

women ; in 1883 there were still only fifteen ; but in 1893 they numbered one hundred and thirty-four, and in another year the total reached one hundred and sixty. The female missionaries of the Society were in 1837 only one twentieth of the entire European staff ; in 1883 they were one-eighteenth ; in 1893 they were one fourth. This advance is the more remarkable because in the last decade it outstripped an extraordinary increase in the number of clerical missionaries on the Society's roll. It has been accompanied by a significant rise in the number of native female teachers. In 1837 they were three hundred and seventy-five ; in 1883 the numbers reached four hundred and ninety-three ; in 1893 they were eight hundred and ninety-two.

There is yet another way of testing the development of public interest in this work. The Report of the Conference on Foreign Missions, held at Liverpool in 1860, contains no serious discussion on woman's work. A short and exceedingly general address which may have lasted five minutes ; a reference by the veteran Leupolt ; another by the Rev. J. H. (afterwards Bishop) Titcomb, and a recommendation as to female education, in the course of a long minute, exhaust the subject. And yet women, other than missionaries wives, were then in the field. Leupolt's language is characteristic of the time, he had pointed out the need of girl's schools in India ; " I would go a step further," he said " and advocate the agency of female missionaries in India." As his published reminiscences show, few knew better than he how sorely women were needed, how ample were the opportunities for the exercise of their powers, how happy the results of their work. And yet the Conference did not follow him.

There is no minute expressing its agreement with his proposals, although educational effort receives ample sympathy.

The Conference of 1886, at Mildmay, showed that in a quarter of a century some advance had been made. " Women's Work," says the Introduction to the Report, " was nobly represented." As a matter of fact, one afternoon session was given up to it. Two years later came the Centenary Conference at Exeter Hall, at which it is not too much to say, that the power of Woman's work was felt throughout. The subject was discussed in a more serious as well as in a more scientific spirit. Women's work had no longer become a mere adjunct ; it was itself a power. Of this ample proof was again given at the Anglican Missionary Conference of 1894.

Nor is this growth of interest confined to ourselves. We have already seen with what astonishing rapidity one women's organization followed another in America, when progress

began. A like impetus has been felt elsewhere. Norway may serve as an illustration. The Rev. L. Dahle, returning in 1888 to Norway, " after nearly half a life spent in Madagascar," was told by a colleague that there was " quite a new question to be faced." " I believe," said his informant, " that about half of the young Christian women in our country are ready to go into the mission field." From collectors of funds they had suddenly become in heart and wish evangelists and teachers. The curious may notice that 1887-1888 saw the turning point in the policy of the C. M. S.

No doubt the attitude both of women towards this work and of the public towards the whole subject is part of a general movement. We are more accustomed now to the independent activity of women than we were a quarter of a century ago. We believe more in their organizing power and in their capacity to think for themselves. We understand better the extent and strength of the barriers which in some countries keep the male missionary from approaching the female population. Above all we are come to acknowledge that women have a duty and a privilege no less than men in regard to the evangelization of the world, and that their task is not necessarily over when they have done something to swell a Society's purse.

In thinking, however, of women's work in the mission field, it must always be kept in mind that missionaries' wives, although they may not be counted as members of the staff, are still missionaries. Their home and family duties have necessarily been their first care ; but these have not kept them from rendering service of the highest value. There are women, indeed, like Mrs. Judson and Mrs. Hinderer, whose names will always appeal to women workers as names to inspire enthusiasm and courage. There are others—such as Mrs. Perowne, the mother of the present Bishop of Worcester, or Mrs. Williams, widow of the first Bishop of Waiapu, who has lived to spend nearly seventy years in the field—whose foresight enabled them to be pioneers in educational and other work which has since been numbered amongst the commonplaces of missionary enterprise.

Indeed, the women who gave themselves to evangelize their sex in the earlier decades of the present century deserve something more than the passing acknowledgment which is commonly conceded, for women's work had then received but scant encouragement or attention. They were not borne up by the prayers and sympathy of thousands of women at home, as their modern successors are. They were not supported by the thought that the extension of women's work amongst women was being eagerly looked for, and that