr. Williams, "it may be said that half of the Chinese know nothing of books." Surely when the percen-

[18] Dean, *The China Mission*, p. 142.

tage of women who can read or write is estimated at one in a thousand we may make the general statement that at the time when China was opened to foreigners, a little over a half century ago, the women of the nation were illiterate and wholly without the benefits of any education beyond that which came in the regular round of their household and field duties.

At this time, moreover, the Chinese were not simply indifferent, but often strenuously opposed to the education of their daughters. Some of the literary men, it is true, considered it befitting their daughters' station to have some smattering of knowledge of music, poetry, the classics and the like, but they were a very small proportion of the nation. Whatever theories her literature might contain, China as a whole saw no value in woman's education and was strongly suspicious that its effect on women would be undesirable.

Doubtless one of the main reasons for this attitude is the relatively low position of woman in China. Compared with the condition of women in other non-Christian countries of the world, the standing of the Chinese woman is high, but in every non-Christian country woman is regarded as distinctly inferior to man. The Chinese woman has more influence

than the woman of almost any other non-Christian country, partly because of her native force of character, and partly because of the emphasis on the virtue of filial piety and its accompanying exaltation of motherhood.

At a boy's school in Chefoo some years ago the subject of a debate was, "Which has more influence, father or mother?" and the boys decided in favour of the mother on the ground that she understood the children better and was more patient than the father.[19] Dr. Williams says, "It is probably safe to say that no country, not Christian, can show in its legislation more care in guarding the sacredness of family ties, defending the purity of the weaker sex, and providing for the maintenance of widows." [20]

At the same time Confucius, China's great seer, says that it is "a law of nature that woman should be kept under the control of man and not allowed any will of her own," and that "In the other world the condition of affairs is exactly the same, for the same laws govern there as here." Such sentiments were common enough among all nations in those days, but the general immobility of China has perpetuated their influence on the position of

[19] *Woman's Work for Woman,* Feb., 1886.
[20] *Chinese Recorder,* Jan.-Feb., 1880.

the Chinese woman. "Eighteen goddess-like daughters are not equal to one son with a limp" is a common proverb. "It is impossible to be more malevolent than a woman," "Nothing will frighten a wilful wife but a beating," [21] and other similar sayings, show how much less highly women are regarded than men. Doubtless one of the chief reasons why one half of the nation has been left uneducated is because the other half placed so low an estimate on the rights and value of the former.

Another reason, which is itself in part the basis of the first, has been the low estimate of woman's mental ability. Although the annals of Chinese history have held more than one record of women whose intellectual achievements have been of no mean order, the average Chinese saw little connection between these women of the misty past and those of his family, if indeed he ever thought of the matter at all. He probably regarded such ability on the part of women much as most people of to-day look on miracles, as something belonging to a more or less remote past and not a part of the world in which they live.

The story is told of a Chinese, who after listening with imperturbable calm to the plea of a missionary that he should send his daugh-

[21] Beach, *Dawn on the Hills of Tang*, p. 50.

ter to school, pointed to a horse standing near by, with the inquiry, "Can you teach that horse to read and write?" On receiving a prompt reply in the negative he exclaimed with an air of finality: "If you cannot teach an intelligent horse what can you expect to do with a woman?" One of the missionaries in West China tells of visiting a Chinese family, the head of which was a fine old man and a Christian, but who said, when she proposed teaching his granddaughter, "Oh, but the women—they can't learn." And she added, "He looked so full of pity at my ignorance in thinking they could."

This unflattering estimate of their intelligence was so strong that the girls and women themselves accepted it. "When the women are asked if they would like to learn to read, the idea is so new that they think they could not, and say, 'Men read, but women work,'" says one of the Hainan missionaries.[22] The Mary Porter Gamewell School in Peking is now one of the largest and finest schools for girls in China, but when she whose name it now bears opened it many years ago, she had just three small pupils, and very tearful pupils at that. When asked the reason for their

[22] Mrs. Gilman, in *Woman's Work for Woman,* Feb., 1888.

distress they sobbed: "We are crying because we have a teacher so stupid as to think that *girls* can learn anything out of books." [23]

But even if a girl's parents could be convinced that girls could perhaps learn something out of books, it was doubtful whether they would agree to her going to school. The social system has had much to do with the lack of education among Chinese women. A girl marries while still in her teens, and thereafter becomes virtually the property of her husband's family. Beyond an occasional visit to her parents, all connection with her own family ceases. The Chinese is nothing if not practical, and he feels that it would be a great waste to have his daughter educated, since another family than his own would reap the benefits of her ability. He feels, as Dr. Arthur Smith picturesquely puts it, that it would be "like putting a gold chain around the neck of some one else's puppy, which may at any moment be whistled off, and then what will have become of the chain." [24] The Chinese father has been stimulated to educate his boy by the ambition to have him hold a government position, which he could not do without

[23] MacGilvray, *A Century of Protestant Missions in China*, p. 461.

[24] Smith, *Village Life in China*, p. 264.

a literary degree, but the girl has had no such argument as this to advance. And if her parents were poor she would have to have some very strong reason to convince them that they could spare her as a wage-earner, or a worker in the field and kitchen.

There were practical difficulties, too, for it is not in accordance with ideas of Chinese propriety that girls should be seen going to and fro on the streets, and therefore day schools were impracticable. But equally great difficulties presented themselves in connection with boarding schools, for such schools for girls, conducted and taught by men, were not to be thought of, and there were practically no educated women in the empire to take charge of them. The outlook for woman's education was not encouraging when, in 1842, the opening of the treaty ports finally made it possible for Western civilization to enter China.

II

THE DAY OF SMALL BEGINNINGS

THE opportunities of education, in the sense in which education is imparted by means of books and schools, were first brought to the women of China by the Christian missionaries. It is with their work, therefore, that the story of the new era in woman's education in China must begin.

Those who attended the Morrison Centennial Conference held in Shanghai in 1907 will remember a dignified and venerable Chinese woman, who on the day devoted to women's work stood upon the platform of Martyr Memorial Hall and was presented to the great audience there assembled. This was Mrs. Lai-sun, the oldest living product of schools for girls in China, and also, in all probability, the oldest living representative of the educational work done for Chinese girls in the years while the missionaries were still waiting outside the rigidly barred doors of China.

The first school for Chinese girls was opened in Singapore in 1825 by Miss Grant, an Eng-

lish woman. Nine years later, in response to an appeal made by the Rev. David Abeel for work among the women of the Orient, a little group of English women organized the first society ever established for the express purpose of work for Eastern women. This organization was called "The Society for Promoting Female Education in the East." In 1837, Miss Aldersey, one of the first of the missionaries of this society, landed in Sourabaya, on the island of Java, and there established a school for Chinese girls. It was in this school that Mrs. Lai-sun received her earliest instruction. But Miss Aldersey's heart was set on work in China proper, and when, after the treaty of 1842, five ports were finally opened to foreigners, she at once went to Ningpo, where for some time she had the distinction of being the first and only single woman missionary in China. There in 1844 she established the first school for girls in all China, and there Mrs. Lai-sun, who had followed her teacher from Java, continued her education.

It is impossible for us to-day to form any real conception of the obstacles and opposition which this brave woman had to meet in the establishment of this pioneer school. Not only must she combat the all-powerful custom which decreed that women should be regarded as

brainless and be educated simply in manual labour, but she must overcome the innumerable fears and suspicions and prejudices which she as "a foreign barbarian" inspired. "Why had she come?" was a natural question. Surely she must have some ulterior motives. One rumour was to the effect that she had murdered all her own children, and now had designs on those of other people. The mother of one of her pupils came to the school in great excitement one day, having been told that her child had been killed. Even after she had been shown the little girl, alive and well, she was not convinced, but took her daughter aside and asked her if she had not been killed and then brought back to life again. Miss Aldersey's habit of carrying a bottle of smelling salts with her when she took her daily constitutional, which would seem a most natural and rational proceeding to any one acquainted with Chinese streets, led to the belief that she was letting evil spirits out of the bottle to destroy her neighbours, and caused such excitement that a procession of idols was formed, to counteract the effect of the smelling-salt demons.

But Miss Aldersey persisted in the face of all difficulties, and by furnishing food and clothing for the children, succeeded in per-

The Daughter of the First Pupil of a Mission School in East China

suading some families, who felt the pinch of poverty with especial keenness, to entrust their daughters to her care. Dr. McCartee of the Presbyterian Mission of Ningpo reported, a year after her arrival there, that she had "a fine school of fifteen girls," and in 1852 Rev. E. W. Syle, who was visiting Ningpo, recorded in his diary: "She has recently rented quite an extensive house in the very heart of the city and has now about 40 scholars under her charge, and if some of our friends at home could see how happy she is in the midst of her large family they would understand that missionary labours here are not all made up of hardships." [1]

The girls were taught "the common branches of education, with plain needlework and embroidery, with the endeavour to fit them for the active duties of life." [2] After thirteen years of unceasing labour, Miss Aldersey's health gave out, and after arranging that her school should be united with the Presbyterian Girls' School at Ningpo, she reluctantly left China. But she left behind her a corps of trained Christian women in whom she had multiplied her life many fold. "Several of the wives of the older pastors of the Ningpo

[1] *Spirit of Missions,* March, 1852.
[2] Dean, *The China Mission,* p. 141.

Presbytery and others, now widows, were her pupils." [3] From as far away as Nanking a missionary wrote of one of the pupils of this school:

"Often when I look at Mrs. Zia's efficient work I think the lady who laboured to make her what she is might have felt repaid if she had only one such pupil for all her years of toil." [4]

The great need of the Chinese girls and women, and the necessity for trained native women to work among them as pastors' wives, Bible women and teachers, were such strong arguments for girls' schools that many other missionaries soon followed Miss Aldersey's example. With rare courage they undertook the seemingly impossible task of persuading the Chinese that they meant only good to their daughters, and of convincing them that these daughters were capable of education and well worthy of it. It was a task which called for limitless patience and perseverance. Even the smallest of beginnings were made with great difficulty. Sometimes the best plan seemed to be to begin work among girls by opening a

[3] *The Jubilee Papers of the Central China Mission* (Presbyterian).

[4] Mrs. Leaman, in *Woman's Work for Woman*, March, 1889.

day school for the children still so young as to be permitted to go to and fro on the streets from their homes to the school. A letter from Mrs. Baldwin of Foochow gives some glimpses of the obstacles which had to be met before such a plan could be put into operation:

"During my first year here I was exceedingly anxious to have a day school for girls. My home Sunday school promised me over $70 a year towards the support of a school, so I went to work to get scholars—every one saying, 'You will not succeed in doing much with a girls' day school; others have tried and have always failed.' I could but try. I could not go into the street and visit house by house, but Mr. Baldwin, with the help of a native teacher, kindly did it for me. Still no one would promise to send the girls to school—boys they would gladly send, but *girls*—what was the use of teaching them? Mr. Baldwin came home feeling very much discouraged, as he had not secured a single scholar. Then I called the native teacher I expected to employ and told him that his having the place depended upon his getting enough scholars to open the school. He spent two or three days trying to induce parents of this ward to send their girls, but in vain. The usual stories were circulated as to what use we would make of

the girls. The two most popular are—we want to cut them open and make opium of them, and another, send them to Peking and sell them to make medicine. Finally the teacher said if I would give them a few cash a day he thought I should succeed. Now this is the general custom, as the scholars usually do something at home toward buying their rice; but I thought I would see if I could not succeed in getting them without this fee. I found there was no help, so I said I would give them ten cash each day. I furnish books, pens, ink, etc., and yet must pay them to come and learn. We at home are most happy to pay for being taught, but our antipodes of course do the opposite.

" The teacher, by the promise of the ten cash, had the promise of two scholars and I thought there would be no further trouble. I had the school room put in order, and the Saturday before the school was to open, purchased desks and put them into the room, locking them up. The first news that greeted me the next morning was that a thief had taken the lock off the schoolhouse gate, and carried off all my newly purchased furniture. All was replaced, but the two scholars did not appear. Still I was determined not to give up.

" There is an old man who has done consid-

erable work for our mission. . . . I heard that he knew of two girls that wanted to be put in school, so I sent for him, and he came in a hurry, thinking we had some work for him to do. I said, 'Now, Ming Se, if you don't go right off and get me a sufficient number of girls to open my school and a teacher that the parents know and will trust, I will never give you any more work to do for me.' He laughed heartily and said he would go and get scholars and teacher, and in two hours he brought me two nice-looking girls and a teacher, and in less than another hour I had the third, and so the number increased from day to day until I now have in regular attendance from fifteen to seventeen girls." [5]

In some respects there were even greater difficulties in starting boarding schools. Among the earliest of these was the Girls' Boarding School of the Methodist Mission at Foochow, formerly known as the Baltimore Female Seminary, which was established by the Misses Woolston in 1859. Dr. R. S. Maclay, who was a witness of their untiring efforts for the cause of woman's education, says:

"The attempt to state all the difficulties, trials and discouragements which the Misses

[5] *Heathen Woman's Friend,* June, 1869.

Woolston had to meet and overcome in their efforts to found the Baltimore Female Seminary would extend this recital beyond reasonable limits; and yet to omit all allusion to this part of our subject would be at once inexcusable and unjust. It is impossible for any one acquainted only with Christian civilization to form an adequate conception of the state of society in Foochow at the time now under consideration; indeed the progress of truth in Foochow since that period has wrought such marked and beneficent changes, that even the missionaries who have subsequently entered that field cannot fully appreciate the severe struggles of these heroic pioneers in the work of educating and uplifting the women of China. . . .

"The Misses Woolston soon found themselves in possession of suitable school buildings and the appliances necessary for the prosecution of their enterprise. Thus far no formidable obstacles had been confronted. But the scene was totally changed the moment they began in earnest to seek pupils for their school. Then followed months of apparently fruitless efforts to remove the prejudice of the people and induce them to patronize the school.

"In some instances the efforts encountered

only stolid indifference, in others contemptuous indignation; while in still others they were met by a malignant hostility which found congenial employment in circulating the vilest slanders concerning the school and every person engaged in it. Against such an accumulation of obstacles, such a combination of hostile elements, it might to less courageous spirits have seemed hopeless to continue the struggle." [6]

Perseverance was finally rewarded by *one* girl, "only secured by allowing other members of the family to come and remain with her to watch over her and guard against her having her eyes gouged out, or being spirited away bodily while she slept, by the foreign devils." [7]

This little girl was the sole attendant of the school for eight days, and of the six who within the next few weeks ventured to follow her, only two remained. However, a year later, after some fluctuations, the Misses Woolston were able to report eight girls in the school. Seven of these eight came from the peasant class. "They were all little 'daughters-in-law,' which means a child of no

[6] Dr. R. S. Maclay, in *Heathen Woman's Friend,* Nov., 1872.

[7] Mrs. Plumb, in *The Gospel in All Lands,* Feb., 1898.

love or care, so what did it matter if she did go to the despised Christians for a time." [8]

These conditions were not limited to one part of the Empire. In 1873 Miss Gertrude Howe and Miss Lucy Hoag arrived in Kiukiang, a city of the Yangtze valley about 400 miles from the coast. Looking back to the first months of their stay in China, Miss Howe said:

"In the year 1873 a Shanghai paper announced that two spinsters had opened a school for girls at Kiukiang, adding also that in spite of liberal offers of food and clothing no girls were forthcoming for the institution. Speaking the truth has been called one of the fine arts, and the writer of the foregoing approximated. It was January 1st, 1873, when the Misses Hoag and Howe, representatives of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, essayed the opening of the school in question. They had secured a teacher; he in turn, as excuse for receiving the Mexicans for which his necessities clamoured, secured two little girls as pupils. They ran away before night but raised a fair-sized din for nearly all the forenoon. . . . The accumulated wisdom of the cen-

[8] Miss Bonafield, in *Woman's Missionary Friend*, Feb., 1898.

Little Chinese Foundling Girls Adopted by the Methodist Mission

turies in this section of China reiterated that book learning would incapacitate girls in the line of womanly accomplishments, such as combing the hair and binding the feet." [9]

In North China, Miss Browne and Miss Porter were meeting with similar trials in their efforts to establish a school in Peking: "The new school grew slowly in its pioneer days. The first small pupil who came ran away as fast as her bound feet could carry her, when she saw the queer-looking foreigners. . . . The Chinese told hideous tales one to another, tales of how the foreigners removed the eyes of Chinese children and used them for medicine. Mothers would hastily cover the eyes of their children when they met the so-called 'foreign devils' in the streets of Peking, lest somehow they cast an evil spirit upon them." [10] During the year patient effort succeeded in enrolling fifteen girls in the school, but at the close only six remained.

From Chefoo came much the same story. "In my visits from home to home," Miss Downing wrote in March of 1872, "I see many girls growing up in sin and ignorance whom I long to get, but their heathen relatives

[9] Miss Howe, in *Woman's Work in the Far East,* June, 1903.

[10] Hubbard, *Under Marching Orders,* p. 38.

would 'rather they would starve' than let them come to us. Many times they reject our offers to train their girls in our school, and sell them for slaves or for worse than slaves. Poor ignorant people. They will not believe we will keep our word with them, but think we want their girls 'to take to foreign countries or to make medicine of them.'" [11]

When once a school was started it was not always easy to maintain it. The year after Mrs. Baldwin had written of her final success in starting a day school for girls she wrote another letter, in which she said:

"I am sorry to have to report that my school exists no longer. . . . Many of the girls had become large enough to pick over tea and thus make from fifty to one hundred cash a day, whereas I give but seven cash. Their parents really did not value the instruction given, or obtained, at any amount; they have not the slightest interest in the education of their girls and would not give a cash toward supporting a girls' school." [12]

The superstitious fears which made it hard to get pupils at the outset sometimes died a slow death, and would reappear to disturb the peace of a school which had seemed to be pros-

[11] *Woman's Work for Woman*, Sept., 1872.
[12] *Heathen Woman's Friend*, Jan., 1870.

pering. Mrs. Nevius succeeded in establishing a girls' school in Tungchow in 1862, but after carrying it on for a time found that the Chinese were regarding it with great disfavour.

"Teaching and supporting a school of girls seemed to them a very dull, tiresome vocation and as useless as it was dull," she wrote. "At last they found the clue to the mystery. We were getting these girls together one by one in a quiet, unostentatious way, and when a large number had been collected and they had been sufficiently improved by their good living, a foreign ship was coming along and the ill-starred maidens were all to be sent off to some distant land—not to be made into opium but to be used in the preparation of that mysterious 'elixir of life' which religionists of the Taoist sect believe has the effect to ensure perpetual youth. The bodies were to be *boiled* and from them would be expressed a kind of oil which, when eaten, has marvellous effects. I could never get from the natives a very clear idea of what they did believe on this subject. But they were really frightened and for a time it was impossible to get more pupils." [13]

Needless to say, the pioneer school girls of China were not such because they had a pe-

[13] Nevius, *Our Life in China*, p. 441 f.

culiarly keen thirst for knowledge, nor because they were preëminently able to assimilate intellectual truths, but rather because they were the only girls available. Where a little Christian community had been built up before the school work was begun, the problem was not so difficult, for the Christians had no fear of the foreigners and were willing to entrust their daughters to their care, even though they might not see the advantage of having them educated. But the number of Christians was small in those days, and girls' schools must have been indeed few and far between had they relied solely upon the daughters of church members for their pupils. In many places, if anything at all was to be done toward educating girls it was necessary to go out and scour the highways and byways for possible pupils; children who had no homes, or those from homes so poor that their parents were willing to run the risk of sending them to the strange-looking foreigners, since they would thus be relieved of their support.

The Jubilee Papers of the Central China Presbyterian Mission record the fact that in the early days of the Shanghai Girls' School, "the children were all from poor families; none others would allow their sons or daughters to come to us." A letter from the Metho-

dist Girls' School at Foochow, in 1872, stated that "twenty of the school girls were foundlings." [14] Many years later Miss Bonafield wrote of the early days of that school, "Only the utterly destitute who came to us for the food and clothing we furnished could be persuaded into our school." [15] The Congregational School of the same city was built up in the same way. "Early marriages and the belief that girls were not worth an education formed a great barrier to the growth of the school. Hence, in the beginning it was necessary to give all food, clothing and books, as well as incidental and travelling expenses of the girls, free of cost." [16]

From Nanking Mrs. Leaman wrote of the high ideals of self-supporting pupils with which she began her work, and how one by one she abandoned her ideals and was thankful to take such children as she could get. "The fathers and mothers want their boys to learn to read and write," she wrote, "but they say it is not worth while to teach girls, so I am obliged to say: 'Let your little girl come to my school and I will give her food to eat and a

[14] Mrs. Sites, in *Heathen Woman's Friend,* March, 1872.

[15] *Woman's Missionary Friend,* Jan., 1905.

[16] *Woman's Work in the Far East,* March, 1905.

place to live,' and they will let her come." [17] A little farther up the Yangtze river, in Kiukiang, Miss Howe reported, "The homes of most of the children are a short distance in the country, the consideration which brings them to us is the appreciation of rice." [18]

In Peking the parents who sent their girls to Miss Porter's school "were mostly so poor that they would accept any means to relieve themselves of feeding and clothing one more little body. Sometimes the girls were left in school only long enough to receive new warm clothing, when they were taken home." [19] When in 1864 Mrs. Bridgman established a school for girls in Peking "a mother with three bright daughters was found begging in the streets and the children were brought to Mrs. Bridgman by a Scotch missionary, Rev. Mr. Burns." [20] These three children with one other formed the nucleus of the present Bridgman School.

In Chefoo Miss Downing wrote to a Missionary Band in Rock Island, which had undertaken the support of a child in her school: "This little girl was a slave bought from a

[17] *Children's Work for Children,* Feb., 1882.
[18] *Heathen Woman's Friend,* Sept., 1873.
[19] Hubbard, *Under Marching Orders,* p. 38.
[20] *Life and Light for Woman,* Feb., 1880.

Mrs. Lai-sun, a Pupil in the First School for Girls Established in China

bad woman who had become ill and sold this child to get money to buy medicine. I do not know, nor does she, what her father's name was. . . . I have another little slave girl who is very pretty. Of her parents we know nothing." [21]

Such were the pioneer school girls of China; the children of the poorest of the poor, whose parents had to be bribed to send them by promises of food and clothing; the homeless foundlings whom no one but the missionaries wanted; and despised little slave girls. This was the material with which the believers in Chinese womanhood must prove to custom-bound, conservative China that her daughters were as capable and worthy of education as were her sons.

[21] *Woman's Work for Woman,* Jan., 1874.

III

THE PERIOD OF GRADUAL GROWTH

"MARY will not give up," said the mother of Mary Lyon, in the days when her daughter was making the brave struggle which finally ended triumphantly in the establishment of Mount Holyoke. "She just walks the floor and says over and over again, when all is so dark, 'Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. Women must be educated—they *must* be.'" [1]

It was with the same high spirit, the same determination, born of deep conviction, that the pioneers in woman's education in a country on the other side of the Pacific faced, a few years later, even greater prejudice, even more discouraging obstacles, than those which Mary Lyon had to meet. Such a spirit acknowledges no defeat. "The women of China must be educated—they *must* be," said those who had given their lives to the uplifting of Chinese womanhood, and set themselves to the accomplishment of their great task with

[1] Gilchrist, *Life of Mary Lyon*, p. 235.

a faith which stood the test of months and often years of apparently wasted effort. And in due season, little by little, they were able to see that their cause had progressed.

Gradually, as it became evident that the small scholars in the girls' schools were not being used for medicinal purposes, nor borne off to faraway countries, but were, on the contrary, very prosperous and well-fed persons, the fears of the people subsided and it became much less difficult to secure pupils. Moreover, the girls who had finished their study and gone back to their home villages to take a helpful part in the life of the community, did much to win favour for their Alma Maters. "Our sending girls out of school to go back to their own homes has done a great deal to break down native prejudice," [2] Miss Woolston wrote home after eighteen years of work in Foochow.

The Girls' School of the Methodist Mission in Foochow, which began with one much frightened little girl, reported an attendance of thirty in 1872, and proposed to increase its capacity that more might be accommodated. "There is now no difficulty in procuring just the kind of pupils we desire, and as many as we can accommodate," one of the missionaries

[2] *Heathen Woman's Friend,* July, 1877.

wrote.[3] In 1887 the teachers reported: "We must refuse about twenty applicants this term, for we dare not put more than sixty girls into our present building,"[4] and in 1898 Miss Bonafield wrote, "Last term one hundred and eleven boarders and thirty-three day pupils were enrolled. We no longer need to canvass for students, but on the other hand are overwhelmed with applicants."[5] In the year 1897 fifty applicants had to be refused admission.

In Kiukiang similar growth was recorded. In 1877, four years after the work was begun, not only did the boarding school number thirty-one pupils, but a successful day school of thirteen girls was opened in a village near Kiukiang.[6] Six years after that Miss Howe wrote that she had fifty pupils and was daily turning away applicants because she could not accommodate more.[7]

In North China, too, fears and prejudices were disappearing. In 1879 Miss Cushman, in charge of the school founded by Miss Porter and Miss Browne, wrote: "To-day a woman came with a little girl who is very anxious to

[3] Dr. R. S. Maclay, in *Heathen Woman's Friend,* Nov., 1872.

[4] *Heathen Woman's Friend,* Sept., 1887.

[5] *Woman's Missionary Friend,* Feb., 1898.

[6] *Heathen Woman's Friend,* Oct., 1884.

[7] *Heathen Woman's Friend,* July, 1883.

come to school. We hardly know what to do about her. So many girls are anxious to come that we have a chance for selection, and she is rather younger than we care to take, at least we prefer older girls. She is eight. While we wish to get the most desirable girls possible in our school, it is hard to say to any little pleader, 'We don't want you.'" [8] In 1884 this school had forty-eight pupils, and it was reported also that two day schools for girls had been maintained during the year.[9]

From Chefoo came word in 1887: "At the last Chinese New Year a number of applicants had to be refused for want of accommodation." [10]

As the schools increased in popularity, those in charge of them dared to begin to wonder whether it was not now time to require some return for value received. The beginnings of self-support were very small, but even the smallest of beginnings was regarded as a great step in advance over the days when "the little girls one by one were drawn into our boarding schools with the bait of providing everything—food, clothing, instruction, homes—all free,

[8] *Heathen Woman's Friend,* Dec., 1879.

[9] Mrs. Jewell, in *Heathen Woman's Friend,* Jan., 1885.

[10] *Woman's Work for Woman,* Feb., 1887.

and we were thankful for every child rescued in this way." The missionaries had never been unmindful of the disadvantages of this system, but in the first years it seemed a necessary evil. As soon as feasible, however, they began to take steps in the opposite direction. A letter received from the girls' school of the Presbyterian Mission at Ningpo in 1878 read: "Formerly every girl on graduating from the school received twenty dollars outfit money. Now they do not receive anything and all the clothes are furnished by the parents except two sets of underclothes for each girl." [11]

A few years later the school under the Baptist Mission in the same city reported: "A new departure has been made in the regulation for admitting girls. We have decided to require the parents to pay something toward the support of their daughters. Let the amount be ever so small *something must* be paid. Under these regulations three girls entered last fall, one paying a dollar a month, one fifty cents and the third two and a half cents." [12] Truly this was the day of small beginnings in the matter of self-support, but when a great prin-

[11] Miss Ketchum, in *Woman's Work for Woman*, July, 1878.

[12] Miss Inveen, in Annual Report of Woman's Baptist Foreign Missionary Society of the West for 1889.

The Class of 1909, Rulison-Fish Memorial School, Kiukiang

ciple is involved even the sum of two and a half cents a month assumes importance.

In Foochow, the parents of the pupils in the school of the Methodist Mission were gradually educated to the point of furnishing their daughters' clothing, "later on books were added, then a small tuition fee." [13]

"Formerly their clothing as well as food was provided by the school, but now the parents give their clothing—a great advance," [14] one of the Chefoo missionaries wrote in 1888, and ten years later it was reported that one country school of seven girls supported itself entirely.[15]

In Peking the Bridgman School made the furnishing of clothes by the parents the first of a series of entrance requirements, and Mrs. Jewell, in charge of the Methodist School in Peking, wrote in 1885, "Our attention has been especially called to the desirability of annexing an industrial department to the boarding school, desirable, we believe . . . because it will be a step in the direction of self-support." [16]

This plan commended itself to many schools,

[13] Miss Bonafield, in *Woman's Missionary Friend,* Feb., 1898.

[14] *Woman's Work for Woman,* Feb., 1888.

[15] *Woman's Work for Woman,* Sept., 1898.

[16] *Heathen Woman's Friend,* Jan., 1885.

both because of the wholesome effect produced on the girls by the consciousness that they were giving as well as receiving, and because it helped to counteract the feeling so common among the Chinese, that manual labour was beneath the dignity of a student. The Presbyterian School in Shanghai was one of the first to adopt the plan. The pupils "did all their own work, such as cooking, washing, taking care of the rooms, etc.," and the girls "worked at spinning, weaving, making and mending clothes, knitting, crocheting, embroidering, etc., and at one time at silk culture." [17] As early as 1876 Mrs. Capp of Tungchow wrote, "I have adopted a new plan with the scholars of my school. They give me from half-past one to three every day, when I require them to work at something that will add to the school treasury. They know how to do some kinds of embroidery, and to make tidies, etc. All but four can spin. . . . If they do not make much money they will at least think they are giving something in return for what they receive." [18]

In the Baptist School at Ningpo the older girls gave half the day to studies, the other half to torchon lace making. As a result of

[17] *Jubilee Papers of Central China Mission*, p. 55.
[18] *Woman's Work for Woman*, Jan., 1877.

their work the teacher in charge was enabled to report, " They have been able to pay all their own expenses and clothe themselves." [19]

Since so large a proportion of the pupils in the girls' schools of China, during the past century, came from homes of very small means, the efforts of the missionaries in the direction of self-support were not undertaken for the sake of adding to the school treasury. Their aim was rather to awaken a spirit of appreciation of benefits received, on the part of parents and pupils, and a sturdy self-respect which would be unwilling to receive those benefits without any effort to give something in payment for them. When this spirit was manifested they were well content, however small the payment.

In reporting a meeting of the native Baptist Church of Swatow Dr. Ashmore wrote, " What interested me more than anything else was the action taken by the church in favour of schools. The moderator in a few well-chosen words put before them the duty of beginning, at least, to coöperate in the work so often pressed upon their attention, and told them the church should do something as a church, not only for the education of their

[19] Miss Corbin, in Annual Report of Woman's Baptist Foreign Missionary Society of the West for 1899.

boys, but of their girls as well; and further that in the future there should be a school for both boys and girls which they could say was theirs. Accordingly, they voted to pay out of their collection fund a part of the salary of one teacher for boys and another for girls.

"True, the amount given would not go far, but getting a start with the wedge in this crevice is a great gain. Mrs. Partridge had already commenced a girls' school and would have continued it had they not taken such action, . . . but she gladly welcomes the expression of interest in a girls' school which has never been given in the past, and which we hope will lead to important results in the future." [20]

Perhaps the genuine appreciation of the students, and their desire to give practical expression to their gratitude for the opportunities which the schools afforded them, were even more gratifying to their teachers than the awakening interest of the parents. Soon after the girls of the Ningpo Baptist School had begun their lace making, their teacher wrote that one girl had paid up her school dues for the preceding year, which her father had failed to pay, and that another, who had hitherto been helped by a missionary society in America,

[20] *Baptist Missionary Magazine*, Feb., 1875.

brought all her first earnings, except a few cents, to the principal, saying that she wanted to pay it back to the school, that it might be used to help other girls.[21]

From the Methodist School in Foochow Miss Jewell wrote of two of her older girls: "I asked them to take the matron's place in caring for the little ones as far as they could. The work involved some disagreeable duties and would require considerable of their time. As I stated what we wanted they said they were willing to do it, and would help the best they could. But when I offered a small remuneration, feeling that they really needed the money, and knowing that they would certainly earn it, they answered,

"'No, no! Don't say anything about money. We don't want to hear such words; we are in the school and we ought to do this if we can help.'

"'Yes, but you are already doing as much as any of the girls, and I fear you must have your sewing done.'

"'Please just let us try to do it, and don't pay us for it.'

"So seeing how much better satisfied they would be to do the work for Christ's sake, and

[21] Miss Corbin, in Annual Report of Woman's Baptist Foreign Missionary Society of the West for 1899.

rejoicing at the spirit they displayed, I said we would just let them try for a month and then see." [22]

A teacher in one of the schools in Peking wrote, "One girl spent much time and labour over a piece of needlework. When completed she wanted the money for it to help pay the debt of a schoolmate who was too poor to pay the debt herself." This spirit was evidently characteristic of the school. "A former pupil who had been married to a heathen came back to us one day, dirty and penniless," the writer continued. "The girls took her in, cleaned her up and gave her clothes out of their own small store. They sent her away, not only with the clothes she was wearing, but with a bundle besides." [23]

In St. Mary's, a girls' school in Shanghai under the American Episcopal Mission, the girls learned to be very skilful in embroidery and lace making, and devoted the proceeds of their labour to the cause of education. "Early this morning," a newly arrived missionary wrote, "I started with Miss Dodson and Mrs. Tsang to drive to the day school in the native city, which the St. Mary's girls are

[22] *Heathen Woman's Friend*, Oct., 1887.

[23] Miss Young, in *Woman's Work in the Far East*, Dec., 1902.

supporting by their embroideries, laces, etc. They have another school of this kind in Kiading which they support in this way and which shows a beautiful spirit of loving and faithful devotion and service, for they have to work hard to meet the expenses of these little mission schools." [24]

When the schools were first opened the work done in them was inevitably very rudimentary. Lack of textbooks was a very serious difficulty. "There was neither Testament nor primer," says a writer on the early days of the Bridgman School at Peking. English was not taught in those days and the pupils had to wait for textbooks to be written or translated, before they could study much of anything beyond reading and writing.

Lack of teachers was another great problem. No foreigner could teach the children to read and write the intricate characters of which the Chinese language is composed. Chinese teachers were, and are, necessary for this branch of the work. In the beginning of school work there were no Chinese who knew how to teach in any other way than that which had been used in China for centuries. Dr. Arthur Smith describes this method:

"The teacher reads over the line and the

[24] Miss Mosher, in *Spirit of Missions,* Aug., 1897.

lad repeats the sounds, constantly corrected until he can pronounce them properly. He then learns to associate a particular sound with a certain shape. A line or two is assigned to each scholar, and after the pronunciation of the characters has been ascertained his 'study' consists in bellowing the words in as high a key as possible. . . . When the scholar can repeat the whole of his task without missing a single character, his lesson is 'learned' and he then stands with his back to the teacher —to make sure he does not see the book— and recites, or 'backs' it, at railway speed. . . . The attention of the scholar is fixed exclusively upon two things,—the repetition of the characters in the same order as they occur in the book, and the repetition of them at the highest attainable rate of speed. Sense and expression are not merely ignored, for the words represent ideas which have never once dawned upon the Chinese pupil's mind. His sole thought is to make a recitation. . . . But if the passage has been imperfectly committed, and the pupil is brought to a standstill for the lack of characters to repeat, he does not pause to collect his thoughts, for he has no thoughts to collect—has in fact no thoughts to speak of. What he has is a dim recollection of certain sounds, and in order to recall those which

he has forgotten he keeps on repeating the last word, or phrase, or sentence, or page, until association regains the missing link." [25]

As teachers of such a method were the only ones obtainable, it was necessarily imported into the girls' schools of the early days. "For several years after the school was established very little teaching was done excepting by the native master," reads a report of the Bridgman School at Peking. "Nothing more could be expected of him than that he would require the girls to commit to memory such books as were placed in their hands. They studied in the usual Chinese way, aloud and all together, so the school was a small Babel, and the progress in anything but ability to read the Chinese character was very small." [26]

Inevitably the memory was developed to a much greater extent than the reasoning powers. The school girls performed prodigious feats of memory, but did little work of such a character as to develop powers of independent thought. An account of a semi-annual examination of the Bridgman School, for example, reads: "One of the girls finished memorizing the New Testament and I think now could repeat almost any chapter in it. She

[25] Smith, *Village Life in China,* pp. 80 f.
[26] *Life and Light for Women,* Feb., 1880.

has also learned the Psalms. All were examined on some portion of Scripture committed to memory and some division of Scripture history studied by topics. Besides the Chinese classics, arithmetic and geography and a simple manual of theology were studied by the older girls. They write, too, the native character and Romanized colloquial." [27]

An examination was held in the Methodist School of the same city a year later, at which the girls were examined in Bible history, the Harmony of the Gospels, arithmetic, Romanized characters, the Chinese classics, and memorized Scripture passages. "The amount recited in these books would be marvellous," said one of the audience, referring to the recitation on the Chinese classics, "but as it is in accordance with the Chinese style of education we suppose they inherit their great power of memory. Twelve girls recited classics and were marked as follows:

"2 girls	. . . .	100 each
5 girls	. . . .	99 each
1 girl	. . . .	98
1 girl	. . . .	96
3 girls	. . . .	95 each

[27] Miss Porter, in *Life and Light for Women*, July, 1876.

"Then sixteen girls recited Scripture, most of them having the entire books of the Gospels by heart, as was proved by the readiness with which they struck in anywhere and recited on and on until called upon to stop because of our want of time. They were marked as follows:

"4 girls . . . . 100 each
10 girls . . . . 99 each
2 girls . . . . 97 each" [28]

These pupils are reported to have done very well in their arithmetic examinations also, but that subject was the only one in their curriculum which tended to develop reasoning powers.

Very probably one of the main reasons why the schools did not include among their courses more of those which would develop ability to reason, and thus counteract to some extent the evil tendencies of the utter lack of this training on the part of Chinese teachers, was that the aim of these schools was not so much to train the intellectual powers as to produce Christian character. It was self-evident that the strength and beauty of such character would be a supremely important element in the usefulness of these girls in after life; it was less apparent that the ability to see clearly and

[28] *Heathen Woman's Friend,* Sept., 1877.

think accurately would add greatly to their influence and power as Christian women.

"My one desire in this school," said one earnest woman, "is to impart instruction which with God's blessing will bring those committed to my care to Christ. I will not think of the higher education, so called. I want them to know nature's God before they learn nature and her laws, and I want them to learn the language of Canaan before they learn my mother tongue." [29]

The courses of study followed in other schools indicate that similar views were held by many others of the early educators. "They studied the 'Three Character Classic' (a Christian book) and 'The Two Friends' (also a Christian book) for which was afterward exchanged a life of Joseph," reads an account of the opening years of the Ningpo Presbyterian School. "On Sunday they studied the Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments and Milne's sermons. They also daily spent some time in sewing and knitting." [30]

The little girls in the school at Shanghai under the Episcopal Mission spent the first hour of their school day in the study of the Gospels in the local dialect. "They then par-

[29] *Woman's Work for Woman*, Dec., 1884.
[30] *Jubilee Papers of the Central China Mission.*

take of their simple morning meal," the account continues, "and are employed in a variety of household and domestic matters until half-past eight, when they assemble for prayers. From nine to twelve they are again in school and during these hours find employment in learning to read and to write their native language, both according to the written colloquial style, and the study of a variety of catechisms on Christian Doctrine and such elementary works on useful subjects as we have been able to have prepared for them." [31] The afternoons were spent in sewing, embroidery, etc.

Mrs. Sites wrote of the work in the Methodist School at Foochow: "Their school books are the Bible and other Christian books, a very nice geography with atlas unbound, a primary arithmetic and a primary astronomy." [32] Elementary astronomy seems to have been a favourite subject from the first, probably because it helped to correct many superstitious beliefs.

Gradually the course of study became broader. It is a very interesting fact that in one of the most progressive of the schools, that of the Methodist Mission in Foochow, the broadening came as a result of a strong desire

[31] *Spirit of Missions,* Jan., 1856.
[32] *Heathen Woman's Friend,* March, 1872.

on the part of the Chinese, and against the judgment of the women in charge of the school. At a meeting of the General Executive Committee of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, in the year 1883, "a memorial asking for a more liberal education for their girls was read, written by the native pastors of the Foochow conference. The paper urged a candid hearing of both sides of this question. . . . This letter was very strongly put and abounded in Oriental figures." [33] The majority of the mission in Foochow were in sympathy with this desire of the Chinese, and the Board at home decided that these changes, prominent among which was the introduction of English and music, should be made. The missionaries in charge felt so strongly that this was a mistake that, although they had established the school and had conducted it successfully for twenty-five years, they now resigned their positions. The step in advance proved to have been a wise one, however, and other schools soon came to feel that Christianity could be taught, and character developed, fully as well in a school with a liberal course of study, as in one with a restricted curriculum, and that the broadly educated woman could do more for the

[33] *Heathen Woman's Friend*, Dec., 1883.

Kingdom of God than she whose knowledge was confined to rigidly prescribed limits.

A noted Chinese pastor of Foochow, Rev. Sia Sek Ong, traced the development of woman's education in Foochow, from its beginnings until the close of the nineteenth century, in characteristic Chinese figure. The figure is applicable not alone to the work in Foochow but to the work throughout the Empire. He says: "When the missionaries first came to Foochow the people were so nearly dead with spiritual famine that they could not help themselves in any way. The missionaries had to cook the rice and feed them. After they had gained a little strength they were made to do their own cooking. This was in the reign of colloquial books, when the elementary sciences were taught along with the Bible. Later on, when fairly well and strong, they were given rice seed and implements of agriculture in order to raise their own food."[34] This was in the last days of the century, when to the Christian teaching were added sciences and the classics, taught, not in the colloquial, but in the classical language.

"Woman's Work in the Far East" for May, 1900, gives the curricula of five representative schools for girls under American

[34] *Woman's Missionary Friend,* Feb., 1898.

mission boards in southern, eastern, northern, and central China. A study of them shows something of the progress which woman's education in China had made in the days of gradual growth since Miss Aldersey established her pioneer school fifty-six years before. These curricula, carefully planned to cover a term averaging eight years, are in themselves prominent evidences of growth.

These graded schools are proof also of growth in stability. Pupils were not dropping out by the way as in the old days. Parents had come to value this education for their daughters as they did not at first, and were not so apt to take them out for early marriages, or in order that they might take their part in adding to the family income. Many of the girls now came from Christian homes where the parents sympathized with their desire for education.

One step in advance which helped to keep the girls throughout the entire course was the giving of diplomas and the celebration of graduation exercises when the work had been completed. The Presbyterian School in Shanghai was the first to do this, in 1896. At that time three girls were presented with diplomas, and graduation exercises were held, in which essays, songs and addresses were

given in the Chinese language, but according to orthodox American custom on such occasions.

The next year, 1897, the Methodist School in Chinkiang graduated its first class of two girls and four years later, another class of seven was graduated "and given beautiful diplomas, the gift of Mr. Wan of the United States Consulate." [35] In 1899 the Methodist School in Foochow held its first graduation exercises, and in the next five years granted sixty-six diplomas. In 1900 St. Mary's reported: "Miss Tsu Sing Lung has graduated with honour to herself and credit to the school, and holds the first diploma ever awarded from St. Mary's." [36] The custom grew rapidly because of its beneficial results. "The girls insist that the parents must allow them to remain in school long enough to get a diploma," [37] one principal wrote.

A very interesting feature of these curricula, common to four of them, was that physical culture was given throughout the entire course. This was truly something new under the sun for the bound-footed woman-

[35] Miss Robinson, in *Woman's Missionary Friend,* April, 1902.

[36] Miss Dodson, in *Spirit of Missions,* May, 1900.

[37] Miss Bonafield, in *Woman's Missionary Friend,* Sept., 1904.

hood of China, but it proved to be of great benefit and soon became very popular.

"Since introducing physical exercise the health of the girls has greatly improved," wrote the principal of St. Mary's, and a teacher in the Bridgman School at Peking testified: "Regular daily work in gymnasium imparts ease and grace of carriage and movement to the heavy and awkward Chinese girls." [38]

Physical culture for women found favour even in the eyes of the Chinese men. One of them watched the girls of St. Mary's at their drill with unqualified approval. "This surely will be a great good to them," he said, "because the Chinese women and girls are not strong. After centuries of foot-binding, close confinement indoors, and sitting constantly over their embroidery frames and other sewing, they become round shouldered and many of them go into consumption for lack of good healthy outdoor exercise." [39]

Four of these curricula included music as a regular part of the school work. All of them offered some work in science, five of them physical geography, four of them physiology and astronomy, two of them physics and

[38] *Mission Studies*, Aug., 1898.
[39] *Spirit of Missions*, May, 1900.

chemistry, one zoölogy, one biology, one geology, one political geography, and one hygiene. In mathematics most of them did not offer anything above arithmetic, but one included courses in algebra, geometry and elementary trigonometry. In all five, classes in the Bible and other Christian books were given throughout the course, and in all, the Chinese classics were studied each year. Work in history was very general, the work being classed as "Universal," or "General" history. English was an optional subject in two of the schools. None of the outlined curricula included any work in the nature of domestic science, but the explanatory notes preceding them stated, "It is understood that the pupils are trained to perform household duties, are taught cookery, to make their own clothes, to spin, to weave, and to embroider—in short, everything a Chinese woman ought to know." [40]

The curricula of these five schools, which were regarded as representative, give a fairly accurate measure of the distance which woman's education had travelled up to the beginning of the present century. They represent the outposts; probably no schools had gone farther; many had not gone as far. Compared with the work which the young women of

[40] *Woman's Work in the Far East,* May, 1900.

America were doing at that time, the work of these schools may not seem to be far advanced. But when it is compared with the work which Chinese girls were doing a half century before, and when one recalls the obstacles against which the cause of woman's education in China had to contend, it is evident that the progress from 1844, when the first school was established, to 1900, though gradual, was very real.

IV

THE WOMEN PRODUCED BY THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

BY the close of the nineteenth century, schools for girls in China had passed the experimental stage. Suspicion and prejudice against woman's education no longer existed, and the communities in which the schools were located regarded them with friendliness and approval. Doubtless many influences had contributed to this result, but the final proof that the schools were a good, not an evil, lay in their pupils. "By their fruits ye shall know them" has ever been regarded as the most trustworthy test, and the young women who went out from the schools undoubtedly did more to win favour for the cause of woman's education than any other one influence.

"Are women capable of education?" the sceptical Chinese lords of creation had scornfully exclaimed when the strange-looking foreign women urged them to send their daughters to the schools which they had opened. To

this question the girls themselves made answer as soon as they were given the opportunity. The father of one little girl who had been in the Methodist School at Foochow for some years, came to take her out one spring, for he said he needed her help in taking care of the cows. "I talked to him of the foolishness of taking her away before she had studied long enough for any real advantage," the principal wrote. "But he was poor, the child was a girl and girls could not learn. . . . So I quietly opened the school records and read her examination marks for several terms, most of them above ninety, and explained what they meant. 'And she can really learn?' 'Yes.' 'Then she shall stay.'" [1]

Dr. Boone of Shanghai wrote of the work done by the pupils of St. Mary's: "In the classics and history, etc., the older girls do as well as any (of the boys) in the college departments, and that is no small praise, for the industry of all our pupils of an age to appreciate their advantages is more than fully satisfactory to their teachers, whether native or foreign. Could the patrons of our schools, and especially of St. Mary's, be present once, and see, and hear with understanding ears, they

[1] Mrs. Jewell, in *Heathen Woman's Friend*, May, 1892.

would rejoice indeed." [2] "The thoroughness with which each girl went through the entire examination was remarkable," said a lady who was present at one of the semi-annual examinations of this school. "To fail was not in their vocabulary." [3]

One of the examining committee of the Methodist School in Peking gives an account of the way in which the girls of that school acquitted themselves in a similar ordeal. "The morning session opened with the singing of a hymn followed by prayer by Mrs. Davis. Then a class of seven little girls was called to the floor. These were examined by Miss Campbell, who had taught them Bible history. During the half hour's questioning *not one* missed and the visitors had no difficulty in deciding that the percentage of the class stood at 100. The next class, with Mrs. Davis as teacher, had mastered the Harmony of the Gospels, and as not one question was missed it was equally easy to say this class was also perfect. An arithmetic class, Miss Campbell's, was called. Here let me explain that in this branch of study the Chinese are accustomed to appear as idiotic as it is possible to imagine mortals to appear. The native methods of

[2] *Spirit of Missions,* Feb., 1884.

[3] Miss Stevens, in *Spirit of Missions,* May, 1882.

education develop great powers of memory but no powers of reasoning. Therefore when the girls of the class rose one after another and went without hesitation through long examples in mental arithmetic the surprise and admiration of the visitors were equally great. But one child (one of the smartest ones, too) forgot to carry a figure on a blackboard exercise, and one or two others made mistakes equally trivial; so the visitors said the class was as near perfect as it could be and not be perfect and marked it 99." [4] The account goes on to tell of the other classes examined, none of which were marked below 95, and of individual recitations, the lowest grade for which was also 95.

A former pupil of the True Light Seminary brought pride to the hearts of her teachers when she carried off the first prize offered by the Chinese churches of Canton for the best paper on the gospels of Matthew and Mark. Many men were among her competitors, ordained ministers only being excluded, and one of them, who received the second prize, was heard to say that "the men would have to break a hole in the girls' seminary wall to listen to the instruction given there." [5]

[4] *Heathen Woman's Friend*, Sept., 1877.
[5] *Woman's Work for Woman*, Feb., 1892.

The school girls of China have not been what are technically known as "grinds," however. Their alertness of mind and ability in execution has been scarcely less evident on the playground than in the classroom. A teacher in Peking writes, "The girls enjoy fully all their playtimes and make the most of the few holidays that come when they are together. They have, in common with most Chinese, a remarkable skill in acting, and on the holidays sometimes entertain us with little plays which they have thought out entirely by themselves. Sometimes they represent people of different countries; sometimes they show a burlesque on the old-fashioned Confucian teacher, or play a joke on each other, as when the younger girls solemnly presented to the college girls a paper figure with a huge head, intended to represent the 'big head' which they get as their learning increases. Their ability to plan these things and carry them out is a constant source of wonder to us. It is one of the Chinese talents to which we of the West do not attain." [6]

Miss Bonafield of Foochow tells of an entertainment given by the school girls there, at which a gentleman just arrived from Canada

[6] Miss Reed, in *Life and Light for Women*, Aug., 1908.

was present. "His face was a study during the performances," she writes. "He said, 'You astonish me! I never expected to see such girls in China. Our Canadian girls can do no better. What wonderful progress you have made! The people at home surely do not know about it.'" [7]

That the Chinese girls soon proved themselves able to pass examinations with honour, write good papers, and plan and carry out successful entertainments, proved indeed that they were capable of education, fully as much so as were the boys, but these facts alone were not sufficient to prove the wisdom of educating them. To answer the question whether or not it was worth while to give them education, it was necessary to prove that they were able to make use of the opportunities which they had had, that their studies had fitted them for useful living. Some of the girls answered this question as teachers.

"She had been in the school a number of years," wrote the principal of a school in Foochow. "She had taken a three years' course in English, finished the Chinese course of study and gone out from us the last of June, 1888. In the fall at our request she came back to teach in the school half of each day and pursue

[7] *Woman's Missionary Friend*, Sept., 1903.

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advanced studies in Chinese the other half. Soon her quiet dignity and the interest of the little ones in their lessons, as well as their affection for their teacher, proved the wisdom of the experiment as far as the school was concerned. During the winter our oldest Chinese teacher came up to the house begging that Fidelia be required to teach one or two classes only, and be allowed the rest of her time for her own studies. And when this Chinese literary gentleman said, 'Let her go on with her Chinese studies for a few years and then she will be fitted to take my place and I'll step down and out,' we were proud of our girl." [8]

Another girl from that school went out to take charge of a day school for girls in Iong Palk, a village some miles from Foochow. At the end of a year the presiding elder of the district reported: "Your school at Iong Palk pays. The people there are asking for a preacher and I hope to send them one." The preacher was sent, but soon after his arrival sudden illness ended the teacher's life. Three days after her death a committee of four waited upon the missionary in charge and asked her to send another teacher to them.

[8] Miss Jewell, in *Heathen Woman's Friend,* June, 1890.

"We need the school," they said. "We will pay the rent for a room. We thank God that for fifteen months we had a Christian woman with our people. We know how Christians live and how they die."[9]

The Chinese principal put in charge of the department for training teachers at the True Light Seminary, Canton, was one of their own graduates. One of her American fellow workers said of her, "It would be difficult to find in any land a teacher better fitted for her position." Some years ago, when the Second Presbyterian Church of Canton was considering the question whom it should call to its pulpit, one of the elders said that he would rather listen to this woman than to any one else.[10]

The principal of the Presbyterian Girls' School in Nanking wrote of her Chinese assistant, a graduate of the Ningpo School, "I find her everything I wanted and in every way she has proved herself equal to the position." The same woman wrote of the matron of her school, one of Miss Aldersey's old pupils, "She married one of our Ningpo pastors. When we were just starting in Nangking we sent to Ningpo saying that we had little

[9] Miss Rouse, in *Woman's Missionary Friend*, Sept., 1896.

[10] *Woman's Work in the Far East*, May, 1900.

money and our need of helpers was great, and we asked who would come to help us. This woman and her husband said: 'We will go,' and they came for just two-thirds of the salary he was getting in Ningpo. After labouring faithfully six years his health failed and they returned, but she said when leaving, 'If God calls my husband home before me I am coming back to you.' A few months afterward the good old man went to his reward and she came back. She is a grand, good woman, a splendid Christian character to have over the girls and I hope will be spared to us many years." [11]

A newly arrived missionary wrote home from St. Mary's, "The chief work I am doing is of course that of study. I have for the present, Miss Wong (the young matron of the school) as teacher. Just here let me sing her praises for I know no one so well deserving. I cannot help rejoicing in the triumphs of Christianity whenever I look at her, she is so good, so very efficient. You ought to see the extreme cleanliness of the school; the tender care she gives the girls; the unselfish devotion to all matters of school or church, to appreciate her." [12]

[11] Mrs. Leaman, in *Woman's Work for Woman,* Sept., 1898.

[12] Miss Stevens, in *Spirit of Missions,* Feb., 1882.

A few years later word came from Shanghai: "St. Mary's entire school, the Orphanage, and everything depend upon Miss Wong." [13] A year after that the Bishop's wife wrote home, "Last July I promised Miss Wong I would add my plea to hers for St. Mary's and the Orphanage. The care of two institutions is a heavy burden for one Chinese woman." [14] But the annual report for that year read: "St. Mary's Hall has done a very good year's work."

It was of this woman who had proved capable of such large responsibility that one of those sent to her relief wrote: "I want many to see this glorious woman. I feel every day that if we had done no more in the past fifty years than win her and educate her to do the grand work she is doing for girls here, all our money would have been well spent. She knows every child and every one knows her. The love they show for her is beautiful. If she opens the door unexpectedly the little ones flock about her, each telling her the pleasure or trouble of the moment, and she hears and helps all." [15]

Other young women have gone out from the

[13] Mr. Partridge, in *Spirit of Missions*, May, 1887.
[14] Mrs. Graves, in *Spirit of Missions*, May, 1888.
[15] Miss Carter, in *Spirit of Missions*, March, 1890.

schools into the study of medicine, that they might use their education to bring relief and healing to the countless suffering women and children of the great Chinese Empire. The splendid work which is being done by Dr. Hü King Eng, Dr. Mary Stone, Dr. Ida Kahn and Dr. Li Bi Cu, all Chinese women, all graduates of mission schools, is probably better known than that of any other Chinese women because these four received their medical training in America and became known to many people during their stay there. But they are by no means the only ones who are doing efficient work along this line.

" In our Soochow woman's hospital," writes Dr. Annie Walters Fearn, " Miss Zah Foh-me (a graduate of McTyeire School, Shanghai) has stood by the hospital through every change; for fifteen years she has been faithful and no man can estimate the value of her services to the work. . . . In the Episcopal hospital in Shanghai Miss Wong Ah Me (a graduate of St. Mary's Hall) has been a tower of strength; often for months at a time she has been the resident physician in charge of the hospital under the foreign supervision of Dr. Boone, without any special training other than practical work; this with her quick wits, perseverance and natural ability she has used

to the utmost, with the result that she has made herself indispensable to the work.

"Our native patrons have shown almost from the first a reliance upon their sisters which has surprised me. Rarely will they insist on seeing the foreigner when the native physician is at hand. In the out calls they occasionally send for the native doctor in preference to the foreign."

Dr. Fearn points out that the physicians educated in America are well known because of the interest felt in the experiment of American education for Chinese women, but goes on to say:

"But you do not know of the work of Miss Zah Foh-me of the Soochow woman's hospital, of her courage, her unfailing faithfulness, her untiring care and watchfulness and her ability which has made her the trusted coworker of the physicians who have been associated with her, and who have felt that in Miss Zah they had a competent helper, one who for months has borne alone the burden of the hospital, who was the first to return to the hospital after the Boxer trouble, and who for two months kept up the work alone and bravely opened the door which we foreigners were not then permitted to enter.

"You do not know of Miss Wong, who for

years has been to the Episcopal hospital in Shanghai all that Miss Zah has been to the Soochow hospital, who has been faithful in all things, equal to any emergency, and who has so identified herself with the work that she has become practically the spirit of the place.

" You do not know of Miss Yong Ngoh-pau, who three years ago graduated from the Soochow Medical School and who for some time was associated with Dr. Frances Cattell of the Tooker Memorial Hospital, the American Presbyterian Mission, Soochow. Her ability was such as to enable Dr. Cattell to run the hospital successfully and without other help, when at one time it seemed, after the loss of one of the two foreign physicians, that the work must suffer great loss.

" You do not know of Miss Yui Ling-tsü, who six years ago received her certificate from the Soochow Medical School, who with the sweetest, brightest faith, the quickest mind, readiest hand, and most willing heart, made the days bright for many a suffering woman, and who left a place hard to fill when circumstances called her to Korea. There she did fine work with her medicine until the influx of foreign physicians and the rapidly growing work brought her to realize that her work was most needed along other lines, and this gifted Chi-

nese girl is now translating English school and church books into Korean.

"You do not know of these because their training has been received at home. But can we who know of such cases debate their capability? We know them to be patient, persevering, to have wonderful endurance, quickness of perception, keen appreciation, and unexcelled deftness of touch." [16]

Dr. Mary Brown of Wei Hsien found the same fitness for this work in the Chinese women to whom she gave medical training. Her biographer says: "So well were these women trained that they have performed difficult operations which gave them such a reputation as skilful physicians that they have been sent for far and near to attend the sick. . . . After Dr. Brown left her work in China one of her pupils, a strong, bright young woman, took complete charge of the woman's hospital at Wei Hsien, and did a noble work."

"It *pays* to work for the women of China," declares another physician, Dr. Woodhull of Foochow. "They are as capable of culture as any women in the world." [17] A little paper, "The Fuhkien Witness," published in Foochow, pays a similar tribute. "No women in

[16] *Woman's Work in the Far East*, Sept., 1902.
[17] *Woman's Work in the Far East*, June, 1902.

the world have ever responded more nobly to what has been done for them than the women and girls of China." [18]

But while many have distinguished themselves as teachers and physicians, the great majority of the graduates of the schools have married, some as soon as they left school, many of them after a few years of teaching. The supreme ideal of the mission schools has been to put educated, capable Christian women into the centres of the homes.

"While the girls are getting a good footing intellectually, and their spiritual life is carefully watched, the practical side of their nature is not forgotten," one of the missionaries wrote. "Our greatest hope is that they may be model homemakers."

A worker in Amoy says, "For over twenty years the missions of the American Reformed and English Presbyterian Churches, along with the London Missionary Society, have been carrying on girls' schools in Amoy. The result of the work has long been seen in the many Christian homes scattered through the southern districts of Fuhkien, in the intelligent women who form not the least interesting part of the Sabbath congregations, and in the pastors' and preachers' wives who superintend in

[18] *Woman's Work in the Far East,* Dec., 1904.

many cases, most ably, the work amongst women in their husbands' churches." [19]

Miss Howe writes from Kiukiang: "Many girls have married from the school and several are now serving as teachers in various places, or acting as Bible women, to say nothing of those who are helping their preacher husbands in the dark places in which the itinerating wheel has placed them. Miss Stanton a few weeks since visited the home of one who was married last July to a young man who was stationed at Kung-lung, fourteen miles distant. She reports the cleanest native house she has ever seen. Although small and crowded, the taste in arrangement secured a pleasing effect. The young wife was venturing out among the most uncongenial women and receiving them to her home for instruction in the Christian way. The husband and wife, both educated, refined and spiritual, found their only true companionship in each other, and strengthening each other's hands were striving with loving help to lift up the fallen ones about them. . . . Miss Stanton observed the two sitting together going through some accounts, and noticed a gratified twitch of admiration play about the young man's face as the wife

[19] Miss Johnston, in *Woman's Work in the Far East*, May, 1898.

each time finished the long column in advance of himself.[20]

Mrs. Gamewell told of another young wife, a graduate of the Methodist School in Peking. "I spent the month of June in making a trip to the coast with Mr. Gamewell," she wrote. "The most cheering sight that met our eyes was the face of Clara Wang. Her earnest words of admonition as she taught her visitors of God, were so well put that anybody hearing them must know that she had had school training. . . . Our girls' school has done nobly to give one such as Clara Wang to the work." [21]

From the Presbyterian School in Peking, Miss Newton writes: "Can we point to any girls whom our schools have developed into the kind of women we long to see, those who 'open their mouths with wisdom and in whose tongues is the law of kindness, who look well to the ways of their households, and eat not the bread of idleness.' I should like to take you into a little home I know in Peking where the young mother seems to me the very embodiment of these words. I have watched carefully her treatment of her children and I have never seen a foreigner who seemed to me more

[20] *Woman's Missionary Friend,* Sept., 1896.
[21] *Heathen Woman's Friend,* Jan., 1885.

conscientious, judicious and self-controlled. When the children are cross or mischievous she doesn't shriek at them and threaten to throw them into a pit of yellow earth. Why not? That is the style of home training she was accustomed to from her mother, a most unreasonable termagant. Simply because several years in a boarding school developed in her refined and womanly qualities. Why is it that the clothing, stockings and shoes of her husband, herself and children are always neat and well made? Her mother cannot sew at all well, much less teach her daughters. Because she was taught in school to sew and embroider until now she does exquisite needlework. Why, a few months ago, did she punish her little boy of three and a half years, because he had told a lie? Her mother, though a Christian, tells lies herself. Because the teaching about truthfulness that she had received in the school had entered into the very bone and sinew of her nature." [22]

The testimony of Dr. Madge Mateer, that school life, instead of spoiling the Chinese girls for home duties, has made them more helpful, is one of the truest tributes which could have been paid to the wisdom and skill of those who have guided the course of woman's educa-

[22] *Woman's Work in the Far East*, May, 1899.

tion in China. "I have heard no one complain that her daughter was unwilling to take up less congenial work at home," Dr. Mateer says.[23]

The educated Chinese women have not only done notably good work, but they have shown the capacity for a large amount of work. A letter from a missionary of Wei Hien reads:

"I wish you could see the teacher of the school. She is the wife of the pastor of the church there. She is a bright Christian woman and her pupils are well trained both in manners and books. They are taught to make their own clothing and to cook their food. Mrs. San, besides teaching and caring for her twenty pupils who board with her, cares for her own family and makes their clothes. She has four children at home and two older girls in the Tungchow High School. She is a very busy woman and a very capable one. She and her husband are doing a great deal for their people and can reach them in a way that foreigners cannot." [24]

Mrs. Teng of Peking led a life very like that of Mrs. San. When Miss Newton, the principal of the Presbyterian Girls' School of that

[23] *Woman's Work for Woman,* Sept., 1898.

[24] Miss Boughton, in *Woman's Work for Woman,* April, 1892.

city went to America on furlough some years ago, she had no American assistant in whose charge to leave the school, so she left it with her first Chinese assistant, Mrs. Teng, of whom she says:

"Her family are all members of the London Mission Church. She was educated in the school of that society in Peking and considered the prize scholar. When about twenty she was married to our helper, Mr. Teng, and came immediately to our compound, where she has lived ever since, some thirteen years. As teacher in our boarding school she has done excellent work.

"She has five children, never had robust health, and used to make all the clothes, stockings and shoes for the entire family. Now, however, she occasionally hires some of her sewing done. She and her husband and children are as neat and trim as if she never had anything to do but fuss over their clothes. How she can do so much at home and spend at least five hours a day in school, and never appear to be hurried, is a mystery. She almost never goes anywhere, is exceedingly systematic, and does not waste moments here and there. While she is braiding the hair of one child in the morning, two others stand on either hand, each reciting a different lesson from the

classics, and at the same time; but Mrs. Teng serenely keeps all in hand.

"She has a good many visitors, but always has time to sit down and listen to the most garrulous old woman. She is ambitious in all good ways, and reads and studies a great deal. With all these other duties she finds time to study English an hour a day! . . . She is a sincere Christian whom we may be sure of finding on the right side of a question, and a most effective speaker in prayer meeting. Her love for me and her really making my interests her own during my six years in the school, have been an unspeakable help and comfort. I was so sure of her ability and loyalty that I was quite willing to come away and leave the school with her." [25]

Instances might be multiplied of Chinese women whose education and training, added to their native ability, have enabled them to accomplish a surprisingly large amount of work. A prominent example is Dr. Mary Stone, the Chinese physician in full charge of the large, well-kept Danforth Memorial Hospital in Kiukiang. She has treated as many as 2,743 patients a month in her hospital, dispensary and out visits. Aided only by the nurses, whom she has her-

[25] *Woman's Work for Woman,* Feb., 1895.

self trained, she performs "the largest operations known to surgery" with marked success. Part of her work is to conduct a nurses' training school, and this means that she must translate many of their textbooks from English into Chinese. Her success in this department is well attested by the fact that when forced to be absent she is able to leave the hospital in charge of her graduate nurses, and by the great demand for her nurses in other hospitals and for private cases. In the crevices of her time Dr. Stone finds leisure to write useful booklets on "What to do till the doctor comes," and other kindred topics, or to deliver helpful and stimulating addresses before graduating classes of girls' schools or conferences of her fellow-workers. Withal she has the reputation of being a most charming hostess and home-maker.

"It is no longer an experiment to send them out into places of responsibility." This statement is true not alone of the graduates of the one school to whom it referred, but of the educated women of China as a whole. They have proved themselves capable of education, but more than that they have proved themselves worthy of it, for they have gone out from their years of study to *use* the knowledge and the training which they have received. As ef-

ficient teachers, as skilful physicians and nurses, as companionable and helpful wives, as intelligent mothers, as useful, uplifting members of the communities in which they live, the educated women of China are the supreme answer to any question regarding the possibility and wisdom of the education of Chinese women.

V

THE PIONEER GIRLS' SCHOOL ESTABLISHED BY THE CHINESE

FOR over fifty years after the establishment of the first school for girls in China, woman's education was left entirely to the missionaries. But just before the close of the last century, it became evident that the Chinese themselves were aware of the value of educational work for women and were no longer willing that the foreigners should do everything for the uplifting of their daughters and they nothing. In the year 1897, a number of wealthy merchants and officials in Shanghai formed a society for the purpose of establishing a school for girls in that city, all the expenses of which were to be met by voluntary subscriptions. The provisional prospectus of this school shows the spirit which actuated the leaders of the project, the ideals which they held for the school, and the care with which they planned to attain them:

1. "In opening schools for girls we are reverting to the illustrious custom of the three dynasties. In order

to open up the intelligence of the people, we must certainly make the women free and afterwards customs can be changed. That the reality may correspond to the name all funds and plans for the school are to be made under the control (supervision) of women, and the teachers are to be women.

The above is the fundamental idea in the establishment of the school.

2. Temporarily four teachers will be employed, two for Chinese and two for English, all of whom are to be Chinese ladies. In general each teacher will have twenty pupils. This refers to the beginning of the literary department. As funds and pupils increase more teachers will be added.

3. There shall be one foreign and one Chinese superintendent who will live at the school and have general oversight of the pupils and employees. They shall receive salaries.

4. Eight directors shall be chosen from the number of contributors who shall visit the school by turns, inspect the studies and assist those in charge. They shall receive no salaries.

5. Twelve men shall be chosen from the families of contributors to solicit and collect funds, appoint teachers and principals, decide on courses of study and manage the finances. They shall receive no salaries.

6. There shall be two treasurers chosen by the twelve male directors, who shall be honest and economical men, and good accountants, to have charge of receipts and disbursements. They shall receive salaries.

The above five rules appertain to the management.

7. The school will open with forty pupils and the members shall increase as funds increase.

8. Pupils may enter between the ages of eight and fifteen.

9. Pupils between the ages of eight and eleven must be able to read a certain amount on entrance. Those

between twelve and fifteen must know something of composition and be able to read letters. Teachers shall decide upon the eligibility of candidates for admission.

10. Foot-binding is a very vile custom of the Chinese. Persons of culture should not continue it. Since this is only a beginning of the school and the customs are not yet established, for the present pupils shall be admitted without regard to whether their feet are bound or not, but after a few years there will be a limit and no one with small feet will be admitted.

11. It is the intention of this school to make no distinctions of rank, but since in the future pupils from the school will be leaders and teachers in other schools, only daughters of reputable families will be admitted.

The above are the five rules for the admission of pupils.

12. The course of study will be half English and half Chinese. First reading and composition shall be learned, and later all elementary branches of learning; afterward, history and science, handicrafts and professions may be taken up.

13. There shall be three special courses of study; mathematical, medical and law. Each pupil may choose which she will pursue, but those who study medicine and law must first have a good general knowledge of mathematics.

14. Besides these courses of study there shall be a kindergarten department, the teachers of which must have a wide general knowledge.

15. The industrial department shall include spinning, weaving and drawing, as soon as there are funds sufficient to engage teachers in both foreign and native methods, as these matters are of great importance to women.

16. Monthly examinations shall be held by the teachers, who shall give the markings. Quarterly ex-

aminations shall be conducted by specialists who will give the marks and award prizes.

The above are the five rules for studies.

17. All those in control from teachers and superintendents to servants shall be women. Rigid discipline shall be enforced. No men shall be allowed to enter the doors. If the male directors have anything about which to consult they shall meet in an outer building.

18. Little children whose homes are near may attend the school without living in it, but must be regular in attendance. When the homes are distant children may live at the school. It is decided to build ten rooms for their accommodation.

19. Fees shall be graduated similar to those paid by foreigners (or expenses will be about the same as those in Western schools). The rich shall pay liberally to help the school, but if the family is in moderate circumstances the fees shall be less. In case of extreme poverty the fees may be entirely remitted. A poor student who has ability and application may not only have fees remitted, but may be provided with board, clothing, books, etc.

20. Clean, honest women servants shall be employed to attend to all the wants of the pupils. Pupils may be allowed to bring servants from home, but such servants shall be subject to the authorities of the school.

21. Whoever completes one of the three courses of study, in the Kindergarten or Industrial course, shall receive a diploma which empowers them to follow the professions for which they have prepared.

22. Girls taken from Foundling Asylums cannot be given in marriage as concubines; much more shall the pupils of this school not be given as concubines, but shall be more highly esteemed in the world and loved by their parents and not by being given as concubines tarnish the purity and disgrace the high standing of the school.

23. All countries prohibit the slave trade. China should gradually do away with the system of slavery. Any pupils who have been in the school, however poor they may be, may never be sold as slaves. Any one violating this rule shall pay a fine of $500.

The above are the three rules for those who graduate from this school.

24. Each contributor will please hand in the official rank and residence of her husband or son, and her own official rank, with her subscription, for the record.

25. Make the contributions payable by the month or year, according to the custom of Western countries. In order that the funds of the school may not run short contributions should be regular. Our great hope is that the ladies within the four seas will observe the annual and monthly contributions.

26. All subscriptions whether from natives or foreigners, small or great, from a dollar upward, will be alike received. We would not hinder cheerful giving.

27. At the beginning, while funds are limited, it has been decided to open a school in Shanghai, but it is hoped that afterward the work may be pushed forward into every province and prefecture and township.

28. The teachers of Western branches first to be appointed are the learned women, from the Kiangsi province . . ., and from the Hupeh province. . . . The teachers of Chinese are yet to be sought out by the superintendents.

29. The men and women directors shall be chosen by ballot by those who are instituting the enterprise. Since the interested are widely scattered those instituting the work will go forward and act temporarily until such times as directors can be selected.

30. For the present all contributions may be sent to the office of the *Chinese Progress*. Each issue will contain names of contributors with amounts contributed,

also all disbursements. Everything being made public will insure confidence in the enterprise.

31. This is an experimental schedule giving the general scope of the enterprise. After the school opens the teachers, superintendents and directors will formulate the details." [1]

True to their purpose the men who had originated the plan very soon turned over the execution of it to their wives and daughters, giving their own efforts to raising the necessary funds. The committee of Chinese ladies, thus confronted with the task of establishing and determining the policy of this pioneer Chinese school for girls, and feeling the lack of such experience or training as would fit them for an undertaking of this kind, at once turned for coöperation and advice to those who were more versed in the methods of woman's education. Dr. Young J. Allen and Dr. E. T. Williams were asked to furnish them a list of the foreign ladies in Shanghai who would be particularly interested in the plan. This was done, and in December of 1897 about fifty foreign women, consuls' wives, missionaries, and others, were invited by the committee of Chinese ladies to a banquet served in a large restaurant in one of the Chinese pleasure gardens

[1] Miss Gertrude Howe, in *Missionary Review of the World,* Jan., 1898. The "learned women" referred to in 28 were two graduates of mission schools.

of Shanghai. There prospectuses for the proposed school were shown, and suggestions invited.

From that time on the foreign women of Shanghai sustained an unofficial but very helpful advisory relation to the new school. Soon after the banquet to which they had been invited, they entertained the school directresses at the home of one of their number, for a further discussion of plans; and when the school was formally opened, the first of June, 1898, ten foreign ladies were asked to be present. Mrs. Timothy Richard, who was one of the ten, wrote an account of this epoch-making event.

"By this time sixteen girls belonging to higher class families had been enrolled as pupils and boarders at the moderate fee of $3.10, which included everything. We were taken over the building and shown the waiting room, dining rooms and dormitories. The arrangements in these, as in the school room, were very much after the model of the mission school for higher class Chinese girls, namely that at McTyeire. Maps and charts of the 'Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge,' and 'The Educational Association,' adorned the walls of the school room. A Christian matron, a member of the

North Gate church, had been secured, and also the services of a Christian Chinese girl (a pupil of Miss Haygood') to teach English two hours daily. Chinese books were to be taught by an educated Chinese lady. The funds at first were not sufficient to meet the salary of a foreign lady teacher. . . .

"The gathering ended in a Chinese dinner served in semi-foreign fashion. Suggestions or remarks were again invited. Some of us spoke of our entire satisfaction with the arrangements—the cleanliness, good ventilation, etc.—and I added the suggestion that the Chinese lady directresses ought to attend the approaching closing exercises in the mission girls' schools in Shanghai and judge for themselves of the attainments of the girls attending these schools." [2]

Mrs. Richard adds that "this advice was acted upon and furnished occasion for other interesting meetings of Chinese and foreign ladies, more especially in the cases where school exercises were accompanied by a 'Social,' as in the case of the McTyeire and Bridgman Homes. The familiarity of the girls in these schools with such varied subjects—with English in the McTyeire, with Chinese character,

[2] Report of the Triennial Meeting of the Educational Association of China, 1899.

classics and history in the Bridgman Home, and with astronomy and mathematics at the South Gate—astonished and pleased the ladies immensely." [3]

The keenest interest was felt in the progress of the school by all the friends of woman's education, and many of them freely gave it the benefit not only of their suggestions but of their time and strength as well. Mrs. Richard says:

"At the request of the directresses I, for some time, visited the school once a week, examined them in their progress in English, gave a lesson in geography and other subjects which the then native staff could not give. Taking with me Betel's Portable Globe, which shuts up like an umbrella, it was easy to explain the different motions of the earth, and the cause of seasons and eclipses. That such explanations were necessary not only for the girls, but for the Chinese ladies always present on these occasions, will be plain from the fact that at the second lesson one of the otherwise intelligent Chinese ladies, who reads and writes Chinese well, gravely asked if in England we had the same sun and moon that they have in China, and when assured it was so, remarked

[3] Report of the Triennial Meeting of the Educational Association of China, 1899.

that of course when it was new moon in China it would be full moon in England and *vice versa.*

"When the school was closed for a month's summer vacation there were twenty pupils, eight of whom had unbound feet.

"Before the reopening of the school the Chinese committee applied to the Rev. T. Richard, Secretary of S. D. C. K. (Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge) for an English lady teacher who would superintend not only the boarding school already established near the Arsenal, but the day school for girls about to be opened in the native city. (Fees in the day school $2.50 per month for tuition and one meal a day.) Miss Allen was recommended. She visits the schools three days a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, teaching in the morning at the boarding school and in the afternoon at the day school. Since Chinese New Year holidays she has besides been teaching foreign sewing on Thursday morning at the boarding school. She teaches English, arithmetic, geography and drawing, and is ably assisted in the boarding school by Miss Ting, who was educated in St. Mary's School, Jessfield, and is a devoted Christian; and in the day school by Miss Zee, a Christian from Miss Haygood's school. . . .

The closing exercises before Chinese New Year were largely attended by foreign ladies. . . . We were much pleased with the progress made in English, reading and spelling, writing, arithmetic and native drawing. After the exercises Dr. Allen shortly addressed the school and visitors, the former in Shanghai dialect, the latter in English. . . . Mrs. N. P. Anderson then distributed the prizes." [4]

In connection with the school a monthly paper, known as "The Chinese Girls' Progress," was published, the purpose of which was to advance the cause of woman's education. The promoters of the school also organized a "Society for the Diffusion of Knowledge among Chinese Women." Such interest as this made the hopes of all run high. Miss Melvin woke a responsive echo in the hearts of many when she called the new school "the greatest wonder of the age," and no friend of Chinese women failed to understand the feeling of the venerable Dr. Allen, who, as he stood before the students and guests assembled to celebrate the closing exercises of this first school for girls, established by the Chinese themselves, declared that he felt inclined

[4] Report of the Triennial Meeting of the Educational Association of China, 1899.

to say, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace."

It was a crushing disappointment to the friends and promoters of the school, when less than two years after its opening, it was forced to close its doors in obedience to the orders of the Empress Dowager. In common with many other progressive movements it was swept away in the reaction which followed the too sudden reform edicts of the young Emperor, Kuang Hsü. The school had been born but to die, but the spirit which gave it birth had become so deeply rooted in the hearts of many earnest Chinese, that those who knew were sure that that spirit could not die. They knew that it would manifest itself when the storm had passed, and were confident that the school which had been both the fulfilment and inspiration of so much faith and hope, was but a forerunner of many other schools, which the people of China would establish and carry on for the education of their daughters.

VI

THE DEVELOPMENT OF GENTRY AND GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

THE storm of reaction against the new order of progress was severe, but short. At the beginning of 1901 the clouds were rapidly disappearing and the spirit of the new era had begun to reassert itself. By the close of that year another school for girls had been established in Shanghai, bearing the name "Wupun," or "Strive For Duty School." The following year another school for girls, known as the "I-Kwo," or "Patriotic School," was established, followed in 1903 by the Chung-mang School, founded by a wealthy Chinese widow, and in 1904 by the Ch'Eng Tung School, established by a Mr. and Mrs. Yang. The year 1905 marked the founding of four more similar schools, one of them under the management of the Anti-Foot-binding Society. Four others followed in 1906, making at the beginning of 1907 a total of twelve schools for girls in Shanghai alone, supported and controlled wholly by the Chi-

nese, and with a total enrollment of over eight hundred students.[1]

Very significant of the new era were the courses of study offered in these schools. In addition to the preparatory and academic work, many of them had normal departments for the training of teachers, a few gave industrial training, and one included a medical course in its curriculum. In almost all, physical culture was a part of the regular work, and in five of them unbound feet were made a condition of entrance. It was indicative of a new era, too, that in each school regular rates of board and tuition were charged, and that whereas some were partly supported by subscriptions others claimed to be wholly self-supporting. Three schools were established and carried on by men and their wives, working jointly, this in itself a proof that a new day had dawned in China. Of the others, the majority were founded by public-spirited Chinese men; the remainder by progressive Chinese women. All, of course, included women on the staff, and as practically the only educated women in China were those trained in Christian schools, it followed that many of the teachers were Christian women. In two of the schools part

[1] Miss Julia Yen, in *Woman's Work in the Far East,* June, 1907.

of the teaching was done by women missionaries.

If Robert Morrison could have had a prophetic vision of Shanghai at the time of the great Morrison Centennial held there in 1907 to commemorate his arrival in China, probably nothing would have caused him greater astonishment than the sight of this company of people, men and women, Chinese and foreign, Christian and non-Christian, working together in harmonious unity created by their common interest in that once despised and rejected cause—the education of Chinese women.

To Shanghai belongs the honour of having been the first city in which a modern school for girls was established, and carried on by the Chinese, but interest in woman's education had now become so general that such schools were soon started in many parts of the Empire.

The Empress Dowager, who in 1900 had so frowned upon the pioneer school in Shanghai that it had been forced to close its doors, became, a few years later, a warm advocate and patron of woman's education. Dr. Isaac Taylor Headland of Peking University gives an interesting account of a conversation with her on the subject.

"On one occasion while in the theatre she called me to her side, and giving me a chair,

inquired at length into the system of female education in America.

" ' I have heard,' she said, ' that in your honourable country all the girls are taught to read.'

" ' Quite so, your Majesty.'

" ' And are they taught the same branches of study as the boys?'

" ' In the public schools they are.'

" ' I wish very much that the girls in China might also be taught, but the people have great difficulty in educating their boys.'

" I then explained in a few words our public school system, to which she replied:

" ' The taxes in China are so heavy at present that it would be impossible to add another expense such as this would be.'

" It was not long thereafter, however, before an edict was issued commending female education, and at the present time hundreds of girls' schools have been established by private persons both in Peking and throughout the Empire." [2]

At the orders of the Empress a large Lama convent was transformed into a school for girls [3] and it is reported also that she gave

[2] Headland, *Court Life in China,* Chap. VII, pp. 102 f.

[3] Hon. John Foster, in *National Geographic Magazine,* Dec., 1906.

100,000 taels (about $65,000) to the cause of woman's education in Peking.[4] Other women of wealth and rank were quick to follow her example, and girls' schools sprang up in many parts of the Empire.

Mrs. Isaac Taylor Headland, who through her skill as a physician had become acquainted with many of the women of this class, tells of a visit to the school conducted by Princess Su in a building within her own palace grounds:

"The school building was evidently designed for that purpose, being light and airy with the whole southern exposure made into windows and covered with a thin white paper which gives a soft, restful light and shuts out the glare of the sun. The floor is covered with a heavy rope matting, while the walls are hung with botanical, zoölogical and other charts. Besides the usual furniture for a well-equipped school room it was heated with a foreign stove, had glass cases for their embroidery and drawing materials, and a good American organ to direct them in singing, dancing and calisthenics.

"I arrived at recess. The Princess took me into the teacher's den, which was cut off from the main room by a beautifully carved screen.

[4] Notes and Queries, *Woman's Work in the Far East*, Dec., 1906.

Government School for Girls—Canton

Here I was introduced to the Japanese lady teacher and served with tea. She spoke no English and but little Chinese and the embarrassment of our effort to converse was only relieved by the ringing of the bell for school. The pupils, consisting of the secondary wives and daughters of the Prince, his son's wife, and the wives and daughters of his dead brother who make their home with him, entered in an orderly way and took their seats.

. . . "'How long has the school been in session?' I asked the Princess.

"'Three and a half months,' she replied.

"'And they have done all this embroidery and painting in that time?'

"'They have, and in addition have pursued their Western studies,' she explained.

"In arithmetic the teacher placed the examples on the board, the pupils worked them on their slates, after which each was called upon for an explanation, which she gave in Japanese. While this class was reciting the Prince came in and asked if we might not have calisthenics, evidently thinking that I would enjoy the drill more than the mathematics. It was interesting to see those Manchu ladies stand and go through a thorough physical drill to the tune of a lively march on a foreign organ. . . .

"'The young ladies do not comb their hair in the regular Manchu style,' I observed to the Princess.

"'No,' she answered, 'we do not think that best. It is not very convenient and so we have them dress it in the small coil on the top of the head, as you see. Neither do we allow them to wear flowers in their hair, nor to paint or powder, or wear shoes with centre elevations on the soles. We try to give them the greatest possible convenience and comfort.' . . .

"'Of what does their course of study consist?' I asked the Princess.

"She went to the wall and took down a gilt frame which contained their curriculum and which she asked her eldest daughter to copy for me. They had five studies each day, six days of the week, Sunday being a holiday. They began with arithmetic, followed it up with Japanese language, needlework, music and calisthenics, then took Chinese language, drawing, and Chinese history, with the writing of the ideographs of their own language, which was one of the most difficult tasks they had to perform." [5]

The sister of Prince Su, who had married

[5] Headland, *Court Life in China*, Chap. XIV, pp. 214-217.

a Mongol prince, was eager to start a school for girls in her Mongolian home, and during a visit to Peking went with Mrs. Headland to visit the girls' school of the Methodist Mission. When she left for her home she took with her a Japanese woman teacher, and soon had a school for girls in full operation. Seventeen of her pupils came with her on her next visit to Peking, both to see the capital and to visit the schools for girls which had been established there. On their return they were accompanied by an educated young Chinese woman, who was to teach the Chinese classics in the school.

Still another sister of Prince Su organized a school in Peking, in which she soon had eighty or more girls taken from various grades of society. A Japanese teacher had charge of the physical culture and gave instruction in the rudiments of Western mathematics, but the Princess, who had learned to read in childhood by bribing some of the palace eunuchs to teach her, conducted much of the work in the Chinese classics herself.[6]

The relation between these "gentry schools," as they are commonly termed, and the mission schools in the city has been a very

[6] Headland, *Court Life in China,* Chap. XIV, pp. 218-222.

cordial one. Those interested in the mission schools rejoiced in the new-born interest in the education of women, and were eager to be of any possible service to the Chinese women who were so courageously giving themselves to this cause.

"Once a week I give a half hour of work to an outside school kept by a Chinese lady of great learning in Confucian lines," wrote Miss Reed of the North China Union College. "These little maidens are expected to keep in perfect order along the stiff old lines, and their stiffness hardly accords with modern exercises, so between that and the mummifying effect of their voluminous winter clothing I am rather in despair over them. But we keep working away the best we can, and in the meantime the friendship between the teacher and our ladies here continues and grows." [1]

At another time she wrote: "In the early spring we were asked to attend an annual exhibition at a large school in the west city, an hour's trip from here. We were also asked to send an exhibit, and, as we do not do any of the knitting and embroidery which they make much of, we sent sets of examination papers, specimens of writing, and so on. It

[1] *Life and Light for Woman*, Aug., 1908.

seemed to be one of the ways to show our very friendly feeling, and to show, too, our idea of school work. . . . We tried another plan at the time of our final examinations. The mornings we gave to quiet written examinations, but in the afternoon we invited people in and the girls gave little talks on the different subjects, with illustrations, all prepared beforehand. This in zoölogy, physiology, geography, physics and chemistry could be made especially interesting. We had a surprising number of guests, teachers from different schools and women of education in the city, and we considered the plan a great success for them, as well as a training for our own girls in speaking before others." [8]

Miss Porter of Peking wrote of Miss Chi, a Chinese woman, the only child of an official who had educated her as if she had been a son, " She has established a private school for girls and of all the teachers we meet is the one whose methods and aims seem most commendable. Several of her pupils attend many of our services, and there is a feeling of genuine friendliness growing between us." [9]

Encouraging as were the evidences of inter-

[8] Miss Reed, in *Life and Light for Woman,* Dec., 1908.

[9] *Life and Light for Woman,* Aug., 1907.

est in the education of women shown by the founding of gentry schools by individuals or groups of individuals, the establishment of a system of woman's education by the government was an even greater step in advance. In the preface to "The Awakening of China," written October 30th, 1906, Dr. W. A. P. Martin says, "Still more surprising are the steps taken toward the intellectual emancipation of women in China. One of the leading ministers of education assured me the other day that he was pushing the establishment of schools for girls."

When the Imperial Commission of 1906 was sent out the commissioners were instructed to study woman's education in other countries. His Excellency, Tuan Fang, who was a member of the commission, returned to China full of enthusiasm on the subject, and it is said that his report of his observations led the Board of Education to decide to push woman's education without further delay. "Tuan Fang's idea is that graduates of female high and normal schools may be put in charge of primary schools, and with a constantly growing number of educated women, children will have in the near future, the valuable privilege of a mother's teaching at home, the real school for patriots. None, he says, are greater patriots

and more loyal to a government than women." [10]

In this same year a missionary in North China wrote: "The Chinese now have under consideration schemes for establishing schools for girls to be under government control, and a system of land tax is to be instituted to support them. These schools will be for the benefit of girls of the wealthy class, for the board and tuition will be free as in the government schools for young men, yet there are so many other expenses connected with the school that none but the well-to-do can take advantage of them." [11]

Two years later the Peking correspondent of the "Shanghai Times" reported: "The Ministry of Education has submitted to the Throne regulations for establishing girls' schools, normal and primary, throughout the empire. The regulations have received the Imperial sanction and were published in full in the 'Peking Gazette.' Normal schools are to be founded first in the provincial capitals, afterwards in the prefectural cities, and later in the country cities; the primary schools are

[10] Hon. John Foster, in *National Geographic Magazine,* Dec., 1906.

[11] Dr. Terry, in *Woman's Missionary Friend,* Oct., 1906.

to be established everywhere. The schools are to be government schools mainly, but private enterprise is also encouraged, private foundations being subject to official inspection. Permission is given for the employment of foreign as well as native lady teachers." [12]

The following year (1909) the "North China Daily Herald" published a brief paragraph stating that "Her Highness the Princess Consort to the Prince Regent has proposed that a National Education Association should be founded, of which she will be the president." [13] A note in "Woman's Work in the Far East" for December of the same year reported: "Schools for women are being opened in every direction by the Chinese, and the Throne has recently decided to require Chinese lady students educated abroad to come to Peking for examination in order that their help may be secured and applied to the best advantage in the education of Chinese women at home." [14]

The government has not confined itself to considering suggestions and drawing up regulations, however. While the Board of Educa-

[12] *Woman's Work in the Far East*, Sept., 1908.

[13] *North China Daily Herald*, Aug. 7, 1909.

[14] Notes and Queries, *Woman's Work in the Far East*, Dec., 1909.

tion has been discussing methods and perfecting plans, the viceroys have been busy establishing schools for girls in their respective provinces. Yuan Shih Kai, the progressive viceroy of the province of Chihli, pushed schools for girls in his territory with great energy. Peking was reported to have twenty schools for girls, outside of the mission schools, in 1908, and between 1905 and 1908 twenty such schools were opened by the Board of Education in Tientsin and its suburbs, the expenses being met partly by the Board of Education and partly by outside subscriptions.[15]

Modern education even found its way into the districts beyond the cities. As early as 1906 a Tientsin missionary who had been making a study of the Chinese schools for girls in and about Tientsin wrote:

"But the most astounding discovery in girls' schools was not made in the City of the Heavenly Ford (Tientsin) but on a missionary country trip one hundred li from the city. We had previously travelled through the mud village of Pei-yeng-chiao and had mentally dubbed it 'The White Pig Village,' since the pigs were not of the usual Chinese variety. A native pastor in a neighbouring village in-

[15] Mrs. G. T. Candlin, in *Woman's Work in the Far East,* March, 1908.

formed us that there was actually a modern girls' school in this forlorn hamlet. We secured a letter of introduction to the teacher, taking care that it should declare that our purpose was not 'to preach the doctrine' but simply to pay our respects to this honourable school. The letter was sent in doubt about missionaries being admitted, but at once a polite invitation to enter was sent—an invitation which included the 'Mu Shih' as well as his harmless wife. In the inner court the teacher herself met us and offered her hand in foreign style. As we entered the school room the pupils arose. They were evidently frightened at the appearance of two outlandish foreigners and much relieved when we were conducted into the teacher's own sanctum—a tastefully fitted up inner room.

"Over the usual teacups we said, 'We have visited the government schools in Tientsin and wish to see if this admirable school is similarly arranged.' To this she replied, 'This is a miserable hamlet and cannot be compared with a city school.' 'What is your honourable school's schedule of studies?' 'Only a few ordinary lessons,' and thereupon she placed before us an elaborate program for every day, much like that of a Western school. The 'few ordinary lessons' included etiquette, Chi-

nese language, arithmetic, geography, elemenary science, sewing, drawing, calisthenics and music." [16]

Reports for the year 1907 show that there were at that time outside of Peking 121 government and gentry schools for girls in Chihli, with 2,523 students.

In 1906 the United States consul at Nanking wrote: "The viceroy of the Liang-Kiang province, Choufu, one of the most progressive of the higher Chinese officials, has recently founded a school for girls in Nanking. At the opening, which was largely attended, the viceroy delivered an address which impressed the people that this girls' school was no ordinary institution. It is supported by subscriptions from a number of the leading tao-tais of Nanking, who have raised $4,296, and the viceroy has subscribed $1,432, annually. The school is located in a quiet place, with spacious buildings. Six women teachers have been engaged, three to teach English, and three to teach Chinese. The opening of the school is an important event in Nanking, as it is really the birth of female education in that ancient city. The interest taken in the school by the leading officials of Nanking indicates the dawning of

[16] Mrs. M. L. Taft, in *Woman's Work in the Far East,* Sept., 1906.

freedom for China's women and girls. For the last few years the missionary girls' schools have been doing good work, but this is the first school established under the patronage of the viceroy. China is awakening to realize that a nation's strength and prosperity lie in the education of her daughters." [17]

A statistical report of the educational work in Nanking, published in 1909, shows that there were in that year, exclusive of the mission schools, nine government schools for girls, and three gentry schools, with a total of 598 pupils in the government schools, 154 in the gentry schools.

In the year 1909 alone thirteen girls' schools were opened by the government in Nanchang, the capital of Kiangsi province. In 1905 an imperial edict in Foochow, the capital of Fuhkien province, announced that a normal school for women and girls would be opened by the government. The viceroy and provincial officials were the patrons of the school, and no expense was spared to make it successful. Farther south, in Canton, twenty-five government and gentry schools for girls were reported in 1908. Over two hundred young women are now enrolled in the normal school alone. In the spring of 1906 the viceroy of Shantung

[17] *Missionary Review of the World,* Feb., 1907.

Government Kindergarten at Foochow in Session

province sent an envoy to Tengchow, the capital, with orders "to arrange for the opening of girls' schools not only in Tengchow but wherever possible in neighbouring cities."[18] Even from conservative Hunan came news of a government school for girls in Changsha, with a primary and normal department, where 200 students were "studying English, arithmetic, Chinese, and *domestic science*."[19] In far Szechuan, 49 government and gentry schools for girls, with a total number of 1,897 students, were reported in 1908, in addition to 297 elementary schools in which both boys and girls were pupils.

[18] Mrs. Calvin Wight, in *Woman's Work in the Far East,* June, 1907.

[19] Rev. Brownell Gage, in *Chinese Recorder,* Dec., 1907.

VII

THE CHARACTER OF THE GENTRY AND GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

WHEN the Chinese had once awakened to the importance of woman's education, they did not hesitate to expend large sums of money in the establishment of girls' schools. Among the prominent characteristics of these schools are the comfortable and attractive buildings in which many of them are housed.

"These schools have been opened by the government," writes a visitor to the Foochow Woman's Normal School and Kindergarten, "and are in a magnificent house, the best in the city and probably in the province. There are seven blocks, very wide, and several upstairs rooms, beautiful stone work and carved woodwork. The normal school is in the first two blocks, the kindergarten in the fourth and fifth. These are separated from the rest of the house by gardens with ponds and rookeries, some higher than the surrounding houses and affording a good view of the city and neigh-

bouring hills, especially 'Black Rock Hill.' . . We were admitted to the kindergarten school through the play room; there were rocking-horses, dumb-bells, pails, carts on wheels in abundance, gaily painted floors, plenty of light and air." [1]

A missionary from Tientsin writes, "A visit to the Kaodung reveals many things most gratifying to the friends of China. The new school building was constructed for this very purpose and the rooms are large, high and airy. There are several good-sized recitation rooms, an inviting guest room, a large room combining library and worship hall, a dining room, pleasant teachers' rooms and commodious dormitories. Each student room will accommodate three or four students. These are furnished with simple single beds and the beds are tastefully draped with curtains, usually of light blue. Each student has decorated her corner with pictures and trinkets so dear to the girl heart in every land, and the sight is very delightful. In connection with the dormitories are bath rooms provided with foreign tubs. The dining room has an ingenious barrel-like opening into the kitchen. As it revolves it permits food to be passed in and

[1] Miss M. J. Shire, in *India's Women and China's Daughters,* Feb., 1908.

out, but prevents either the cook from seeing the students, or the students from seeing the cook. We were present at the time of the midday meal and noted the white rice and abundant variety of vegetables." [2]

Neither was expense spared in providing the schools with apparatus of various kinds. "The schools seemed well supplied with physical and chemical apparatus," [3] wrote a visitor to Peking and Tientsin who had been inspecting the schools established there. Even the school in the "White Pig Village" boasted "biological, zoölogical and physical culture charts, also maps and blackboards" and an organ from Japan.

The salaries paid the teachers are usually very large as salaries go in China, sometimes extravagantly so. "The matron told us that the teachers' salaries vary from 'over ten to forty dollars a month,'" said a missionary, after a visit to the Foochow Woman's Normal School. "We consider ten dollars a month an enormous salary." [4] "The teacher has very

[2] Mrs. M. L. Taft, in *Woman's Work in the Far East*, Sept., 1906.

[3] Dr. Mary Carleton, in *Missionary Review of the World*, Feb., 1908.

[4] Miss M. J. Shire, in *India's Women and China's Daughters*, Feb., 1908.

light work, teaching arithmetic, geography and physical culture for three hours a day, and the salary is nearly five times what we offer our teachers," [5] reads the letter of another, who had been talking with a teacher in a government school in Peking. Another, after visiting a government normal school, wrote of one of the pupil teachers, "She is a very clever girl of nineteen or twenty and gets thirty dollars a month while in training. (This is eight times the salary of my day school teacher.)" [6]

A letter from Dr. Carleton of Foochow tells of an interesting case. "We visited Emily Hsu, and with her visited two schools in which she teaches. Emily is also tutoring in a private family. If I remember correctly she teaches two hours in each of the two schools, and tutors one or two hours. For this service she receives $140 (Mexican) per month. To appreciate what this munificent income means one must compare it with the salary of other teachers. A first degree man, purely a native teacher, may be employed for from four to six dollars a month. Young men with a small knowledge of English command from ten to twenty dollars a month.

[5] Miss Mary Andrews, in *Life and Light for Women*, Nov., 1907.

[6] *Woman's Work in the Far East*, March, 1906.

Young men, graduates from our Anglo-Chinese College, start in at the post office or customs, clerking, with twenty dollars a month.

"Emily Hsu was educated in our girls' boarding school and later in Foochow Conference Seminary, where she learned English, and I believe she also learned a little Mandarin. She quietly goes off up to Tientsin and walks into this post with a salary each month as great, or nearly so, as her father, a presiding elder in our conference, receives in a year."[7]

Even more remarkable was the salary recently offered a native kindergarten teacher, $100 gold, not Mexican, a month,[8] a salary much larger than that which single missionaries receive, although living expenses are necessarily much higher for a foreigner than for a Chinese.

The courses of study pursued in the government and gentry schools vary largely in detail, but on the whole show much similarity. Sometimes the curriculum is extremely simple. "The studies at present are Chinese, arithmetic and needlework,"[9] wrote a cor-

[7] Dr. Mary Carleton, in *Missionary Review of the World*, Feb., 1908.

[8] Mrs. J. W. Bashford, in *Life and Light for Women*, Jan., 1908.

[9] *North China Daily Herald*, Sept. 25, 1909.

respondent of the "North China Daily Herald," of a newly established school in the interior. Somewhat more elaborate is the course of the Woman's Normal School of Foochow, where "classics, Mandarin, arithmetic and geography, needlework, embroidery, artificial flower making, crochet in cotton and wool, are taught," [10] although the greater length of the curriculum is caused chiefly by the addition of the courses in handwork.

The more elaborate course of study in the Public School for Girls, of Tientsin, is probably fairly representative of the work offered by the larger schools. "The Handbook Guide to Tientsin" reports that the students of the Public School for Girls "are taught Chinese classics, history, arithmetic, geography, natural history, Japanese, English, music, drawing and calisthenics." Another writer on the government schools of Tientsin says, "The curriculum in every school is about the same." [11] Not very different from this curriculum is that of the government school for girls in Hangchow, where Chinese reading and writing, arithmetic, geography, drawing, singing and handwork

[10] Miss M. J. Shire, in *India's Women and China's Daughters,* Feb., 1908.

[11] Mrs. G. T. Candlin, in *Woman's Work in the Far East,* March, 1908.

(embroidery or crocheting) are offered in the primary department, with an addition of history, algebra, and simple psychology in the higher course. A large gentry school for girls in the same city publishes a very similar curriculum, in which Chinese, arithmetic, geography, handwork, algebra and a course which aims to give instruction in methods of teaching are the principal features.

Probably the most serious defect in these curricula is the almost total absence of any study of physical and biological sciences. The presence of biological and zoölogical charts, and physical and chemical apparatus has been mentioned, but the curricula show that the work done in science has either been very elementary, or wholly absent. The same writer who spoke of the presence of physical and chemical apparatus in the schools in Peking and Tientsin adds that they "were quietly resting on the shelves, and though well labelled seemed never to have been used." [12] The lack of this kind of study would be a serious one in any country, but is especially so in China, whose old educational system has trained the memory rather than the reasoning faculties, and has taught the student to ask, "What did

[12] Dr. Mary Carleton, in *Missionary Review of the World*, Feb., 1908.

our fathers say?" rather than "What is truth?" China needs to acquire the scientific spirit, and the schools should be doing all that they can to develop it, by giving their students the training of the scientific laboratory.

A less serious criticism has been made of the prominence given to embroidery, crocheting, etc., in their curricula. Manual training of one kind or another is being given increasing prominence in American schools and probably no thoughtful student of the educational problems of China would fail to recommend that it be given a place in the curricula of Chinese schools. Apart from its universal value, it has a peculiar service to perform in China, where long finger nails have for centuries proclaimed the scholar's scorn of manual labour. The criticism has not been of the presence of handwork, but of the disproportionate amount of time spent on it in many schools, and of the kind of handwork in which training has been given.

The Chinese are noted for their skill in embroidery, and it seems scarcely necessary to give the teaching of this art a large place on the school calendar. Time spent in artificial flower making could doubtless be spent to better purpose, and judging from the reports of those who have seen the exhibits of crocheted

and knitted articles, the same thing could be said of the hours spent in their manufacture. "Fancy work, principally crocheting, was taught in all the schools," wrote Dr. Carleton. "Some of this was on inspection under glass cases, and I must confess it was supremely ugly." "All manner of useless crocheted articles of many hues," is another visitor's verdict, and a third declares that the colour combinations make one weary.

Other criticisms of the curricula might be made, but after all the final judgment of a school cannot be made on the basis of the outline of its course of study. It is comparatively easy to strike out some subject of the curriculum and substitute another in its place. The test of a school is not so much the excellence of its plan of work, important as that is, as the excellence and thoroughness of the work itself. An examination of their practice will give us a better basis of judgment of the strength of the government and gentry schools, than any study of their theory.

Dr. Carleton's verdict, given after her visit to the government girls' schools of Peking, Tientsin and Hankow, is suggestive. "Splendid as are these schools by comparison with an old style native school, yet we could but feel how poor it all was." The government

schools have not lacked good buildings or equipment or anything else that money could supply, and while the financial support of the gentry schools has varied according to the wealth of the backers, their weaknesses are not attributable to lack of funds. The weaknesses of both classes of schools are due to the fact that they have not been able to supply themselves with that without which no school can be successful, whatever else it may possess, namely, a strong teaching force. The desire for Western education has swept over China so suddenly that the demand for men and women who have themselves received this education and are trained to impart it has far exceeded the supply. This is true to an even greater extent in the case of the women than in that of the men. While the education of boys has always been approved in China, the general popularity of woman's education is as recent as that of Western education, and the Chinese women able to teach in these modern schools are an even smaller number than the men. Clause 17 of the rules of the government girls' schools of Tientsin is very suggestive of this dearth of women teachers, in its simple statement, "If any educated ladies care to offer their services as teachers they will be accepted."

At first the employment of Japanese teachers seemed to afford at least a partial solution of the problem, and Japanese women were members of the faculty of almost every government or gentry school for girls, often being in charge of the work. But this proved to be far from satisfactory. The schools felt that they could not wait for the Japanese teachers to acquire the language, and the work done either through an interpreter, or with a superficial knowledge of Chinese on the part of the teacher, or of Japanese on the part of the pupils, was of necessity far from thorough. Moreover, the Japanese teachers were often not at all competent to teach the courses assigned them. As early as 1907 a missionary in North China wrote, "The Chinese are coming to feel more and more dissatisfied with the teaching done by many of the Japanese teachers." [13]

The majority of the Chinese women employed have proved to be little more satisfactory. A missionary in Shensi gives an extreme case of the incompetence of some of these teachers. "A few weeks ago we were visited by a small school of ten pupils in charge of two ladies. All were dressed in long

[13] Miss Mary Andrews, in *Life and Light for Women*, Nov., 1907.

gowns of black sateen trimmed with gold braid, wearing peaked caps and high boots like boys. They filed in in order and saluted at the word of command, but when we offered them books they were unable to read, even the ladies in charge being quite ignorant." [14]

Another wrote of a visit to the practice school of a government normal school for women, the music mistress of which had mastered but two pages of music, "the most elaborate tune being a variation of 'There is a happy land.' It was played slowly with one finger of each hand." [15]

While there are probably few cases of incompetence quite so glaring as these, really good teachers of the new education are rarely found in these schools. Men trained in the Chinese classics are not hard to find and they have been employed to teach the girls to read and write their own language. Nor has it been difficult to find women to give instruction in embroidery, etc. But other subjects are usually poorly taught. A letter from a friend teaching in a mission school in Hangchow tells of a pupil who has come to her from one of

[14] Miss Beckingsale, in *Woman's Work in the Far East,* June, 1907.

[15] *Woman's Work in the Far East,* March, 1906.

the gentry schools. "She is very bright and is doing nicely. She shows, however, a poor foundation in mathematics, geography, etc. She can commit beautifully, but not reason so well. It was quite a new thing for her to have to explain her problems." The same letter states that "Most of the work (in the government and gentry schools of Hangchow) is done by the lecture rather than the recitation method," which is certainly not a wise plan to use in such elementary work.

That the educators of China have realized this fundamental weakness in these schools is shown both by the very large inducements which they offer to trained women, and by the efforts they have made to train teachers. Many normal schools have been established in various parts of the Empire. Before the opening of the Government Normal School of Tientsin it was announced that "In order that properly prepared women may be able to relinquish other occupations and take this training, the viceroy offers each student ten dollars a month, and also promises positions as teachers when the course of study is satisfactorily completed."

But this very effort to meet the demand for teachers has been another source of weakness in the government and gentry schools. Eager-

ness to push the pupils out into teaching has made the requirements for a teaching position very low, and has led to rapid and superficial study. After a study of the government and gentry schools in Hangchow, Miss Nourse of the Baptist Mission in that city writes, "You notice in all or nearly all the schools the desire for usefulness—the normal training idea. They have not the teachers to give the needed drill either in studies or in normal training. And so far they do not appreciate the fact that it takes say sixteen years, instead of seven or eight, to put a girl where she is capable of teaching. I believe the girls would stay in school much longer if anything was offered them."

Mrs. Taft of Tientsin, in an article on "Some Public Schools in Chihli," calls attention to the same thing. "These glimpses show clearly the widespread eagerness for education. They also show that the spell of the old classics is broken and that what is wanted is a modern Western education. But there seem to be at least two dangers,—a strong demand for *showy* accomplishments, and for *quick* methods. One asks, 'Will the Chinese girl be willing to scorn delights and live laborious days for the sake of a solid, thorough training?' We think she will. We must not

forget that there is a present emergency and an imperative demand for Chinese women teachers which palliates this cry for lightning methods. So great is the need for women teachers that the viceroy is about to open a woman's normal school in this city, the avowed purpose of this school, as stated in the elaborate 'chang ch'eng,' being 'quickly made teachers.'" [16]

"Some teachers have been sent out to teach," writes Miss Russell of Peking, "after having had but six months in the study of Western sciences." [17]

That practically none of the government and gentry schools are giving their pupils such training as would enable them to go out and do strong work as teachers, is evidenced by the replies made to one of a set of questions sent out in the winter of 1909 to the principals of the leading mission schools for girls in China. The object of the questions was to determine whether or not there was need of a woman's college or colleges in China, and one of them read, "Do you think the government and gentry schools of your territory would be willing, and prepared in point of scholarship, to send

[16] *Woman's Work in the Far East*, Sept., 1906.

[17] Miss Russell, in *Woman's Work in the Far East*, June, 1908.

students to such an institution?" The answers received were substantially unanimous in their verdict that the government and gentry schools, although some of them are termed normal schools and others colleges, are as yet far from doing the equivalent of high school or academy work.

"It will be many years before they can send students into any grade above the high school," wrote a teacher from Peking. From central China, the missionary in charge of a large school in Hankow, wrote, "I know of no government school for girls that could possibly prepare students for a college entrance examination." "Willing, but poorly prepared," was the verdict of the principal of a Shanghai school. From Hangchow another wrote, "They might be willing, but I fear they would not be prepared in point of scholarship," and added, "In the first place they do not comprehend what entrance to college (of real college grade) means, and then they have not the teachers to carry it through if they did." Word came from Foochow, "Our gentry and government schools are not yet ready to send students, but they will be willing to do so when they are ready." Still farther south, in Canton, another wrote, "The government schools and the gentry schools of South

China have *no* girls ready in point of *scholarship* for a college training. And I don't see how they can have any in three or four years' time as long as they have no properly trained teachers to prepare them for college."

It goes without saying that such "quickly made" teachers have failed to meet the need for teachers adequately. A friend has recently written me of the experience of a gentry school graduate, which is probably typical of many:

"A little day school supported by the government has just been opened across from us. There are over thirty pupils. The teacher is a graduate of Kong Nü Yah Dong. . . . Poor thing, she is discouraged already, for she can't do anything with them. She says if she could have an older person to govern she could do the teaching. It's just, you see, a matter of not being prepared for what she is attempting. She says she promised to try a month, but says she can't stand it any longer than that. She is teaching them Chinese (national reader) and arithmetic."

The Chinese themselves realize the defects of these schools. Many of the most prominent men of the official and gentry class who, now that they are fully awake to the desirability of education for women, are determined that

their daughters shall receive the best educational privileges available, are sending them to the mission schools in preference to those established by the government. A few years ago a number of Chinese officials in Hankow appealed to Bishop Roots of the American Episcopal Mission there, to establish a school for girls to which they could send their daughters, as they were much dissatisfied with the government school which the girls had been attending. The expense of the school was to be borne by them, but they asked that some woman of the mission staff be assigned to take charge of it.[18]

Yet in spite of all their present weakness no one doubts that the government and gentry schools have come to stay. China has resolved that she will give education to her daughters, and she is not to be balked by any difficulties, however discouraging they may be. These schools are stronger now than they were four or five years ago. In a recently published letter from Miss Russell of Peking we read: "The first two years there were many students who were practically 'tramps,' going about from school to school. The Board of Education has gradually brought this element under control, and is making rules for more

[18] *Spirit of Missions,* June, 1906.

stringently governing the pupils." [19] In the same letter she says that some of the schools "are slowly developing into schools that call for respect and praise."

"Primary, superficial, insufficiently instructed they may be," writes another, "but here and there from the number of institutions planted is growing a school destined to live and become a power in China." [20] Whatever therefore may be the present weaknesses of the government and gentry schools for girls, the energy with which the Chinese are seeking to strengthen them, supported by the wise and sympathetic coöperation of those more experienced in modern educational methods, gives hope that they will eventually become a real and vital factor in the moulding of the new China.

[19] *Life and Light for Women*, Feb., 1910.
[20] *Chinese Recorder*, Feb., 1910.

VIII

THE PRESENT POPULARITY OF WOMAN'S EDUCATION

THE past decade has witnessed in China what is probably the greatest educational renaissance the world has ever seen. And no feature of this awakening has been more interesting or significant than the universal interest felt in the education of women. The establishment of government and gentry schools for girls is convincing evidence that the interest is a real and vital thing. For years the mission schools for girls had been breaking down the prejudices against woman's education, and winning their way into favour in the communities in which they were situated, but even the most optimistic advocates of education for women were unprepared for the suddenness with which their cause leaped into universal favour. During the last few years woman's education has enjoyed not only local approbation but national popularity. Enthusiasm for the education of women is in the very air of China to-day.

The principal of a school in Nanking writes, "One of our little girls recently asked to go home to have her picture taken. She proudly showed me the result, which was a feminine family group, with grandmother, mother, three or more aunts, and about six cousins. All had assumed an intellectual expression and were posing before open books. I suppose our little one was the only member of the group who could read! The others only *wanted to*. But that picture stands for China's women to-day. Every woman in the empire, I believe, wants to read." [1]

The experience of a lady of wealth and position in Peking is suggestive of the new vista which is opening before the Chinese women:

"I have always prided myself on my beautiful clothes and jewels," she said. "A few months ago I saw a very beautiful new silk, and as I was going soon to an entertainment I decided to buy it and be the envy of all my friends. When the time came I was the best dressed lady there, but every one was interested in a quietly dressed little lady who was educated and could talk about a great world we had never seen and only knew of dimly.

[1] Miss White, in *Woman's Missionary Friend*, Oct., 1908.

No one paid any attention to my rich dress, or was envious of me, and as for myself, I hated it and longed to know what she knew and talk as she talked." [2]

Mrs. Isaac T. Headland says that in Peking there is not a prince's palace or a Manchu official's home where the girls are not all studying; that now a woman is ashamed if she cannot read, whereas formerly it was held to be a matter of little moment.[3]

"It was only last week," Miss Honzinger of Nanchang writes, "that I was a guest at a feast and numbered among the guests was the wife of the magistrate of Nanchang. She inquired into the details of our school and then asked if we would take her as a pupil. We had to say no, for experienced missionaries say that we must not put the women and girls together. Many a married woman has come to seek entrance to our school; many put their hair in a braid as is the custom with school girls, because they wish to study." [4]

In very practical ways Chinese women are manifesting their interest in woman's education.

[2] Miss Russell, in *Woman's Work in the Far East,* June, 1908.

[3] *Woman's Missionary Friend,* Aug., 1906.

[4] Miss Honsinger, in *Woman's Missionary Friend,* March, 1910.

"Some time ago the daughter of an official in the province of Leu-chuän died, and before her death she asked her father to allow her to give all her property for the opening of a school for girls. Later a Mrs. Wu, a very well educated lady of a fine old family, came into a large property on the death of her mother, and this she turned over entirely for girls' schools. Then the wife of an official in Peking died, and at her request her husband gave about $25,000 to help start some girls' schools in Peking." [5]

The women of China, who have lived in such seclusion for centuries, are even going to other countries in pursuit of education. As early as 1902 "The Diary of Events in the Far East" contained this surprising note:

"June 7.—Departure for Japan of eight young Chinese lady students under the chaperonage of Madame Wu, the wife of a Chinese M.A., Mr. Wu-chih-hu, a native of Weisien, who also accompanies the party. These eight young ladies are to undergo a course of three or four years' education in Japan. This is a decided step in advance for China; all the young ladies belong to distinguished families

[5] Miss Russell, in *Woman's Work in the Far East*, June, 1908.

The Girls of the Baldwin Memorial School, Nanchang

amongst the gentry and literati of the province." [6]

The young men of China are strengthening the cause of woman's education by their demand for educated wives. They have awakened to hitherto unrealized possibilities of mutual helpfulness and enjoyment in married life, and are seeking wives whose education and training will make them congenial companions. Miss Bonafield of Foochow tells of a young man of that city who had been without his knowledge betrothed by a member of his family to an uneducated girl. A betrothal in China is very nearly as binding as marriage, but this young man declared, "The girl must go to school or I will not marry her," and it was not until he had succeeded in obtaining entrance for her into a girls' school of the city that he would promise to carry out his side of the agreement.[7]

One educated Chinese man, Mr. Wang, published a "Girls' Reader" a few years ago, in the preface of which he made a very emphatic statement in regard to the value of woman's education. "We should all realize that the education of the women of a country is really

[6] *Chinese Recorder,* Aug., 1902.
[7] *Woman's Missionary Friend,* April, 1907.

of more importance than the education of her men," he wrote, "for as has been said by one of our sages, 'A good girl makes a good wife; a good wife makes a good mother; a good mother makes a good son.' If the mothers have not been trained from childhood where are we to have the strong men for our nation. If then we say, as China has said for so long, 'Let the men be educated, let the women remain in ignorance,' one-half at least of the nation cannot be as useful as it should. It is as if one-half of a man's body were paralyzed; these members not only being helpless but proving a weight and hindrance to those not affected."

As the cause of woman's education thus leaped into favour, the mission schools for girls became correspondingly popular. It was a well-deserved popularity, for it was largely to their years of patient, persevering work, in the face of prejudice and obstacles well-nigh insurmountable, that the present interest in woman's education owed its existence. The interest felt in woman's education by the Chinese to-day is a part of a general and widespread national awakening, but it is to a great extent based on, and sustained by, the fact that Chinese women have proved themselves able to receive and wisely use education, and

this fact has been demonstrated by the mission schools.

"In the schools which have already been opened at some of the ports and by the missionaries in the principal towns," said Dr. Liu Ming-tse of Hangchow in a plea for schools for girls, "we find our Chinese sisters making rapid progress in English, literature and conversation, astronomy, geography, medicine, mathematics, music, etc. . . . It is not that by nature they are dull, for this has been proved not to be the case. . . . Seeing where our weakness lies the missionaries, who know us more thoroughly than other foreigners, have opened girls' schools in different cities and towns all over the Empire. They spend money and time thereon to an incalculable extent. The benefits we receive thereby cannot be overestimated. Such philanthropists cannot bear to stand by and see their Chinese sisters relegated to positions of absolute uselessness." [8]

Lady Pao, who started a school in Peking a few years ago, said, as she was taking some American friends through it one day, "Had it not been for the example and efforts of you foreign ladies all these years, this school would not have existed. . . . Your schools and influ-

[8] *Woman's Work in the Far East,* Nov., 1901.

ence have made this day possible and you have opened the way for us. I thank you foreign ladies for what you have done in thus opening the doors of education for the women of China." [9]

The attitude of the educated young men is indicated by a letter written by the president of the World's Chinese Student Federation to one of the missionaries, in which he said:

"I highly appreciate your deep interest in the welfare of our young women in China, and the noble work you and other missionary friends are doing in the education of our young women. The field for such work at present is certainly very great, but the workers very few. As a nation we owe you a heavy debt for your noble endeavour on behalf of our women." [10]

No longer are placards denouncing girls' schools and all concerned in them, posted in public places as formerly. Instead, such notices as this appear in the daily newspapers:

"In this city (Nanchang) outside the 'Virtue Conquering Gate,' there has been established a school for girls called 'The Baldwin Memorial.' It is under the principalship of

[9] Miss Russell, in *Woman's Work in the Far East*, June, 1908.

[10] *Woman's Missionary Friend*, Oct., 1906.

Miss Kate Ogborn. Her love for others and her patient labour to provide for teaching girls has, since the beginning of the school until now, been constant and untiring. Two of my daughters have the privilege of being in the school and they are receiving most faithful instruction under Miss Ogborn. It is with pleasure that I take this means of announcing the work and privileges of the school, feeling sure that others will wish to send their daughters. The methods of instruction are good; the character of the school is of the very best. It is very highly spoken of by the many visitors who go to see it." [11]

Eager interest in these schools has taken the place of the indifference on the part of Chinese parents which was almost as hard to bear as active opposition.

" At a recent commencement exercise in the Nanking Christian Girls' School the church was crowded to the doors. The windows were open and masses of heads looked into the room from outside. Missionaries and Christians did not make up the bulk of that audience, but the rich and influential men and women of that great city eagerly responded to the invitations to be present on this occasion when four girls were to be graduated. These lead-

[11] *Woman's Missionary Friend*, Feb., 1905.

ers for the first time in their history were struggling with the problem of education for the despised half of China's race. . . . With the coming of the new era in China the leaders are now undergoing a change of attitude toward their womanhood. . . . Even the custom of the girls' names is changing. Heretofore such names were given as 'Want a boy,' 'Too many girls,' 'Come a boy,' 'Little Trouble'; now we hear of 'Little Love,' 'Little Precious' and 'Little Joy.'" [12]

"The schools are overwhelmed with applications," writes a teacher in the same city. "The demand for the education of girls is far beyond the capacity not only of mission schools but also of government schools, that new, strange thing in Chinese history." [13]

The head of the Southern Presbyterian School for girls in Hangchow wrote in 1909, "Last autumn we refused thirty-four applicants and I have not kept a full account of those turned away, but I have no doubt we could as easily have two hundred pupils as one hundred."

In Shanghai another teacher writes, "God's

[12] Rev. E. Osgood, in *Missionary Review of the World*, Nov., 1907.

[13] *Woman's Missionary Friend*, Nov., 1906.

people have prayed and hoped that China would awake to the imperative need of education for her daughters, but now the first signs of awakening have so overwhelmed us and so nearly exhausted our visible resources that wise workers are considering carefully the very best use of these same resources. Though dormitory, classroom and dining room are all crowded, it needs a firm heart to refuse to take in the 'one more' eager applicant and the 'one more' again; but now it has come to the point of being obliged to refuse applicants who come early in the spring to ask for admission in the fall term, because they have heard that three or four pupils are to be graduated in July. One Chinese gentleman made such an application a year before his daughter was old enough to come to school." [14]

The days when the schools were composed of the little outcasts of society, slave girls, foundlings, or the children of the poorest of the poor, have long since passed.

"We have not sought the higher classes and filled our dormitories with the daughters of the rich," wrote a teacher at St. Mary's Hall in 1901. "As the result of what we have done, the higher classes are now knocking for en-

[14] Miss Cogdal, in *Woman's Work in the Far East,* Sept., 1908.

trance. Already within the last year eighteen entirely self-supporting girls have been received from the rich merchant class of the Yang-tze valley." [15]

From the Baldwin Memorial School in Nanchang, the teacher in charge wrote, "The school girls are all from good families, some of them from very good homes. They give a character to the school which is not to be despised. The time has come in China when the labours of the pioneers are bearing fruit, in the way of giving a taste for education among women. Hence it is that we are able to require a fee from every pupil who comes in." [16]

From the north Miss Reed writes, "Another means of extension is presented in the application of girls from non-Christian families in Peking, girls of rich families, who would pay their own expenses. . . . Before this such families have held aloof from the church schools, but now the interest in the education of girls is so great that they are ready to come here for the sake of study." [17]

"Appeals are being made to the mission-

[15] Miss Dodson, in *Spirit of Missions*, Dec., 1901.

[16] Miss Ogborn, in *Woman's Missionary Friend*, March, 1904.

[17] *Life and Light for Women*, April, 1908.

aries for teachers and the opening of schools for girls," writes another worker. "Wherever they are opened these (the upper) classes readily send their girls and loyally support the schools both financially and morally." [18]

Perhaps nothing gives clearer evidence of the attitude of parents in the matter of the education of their daughters than the willingness to pay for that education which they now show.

"Fifteen years ago we did not have a self-supporting pupil," reads the annual report of the Methodist Boarding School, for 1909. "Now we have sixty who are self-supporting." [19] The same year's report of the College Preparatory and Normal School for girls of the same mission, lays similar emphasis upon the changed conditions in this matter.

"We have had during the year thirty-six students, only one-third of whom have received any financial help from the school, and some of these only partial assistance. The girls pay their board, regular tuition, rental for books, and for organ or piano instruction. It is an encouragement to the missionaries who are working and striving toward self-support in

[18] Rev. E. Osgood, in *Missionary Review of the World,* Nov., 1907.

[19] *The Foochow Woman's Conference Report,* 1909.

our schools, to know that it would have been impossible a few years ago to persuade the fathers and brothers of our girls to maintain them in school as they are now doing.

"A few years ago a lovely, cultured young woman was graduated from the Conference Seminary, which was the predecessor of the present one. During her school course she was obliged to depend almost entirely on her own efforts or the support given by the missionaries. Now, without any added wealth having come to the family, the younger sister, who is in no wise superior to the elder or any better beloved in the family, receives willing support from her home. All her expenses are paid by the family, including six dollars a year for piano lessons." [20]

Instead of permitting his daughter to attend school only on condition that he shall be wholly relieved of her support, the Chinese father now writes such letters as this, with check enclosed:

"DEAR MRS. JEWELL:—

Dr. Tsao has kindly informed me the amount for my daughter's board while attending your school. Allow me to thank you profoundly for your extreme kindness to my little girl, who is anxious to rejoin the school when the next term commences. You are doing a most

[20] *The Foochow Woman's Conference Report*, 1909.

noble work and I shall be most happy to render any assistance in my power. Thanking you again for what you have done for my little one, I remain, dear Madame,

Yours most respectfully,

C. W. TSUNG." [21]

When Miss June Nicholson, acting head of McTyeire School, Shanghai, felt the need of rather extensive repairs on the school building and grounds, she decided to ask the fathers of her school girls, many of whom were men of wealth, to furnish the money needed. A subscription book was procured, and sent around to the school's patrons with most gratifying results. Miss Nicholson wrote:

"The father of one of the girls gave one hundred and fifty dollars, and interested himself in securing subscriptions from his friends which altogether amounted to four hundred and forty dollars. An expectant Tao-tai (official), the father of one of our girls, telegraphed from Tientsin that he wished to subscribe two hundred taels (about two hundred and seventy dollars). A little girl about thirteen years old, a daughter of one of the wealthiest families in Shanghai, came into the study one morning and said, 'I have told my father I did not want him to give any little

[21] *Woman's Missionary Friend,* Dec., 1907.

money (small amount).' Several days after, on Monday morning, she came into the study, her face shining with joy, and with something in her hand so heavy she could hardly carry it. Upon inquiry as to what she was carrying she said, 'Oh, it is money,' and it was three hundred silver dollars tied up in a bandanna handkerchief. Three families gave a thousand dollars. The remainder came in smaller sums of one hundred, fifty, thirty and twenty dollars. By the time school closed we had enough in hand to embolden us to give out the contract for the work." [22]

The fact that this was the first time a subscription had ever been asked, and that the American boycott was just than being violently agitated, made these generous gifts to the school a peculiarly strong testimony to the value which the Chinese placed upon the work there being done.

After inspecting the work of the Methodist Girls' School in Nanking, a Chinese visitor of high rank gave fifty dollars to be used in its work, with the remark, "I have been over many government schools but never have I seen such excellent work as in your school." Then turning to a friend who was with him, he added, "After all, it is the missionaries who

[22] *Woman's Work in the Far East*, March, 1906.

The Members of the Young Women's Christian Association
—The Laura Haygood School, Soochow

are doing the real educational work in China." [23]

The day of opposition and derision passed away long since, and we rejoiced in the hard won gains of the period of gradual growth, when little by little the schools for girls won their way into favour among the people of the communities in which they worked. But the sun of a new day has risen, the day when interest in schools for girls is not local but universal, the day when woman's education is looked upon with approval so strong as to merit the term enthusiasm.

[23] *Woman's Missionary Friend,* Sept., 1908.

IX

THE RELATION OF WOMAN'S EDUCATION TO THE NEW CHINA

FULLY to appreciate what the new movement for the education of women in China means, one must take account of the place which woman has formerly occupied in Chinese society and the consequent significance of any change in her general position. In the great social transition through which China is passing, no feature is more marked than the emergence into prominence of the women who have for centuries been kept in relative seclusion, and to this new-born prominence the education of women is related, both as cause and effect.

The women of China possess native strength of character. Mrs. Isabella Bird Bishop once said, "Of all Oriental women I love the Chinese women best; they have so much character and are so womanly." On their return to America, the members of a deputation sent to China by the American Board a few years ago, expressed much the same opinion. "The mod-

esty, reserve and strength of the Chinese women have impressed us profoundly in all parts of the country," they reported. These impressions are shared by those whose life in China has given them opportunities for even greater observation and knowledge of the women of the country. Dr. MacGowan, for over fifty years a resident of South China, says, " Chinese women are acknowledged to be capable, and possessed of natural dignity of character." " Morally," says Dr. W. A. P. Martin, one of North China's veteran missionaries, " they are China's better half—modest, graceful and attractive." [1] Mr. Swanson of Amoy declares: " I am in the habit of saying that there is some backbone in Chinese men, and if I were to go on to say what I think of the women I should say that there were several backbones in Chinese women. They have been the great force which has preserved the country. I say this without fear of contradiction." [2]

They have shown also a native keenness of mind, glimmering through the dulness which has been the result of disuse, and responding

[1] Quoted in Dennis, *Christian Missions and Social Progress,* Vol. II, p. 189.

[2] Report of the London Missionary Conference of 1888.

to cultivation with amazing freshness and vigour. "Intellectually they are not stupid but ignorant, left to grow up in a kind of twilight without the benefit of schools," says Dr. Martin. "Some of the brightest minds I ever met in China were those of girls in our mission schools." [3] Mrs. S. L. Baldwin, whose years of residence in Foochow gave her opportunity for intimate knowledge of the Chinese women, averred, "There are no brainier women anywhere than the Chinese." "Let none think Chinese women inferior to those of any other land. There is no line of study or of effort in which they do not excel, and no height of character to which they do not attain," is the emphatic statement of the women of the National Committee of the Young Women's Christian Association of China, in a letter to the World's Conference of that organization held in Berlin, May, 1910.

With such native strength of mind and character it is not surprising that even while these powers were left undeveloped, or at best only slightly cultivated, Chinese women have nevertheless exercised a greater influence than has been supposed. "Of all heathen countries there is none where the woman has the same

[3] Quoted in Dennis, *Christian Missions and Social Progress*, Vol. II, p. 190.

power as she has in China," said Mr. Swanson of Amoy at the London Missionary Conference in 1888. He went on to speak of the degradation to which the Chinese woman has been subjected, but added, "But whilst you have this degradation in China, woman has a remarkable place of power. . . . They have been important factors in its political history and they are important factors in its social life. I remember once speaking to one of our Chinese Christians as to why he did not do a certain thing for me. 'Well,' said he, 'my wife was not at home and I never do anything of that kind without consulting her.' I said, 'How is that?' 'Well,' said he, 'If you had married one of that kind you would not have asked the question.'" [4]

A teacher of a girls' school in Kalgan, wrote some years ago, "We lost a promising pupil by forgetting that woman has her say and way sometimes in China. One of the men of the station class directed his daughter's feet to be unbound without asking his wife's consent. When she heard the news she would have killed herself had not the man promised to bring the girl home." [5]

[4] Report of the London Missionary Conference of 1888.

[5] *Mission Studies,* Nov., 1895.

"It has been my privilege," writes Dr. Annie Walters Fearn, "to know intimately several families in Soochow where the wife and mother is decidedly the head of the house, including the husband. In one case, after the death of a wealthy man, the management of his estate was put into the hands of his small wife. She kept the books and received in person the accounts of her stewards who had charge under her of the grain and produce brought in from the estate. In one family of great wealth and influence not one cent is spent without the consent of the Madam. To her are submitted the husband's accounts; no business transaction is completed without her sanction; hers is the ruling spirit. In another family the eighteen-year-old daughter wields undisputed power. At the recent marriage of the oldest son the daughter, in person, delivered the invitations; she was mistress of ceremonies; no question was answered without reference to her, and deference was paid to her slightest wish. These are only three cases out of hundreds which might be enumerated." [6]

Failure to recognize the importance of the influence exerted by the Chinese woman has always led to blunders. "In the early days of mission work in a certain field attention was

[6] *Woman's Work in the Far East*, Sept., 1902.

Young Women's Christian Association Building, Shanghai

given only to the instruction of the men, with what for a time were supposed to be satisfactory results; but in a few years it was found that the next generation, following the teaching of their heathen mothers, fell back to the plane from which the fathers had been elevated, showing conclusively the mistake which had been made." [7]

The Chinese women of the past, hampered by crippling foot bandages and the even more rigid bonds of the old social customs, have known no horizon beyond the four walls of their houses. They have received so little education, if any at all, that even in thought they have been practically limited to the area within those walls. That they, in spite of these limitations, have exercised such undeniable influence, is significant of the power which will be exercised by the Chinese women of the future, who, with unbound feet and minds, are to-day facing a new and dazzling era in the history of Chinese womanhood. The shackles of the old social customs are breaking rapidly, and they are entering into a broader life than their grandmothers, or even their mothers, ever dreamed of.

Conspicuous among the outward symbols of

[7] Miss Noyes, in Report of Shanghai Conference, 1890.

this new life are the unbound feet. When in 1872, Miss Porter and Miss Brown, who were in charge of the Methodist School for Girls in Peking, determined to make the unbinding of the feet a condition of entrance, it proved so serious a stumbling block that many of their fellow-workers seriously doubted the wisdom of the step. Parents said that they could never "get a mother-in-law" for their daughter if she did not have the "lily feet." Only the church members, and not all of them, or the very poor who were not able to support their daughters, could be induced to send girls to a school with such a requirement.

To-day many schools, not only those under the missions, but the government and gentry schools as well, refuse to receive any girl with bound feet unless she will unbind them at once. Few if any objections are offered. The tide of public sentiment has turned against the century-old custom of foot-binding, which for years seemed so impregnable that the continued protest of missionary workers appeared to have no effect at all. To-day women are taking the bandages from their own feet and letting their daughters grow up with natural feet. Men are making speeches and writing articles on the evils of foot-binding. The younger generation of men are demanding that their

wives shall have natural feet. I remember hearing one teacher in East China say that the father of one of her students had come to her with the request that she would help him find a husband for his daughter, for he said that the girl had bound feet and the young men did not want to marry her on that account. So strong is the sentiment for natural feet that in some places it has even led to official action being taken. The "North China Daily Herald" of September 25, 1909, contains this notice:

"The Viceroy in Nanking has recently drawn up and issued copies of regulations to check foot-binding among the people. According to the regulations anti-foot-binding proclamations and literature will be distributed when the local officials take a census of the people. The officials will instruct them in the disadvantages of foot-binding and the necessity of unbinding the feet of the women and girls within the space of one year. Fines will be inflicted or rewards given according to violation or observance of the prohibition against foot-binding. From the first year of Hsüan Tung, girls under ten years of age are not allowed to have their feet bound on pain of fines of one to four dollars according to the standing of the family that violates the rule. An inquiry will be held yearly, when fines for violation, or rewards of observance of the rule, will be meted out accordingly.

"Anti-foot-binding societies should be extensively established throughout the Liang Kiang, and where success has been achieved memorial tablets will be awarded to parties concerned, for their services in dis-

couraging the practice of foot-binding. The Shanghai Magistrate has issued proclamations embodying these regulations for general information."

But the change of attitude toward bound feet is only one evidence of the deeper and broader change of attitude toward woman and her place in life. "In the past women have been a negligible factor in Chinese social life apart from the family. To-day not a few appear as equals in miscellaneous gatherings and find voice in public meetings. The democratic tendencies of the race, the age-long reverence for learning, the brilliant achievements of exceptional women in Chinese history, literature and politics, their native ease and fluency in public speech, all tend—now that the ancient barriers are broken—to open to women every avenue of influence and power." [8]

One of the most striking signs of the times is a daily newspaper for women edited by Mrs. Chang, a woman of Peking. This newspaper has been a power in Peking ever since it was started in 1906. "The articles are written in colloquial Mandarin, easy for the women to understand, and are very entertaining. Sarcasm and ridicule are freely used, but so evident is the love of country and

[8] Letter to World's Conference of Y. W. C. A., Berlin, 1910.

love for the women themselves throbbing underneath, no sting is ever felt. The news is divided into four sections: general news, news from Peking, news from the provinces, and news concerning women. The general news contains all important telegrams from foreign countries. The running comments, sometimes condensed into a single word by this keen-minded woman, jealous for China with a woman's jealousy, are often exceedingly interesting. Besides stories and fables, a section is given to topics like arithmetic, physics, domestic science or hygiene." [9]

Significant also of the new era are the "newspaper lectures," conducted by Miss Russell, a missionary of the American Board in Peking. On certain days of the month, one of the street chapels of the mission is open to all women who care to come in and hear the woman's newspaper read. Besides the reading of the paper, lectures are given, chiefly by educated Chinese women or the older pupils of the Bridgman School, on such subjects as Hygiene, Domestic Science, Geography, Gambling, Opium, Love of Country, Foot-binding, etc. Women of all classes have attended. Miss Russell writes, "Women come and go as they please, sit and drink tea which we pro-

[9] *Missionary Review of the World,* April, 1907.

vide, smoke cigarettes, which we certainly do *not* provide, now and then call to each other some interesting bit of news. Once and again, when something has been said that especially pleases or hits some one, it is very evident from audible remarks." [10]

Miss Russell has also inaugurated another series of lectures, which are largely attended by women, many of whom would probably not have been permitted to appear in public audiences of this kind a few years ago. Special invitations to these lectures are sent out to women of influence, and the subjects are chosen with a view to being popular and at the same time helpful. Among them are such topics as " Kindergarten in All Lands," " The Proper Care and Food for the Sick," etc. During one winter such subjects were chosen as would be interesting and helpful to the teachers of the government and gentry schools of the city. On one occasion, Miss Russell asked Sir Robert Hart's famous Chinese Band to give a concert for her women. " There were between nine hundred and a thousand women present, representing every class of society from a Mongolian princess to the most decrepit member of the Old Ladies' Home."

Mass meetings of Chinese women are now

[10] *Mission Studies*, Nov., 1908.

of such common occurrence as almost to have lost their novelty. Some months before the opening of the National Industrial Exposition recently held in Nanking, a public meeting for women was called in Kiukiang. The purpose of this meeting was to urge the women to send specimens of their work to the coming exposition, "and so widen their interests and at the same time promote a worthy national enterprise." A large hall was handsomely decorated for the occasion with banners and silk drapery, and at the appointed time it was filled with representatives of the gentry class, and of the girls' schools of the city. It was noticeable that the women chosen as speakers were all trained in mission schools, doubtless because they were the only women in the city who had received sufficient training to enable them to address a large audience.

Not long ago the girls of the Methodist School in Foochow were the hostesses at a meeting for the women and girls of that city. Chinese ladies of the best families of the city, pupils from the government school, as well as those from other mission schools were present. "The meeting was called to share in a popular protest against a British loan for the building of a railroad in the Chekiang province. All desired the railroad but wished it to be built

and owned by the Chinese. They are unnecessarily fearful of foreign capital, but this is not strange in view of past exploitation of China by the great powers. At the meeting a foreign lady was invited to preside, but the discussion was conducted entirely by native women. The speeches and motions made and the resolutions adopted were creditable alike to their patriotism and their ability. The petition was forwarded to the Throne." [11]

The Association Monthly for April, 1911, contains a letter from Miss Edith Wells of Peking, in which she tells of women's meetings held in that city:

"Quite recently I met a Chinese woman who told me that a group of women, most of them wives of prominent officials, was meeting each month to discuss the deliberations of the Assembly as they affect the standing of women in China. Whatever else has been accomplished, this Assembly has aroused an interest among both men and women in public affairs and has sought to prepare the way for constitutional government.

"Just now there is a strong interest in the anti-opium movement, expressed in mass meetings and in the circulation of various petitions. Such meetings for women have brought together larger numbers of women than have ever assembled before, except perhaps for religious services. Two such meetings I have attended. The first was composed of six hundred. There were women representing twenty-two schools in Peking. The

[11] *Woman's Missionary Friend*, Oct., 1908.

second, called by the principal of a private school for girls (herself not a Christian), included over three hundred women, among them several princesses and wives of Government officials. At these meetings, a letter was addressed to the secretary of the Anti-Opium Society of England and signed by large numbers of Chinese women. This is significant in itself, for it has not been the custom of Chinese women to sign public documents of any kind. The women of China are not being left behind in the great changes now going on."

Societies of Chinese women have been organized with various objects. Lilavati Singh, that splendid example of the possibilities of the women of India, on her return to Lucknow from a visit to China and Japan in 1907, gave an address to the students of Isabella Thoburn College on the present conditions of the women of those countries. "The mother-in-law in China is evidently as much of a tyrant as the mother-in-law in India," she said. "So the women of China in different places have formed a society for getting rid of the undue authority usurped by the mother-in-law. One bright, attractive Chinese lady told me this, and shyly added, 'In most cases our husbands have become honorary members of this society.'"

Another society with an aim more comprehensive if no more difficult of achievement, was the "Chinese Woman's Enlightenment

Society." The large and very successful "Anti-Foot-binding Society," though begun by foreign women, is now almost entirely carried on by Chinese women. The chairman of the Board of Directors of the Young Women's Christian Association of Shanghai is a Chinese woman, as are the great majority of the members of the Board. A society of women was organized in that city a few years ago for "reforming the affairs of the home." These women have been courageously combatting such evils as "opium, foot-binding, foolish and idolatrous ceremonies, certain customs connected with betrothals, weddings and funerals that they begin to question as unwise, extravagant or unnecessary, and numerous other matters." At a recent public meeting at which both ladies and gentlemen were present a Chinese lady was in the chair. In speaking of this a conservative Chinese Christian gentleman remarked, "A number of our influential Chinese men have wives who are as well informed upon public matters as themselves. They live in full sympathy and intimate companionship with their husbands, so it is not strange that such women should come into prominence in public meetings." [12]

[12] Editorial Note, *Woman's Work in the Far East*, Dec., 1907.

An interesting instance of the changed attitude toward women on the part of Chinese men occurred at the Jubilee celebration of the establishment of the Methodist School for Girls in Foochow. A series of anniversary gatherings was held at this time, the first of them for the officials, gentry and business men who were interested in the school. This occurred while the Fuhkien Provincial Assembly was in session, and the General Executive Committee and the officers of the Assembly were invited to be present. That every one of them was present was itself indicative of a new interest in the progress of woman. But the most significant event of the afternoon was one of the speeches, given by a young man of wealth and influence, who said, among other things:

"Some time ago, in company with others I was interested in establishing a school for girls in a neighbouring city. Then the question came up where we should obtain teachers. One man said, 'We must send to the Methodist Girls' School in Foochow.' That was the first time I had ever heard of this school. You ladies in charge sent us Miss Ung Peh Ha and Miss Ling Nguk Chai, and they proved to be such efficient teachers that I hope every member of the Assembly present here to-day will

go home and establish a girls' school and send to this school for teachers."

"Now when the young man gave the *names* of the teachers we had sent to them my heart seemed to stand still," wrote the principal of the school afterward, "for he had committed a terrible breach of Chinese etiquette. His address was given in the Mandarin dialect and was interpreted into the Foochow dialect by Mr. Wong Nai Siong, also a member of the Assembly, the very man who, fifteen or twenty years ago, had taught the new missionaries that we should never speak the name of a Chinese woman or girl in public but should rather refer to her as 'a certain sister' or 'such a man's daughter, wife or sister.' I thought to myself, 'Mr. Wong in interpreting will not speak the *names* of the girls,' but he did, not only *once* but *twice* and with emphasis,—and then it dawned upon me that in the new China, girls and women were to have names and individualities." [13]

The principal of McTyeire School can scarcely have been less surprised when an intelligent and wealthy gentleman of Shanghai, of influential family, inquired, as he was about to enroll his two daughters in the school, "Do

[13] Miss Bonafield, in *Woman's Missionary Friend*, March, 1910.

you teach your pupils to ride the bicycle?" On being answered in the negative, he exclaimed disappointedly, "Oh, I think you ought to teach that."

Truly a new day has dawned for the hitherto secluded and uneducated women of China, and no friend of China can fail to rejoice at the change. But at the same time none can doubt that the time of transition from the old to the as yet dimly defined new is a time of danger. "The times are fraught with peril because of the rapid changes in what was for ages a stagnant nation—old traditions are being overturned, new standards are not yet set up. What wonder if there is anxiety on the part of the conservative and unrest among the newly emancipated?" [14]

"If ever China needed a sympathetic friend it is now, in the efforts she is making to get in line with the rest of the world," Miss Russell writes from Peking. "This is especially true in the social conditions. The past six years have seen great changes in Peking. The present pace of those who are from the 'Smart Set' or the 'Four Hundred' of Peking is quite in line with the same classes in New York or London. Foreign carriages, wine

[14] Letter to World's Conference of Y. W. C. A., Berlin, 1910.

suppers, cigarettes, poker, anything that savours of the West—these are the latest fashion. Foreign jewelry is quite the rage.

"Recently one of the ladies belonging to one of the first families in the city said, 'Many of our set want to adopt foreign dress.' She added, 'It costs ten times as much to live now as it did ten years ago. Every one wants foreign furniture, clothing, food. You are not in it if you do not have your own carriage, telephone, and entertain parties at the foreign hotel.'" [15]

The National Committee of the Young Women's Christian Association of China, which is eagerly striving to be of service at this critical time, wrote in the letter already referred to: "Already we hear in large cities of women in families of wealth who are burdened with social engagements—feasting, gambling and theatre going. The pleasure-seeking young man of China is a pitiable object. We tremble to think of the pleasure-seeking young woman with education enough to make her a menace to society."

One of the secretaries of the Young Women's Christian Association tells of being present at a reception at which a Chinese lady, eager to entertain her friends in foreign

[15] *Life and Light for Women*, Feb., 1910.

fashion, decided that she would sing a foreign song to them. She accordingly arose and regaled her audience with the strains of "Waltz Me Around Again, Willie." The mental vision of a dignified Chinese lady, solemnly singing that ridiculous ragtime to a roomful of equally dignified and ceremonious guests, would be irresistibly funny if it were not so pathetic.

Not only in the cities of the north does one see this eagerness to imitate foreign customs. In the first home of wealth in which I ever visited in China, the home of an official of Foochow, there were three young daughters, who proudly exhibited to us what were probably their first calling cards. They were not the long strips of red paper with the name painted on in black Chinese characters, which have for centuries been the proper thing in the Heavenly Empire, but small white pasteboard cards like our own. There were no Chinese names or Chinese characters on these cards, but the most fanciful of English names, neatly printed in the letters of the English alphabet. A far more important change of styles among Chinese women was shown by their unbound feet.

In Shanghai the sight of wealthy Chinese driving through the streets in handsome carriages, with gorgeously apparelled coachman

and footman in attendance, is so frequent as to excite little attention except from newcomers. Whizzing forty-horse-power automobiles are common enough to make 'ricksha riding on the Shanghai Bund a nerve-racking process. Handsome houses, of foreign architecture, are quite likely to belong to Chinese. Even in houses built in purely Chinese style, I have sat on an American sofa, partaking of refreshments in the shape of tea and Huntley & Palmer's wafers, listening to a stirring Sousa march issuing from the mouth of a Victor phonograph. In one official home in Hangchow the official showed us with great pride his private sitting room, furnished entirely with foreign furniture. His wife displayed equal pride in exhibiting the handsome brass bed which filled her bedroom to repletion.

The spirit of the times manifests itself in somewhat different form in the schools. In the far west, in Chengtu, the capital of Szechuan province, the students have adopted a semi-foreign uniform, with a dragon embroidered on the left sleeve, and the character denoting the class of school the wearer attends, embroidered on the upturned collar. A visitor to the city writes of his amazement at seeing a number of students with the character for "woman" on their collars. "When I went

to some of the missionaries there, and asked what it meant," he wrote, " I was told that the young women of the well-to-do families were now attending girls' schools, and taking the same studies as their brothers, but that with their girls' attire they could not go out on the street to attend the classes, and so to avoid this they now dress in almost the same clothes as the men. Miss Dodson of the Friends' Mission rather amused us by telling of her efforts to get one of these same Amazons to go round to the boys' entrance of the school —she herself deceived by the appearance of her visitor. The fashionable small feet had of course disappeared and the fair student wore top boots, and, I suppose, had drill exercises. What a wonderful change for China!" [16]

One finds occasional references to similar costumes worn by school girls in other parts of the country, but the custom is probably comparatively rare. It must be remembered also that the dress of a Chinese man, with its long flowing robes, is as modest as that of the woman. Such things as this are, however, sufficient evidence of the new spirit of freedom among Chinese girls which is manifesting itself in many ways. The days of seclusion are over.

[16] Rev. John Parker, quoted in *Missionary Review of the World,* Nov., 1907.

When fifty boys' schools of Hankow took part in an athletic meet about two years ago, six girls' schools were allowed to attend. That appearance of Chinese girls in public was even more of an innovation than the acrobatic performances of the young scholars of China, so contrary to the dignified deportment which Confucius deemed suitable for learned men. In the same city a few years ago a concert was given by the Hankow College alumni for the benefit of the famine relief fund. The girls of one of the mission schools were invited to assist by singing, and accepted the invitation. This was probably one of the first occasions at which Chinese girls ever appeared before a public audience, except at school graduation exercises.[17]

The border line between liberty and license is never hard to cross. It is perhaps not to be wondered at, that the sudden access of hitherto unknown freedom has sometimes gone to the heads of the girls, and led them to regrettably high-handed methods of expressing themselves. For example, the "North China Daily Herald" for June 12, 1909, reports:

"Not to be behind other educational centres, two of our larger schools (in Paotingfu) have

[17] *Missionary Review of the World*, Aug., 1908.

been having student rebellions. The Girls' High School was invited to attend the field day exercises of the graduating class of the large military school. The young ladies were willing to put aside their studies for the day and attend. The proctor was willing to chaperon them. But the lady director withheld her consent. Nevertheless part of the school, led by the proctor, did attend. This insubordination rapidly led to the resignation of the proctor and to a school strike by the students who had attended. The strike is probably dying out, but it was in force for about half a month."

The official who recently examined the pupils of one of the girls' schools of Hangchow, did not give them as high grades as they desired. When at the graduation exercises the time came for them to go to the platform to receive their diplomas from his hand, they refused to leave their seats, thus openly insulting the official.

One of the most difficult problems of the changing China is the readjustment of the relation between men and women. In the old China there was no such thing as social intercourse between unmarried men and women. The century old custom has been, and still is, to arrange marriages by go-betweens. Court-

ship was an unknown term, and the young people might never see each other until they were man and wife. Childhood betrothals arranged by the parents were not infrequent. This custom still prevails, but educated young people are beginning to protest against it, and surely none can blame them for desiring opportunities for mutual acquaintance before marriage. The solution of this problem is not the easy thing it may appear to those who have always lived in a Christian civilization, and have known nothing of the seclusion in which the Oriental woman has been kept. The young people of China know something of the relations which exist between men and women of foreign countries, and in the new spirit of liberty which has swept over them they are eager to imitate them. And in this tendency lie grave perils, for it is an over-imitation of the imperfectly known external features of this relationship, without an understanding of the fundamental principles underlying it. "In these new times we hear of social indiscretions that are alarming. For example, a group of young men from a government school have a feast and invite several girls from a neighbouring school. Without chaperoning, feasting and jollity continue far into the night. The young people think they are following foreign style

and do not realize that Western freedom without Western safeguards is the height of impropriety." [18]

The desire of the Young Women's Christian Association of China to erect "student hostels" or dormitories, to provide homes for girls who are attending government and gentry schools in the large cities, is in recognition of the perils surrounding many of these students. In an article on the need of such homes, the writer says, "In Peking we know of scores of young women in attendance on government schools of the capital, living not in the schools, nor yet in the home of friends, but in the provincial 'official residence,' because there they hear their own dialect and can claim a hostel. The danger of such a life is obvious. . . . Chinese parents with great reluctance allow their daughters to reside outside the home walls and they will not be indifferent to a home that promises them protection," [19]

It is inevitable that the old social system of China should, to a large extent, pass away, and none would wish it otherwise, but it is imperative that during the transition period China should have the wise and sympathetic

[18] Letter to World's Conference of Y. W. C. A., Berlin, 1910.

[19] *Chinese Recorder,* Feb., 1910.

guidance of those who will help her to found her new social principles upon the pillars of righteousness and truth. A very important part of this guidance must be given by those to whom the education of the girls of China is entrusted. "One of the most important features of educational work for girls at the present crisis is the privilege it gives us of helping them to adjust themselves to their new condition. Their present condition is very uncertain and we should do all we can to help them find themselves," [20] said the principal of a girls' school in West China, at a conference of missionaries in 1908. Another, the head of a school in East China, gave as one of her strongest reasons for desiring a college for Chinese women, that it might "train Christian young women who will be prepared to be leaders among their sisters in the new China, and who can stand as bulwarks against the many threatened evils of the new social life which is so rapidly developing."

"The emancipation of woman is one of the watchwords of the advanced movement in China," the American Board Deputation reported on their return. "But here also the sudden access of freedom and vagueness of the ideals which the leaders sometimes set be-

[20] Miss Page, in West China Conference Report, 1908.

fore themselves constitute an element of real danger. These facts create the conditions and emphasize the need of an intelligent and sympathetic guidance of the woman's movement in China, for a brief time at least, on the part of tactful and devoted Christian women from the West." [21] It would be difficult to state whether the need or the opportunity of the present conditions makes the greater appeal.

[21] *Life and Light for Women,* March, 1908.

X

THE PRESENT OPPORTUNITY AND ITS CHALLENGE

TRUE success always results in enlarged opportunity and responsibility. The new life and light which have come to the women of China are due largely to the work of the Christian schools, and the guidance so imperatively needed during these days of the moulding of the new China must still be largely given by Christian educators. Wonderful as is the enthusiasm with which the government and gentry school education has been established, and encouraging as is the vigour with which it is being carried on, there are as yet comparatively few Chinese men or women who are capable of conducting schools in Western education, without assistance. That the Chinese government has undertaken educational work for women does not mean that the work of the Christian schools is ended. On the contrary, there has never been a time when Christian education was more needed in China. After years of patient over-

coming of prejudice and obstacles, the Christian schools for women are to-day facing opportunities of a magnitude of which even a few years ago the most optimistic would hardly have dared to dream.

One of the greatest opportunities lies in the fact that to them is entrusted the task of training many of those who are to be the wives and mothers of the future. One of the greatest weaknesses of ancient China has been its lack of home life. The patriarchal form of family, the loveless marriages, the practise of concubinage, the relatively low position of woman, her lack of education, have all tended to make *homes,* in any true sense of the word, impossible. One of China's leading men, who was educated in America, was asked not long ago, what he considered the best age for a Chinese boy to go to America to study. He unhesitatingly replied, "While he is still a young boy; in order that he may avoid the blighting atmosphere of a Chinese home, and may receive what to me was the greatest blessing of my American education, the influences of Christian home life."

For genuine home life mutual sympathy between husband and wife is necessary. The mission schools for girls have already done much to make this possible by giving their pu-

pils such training as has made them real companions of their husbands and has enabled them to take an intelligent and helpful interest in their husbands' work. Not long ago a student in Peking University went to one of the missionaries and asked her to suggest an English name for his wife, a young woman from the girls' school of the Methodist Mission. He was given a list of English names for girls with their meanings, and after studying over it for some time announced, "I have chosen the name Dorothy. I do not like the sound of it as well as that of some of the others, but I have chosen it because of its meaning, for my wife is indeed a 'gift of God' to me."

It is an old unwritten rule in China that it is a breach of etiquette even to ask a man concerning his wife's health. It is a rare tribute to a wife, therefore, to have her husband publicly speak of her assistance to him in his work, in terms of highest praise, as did a Chinese pastor in Shaowu not long ago.[1]

The Christmas present recently sent by a wealthy student in a mission college to his young wife in their distant home is significant of the influence which Christian ideals are ex-

[1] Miss Florence Fensham, in *Mission Studies*, Feb., 1908.

A Chinese Official and His Family

erting upon the marriage relationship. Neither the young man nor his wife are Christians, but both read the Bible and are open minded to new truth. The gift was a gold bracelet, on the inner side of which was engraved, Ephesians 5 : 25 (" Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself up for it "). " My wife will be pleased with that sentiment," the young husband said, and well she might be.

However much the Chinese wife and daughter may have lacked of respect and honour, the mother, in that land where filial piety has ever been regarded as one of the supreme virtues, has been reverenced. " A woman when she comes to be a mother and a grandmother is a power in the family and a power in the village or the town that it is almost impossible to overestimate," [2] said Mr. Swanson of Amoy at the London Missionary Conference of 1888. Dr. Kupfer of Kiukiang calls attention to the fact that " although the women of China occupy a very inferior position in social life, the bringing up of the children is indisputably entrusted to their care." It is a strong tribute to the inherent strength of Chinese character, that the race possesses so many good qualities, in spite of the ignorance of the mothers.

[2] Report of the London Missionary Conference, 1888.

"Why do the Chinese in mature life give way so easily to passion and self-will?" wrote a contributor to the "Chinese Recorder" some twenty years ago. "Why do they show little power of self-government in places of temptation and trial? Is it not largely because their childhood has been spent in the hands of mothers who were but grown-up, passionate, self-willed children?" [3]

Mrs. Wong, a Chinese woman, whose education has given her an insight into the high duties of motherhood, has recently written: "The Chinese mother is ignorant, without knowledge of the methods of unfolding her children's nature. She is ignorant of the nature of the emotions of the child, or their order of evolution, or their functions, or where use ends and abuse begins. Many an action which is quite normal and beneficial she continually thwarts, thus diminishing the child's happiness and profit, injuring its temper and lessening her own power and influence, and too often destroying a confidence which otherwise would have been a protection and guidance for the young mind. Lacking knowledge of mental phenomena with their causes and consequences, her interference often does more harm than absolute passivity would have done."

[3] *Chinese Recorder*, June, 1890.

"They (the Chinese women) do not rant nor clamour for power to vote," Mrs. Wong says in another part of her article, "but a longing, hungering for knowledge, fills their hearts. They now realize what grandeur of the world is hidden from them, that the intellectual darkness of their own minds hinders them from filling satisfactorily the highest position given to mortals in this world, that of a parent—the mother. She pleads to-day for education that will qualify her to be truly a helpmeet for her educated husband and an intelligent mother for her child." [4]

That the Chinese girls who graduate from the mission schools make good wives and mothers has been proved in a multitude of cases. The teachers of these schools have never failed to realize their responsibility to train their pupils to be good home-makers. Nor, in these days when life is so rapidly broadening for Chinese women, are the educators losing sight of the fact that for the great majority of their girls the home will ever be the sphere of greatest usefulness. "While we should be satisfied with nothing but the best and highest training possible for our girls," says Miss Page of Suifu, "yet we must constantly bear in mind that we are

[4] *Chinese Students' Monthly,* Dec., 1909.

training the future mothers of China, and that a large percentage of our pupils will sometime have homes of their own. For this reason we should carefully avoid appealing to any ambition that in any way deprecates the home." [5]

In this era of widespread popularity of woman's education the mission schools have an opportunity to exert a far wider influence over Chinese home life than ever before. The pupils in these schools come from every rank and grade of society. Not a few are the daughters of officials and will become the wives of officials, and the mothers of men of rank. The principal of a school in South China writes of a visit to Tientsin, where one of her former pupils was "the wife of a rising young official," and to Peking, where the husband of another was "Secretary and Physician to His Excellency ———." The young official's wife was giving private lessons to the wife and daughter of His Excellency, and was in every way occupying a position of great influence. Many come from homes of wealth, and will in all probability marry men of wealth and be the mothers of the wealthy men of the new China. Many students from these mission schools for girls will marry graduates of the Christian schools for boys, becoming the wives

[5] Report of West China Conference, 1908.

of business men, engineers, lawyers, physicians, teachers, and ministers. All over the Empire these girls will be the centres of homes of influence.

All Christian schools for girls beyond the very elementary day school are boarding schools, because according to Chinese custom it is not seemly for young women to be seen going to and fro on the streets. Thus, at the most receptive period of their lives, these girls are day by day and year after year under the influence of earnest Christian women, whose lives as well as their teachings, serve to plant Christian principles in the hearts of their pupils. It is little wonder that many a teacher in China has been able to say that practically no girl had ever completed the course of study in her school without becoming a Christian. Even when the girls come from homes where the opposition of their parents has made it impossible for them to make any outward expression of their belief in Christian truths, those truths are cherished in their hearts and make them worthy wives and mothers. Their children will meet with no opposition from them, if when they have learned of Christianity they wish to become open followers of Christ.

A member of the American consular force,

long resident in China, said not long ago: "I regard the Christian training of Chinese girls as the most effective method of the spread of Christianity. The most optimistic imagination cannot take too favourable a view in contemplating the future of China when a Christian wife shall be at the centre of even a small proportion of its homes." Is it possible to overstate the opportunity before the mission schools of China to-day, in the privilege that is open to them of giving strong Christian training to this great army of girls? From every part of the Empire, and from homes of every rank, multitudes are coming who, after spending the most plastic period of their lives under Christian influences, will go forth to be the centres of influential homes in every part of the great new China.

Many of these students will be teachers. A large proportion of them will teach for a few years before marriage, many will find it possible to give a portion of their time to teaching after marriage, and a few will give their whole lives to this work. Many of them will find their place of greatest usefulness in the mission schools, passing on to other girls the blessings which they have received there. There is always a demand for capable, well-trained Chinese women teachers in the mission

schools, and as long as Christian schools exist this demand will continue to offer opportunity of large service to the graduates.

But there is another great field of opportunity for young Chinese women teachers, in the government and gentry schools, whose need of trained teachers is well-nigh desperate. The principal of a large mission school in Nanking told me that, even before her girls had graduated, they were sought as teachers by those in charge of government or gentry schools, and were offered what were to them fabulous salaries, three times the size of their fathers' earnings. The daughters of those in charge of these institutions were themselves sent to her school, in order, she thought, that they might receive such training as would enable them to be teachers in the schools of which their parents had charge.

These government and gentry schools are far more than merely willing to take graduates of Christian schools as teachers; they are eager for them, for they know that they are better qualified teachers than any other women available. In fact, there are practically no other women in the Empire who are able to teach the modern education which is so important a part of the curricula of these schools.

In an article in "The Student World" of

July, 1910, Miss Paddock, national secretary of the Young Women's Christian Association of China, writes: "There is not a Christian young woman, graduate of a Christian school, who could not find immediate employment in these institutions. One of the most progressive viceroys of the Empire, calling for women to take examination and be sent abroad to become fitted to lead the education of the provinces under his control, sent three Christian young women to America for such preparation, they being the ones who could best pass the examinations."

"It seemed rather incongruous," Mrs. Taft wrote from Tientsin, "to sit in the room which contained the tablet in honour of Confucius, incense, candles and all the other paraphernalia for worship, and listen as the young Christian teacher sang, 'Jesus, lover of my soul.' Though the principal is a strict Confucianist she employs this girl trained in a mission school in Shanghai, and a Christian, such is the demand for Western accomplishments." [6]

Far north in Manchuria some of the gentry wished to open a school for girls about four years ago, and selected a young graduate of a mission school as their first choice for teacher.

[6] *Woman's Work in the Far East*, Sept., 1906.

"She was approached by the gentlemen in charge and tendered the school with a good salary. She replied, 'Yes, I will teach in the school if I may teach for one hour each day from the Bible.' 'We could not permit that,' said they, and took their leave. Search for a teacher went on elsewhere but to no avail. Again the young woman was approached with a still better offer, which was as firmly refused unless her conditions be met. The search for a teacher proved to be of no avail, and at last the officials came to her with permission to teach the school, free to teach the Gospel that had become to her more than meat and drink, more than money and influence." [7]

In Foochow another young Christian Chinese woman was recently invited by some of the leading officials of the city to open a kindergarten for their children. She firmly declined to accept the position if she were to be required to teach on Sunday, and won her point, so great was their desire for her services.[8]

The fact that these schools do not insist on making requirements of their teachers to which Christian young women could not conscien-

[7] Miss Paddock, in *Woman's Work in the Far East,* Dec., 1907.

[8] *Life and Light for Women,* Feb., 1908.

tiously conform, removes objections which would otherwise be felt to their teaching in them. "No wrong worship is required of her," a missionary writes of a teacher in a government school of Peking, "and as the Sabbath is a holiday she is able to attend Sabbath services at the Presbyterian Mission which is not far from the school." [9] Dr. Carleton spoke of the Confucian tablets in the government schools of the north, at which "students are expected to worship at least twice a month," but noted that "the teachers are exempt from this." [10] "There is in them no heathen worship and Sunday is observed as a day of rest," [11] Mrs. Bashford, wife of the Methodist Episcopal Missionary Bishop for China, wrote of the government and gentry schools with which she was acquainted.

It is a matter for congratulation that the students from Christian schools are thus free to accept positions in the government and gentry schools, for the opportunity of service thus presented to them is no slight one. A teacher may exert a great influence in any country, but the reverence with which China has for

[9] Miss Mary Andrews, in *Life and Light for Women*, Nov., 1907.

[10] *Missionary Review of the World*, Feb., 1908.

[11] *Life and Light for Women*, Jan., 1908.

centuries regarded her teachers and learned men probably makes the position of teacher there, one of even greater potential power than in other nations. "We inherit the respect for centuries accorded teachers," a young American teacher in China once told me. The educated young Chinese women inherit it also, for China has proved consistent in her reverence for learning and honours it in women today as she has ever honoured it in man. A striking example of this was recently given when a man employed as a teacher in two government schools proposed to take an educated woman of the city for a secondary wife. "His students rose in revolt, not against polygamy, as we might suppose, but against dishonour to learning, which all Chinese reverence. The wrong was averted and the teacher lost both his positions."[12]

The mission school graduates who accept positions as teachers in the government and gentry schools are thus entering positions of great influence. To them is given the privilege not only of using their education and training to build the new, struggling schools into strong institutions, but also of giving to their eager and receptive pupils a vision of the true and

[12] Mrs. J. W. Bashford, in *Life and Light for Women*, Jan., 1908.

beautiful womanhood which is their birthright. This alone will enable the women of China to face their responsibilities at this critical era in their nation's history, and help them to mould the new China into lines of strength and righteousness.

"Tempting doors are opening for our girls in the new schools which are being started by Chinese, where high salaries are paid and where there is no interest in Christianity," said Miss Rollestone of Ningpo at a conference of workers in girls' schools, held at Mohkanshan. "In many cases there are and will be splendid opportunities where spirit-taught girls can be greatly used in being witnesses for Christ in places where foreigners are neither wanted nor admitted. This side of the matter ought to be kept before our girls. One girl said to me, 'Sometimes when I think of these things my heart burns.'" [13]

The position of these Christian young women teaching in government or gentry schools, as respects religion, is much the same as that of a Christian teaching in the public schools of Chicago or New York. In so far as their own conduct and character are expressive of Christian ideals, they inevitably exert on their pupils an elevating and healthful in-

[13] *Woman's Work in the Far East*, Sept., 1906.

fluence, and as inevitably commend to them the religion which has shaped their own lives. Direct Christian teaching is rarely permitted in these schools and it would be a difficult matter to reach many of the students by religious services. But in some of them there is a very tolerant attitude toward religious matters. For example, at the formal opening of the Tengchow Girls' School, established by order of the Governor of Shantung, the young Christian teacher who had been engaged to take charge of the school asked the prefect's mother, who was conducting the exercises, if the programme "might not be begun by prayer." Permission was willingly given, and all stood while the young teacher offered an opening prayer. One of the guests remarked, "We try to teach reverence and obedience to teachers. If pupils learn to obey the Supreme Ruler they will certainly obey their teachers." [14]

In the government schools especially there are strict rules forbidding the teachers to talk of Christianity in their classes, but outside of the school, they are of course private individuals, free to speak as they please. The opportunities afforded by friendly intercourse with

[14] Mrs. Calvin Wight, in *Woman's Work in the Far East,* June, 1907.

their students, together with the constant and natural influence of their lives, are probably more effective than the forbidden classroom teaching would be.

A young Chinese woman who has been studying in America during the past year, but was before she came teaching in a gentry school under these conditions, says, "Not a word of Christian teaching was permitted to be taught. However, in spite of such restriction, never in my life have I felt the power of Christianity so vital as when I was there. Here one could preach by life only, not by words, not on Sunday alone but every day. . . . The change in the attitude of the girls toward Christianity was wonderful. There was no school on Sunday and every one was free to do whatever she pleased. As they were indefatigable workers, most of them spent the seventh day in studying, working, or in other activity. One Sunday, leaving for church, I was waylaid by a group of girls who wanted to know where I was going. Upon being told of the place they instantly said, 'May we go with you?' With great joy I took them with me. How eagerly they listened to the sermon. This was only a start. The next Sunday the number of those who attended the service was doubled, over forty. From this time on they showed

A Chinese Kindergarten Teacher and Her Pupils

real interest in the Christian religion. It was a great regret for me not to have been able to work with them longer." [15]

In view of the eagerness with which the government and gentry schools are seeking the students from Christian schools as teachers, and of the valuable services which these able young women may thus render this most ancient and most populous of the world's nations at a great turning point in its history, it would be supremely worth while to give generous support to Christian schools, were they doing nothing more than to put capable young women teachers into the non-Christian schools.

But there is another important service which the mission schools may render the government and gentry schools in these days of their infancy. A letter to the Association of Collegiate Alumnæ, written by Mrs. Bashford, reads: "Scores of American college women engaged in mission work in China are doing much to give wise direction to this wonderful new national government movement for the uplift of women. They are supplying the standard and their schools furnish the object lessons according to which the new govern-

[15] Vong Pau Sze, in *The Association Monthly,* Feb., 1910.

ment education is being largely fashioned." Miss Wykoff of North China writes that two ladies of rank in Soochow asked that they might spend two weeks in one of the mission schools in order that they might see how it was conducted, as they were planning to start a girls' boarding school in their home, a large city of Eastern China. The principal of a mission school in Nanking told me that although her school was not fitted, in building or equipment, to serve as a model, it was almost daily used as such, so frequent were the visits she received from government officials or private individuals who were about to establish schools for girls.

These things mean that it is now within the power of Christian educators, not only to furnish many of the teachers for the government and gentry schools, but to serve as models for them and thus to permeate the whole system of education for women with the elevating influence of Christianity. In view of the fact that there are two hundred million women in China, and that education has from time immemorial been the dominant influence in the life of the nation, the significance of the situation can scarcely be overemphasized. But if this opportunity is not to be lost, it must be seized promptly.

XI

THE PRESENT OPPORTUNITY AND ITS DEMANDS

THERE can be no question as to the large service which the Christian schools for girls have the opportunity to render China at this time. Nor can there be any question of the inestimable value of the service which they have rendered in the almost seventy years since Miss Aldersey established the first of them, to the present time when girls' schools dot the entire Empire. "The woman missionary," says Mr. Denby, for many years United States minister to China, "takes in her arms the poor, neglected, despised girl and transforms her into an intelligent, educated woman. If the missionaries had done nothing else for China, the amelioration of the condition of the women would be glory enough." [1]

How large a part these schools have played in the present wonderful awakening in China it is impossible to estimate, but certain it is

[1] Denby, *China and Her People,* Vol. I, p. 228.

that it is no small one. Nor will any one acquainted with conditions at the present time question the great work which these schools are now doing. But in view of the magnitude of the opportunity, the question of the extent to which the Christian schools are fitted to meet it, and of how their work may be rendered even more effective, is certainly a pertinent one. Are we equipping our mission schools in such a way as to enable them to meet the demands of the hour?

I have seen more than one mission school in China housed in a substantial and comfortable home, built for the purpose, and well adapted to it. But I have seen more, whose work was carried on in crowded and uncomfortable quarters, which were a constant disadvantage. Sometimes the school building is one which was built years ago, when woman's education in China was still a comparatively small and struggling thing, when pupils had to be sought for, and the work given was elementary. These buildings, not too good to begin with and showing the effects of long use, are wholly inadequate to the present situation. Eager pupils have to be turned away constantly because there is not one corner of the dormitories where another bed could be placed, nor another bit of floor space in the classrooms on

which to set a chair. Moreover, those who are fortunate enough to succeed in getting in, live in crowded conditions in which the strongest development of body, mind and spirit is well-nigh impossible.

Sometimes the work of a Christian school is carried on in a Chinese house, frequently a very unattractive one. It is apt to be even less adapted to the needs of a modern school than the outgrown mission building, and the disadvantages of crowding are even greater. I well remember one such school in a city of great opportunity, where families of wealth and influence were eager to have their daughters educated, and were willing to send them to the Christian schools. But as I went through the tiny yard which was the only place for play and exercise, into the dark, dingy classrooms, one of which also served as dining room, and up the narrow, shaky stairs to the crowded, unattractive dormitories, I could not wonder that an official of that city had told the principal that he would send his daughter to her school if she had a better building.

In that city, which is one of the largest and most prominent of the Empire, there were three other mission schools for girls. One of them, an English school, had just built a good

new building, one of the others had quarters in a Chinese house fully as dingy, dark and unattractive as the one just mentioned, and the fourth had crowded a building, erected many years ago, to the utmost limit reluctantly permitted by the physician of the mission.

"A woman physician who visited one of the finest equipped girls' schools of Shanghai remonstrated with the missionaries in charge on account of the crowded condition of the dormitories," Miss Cogdal of Shanghai wrote a short time ago. "But there are other mission schools more crowded as to dormitories, and with a poorer equipment generally than this one. God's people have prayed and hoped that China would awake to the imperative need of education for her daughters, but now the first signs of awakening have so overwhelmed us and so nearly exhausted our visible resources that wise workers are considering carefully the very best use of these same resources. . . . A wealthy Christian gentleman from the United States who attended the conference in Shanghai last year and who has given liberally to the mission cause, asked a teacher in one of the Christian girls' schools if she was not ashamed to teach in such poor buildings and with such unlovely surroundings. But the teachers in that same school

feel that inasmuch as it has been said that Mark Hopkins and a pupil with naught but a log between them would be a university, it is just as true that when a missionary with a heart full of Christ's love and sympathy for her poor, downtrodden, ignorant sisters comes in contact with Chinese girls eager for the advantages of a Christian education, there is bound to be a school, log or no log, equipment or no equipment." [2]

No criticism can be made of the missionaries, for carrying on their work in such deplorable surroundings as they often do. In the face of the present need and opportunity they cannot refuse to teach the eager girls pressing on them from all sides, in whatever surroundings are the best obtainable. We must rather criticise ourselves, who have given them such tiny sums with which to carry on their work of equipping the women of the great new China for their large responsibilities, that they must do that work under conditions which are a constant source of shame to them, and all who believe in the work they are doing.

The disadvantages of work under such conditions are manifold. Not the least of them is the fact that the poor equipment of many of the schools causes them to lose some fine girls

[2] *Woman's Work in the Far East,* Sept., 1908.

from the most influential families. These girls would have come if the school had had "a better building," and they would have gone out equipped with Christian education and training, to be powers for good in their positions of influence. So long as schools are housed in such buildings as many of them now are, we cannot blame the official who does not wish to send his daughter to live in their crowded discomfort.

From the standpoint of the pupils who do come, the disadvantages are also serious. They cannot be or do their best in such surroundings. It is impossible in these crowded rooms to teach them the lessons in neatness, and cleanliness about a house, which their homes often fail to give them, and which would make them far better home-makers than they could otherwise be. They lack the object lesson which light and well-ventilated rooms would be, nor do they receive the culture given by well-chosen and well-arranged furniture and decorations.

In equipment other than classrooms and dormitories many mission schools are weak also. In schools for Chinese the sciences should be among the strongest and most thoroughly studied subjects in the curriculum, but in too many cases this work is deplorably weak,

Almost Ready for College

because the appropriation for the school is not large enough to provide the apparatus without which no laboratory work can be done.

Every year the presses in Shanghai and other cities are adding to the number of strong, stimulating books which have been written in Chinese, or translated into it, and every year more and more girls are becoming able to read English. But the name of the schools without libraries is legion. Even libraries for the use of the teachers are few indeed, and lessons have to be prepared and recited without the aid of any collateral reading by teacher or pupil. Even a dictionary is sometimes too expensive an article to be owned by a mission school.

If ever girls needed the benefit of proper exercise, the Chinese girls, descended from generations of bound-footed women, need it. But when the only gymnasium is the yard, and exercise is therefore dependent on dry weather of moderate temperature, and when only the simplest sort of gymnastic apparatus can be afforded,—if indeed there is any at all,—physical culture can be by no means thorough.

Perhaps the most serious economy which the mission schools have been forced to practice is in the matter of teachers. Only a few months ago a letter from the principal of one

of these schools told me of the loss of one of her most promising pupils, the daughter of one of the best official families in the city. Her father had sent her to a school in a city several hundred miles away, because the appropriation for teachers in that mission school was not sufficient to permit the employment of a good instructor in the Chinese classics. Yet a very small sum would have secured the services of an excellent Chinese teacher.

The salaries of missionaries are never high, yet the schools with an adequate foreign teaching force are very few in number. The inevitable result is to weaken the quality of the work which is given, and to limit the amount which can be offered. Opportunities long and patiently waited for are pressing upon the school from every side. With a vision of the needs and the possibilities of this critical period in China's history, the teacher who has given her life for these girls of China longs to give them all that she possibly can, of that which will enrich their lives and add to their usefulness. She does not, cannot, spare herself, and although the hours of rest in an Oriental climate should be more frequent than at home, she reduces them to a minimum and overworks most of the time. Very probably she realizes that she is almost always too tired to

do her best work, but the work must be done, every one else is as overburdened as she is, and countless opportunities are being unmet. Can any one blame her, since by her utmost effort she can do little more than what seems absolutely necessary, if she works too hard, even to the point sometimes of breaking down and having to go back to America to recover, making it necessary either that her work be done by already overburdened fellow-workers, or left undone?

It is easy to find fault because newly arrived workers are often immediately given so many tasks which can be performed without the knowledge of the language, that their language study is seriously interfered with, so much so sometimes as to cripple them in after years. But it is also easy to understand that this is done because we at home have made it necessary. That the teaching done in the Christian schools, while usually far better than that of the government and gentry schools, is nevertheless not always the strong and vigorous work which the situation demands, is not in most cases because the teachers are not capable of doing this work, but is rather due to the fact that they are too overworked to do that of which they are capable.

Crowded buildings, lack of equipment, overworked teachers, are certainly sufficiently undesirable in themselves. But when we remember that many of the schools in which these conditions exist are to-day visited by the Chinese in search of methods and suggestions for the government and gentry schools, the situation is seen to be even more serious than it otherwise would be. If Christian schools are to serve as models, they must be worthy to be copied. They ought to be the best schools in China, from every point of view. It discredits Christianity in the eyes of the Chinese, if they are not.

"We are out here in China for the avowed purpose of bringing China to Christ," says a writer in the "Educational Review of China." "But that does not prevent us from establishing and conducting efficiently the best schools in China, and by best we mean the best from an educational standpoint. Our buildings ought to be the best, not necessarily the most expensive or the most showy, but the best adapted to educational purposes. Our teachers ought to be the best—not only the best morally and religiously, but also the best-equipped intellectually and the most skilful in the art of teaching. We believe it is of prime importance to have good Christian men and women as

teachers in our schools, but it is more inexcusable to have an incompetent teacher of mathematics or science or any other subject, however spiritually minded he may be, than to have a teacher with less religious fervour, but who is a thoroughly competent instructor in his line. A religious incompetent as a teacher can do as much harm as a non-Christian. We need in our schools teachers who combine religious fervour and pedagogic skill and we should be satisfied with nothing less." [3]

Christian education for women in China needs better buildings, better equipment, and a more adequate teaching force, and it also needs to be able to offer more advanced work than was necessary in the past. There are, and always will be, many girls in China who cannot take more than the equivalent of a grammar school education, and too much emphasis cannot be laid on the importance of good girls' schools of grammar grade. But there are many who desire, and whose parents desire for them, a more thorough education, and who will be more useful and influential women if they are given it. It is much to give a child a good primary education, but the girl who leaves the influence of the Chris-

[3] Editorial in *Educational Review,* Feb., 1909.

tian school at that point is still very plastic and other influences may undo much of that which has been wrought in her. But the girl who remains for high school work is almost a woman when she completes that course. In addition to the greater power for usefulness and influence which her further study and training have given her, her ideals and purposes are too firmly fixed to be easily changed. A few years ago it was difficult to keep girls through a high school course. The desire for their services in the home, and early marriages, had much to do with this. But to-day many parents are eager to have their daughters remain through the entire course, and the desire of educated young men for well-educated wives has militated against early marriages.

The need for more academic education than has been given in previous years has been recognized by missionary educators, and the curricula of many of the schools have been much extended in the past few years. Many of them have included a normal training course. The teachers and equipment necessary to carry out the work thus outlined in the curricula should be supplied at once, for young women thus trained are urgently needed in China.

Attention has already been called to the great dearth of trained teachers in the government and gentry schools. Part of the work in them could be done successfully by girls with a good high school education, including some training in methods of teaching. Young women with such training are needed also in the mission schools, the work of which has always been hampered in the past for lack of good Chinese women teachers. One of the most prominent workers in woman's education in China told me that the entire system was crippled by the poor work done at the very beginning, in the elementary day school, by untrained teachers. Children thus hampered by poor foundation work were at a disadvantage throughout the entire course. In one school which I visited, the American teacher was taking a class of girls through precisely the same work in arithmetic which they had gone over with a Chinese teacher the preceding year, having found in the attempted review that the class knew no more about the subject than if they had never studied it. Well-trained elementary teachers will strengthen the educational system at its very roots, and will solve the dilemma which many mission schools have to face, of giving the work of their lower grades into incompetent hands, or

of having much of it done by their college trained American women, who are so well equipped and so much needed for the more advanced work. Good high schools for girls and many of them, are one of the most imperative needs in China to-day, and will meet many of the most urgent demands in woman's education in that country.

But high schools only will not be sufficient. The replies to a questionnaire sent to the principals of the leading Christian girls' schools in China were almost unanimous in the strongly expressed belief that college education for women was a present need. Chief among the reasons given for this belief was the great dearth of trained Chinese teachers. While high school graduates can do much in the primary grades, it is felt that college trained teachers are necessary for the work in the high schools.

It is felt also that the best work in the government and gentry schools can be done only by college trained women. The position of teacher in these schools is a more responsible and difficult one than that of teacher in a Christian school, and the average girl fresh from high school is rather too immature to undertake such large responsibility, especially if she is the only representative of

Christian education on the teaching staff. The very magnitude of the opportunity, which would be so stimulating to an older and more thoroughly equipped girl, may prove overwhelming to her, and the fact that she must often stand alone, without sympathetic cooperation from her fellow-workers, may cause her to lose courage. There seems to be no reason why the more elementary work in these schools might not be done by high school graduates, associated with a college graduate. But few will question that the more thoroughly trained are the teachers furnished these schools, the greater the service that can be rendered.

The replies to the questionnaire referred to indicate also that there is not only a theoretical need for college education among the Chinese women, but that there are already several young women who are prepared and eager for it, and that they are steadily increasing in number. Several of these young women have gone to Japan, or even to America, to study, but the number who can afford foreign education is necessarily small. Those who would gladly avail themselves of the opportunity for a college education could such education be given them in China, are a much large number than those who are at present able to obtain

it. Moreover, there are necessarily some disadvantages of life in a foreign country, for young women of a nation so recently apart from the rest of the world as was China. While foreign education will probably for many years to come be of benefit to a few exceptional women, the great majority of Chinese girls ought not to be forced to seek college training outside of their own country.

A few centrally located colleges, with courses carefully adapted to meet present needs in China, would do much to strengthen all the educational work for women. They would furnish well-trained teachers for the Christian and also for the government and gentry schools; would tend to unify the curricula of the schools of lower grade; would afford opportunity for studies in special lines such as music, domestic science, medicine, etc., and would give broad, general culture to women looking forward to positions of influence in home life. It is the practically unanimous opinion of women educators in China that each of these colleges should be a union college, either controlled by a union of the Protestant forces of the territory in which it is established, as is the one which has already been started in North China, or else representing some American or English college or colleges, as

The Only School for Girls in a City of Twenty Thousand

does the college for men established by Yale University in Changsha. The need of such a college as this in some centrally located city of East China is already so evident, that it is earnestly to be hoped that the money necessary to establish a strong, thoroughly well-equipped institution will not long be lacking. Before the earliest date at which plans for a college could be executed the need will be even more urgent than it is now.

No one interested in the welfare of China can visit that nation to-day, and study the needs and opportunities of this time of startlingly rapid changes, without becoming convinced that there are possibilities of service of eternal value in China to-day, of a magnitude such as Christian people have not faced since the days of the Reformation, or even since the first century of the Christian era. But with that conviction there comes to many also a second conviction, which is that China has no greater need than that Christian people of other lands should realize her present crisis and rise to meet the opportunities of service which it affords, before they are gone not to return. The China of to-day is plastic, the China of a very few years hence will be far less so. No one sentence could have better expressed the present situation and its significance, than

the few words cabled to the Student Volunteer Convention held in Rochester from December 29, 1909, to January 3, 1910, "God has melted ancient China; who will mould the new?"

Christian education for women in China today has an opportunity to render that nation an invaluable service. All the strong Christian schools which can be established will be filled to overflowing with young women, who because of their education will go out to be powers all through the Empire. Moreover, it is to these schools that the government and gentry schools must look for their teachers and methods. To give Christian training directly to many, and through them indirectly to many more, of the young women who are to be the mothers and teachers of the great new China, is to invest life or money in a way that will yield the richest of returns.

But the present opportunity cannot be met unless the Christian schools are strengthened. It is now in the power of Christian education to exert a kind and degree of influence which will be wholly for the good of the educational system of China, and to win for itself a place akin to that held by the Christian schools of America. But the Chinese are exerting great energy in remedying the weaknesses in their

schools. Unless the weaknesses in the Christian schools are promptly corrected we shall some day awake to find that Christian education has lost its position of leadership, and that thus one of the greatest means of helping the Chinese to build their new nation into lines of strength and righteousness has gone beyond recall.

If Christian education is to keep its place of great influence it must be so supported that it can be housed in substantial, well-planned buildings, and supplied with the apparatus necessary to thorough work. The schools must have funds at their command sufficient to enable them to carry their courses of study to whatever point of advancement the situation makes necessary. Most important of all, there must be adequate teaching forces of thoroughly trained women, who will have such opportunities for refreshment of body, mind and spirit that they will be strong and clear visioned to carry out the magnificent task assigned them. More schools are needed. In one city of twenty thousand inhabitants there is but one Christian school for girls. In other cities there are none. More schools are needed, but greater than this need is that of better and stronger schools. Without them one of the greatest opportunities for large service of eternal value

which life ever offers will be lost. With them, every class of society will be reached, educated Christian women will be centres of influential homes all over the Empire, the mothers and the teachers of the new China will be women worthy of their high office, and the educational work for the women of the new nation will be permeated with the influence and the spirit of Christ.

THE END