

Wherever the gospel is preached, education is demanded. As the Christian community grows up, the young must be taught. The children of Christians must not be left in ignorance, nor will they be left in ignorance. The Christian communities make their own demand for education. They will have it. The Karens have clamored for it, and have fulfilled hard conditions in order to obtain it. It is the invariable rule, successful preaching brings this new demand. As rapidly as the Christian circle widens, so rapidly does the teacher's sphere extend. It often happens also, that the school itself is a missionary agency. Children of heathen parents are there brought under holy influence, and are drawn to Jesus; and, borne by them, the same holy influence goes out into their heathen homes, and abroad among their friends. The teacher's toil often helps the preacher; and the preacher's success always makes the teacher necessary.

The Missionary Union sends out preachers according to its means, as it ought. But let the work of conversion go on prosperously for a while in some heathen community, and then see what work presses upon the lonely missionary preacher:—to preach still to the heathen, for this, the chief work, must not be neglected; to instruct the converts, and build them up in the faith; to train helpers for the future; to give the character of a Christian community to the converted people, and build up Christian institutions among them. And who has he to help him? In all ordinary cases, in Burmah, at least, he is alone as a missionary. His nearest neighbor, most likely, was sent to another race, of another language, and is burdened with cares like his own. The two may consult together as brethren; but each missionary, usually, is a solitary laborer. And every man among them works with insufficient force. The fields of labor among the heathen are so many, and are opening and extending so rapidly, that the Missionary Union cannot provide full working force for each. God has given us so many points to hold, that, until the churches at home do more, every point must be held with inadequate force. Who are the missionary's helpers? Who will teach? Some convert can be trained to fill the place of schoolmaster; but it is slow work to teach the teachers, before they can be of use; and the missionary cannot give them, in any case, such an education as Americans gain at home. He has his wife; and a noble helper she is. Her heart is with him, and so is the toil of her life with his. A missionary and his wife together can do great things; but they cannot do everything. Try it at home. Lay out here such work as is done there. Let a man be pastor of the church, whether in village or in city; and let the minister's wife, with her home, her children, her uncounted cares, and perhaps her imperfect health, be the chief teacher in the day-school of the neighborhood. Let that school be kept on the minister's grounds, and let his wife have personal care over a considerable part of the pupils. Let the minister's house, too, be the apothecary's shop for the country round. Let the minister's wife help her husband in teaching on the sabbath; and let her travel with him sometimes, in the travelling season, making, not pastoral calls, but visitations to churches

far remote; or, if she cannot go with him, let her have charge of matters at home while he is away. Try such an experiment. Call a minister with the understanding that such work as this shall devolve upon his wife. Conceive, if you can, that such an arrangement is fairly entered into, and common humanity will quickly ask whether some one else could not be provided to do a part of that work. The experiment has been tried again and again in Asia; and that same question is the one before us now.

Let it be remembered, at the same time, that the missionary's wife is not officially recognized as a missionary. In 1859 the Missionary Union adopted this, as one of its principles of action: "That the wives of missionaries be no longer regarded as assistant missionaries, and that they be held responsible for no service." Temporary reasons may have had some influence in favor of the rule; but it is evidently a recognition of the fact that a missionary's wife is a wife. She is not an independent messenger of the churches, apart from her husband; she is her husband's helper. Her heart and life are to be with him. She has no duties which officially bind her to neglect her home. The rule is also a recognition of the fact, that she may be able, in some cases, to do very little actual missionary work, and perhaps none at all. And so the Missionary Union makes no official provision, in most cases, for the great secondary work that needs to be done at every station. It seeks to train native teachers; but teachers from home it cannot send to any great extent. The missionaries' wives do as much of the work as they can; but they do it often at the expense of health, if not of life.

Let it be remembered also, that a great share of this varied work is work for women. Americans need not be told that women are well fitted to the work of teaching. But teaching, after all, needful as it is, forms but a small part of the work in question. The women and children form, in heathen lands, as here, two-thirds of the population. The missionary preachers cannot gain access to the women's minds. Oriental customs have shut women, as thinking beings, away from men. With men who are seeking their salvation, they will not, cannot, freely talk. The heart best able to win their confidence is a woman's heart. The teacher who draws them out, and shows them a Saviour adapted to their real wants, must be a woman. Two-thirds of the people, the women and children are more accessible to women than to men. Not, of course, that women, apart from the missionaries, going and laboring alone, could be successful. The preaching of the gospel must open the way for them: they must labor with the missionaries. But, in providing the missionary stations with the most effective working forces, we ought to send men, and their wives to help them, and other women to do what the men cannot do, and their wives may not be free to do.

Women's work for missions, as it is now presented, amounts simply to this: Some of our Christian women, taking notice of this vast margin of work, necessary, but inevitably neglected, have said "Here is something for us to do. The Missionary Union does its duty in sending chiefly men to preach. But there might be a society on purpose to do this secondary work. The work is

for women: why may not we give money for it, outside of the general fund, and send women to attend to it?" The question arose almost simultaneously in many minds. Plans were formed, and the work was undertaken. The proposal has been received by the women of our churches in a manner which indicated that they were heartily ready for it. The most hopeful have been surprised and delighted at their response to the call. Several young women have already gone; and the support of the unmarried women previously in the field has been assumed by the new society. That is to say, this great, half-neglected part of missionary work, secondary, but necessary, has found a company of laborers ready and eager to undertake it. That which our missionaries have mourned that they must neglect, our sisters are desiring to take upon themselves. And who shall forbid them? If there is no valid objection to their assuming some part of this work, it is our duty to welcome them to it; to help them by all means, and to thank God that He has made such an addition to the effective missionary force.

If what has been said is true, it cannot be that the new movement is superfluous—the fifth wheel of the coach. If the Missionary Union must send preachers chiefly, and if success in preaching makes another kind of labor necessary, to which women are specially adapted, then an attempt to provide women for this work is a direct endeavor to supply the field with the needful laborer. The Woman's Society proposes to meet a necessity just as really as the Missionary Union; not the first necessity, indeed, but the second, and one which must not be overlooked. If any one thinks the new effort superfluous, let him ask who is to do the work which the Woman's Society has undertaken. Is any one else ready even to attempt it? And is any one yet so stupid that brings laborers to an important and neglected field, and yet neglects to have some one to take their place?

II.—HELPER.

It is evident, however, that the laborers in a new field ought to draw their means from new sources. They must not take away the supplies of the general treasury to maintain labor in this one department; nor are they at liberty to withdraw support from the support of other good institutions to help their own. The Woman's Society must not impoverish the Missionary Union or any other society, or withdraw support from the churches at home. Perhaps the greatest fear concerning this new movement of our sisters has been, that it may absorb something from the support of other institutions of the kingdom; that many givers will make this the main channel of their gifts, so that interests at home, and the more general interests abroad, will be forgotten. But our sisters do not suggest or desire any such action. They expressly ask for the very reverse of this. Their request is simply, that each woman save at least one dollar a year from needless expenses, to give it to the heathen, in addition to all that she has given before. They expressly ask that all previous habits of giving be fully kept up, and that this habit be added. And is there anything unreasonable to general benevolence in this? No; it broadens the channel. Pastor, would you