

some university. It is only in the last twenty years that Oriental women have deserved this term, as, in addition to a widespread disbelief in the capacity of women for university studies, social custom in the Orient enjoined marriage at an age too early to allow a girl to continue her studies beyond her very early years. Even to educate girls at all seemed to many impossible, to most unnecessary, and to some injurious. Occasionally some learned father might educate a much-loved daughter, but the acceptance of women's education as an ordinary fact in national life is a process still in its initial stages. It had its rise in the 19th century and is the fruit of Christian missions. Not only has the Church raised the age of marriage for Christian girls, thereby gaining for them the time and health for higher education, but it has also opened the gate of learning to them by establishing girls' schools in all its fields of work. Last year Ceylon celebrated the centenary of the first girls' school in Asia, the Uduvil school in Taifra, which is the work of the American Congregational Mission.

Women's colleges, however, are the fruit of the present century and, considering all the many obstacles that beset their origin, it is amazing that even the small group of them which now exists has come into being at all. All the objections raised against the education of women in general were urged with tenfold strength against their university education. But some girls strangely desired it, the university authorities were not against it, and a few fathers were willing to let their daughters attend lectures at men's colleges. The academic success of most of these students began to dispel the idea that women were as such incapable of understanding the higher studies and of passing the same examinations as men. We must greatly honor the achievement of these pioneer women who underwent great exertions with few alleviations and enjoyments, and thus paved the way for their younger sisters to move on to happier things.

In the twentieth century the number of women students and graduates became sufficiently large to cause serious thought on the part of missionaries. These academic women were of immense importance and influence.

Most of them were Christian, and their value in church work and in mission schools was beginning to be felt. The idea of women's colleges sprang up in several places. But the expense seemed prohibitive and the number of specialist teachers required for the staff seemed unattainable. The teachers must all be university honor graduates themselves and no mission could devote the few such women which it possessed to the instruction of a handful of matriculated girls. Two or three missions made efforts of this sort and added college classes to one or two of their chief high schools, but in hardly any case could they carry on the work beyond the government examination which comes as a test at the end of the second year. The complete course of four years which is required of "first-grade colleges," and the absolute separation, from school which is so necessary for the academic dignity and standing of a college seemed impossible.

The remedy was found where the remedy for many missionary problems may yet be found—in combination and union. What no one mission could afford to do, several missions in co-operation might accomplish. And so in the last fifteen years Union Christian Colleges for women have sprung up in India, China and Japan, and have attained a success far beyond the expectation of their founders. The first response was an immediate increase in the number of girls sent to the colleges. Parents saw many of their misgivings removed when they found that their daughters would be taught by women and with women, and would be lodged in buildings where every care would be taken of their health and where their teachers would live with them. The girls themselves also were eager in their desire to go on with their studies in places where they could have the peace and safety of the boarding school combined with greater freedom or more manifold activity. The missions also before long could welcome to the staff of their high schools teachers of the same language and race as their pupils, academically fit for their work and moulded by the valuable training derived from life in a residential college.

The advantages of union in such mission-