

and who make admirable assistants, either in the schools or as Zenana visitors. The services of such can usually be obtained for considerably less than the amount needed for a European lady missionary, and without the expense and the risk attendant on sending these out from England. An increasing number of this class are already at work in connection with various societies in Calcutta and other places in North India; and we have little doubt that similar help could be obtained in the Madras Presidency. We think, therefore, that it would be a great mistake to assume the necessity for sending out European lady missionaries to labour in every place where an opening for female labour is shown to exist, and from which an appeal for further help in this work comes. In every case, where it is possible to do so, local assistance should be sought, and local superintendence should be relied upon. The wives and the daughters of the missionaries at several stations are already rendering most valuable service in the superintendence of schools and Bible-women. To send fresh workers to such stations, with independent powers, is not always the most economical or the most satisfactory mode of doing the work required; while the provision of a suitable assistant or assistants, who should work under the direction of the missionaries' wives, though under the ultimate control of the District Committee, would greatly enlarge the sphere of the labours already being carried on while maintaining the unity and strength of the work. Were an amount equivalent to the salary of one European lady missionary placed at the disposal of the District Committee for any station where work is now being done by the missionaries' wives, it would enable them to procure the services of a thoroughly suitable assistant and a couple of Bible-women, and would, in addition, provide sufficient funds for the maintenance of two or three girls' schools.

We would, therefore, strongly advise that the European female missionaries be, for the present at any rate, centered in three or four suitable places, and that their energies be largely given to training Bible-women and native teachers for girls' schools. The supply of these is, at present, lamentably deficient, and, until the want is supplied, vernacular schools for girls and work among the multitudes of women of the poorer classes and the lower castes must continue to be very much restricted. the Zenana Home in Calcutta, is, we believe, a step in the right direction, and if wisely used, it ought in time to be the means of providing a constant supply of female teachers, not only for the mission in Calcutta, but for the whole of the society's missions in North India. And the formation of a normal class in Madras, if judiciously managed, ought to prove equally serviceable in that Presidency.

While dealing with the subject of female work we would ask the attention of the Board to the urgent need, in the present state of Indian society, for the provision and maintenance of boarding-schools for girls especially for those belonging to Christian families. There are already several of these schools in connection with the society's missions, maintained partly by local contributions, but mainly by subscriptions received from England, and receiving only doubtful recognition from the Board. We were disposed at first to look critically and doubtfully on these institutions, because we found that the cost of maintaining the scholars fell almost entirely upon the funds of the school. The parents rarely contribute more than the clothing of their daughters, although efforts are made to press them to do so. We were, however, met with so much and such varied testimony as to the necessity for such schools and their great value, that we were compelled to modify our opinion, and to regard them as being, in the present stage of the missions, a very important element in female work.

It is to be remembered that the conditions of the climate and of social custom make home-life, in our English sense, almost impossible to the majority of the natives of India. The congregation of several branches of a family in one house constitutes often a very serious obstacle to Christian profession when one of the number has become impressed with the power of the truth. And it is a very great hindrance to any domestic discipline and home training as the children grow up. The children of each family are constantly under the influence of the larger household, some of whom probably have no sympathy with Christian training. This is specially prejudicial to girls, because they are constantly at home. And many Christian parents are greatly troubled because the daughters are constantly exposed to the contaminating and corrupting influences of the heathen life around them. Were they able to pay for sending them to a boarding-school, many of them would gladly do so, but in most cases poverty prevents this. If the mission does not step in with the needed provision, they would grow up under very unwholesome and dangerous influences. Feeling this and feeling also the desirability of having the rising generation of Christians trained to a higher standard of domestic life, some of the missionaries have, for many years, conducted such boarding-schools. And they have been richly rewarded. In addition to the numbers who have returned to their homes better fitted to shed the light of a Christian life upon their families and neighbours, from these schools have come many valuable helpers in mission work, and many who have proved most suitable wives for native catechists and pastors. In the addresses presented to us by the native Christians, frequent references were made to these schools and urgent appeals were made