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THE CONSTITUTION.

When our Women's Mission Societies were organized and Circles came into existence, three constitutions were drawn up, which were adopted as "the rules of faith and practice" of the Home Missionary Society, the Foreign Missionary Society and every Circle formed auxiliary to these two bodies. As the years have gone on, and the workers have changed, we fear there are very many, perhaps a large proportion, who are quite unfamiliar with the requirements of the constitutions, and consequently are liable to, and indeed do, very often violate certain articles therein.

This is not as it should be. The Constitutions are the expressions in condensed form of the wishes of the women all over our province as to what our work shall be, and how it shall be done. When these have been formally adopted, as ours have been, every member of the two Societies and every Circle formed auxiliary to these Societies in any church is bound to conform to the rules laid down. If any members have conscientious scruples about subscribing to any article in these Constitutions, it is open to them to withdraw and have an independent organization which is not a Circle. But, so long as anyone calls herself a member of the Home Society and the Foreign Society, and so long as the groups of women in our churches organized for mission work, call themselves Circles, they have pledged themselves to the rules which they have themselves adopted in joining the Societies and in organizing the Circle.

One cause of confusion has been that there are three Constitutions, and many have not learned the relationship between them, and have confused the articles in each. The first one is the Constitution of the Woman's Home Missionary Society of Ontario West. With the details of that we have nothing to do in this paper. The second is the Constitution of the Foreign Missionary Society of Ontario West. These two Constitutions are on the same plane, so to speak, and they concern every woman who is a member of either or of both. What are the conditions of membership we shall find out later.

The third is the Constitution for Union Circles. While it has been deemed wise to have two Societies to deal with the two sides of our mission work, for the sake of easier administration, we do not have two Circles in each church. We have one Circle, a Union Circle, auxiliary to both Societies, doing its work in, and making its contributions to, both the Home and the Foreign work. For these Union Circles it was, of course, necessary in the beginning to have a constitution. That constitution differs in some respects from that of either Society, and we think it profitable just at this point to examine it with some care, and try to understand it more perfectly. Afterwards we shall do the same with the General Society's Constitution, and shall hope also to deal with the Constitution for Mission Bands. We print herewith the six articles of which it is composed, and hope that it will be thoroughly read and digested by every Circle member. Next month we shall hope to enlarge upon and explain two or three of the articles on which