A Review of Twenty-Five Years
OF THE
WOMAN'S
Presbyterian Board of Missions
OF THE NORTHWEST,
PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING
HELD AT
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN,
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BY
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A Brief Review of Twenty-five Years.

The future historian of the last quarter of a century must write of the events and results connected with American Missions. When he records the glorious unification of Germany, he must mention marvelous changes wrought in Japan through the diffusion of Christian principles, as "when the Emperor of Japan promulgated the constitution, February 11th, 1889, the Empress rode beside him in an open carriage, it was the first time in twenty-four hundred years' history of that Empire that the wife had been thus publicly recognized." Also "last year these sovereigns celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of their marriage; the only time a Japanese monarch had thus acknowledged the sanctity of marriage, tending to the final approval of Christian monogamy."

When he describes the Chinese war which while shaking the nations interested, surprised all Christendom with its results, he will not forget to state that during those same months of human slaughter, "we are fully justified in estimating that there were nearly 100,000 conversions in the Foreign Mission fields, out of every tribe, nation and tongue." Page after page will be filled with items of mission anniversaries, and of native Christians sending the Word to those still ignorant.

It is grand to have lived in these years, and acted a part though small, with a story comparatively simple. It is not necessary to explain at length why we exist as a society. In all the past when woman's brain or hand has been needed, she has risen to the occasion and proved her
power. Today it is said, "we women are the great Home Guard to whom the world at large is turning trustful eyes for help and blessing and uplift." This is not a new idea for we find records of individuals and isolated bands of women early in the century working to clothe and assist in sending out men and women to heathen lands. To woman particularly must the story of salvation be told, for Christ had bought her freedom and elevated her from the level of the brute.

But the present form of regular organized work by women directly for women abroad was not adopted until 1861, when a Union Society was formed in New York composed of women from all denominations, and so continued until 1868 when the Congregational ladies formed a society in Boston to include their own churches. In quick succession the Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists and Episcopalians followed.

After the reunion of the two branches of the Presbyterian Church, and the distribution between the Congregational and Presbyterian denominations, of American missions abroad, the time had arrived for our

ORGANIZATION.

Many of our number had been engaged with the Board of the Interior for two years and were well informed concerning the conduct of the work, so that when the women of Chicago and its vicinity met in the old Second Presbyterian Church, December 15th, 1870, to consider the formation of a society, there was much surprise that a strong influence was brought to bear for uniting Home with Foreign Mission work. To those who had experience, this seemed unwise, as it was inevitable that one branch would suffer. Not that one is of more consequence, or that any Christian can think the other of less importance. Pure milk is good, and pure water is priceless, but a
mixture of the two is weak. However, the feeling for union was strong, and the motion for the double feature was carried.

We claimed as our constituency all the Presbyterian churches from western Ohio to the Pacific Ocean, and between the Canadian border and the Ohio river and Texas. It was an enormous area, in large part frontier, sparsely settled by immigrants and some enterprising people from the east. It was literally a Home mission field, still we believed a church would not prosper until it worked for others. It has required a large measure of faith and patience to convert many pastors to this idea.

The impression that the society would not always retain the union feature, and the knowledge that it was injurious to the interests of a corporate body to change its name, resulted in the adoption of the comprehensive

NAME

*Woman's Presbyterian Board of Missions of the Northwest.*

The wisdom of this action was made manifest in a few years when the women of our church organized for Home Missions distinctively. But the star of empire has moved west so rapidly, that the propriety of the term Northwest is criticized. Then too our limits have been diminished greatly. In 1876 mission quarters were opened in St. Louis, so that the churches in the region surrounding might sooner and more easily be reached and auxiliaries formed. In 1886 the Northern Pacific Board was organized, assuming the oversight of the work west of the Rocky Mountains. While this involved a withdrawal of many tried and dear friends, and many gifts of money, we realized that it was best for the cause, and bade them a reluctant good-bye, with many warm wishes for success. The pleasantest of relations have ever continued between us.
In 1892 the North American Indians were entirely transferred to the care of the Home Board, and last year Ohio formed synodically, and will hereafter report to Philadelphia. This leaves us in touch with the twelve remaining States. From each of these, two or more women are elected each year to serve as Vice-Presidents of the Board.

Doubtless this distribution of active members led to the holding of annual meetings in different sections of the country. With the exception of North and South Dakota, Montana and Utah we have convened in each state. Thus the distant societies have been brought into personal contact with the leaders, and by verbal questions which they thought too simple to commit to paper have learned many valuable details necessary to advancement. The spiritual influence of these meetings has been marked and has given a deeper religious tone to the work.

**THE CONSTITUTION**

adopted by this Board was an anomaly, for while we had voted to work for both Home and Foreign Missions, we also voted, as recorded in Article II, that “the object of this society shall be to promote an interest among the Christian women and young people of the Northwest, in the work of Foreign Missions, and to work in co-operation with the Assembly’s Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church.”

But if our name and constitution were not as specific or correct as the law might demand, we were true to our pledge, and during the few years the double feature was retained, money was given for both, but far from equally.

During the two years of service with the American Board, the women in many churches of our denomination had formed societies, so that when we were recruiting volunteers for this new regiment in the army of the
Lord, twenty-four organizations were reported to head the list. Our courage rose at once, for they already knew how the work should be done. From this small beginning we have gone forward until we have 2,055 Societies and Bands.

In the early days the question of a fair distribution of work throughout our borders caused much thought and discussion which resulted in the formation of Presbyterial Societies, having efficient officers who could come into intimate relations with local societies. This proved such a power for good that in 1876 we completed the system by Synodical organizations which were under the immediate supervision of the officers of the Board resident in the several states.

CHARTER AND PROPERTY.

An application for a charter was made to the Legislature of the State of Illinois in 1875. This was granted with the Great Seal of the State attached to it, and we were in a position to hold property legally.

The world contains many good kind hearted people, but none more generous toward this work than Dr. and Mrs. D. K. Pearsons, of Chicago. They are known throughout the Northwest for their munificent benefactions, which included in 1888 a fine gift to this Board, of improved property in Chicago, valued at $20,000.00, from the rental of which we receive a good annual income. Then too, these friends know that small hindrances retard all kinds of work, and in a quiet way they often remove them.

An additional fund of $400.00 has been given by Mrs. Lyman Marshall, the interest of which is supporting a native evangelist in China.

A small endowment for medical work will be mentioned hereafter.
ROOM 48 McCORMICK BLOCK.

After the great fire of 1871 the outlook was dark. The lecture room of the Second Church which we had called home, had been destroyed, and we held the monthly meetings in private houses. What could be done in a desolate city? We did not know that help was near, until Mr. Cyrus H. McCormick, a staunch friend of the church and a promoter of all its interests, counselled patience, and he would provide for us. When McCormick Block was completed, Room 48 was allotted to our use, free of rent during the owner’s lifetime, and August 29th, 1873, it was consecrated to work for Foreign Missions, since which time we have gathered there every Friday morning at ten o’clock, for devotion or in executive committee.

With a name and a locality the friends of missions gave us more encouragement through frequent visits and constant attendance of the regular meetings. One room soon became too small to accommodate the many who came for the devotional hour, and a part of the intervening wall was cut away, and Room 47 was ours, for which we pay rent. This enlargement was also very much needed for the legitimate business of the Board, which was growing rapidly.

A small library of choice books, and a long table covered with the latest papers and magazines containing fresh foreign missionary intelligence, also some cabinets of curios lend attraction to these rooms. Missionaries’ photographs and correct maps of the missions hang on the walls. Three young ladies are always in attendance to give every one a cordial welcome and impart information.

To say that Room 48 has become a household word in the Northwest and in the mission stations will give the best idea of its place in the affections of the people.
Above the noise and smoke of a large city it furnishes a quiet resting place for our missionaries, whether their faces are turned toward the East or West. We often hear their voices in the Friday morning meeting, and thereafter their letters have a deeper meaning. Clergymen frequent these rooms for items of interest for their own church meetings.

Room 48 has witnessed welcomes and adieus, laughter and tears, fervent prayers and their answers until some call it "a Bethel" and some call it "a Mecca."

For years the Church did not deem it wise to establish other mission headquarters in the West, and in 1875 the Assembly gave us this commission, that, "Inasmuch as the church did not employ a Western Secretary of Foreign Missions, it ought to leave the Woman's Board to work upon its own methods, and put forth the cause of Foreign Missions definitely and separately, as that was the only agency which represented the cause in the West."

This condition of affairs remained until 1891 when Rev. Thomas Marshall was employed as Field Secretary. Believing that interest and knowledge would be increased by co-operation with him, he has his desk in Room 48, and whenever making a tour of the churches he is ready to address the women's societies.

We are inclined to mention all the faithful laborers who are identified with this Mission room. That would take us back to the First Annual Report, which contains the names of the first twenty-nine officers of the society. Of that number only seven are found in the work of the Northwest to-day. Some have moved away from our territory, while others have reached that better country where dwells the first grand Missionary.

On down the twenty-five years we come, and many, many tender memories are stirred, over which we would
linger, but the length of this review forbids allusion to any one, save our

PRESIDENTS,

whose lives are so interwoven with the work, that they form a part of it.

On that cold December day when we commenced to lay plans for this enterprise, Mrs. R. W. Patterson consented to lead us if we would give her our firm support. The records show that good work was done from the beginning, and strong foundations were laid during the ensuing two years, when the President removed from the city and was obliged to resign her office. This did not cool her ardor for missions, for she has occasionally met with us, and we are delighted to have her with us to-day.

At the second Annual Meeting held in the First Presbyterian Church, Chicago, in April, 1873, Mrs. A. H. Hoge was chosen to fill the vacancy. She was a rare woman of advanced years, and rich with varied experiences of life. She possessed a strong intellect, dominating a big heart that loved the good in everybody. In prayer she held the hand of our Father while she made her petition, and the young missionary leaving her native land for a foreign home, will never forget her benediction.

Mrs. Hoge's deep piety and sound common sense combined to make her an uncommon executive officer. She would listen patiently to the discussion of a question, and satisfy both parties with the reasons for her decision. The fifteen years of her connection with the Board left her impress, and in our minds much of the good we have accomplished is attributed to her influence. The last years of her life she was feeble, and in 1885 she was made President Emeritus while Mrs. Herrick Johnson served one year as Acting President. Everyone regretted that she could not be persuaded to continue in the office she filled.
so well, but we loved her too deeply to disregard her sincere wishes.

Mrs. Benjamin Douglass was elected to succeed Mrs. Johnson and again a strong leader was ours, intelligent, learned in the scriptures, possessing an extensive acquaintance in the religious world, and familiar with all church work. Her motto was “go forward,” and it is well known that her enthusiasm brought about numberless good results.

The spirit of change seemed to be still hovering over us, for in 1889 Mrs. Douglass moved to California, and found work at once in the same line that she had left. But only three years did she remain with her family, when she was suddenly called to higher service.

Her words of comfort to an afflicted society come back to us. “You have indeed lost a tower of strength, but the promise holds good ‘In Me is thy help.’ The Lord can more than make up all our losses, by leading us to rely entirely upon Himself.” The ministry of sorrow has knit our souls together.

In 1890 Mrs. H. D. Penfield assumed the leadership, and with her strong intellect and physique, and her experience in the work, we looked forward to a prosperous future. Her implicit belief in the final conversion of the world could not be shaken, and she longed to do her part. But an insidious disease had been undermining her constitution and she was taken from us.

So three of these worthies have heard the Father’s “well done” and entered into “the cloud of witnesses.”

During the last year of Mrs. Penfield’s life, Mrs. N. W. Campbell served as Acting President, but no persuasion could induce her to continue in the position for which she was peculiarly fitted.

For one year past Mrs. H. H. Forsyth has acceptably filled the office of President, and we hope she may be spared to us and the work for many years. Another pen
will write her history for the golden jubilee of the Board. The most helpful agency employed in forwarding this work has been our

**PUBLICATIONS.**

As early as 1871 we united with the Philadelphia Society in issuing a quarterly magazine named *Woman's Work for Woman*, which became a monthly in 1875, with 10,000 subscribers. Later, in 1885, the New York Society joined us, and while the original name was retained, the place of publication was moved to New York. Since that time it has become the organ of the seven Woman's Foreign Missionary Societies of the Presbyterian Church.

A monthly magazine for children, called *Children's Work for Children*, was issued in 1875, and was made very attractive to old and young alike. When in 1893 its name was changed to *Over Sea and Land*, a friend wrote, "let it hold the same dear familiar place in your hearts, for our old new magazine contains all that was good in the old, and many helpful features are added to the new."

In 1878, the editor of "**The Interior**" suggested that a few missionary items be furnished by us for the paper, each week, as a new feature. This was cheerfully done, and has resulted in a report of the devotional weekly meeting held in Room 48, and fills a page. This has proved of mutual benefit to the publisher, reader and foreign missions.

In the early days we issued a monthly letter containing all the missionary news available for young societies, but as they grew older and stronger, and missionary literature abounded, this dwindled in importance and was withdrawn in 1888.

At one time a strong feeling prevailed that some new historical or biographical books might be written in such a bright and attractive style as to please both old and young. The most accurate and fullest existing records
could be searched, and the story told truthfully and completely, while all uninteresting details would be omitted. Ladies gifted with literary taste and ability gladly pledged their services to this end, for the sole purpose of advancing Foreign Missions. The plan was realized in 1888, when nine volumes of Missionary Annals appeared in print. The wisdom of the venture was made manifest in the call for several editions.

Hundreds of thousands of leaflets on varied missionary topics have been sent out since the small one "Go Tell" was published the first year of our existence.

We have united with the other Boards in the publication of Missionary Calendars and the Year Book, all of which have contained the names of the missionaries, and a day designated for prayer for each one.

Thus everything done in the line of missionary literature has been planned for our work only. They can all be found in Room 48, many of them for free distribution and for the others we only ask so much as will cover expenses.

MEDICAL WORK.

The physical suffering of heathen women has never appealed to the sympathies of the father or husband. But when Christian women were allowed to visit these helpless sisters, they found that those who could treat diseases of the body could more easily tell of the cure for sin. Some of our officers were deeply interested in this opportunity and after much careful consideration it was decided to advise the missionary candidates to study medicine, when possible, for one or two years before going out.

At once came the question of funds, as regular contributions could not be used for such education. Scarcely was the need made known to friends of the cause, when in 1884, $1,000.00 was given for the Grace Chandler
scholarship in the Woman's Medical College of Chicago, while from other sources we have received $1,225.00 as an endowment fund. Many annual donations are also made for this special department, so that we now have six students in the College, two graduating in June, and during the last eleven years have sent out eleven medical missionaries, who are now on the field.

No printed page will ever reveal the number brought to trust in the divine healer, because of the love shown by the human physician.

OUR MISSIONARIES.

When we withdrew from the sister Board, we were obliged to abandon the support of several young ladies in whom we had become much interested, because they were not members of our church, and only one came with us, Miss Jennie Dean of Persia. Before the first annual meeting we had adopted Miss Mary Jewett, sent to Persia, also Miss Eva Sly, now Mrs. J. J. Lucas, who had gone to India, and these three missionaries are still living, the last two celebrating this Twenty-fifth Anniversary with us today. We should enjoy telling of our love for, and the work of all the 191 missionaries who have represented us in foreign lands. Several have married into other denominations, while sickness and other causes have forced resignations, and twelve have fallen like brave soldiers with the harness on. We have ninety-eight names on our list today. Regular correspondence has been held with each one, love and prayer have followed them so that none could feel neglect and exclaim with Judson, in bitter disappointment, "I thought they loved me, yet they would scarcely have known it if I had died." Only self-denial and consecration could fit these young women for such a life of sacrifice, for which they have the promise of the hundred fold here, and life everlasting.
THE YOUNG PEOPLE.

From the beginning the young ladies have rendered assistance, some of their societies assuming the entire salary of a young missionary, and always proud to speak of her as "our own." Children's Bands have flourished and the pennies and dimes of the boys and girls have added steady streams to the treasury. In 1878 the Sabbath Schools began forming missionary societies, and the bible teaching combined with the lesson of systematic giving commenced a broad foundation for a strong Christian character.

And now the Y. P. S. of Christian Endeavor as a comparatively new and forcible organization has come to the front, absorbing the young people and their societies. For the present, in their division of funds the contributions are somewhat diminished, but it promises in a short time to eclipse all that has gone before. From these ranks of the young must come the men and the women who in the future shall maintain the work of the church.

THE TREASURY.

A system of finance is always established at the commencement of any business enterprise that would be successful, and one that is dependent on voluntary gifts is not always sure of its funds. This latter condition has been the experience of this Board, and while in the main there has been increase, there have been years of decrease.

Legacies received may in part account for varied amounts. Our membership consists of the rich who have given of their abundance, and the poor who have cast in all their living.

Occasional gifts have had a peculiar significance, as during that dark year of Chicago's history, when we were helpless and penniless, the Philadelphia Society sent us
$120.00 to help pay the salaries of missionaries we were pledged to support. Was there ever a more sisterly act?

The missionaries themselves have sent donations, and this Silver Anniversary has brought $10.00 from Persia, $25.00 from Hainan and $25.00 from Mexico, from individual missionaries, given out of their limited salaries. "The love of Christ constraineth me," they said.

The Indian women of Dakota once sent $100.00, the proceeds of a sale of forty quilts, in which each stitch meant real hard work. "They crooned in a minor key," said dear Mrs. VanCleve of Minneapolis, "when in my childhood I watched them making mats, and I thought when they made those quilts they still sang in an undertone; but now it was, 'I am so glad that Jesus loves me, loves me, even me.'"

Miss Carey wrote when visiting our auxiliaries, "I sometimes think too much is said of the missionaries when I see how hard the poor small societies work to secure small sums of money. They deserve mention as highly as the missionary."

Such are the gifts received for this righteous work, from those who know not the Hebrew law of the tenth, only the law of love as taught by Christ.

At the first annual meeting $6,334.42 was reported and this year it has reached the goodly sum of $80,001.75, which includes the silver offering of $9,742.85, making a total during the twenty-five years of $1,367,084.66.

This is an imperfect review of what we have accomplished in twenty-five years. The Decennial Report contains some other items of interest, but the work abroad, done by our substitutes can never be written. It has been aggressive and progressive, and one is not bold to predict undreamed of results in the near future. New
methods of work will be employed, for missionaries and Christian travelers tell us that the great ingathering will occur, when native preachers and teachers tell the old, old story in their own language.

It is a solemn thought that the speedy coming of that day depends on the present living Christians; their patience in work, faith in prayer, and regular giving, as God has prospered them.

But whatever is accomplished here, or whoever may go beyond the seas, Christ will finish this work, for it is the bringing in of his inheritance, and we hear his prayer, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me."