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# WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

ADDRESS BEFORE THE HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

OF THE

SOUTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE

MULLINS, S. C., NOVEMBER 11, 1930

AND THE

UPPER SOUTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE

SPARTANBURG, S. C., NOVEMBER 25, 1930

BY REV. W. A. FAIRY

# WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

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I have chosen as my subject, Women in the Church. While nearly every phase of the Church's life and work has been discussed in these addresses, little has been said about woman's place and work in the Church. And yet to woman more than to any other human factor, perhaps, the Church owes its present place of influence and power. Let us therefore give honor to whom honor is due.

The various religious bodies, including our own, are pondering the place of woman in the progress and economy of the Church. Numerous books and magazine articles have been written on the subject, and it continues to be a live topic of conversation in social and religious circles.

I may say in the outset that I am not here expressing my own personal convictions, I am simply recording history.

Whatever may be our attitude toward the question, whether we approve or disapprove, the fact remains, that women are fast coming to the front and claiming their place of leadership in the councils of the Church.

When the Jewish ecclesiastics were disturbed about the after-Pentecost preaching of the Apostles, Gamaliel, a learned doctor of the law, offered this timely advice: "Refrain from these men and let them alone," he said, "For if this counsel or this work be of men it will come to naught. But if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

It is said that in the early seventies a prominent minister, disturbed by the increasing activity of women within the Church, wrote to his brethren of the ministry after this manner: "Some of the thoughtful minds are beginning to ask, what is to become of the woman's movement within the Church? We must let it alone. All through our history like movements have started. Do not oppose the women and it will die out." He did not, however, indicate that the movement might be of God.

Every critical side of a man's nature under normal conditions has woman associated with it. As wife, mother, sister, daughter, or friend, a man's pleasure as well as his duty brings him in contact with woman from the cradle to the grave. That he is born into the world at all some woman must go down into the shadow of death. Woman watches over him in his weakness when he is nothing but a little helpless bundle of undeveloped possibilities, not knowing the meaning of either love or gratitude.

In young manhood and middle life his highest hopes, his noblest struggles and his most heroic achievements are shared by some congenial, womanly soul. And when old age comes with its weakness, and second childhood gathers about him, it is to woman he must turn for patient sympathy and compassion.

Surely then man's relation to woman is second only to his relation to God. The story is told of a celebrated Italian nobleman who had

been most unfortunate in his marriage. In early life he was married to a beautiful and brilliant woman, who turned out to be unprincipled and wicked, and her cruel folly broke his heart. Whereupon he made a foolish resolve that his baby boy, the only fruit of his unhappy union, should never look upon the face of a woman until he became a man. He retired to a castle, hidden away in the fastness of the mountains, and remained faithful to his vow until his son was twenty-one years old, when he took the shy and handsome youth to a great banquet at the foot of the mountains.

A number of beautiful girls were present at the feast. "Who are those creatures?" exclaimed the trembling and fascinated youth in the ear of his father.

"My son," replied the older man, "They are devils—black-eyed devils. I have had experience with one of them and they are dangerous; your happiness consists in keeping away from them forever."

The evening was spent viewing magnificent collections of art and conversing with polite and entertaining guests, and in enjoyment of the feast.

On leaving the father said, "Now, my son, tell me what would you rather have of all the things you have seen on your first entrance into the world?"

The boy reflected for a moment and replied, "Father I would rather have one of those black eyed devils than everything else in the world combined."

The moral is, "It is hard to kick against the pricks."

### **Friends of Jesus**

From first to last women were the best friends Jesus ever had. From the day Herod sought the young child's life to the day of His death men opposed Jesus and His work. They tried again and again to entrap Him in His speech. They misrepresented Him; they maligned Him; they abused Him; they persecuted Him; they lied on Him; they mocked Him; they spat upon Him; they scourged Him; they crucified Him. But there is no record of any woman who hindered the Master in His life or His work. They looked forward to His coming; they welcomed Him when He came; they waited upon His youth.

When He had grown to manhood and entered upon His ministry they followed Him; they listened to His teachings; they ministered to His necessities. They entertained Him in their homes; they invited Him to their social gatherings. It was woman's hand that wove the seamless robe He wore. It was the women who wept for Him as He went forth to die on Calvary. Later they brought sweet spices to anoint His body. Women were first at the open tomb and first to see their risen Lord and hear Him speak.

It was a woman's grief that touched the Master's heart and led to the raising of the son of the widow of Nain, It was the women who, against the disciples' wish, brought young children to Jesus that He might touch them. It was a woman, who in the house of Simon, when the host had neglected his duty to his guests, bathed the feet of Jesus

with her tears and wiped them with her tresses. It was a woman's faith that said, "If I but touch the hem of His garment I shall be healed."

It was a woman's question that prompted the sublime statement which has meant so much to the world, "God is a spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

The only person who lifted a voice against the cruel and unjust proceeding of that night when He was betrayed was a woman. She sent word to her husband, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just man."

### **Specially Fitted for Service**

Women are peculiarly fitted by nature, disposition and training for Christian Service. While practically all trades and professions are now open to women it is significant that comparatively few women have entered some of these trades and professions. There is no external reason, for instance, why women should not succeed as operative surgeons; the way is wide open and the rewards are large. And yet not many women graduates in medicine undertake surgery.

There is again no external reason why women should not prosper at the law, as editors of newspapers, in wholesale trade, or as book-keepers. But the number of women actually practicing these trades and professions is very small, despite the fact that such occupations are well within their powers and offer no social barriers to their entrance.

"Women rebel against the dull mechanical tricks of the trade that the present organizations of society compel them to practice for a living, and that rebellion testifies to their intelligence."

Their gifts and talents are along other lines, and find their highest expression in fields of Christian Service.

### **Women and Non-Christian Religions**

A most fundamental difference between Christianity and the non-Christian religions is found in the estimate and place of women in social and religious life. The founders of non-Christian religions took great pains to define the sphere of women, and to assign to them certain virtues and work definitely feminine.

No such thing as a personal religion is provided for women by men.

A woman as a woman cannot be saved, she must be reborn as a man if she is to attain salvation.

While Hebrew women in ancient times were held in somewhat higher esteem than among many others, they too were considered inferior to men, and were given subordinate position in the Church. The patriarchal type of family among the Hebrew, Greek, and Roman people was similar in many respects.

In each type the husband and father dominated and controlled the family. The Hebrew mother and child were always completely under the authority of the father by religious custom and practice.

The Greek patriarchal family likewise had all power centered in the father as the governing head, not by religious right but according to law as the trustee of family estates.

The Roman patriarchal family vested all religious rights in the oldest male member as the priest of the family ancestral worship.

In view of these facts, it is not at all strange that the disciples of Jesus, bred in an atmosphere of the relative value of the sexes should have been astonished at the attitude of Jesus toward women and his kindly treatment of them. The transition was so sudden they could not adjust themselves to it. The Apostle Paul seems to have expressed the earliest authoritative opinion of Christian leaders in regard to the status of women in the Church.

But Paul, who styles himself an Hebrew of the Hebrews, was exposed to the same background of tradition. He had not had the time or the opportunity to shake himself from the dust of such time honored traditions, or to break the shackles that bound him.

And yet even Paul seems to have gotten a vision of the new day for women in the work of the Church, when in his letter to the Galatians he says: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond or free, there can be no male nor female, for we are all one in Christ Jesus."

Paul was here making progress, but it was painful progress, and he seems to have made no serious effort to have the latter part of his prophecy put into execution. And yet Paul wanted to have everything measured not by his own standard, but by the standard of Jesus. He wanted no authority of his to stand between humanity and its Maker. Paul believed that where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.

### **Christ's Attitude Toward Women**

Jesus instituted a new order in the treatment of women and their place in the Church. And He did it so naturally and so simply; no questions were asked; no discussions evoked.

The norm had been fixed, and women took their place naturally and unhesitatingly.

If we examine the records we shall find that Christ treated women just as He treated men. He was a whole-hearted, respectful, courteous brother to women as well as to men.

You never notice any change in the tone when He changes from talking with a man to talking with a woman.

He never seemed to think it necessary to flatter women, or patronize them, or to regard them in any other way than as comrades on an equal footing.

There is to be found in His teaching no word that suggested a difference in the spiritual ideals or potentialities of men and women.

He did not define or limit their sphere of work. He accepted the services of women who ministered to Him of their substance and followed Him from village to village with the same consideration and appreciation He gave to men.

Jesus thought of women in terms of service; and we should put the emphasis where Jesus put it. Men may call Jesus an idealist, unpracti-

cal, and a dreamer of dreams, but their instincts are stronger than their logic.

We are slowly, perhaps, but surely coming round to Chris.'s way of thinking in terms of service.

Doctor Charles Forster Smith says: "There has never been a time in my experience when barriers that separated the sexes have been so broken down to the mutual advantage of both men and women."

The General Conference, which met in Atlanta, Georgia, in May 1918 gave full lay membership to women of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, thus giving them the privilege of holding elective and appointive positions in the Church, hitherto held only by men. In the twelve years that have followed it is interesting and illuminating to note the facts and figures which show how women have progressed since the privilege of full lay membership has been accorded them. In the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in the United States in 1928 the following figures were reported through the questionnaire from two hundred and twenty-four districts.

The statistics are taken from "Woman's Place of Service in the Church," to which I am indebted for valuable information in the preparation of this address.

Number of women who are stewards -----	7962
Number of boards having women members -----	4039
Number of women who are presidents of official boards -----	51
Number of women who are treasurers of official boards ----	444
Number of women elected to District Conferences -----	4468
Number of women attending District Conferences -----	3166
Number of women elected to Annual Conferences -----	477
Number of women attending Annual Conferences -----	398
Number of women serving on Annual Conference boards ----	409
Number of women serving on Conference Commissions -----	13
Number of women serving as Sunday school superintendents--	882
Number of women serving as Epworth League presidents ----	1829

Women are serving on the following Annual Conference Boards: Epworth League, Literature, Education, Sunday School, Hospital, Finance, American Bible Society, Temperance and Social Service, and Missions.

The General Sunday School Board makes large use of the ability of women.

The Board employs forty-seven women in its various departments. And if the work of the women employed by the Book Committee who prepare the Sunday school literature is included nine more should be added, making a total of fifty-six so employed. Of the nine women serving in this department, five are assistant Sunday school editors; one assists with general periodicals; two are connected with the elementary periodicals and lesson material; and one assists with adolescent story papers. In the editorial work, as in the administrative work, women are required to have specialized training.

Of the ten General Conference Boards of the Church four have women serving: Sunday School Board, Board of Missions, Epworth

League Board, and Board of Temperance and Social Service .

The new Board of Christian Education ,elected at the General Conference May 1930, which merges the Board of Education, the Sunday School Board and the Epworth League Board, has nine women members.

At the first General Conference to which women were elected in 1922 there were eighteen women elected. At this Conference twenty-three women were seated as members, five beyond the number elected being alternates, seated in the place of men delegates.

Of the two hundred and one lay delegates elected to the General Conference of 1926 eleven were women.

The General Conference held last May in Dallas, Texas, had in its membership thirty-two women delegates, one from Cuba and one from China. Since the first time women were seated, in 1922, in Hot Springs, Arkansas, the numbers have not increased appreciably, but this last session marked a real change in the attitude of the delegation and in participation of the women members. The women seemed not only more at home, but they took a larger part on the floor than at previous conferences.

The time element accounted largely for this, men having become more accustomed to the presence of women in all walks of life, and the women themselves having become less conscious of their new and strange environment. Several of the outstanding addresses of this Conference were made by women. In fact a prominent member of the Conference said that THE outstanding address of the Conference was made by a woman.

And what is true of women in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in the United States is correspondingly true of women holding elective and appointive positions in foreign countries.

### **Women and Educational Work**

Women have always been interested in education, but it was not until the period of the Reformation that any serious consideration was given to the education of girls. It is in modern times, and late in the Christian era that systematic attempts have been made to furnish schools for girls and women. Denominational Church schools began to appear in the Methodist Episcopal Church before the division of the Church in 1844. La Grange College in Georgia was established in 1833. It was the first school in the world devoted solely to the higher education of girls. In 1836, at Macon, the Georgia Female Seminary, now called Wesleyan College, was chartered. In the same spirit other denominations founded schools for girls. And today the whole country is a net work of endowed schools, colleges and universities for the higher education of girls and women. The number of Church schools and colleges, reported by thirty Conferences in 1928, was fifty-two. The number of women employed by these various institutions was seven hundred and fifty-one. The list of positions as reported included faculty members, matrons, secretaries, house mothers, health directors, dieticians, deans, book keepers, post mistresses, stenographers, super-



visors, and directors of religious activities. The service required of women in these institutions is largely skilled and professional.

Speaking of the recent passing of Mrs. Lucy Robertson the writer says, "Higher education for women in North Carolina had a leader and pioneer in Mrs. Lucy Robertson. She was among the first Southern women to hold the position of president of a college for women. Her presidency of Greensboro College for Women during more than a decade of its history marked her as an educational administrator of unusual ability. Her interests were not alone for higher education; she was a leader in missionary efforts of the women of her Church; a loyal supporter of the movement for prohibition reform, and other movements for social betterment. Mrs. Robertson belonged to the generation which produced such women as Mrs. Lucy Kidd Key, Miss Maria Gibson and other Southern women, who by their success proved that women are well suited for leadership in education."

There are almost three times as many women employed in educational work on the foreign fields as in social and evangelistic work, and the service rendered by them represents a high degree of technical skill and ability.

### **Women and Missions**

But it is perhaps in their missionary labors that women excel. An exhaustive study of women in their relation to missions at home and abroad would be too voluminous and require too much time allotted for this paper. There is material here for a separate address. Since the woman of Samaria went forth as the first home missionary, women have been vitally interested in the evangelization of the race.

### **Women and Pentecost**

In his book, "The Christ of Every Road," Doctor Stanley Jones reminds us that at Pentecost the "One hundred and twenty were there with the women." "Previous to this," he says, "religion had been identified with a specially sacred sex, and that sex had always been man; but at Pentecost religion was loosed from a specially sacred sex and Pentecost was thrown open to women as well as to men!" There can be no doubt that the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost came largely in answer to the faith and prayers of the women that were present in that remarkable group.

Our last General Conference called upon the whole membership of our Church to celebrate the nineteenth hundred anniversary of Pentecost by a concentrated effort to deepen the spiritual life of the whole Church. It also created a Commission on the Spiritual Life of the Church to assist in the development of this spiritual emphasis in the life of our people. This Commission held its first session in Atlanta, Georgia, June 12th, 1930.

The report of the Commission was adopted as follows: "Perhaps there has never been a period in the history of our Methodism when the spiritual power and influence of our Church has been at a lower ebb than it is today. During the past decade there has been an ever present tendency to place great emphasis upon the material side of life.

In the business world, in our schools and even in our churches, success has been measured in a marked degree in terms of material values."

During the month of August of this year a Spiritual Life Conference under the direction of the General Conference Commission on Spiritual Life was held at Lake Junaluska. It was a great conference, largely attended and during the conference many prayers were offered for a new demonstration of the Holy Spirit. This is the year in which the Christian world is thinking of the nineteenth hundred anniversary of Pentecost. When this Pentecost comes it will come largely in answer to the prayers of the women of the Church just as the first Pentecost came largely in answer to the prayers of the women of the Church, and just as other great spiritual awakenings have come.

Doctor O. E. Goddard, speaking of a leader for this Pentecostal movement asks, "To whom shall we look for leadership?" "Naturally," he says, "to our bishops," but proceeds to eliminate them, because of certain handicaps, by having to maintain the status quo. "A bishop is a servant of an organism that must be maintained. He is far from a free man." Other connectional officers, such as secretaries, editors, and other executives he precludes, since their work has too much routine for the prophet. After eliminating the extreme modernist and the fundamentalist for such leadership, he names two classes from which such leadership might come: the pastorate and the laity. But there is another possible source of leadership which seems to have escaped the learned doctor, the leadership of consecrated womanhood.

When God needed a leader to command the forces of righteousness and lead them against Sisera, He cast about for a man and couldn't find him; but He found a woman. Her name was Deborah, a prophetess, who styles herself a "mother in Israel."

Under the leadership of this brave woman Sisera was put to flight and the enemies of God's people covered the ground like hoar frost.

Other world movements in moral and social reform were led by such women as Florence Nightingale, Frances Willard, and Evangeline Booth. And who knows but some divinely inspired Esther shall come to the kingdom for such a time as this.

### **Women and the Ministry**

For a number of years a movement has been on foot to grant women the right of ordination to the Christian ministry. It is illuminating and helpful to know the attitude and opinions of thinking men and women about a matter so vital to human welfare and development. A concerted effort to find the relative place of women in the Church resulted in a survey undertaken in 1925 by a joint committee of sixty people, representing the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, the Council of Women for Home Missions and the Federation of Woman's Boards of Foreign Missions of North America. Two thousand schedules were returned from more than one hundred denominations.

The report was made up of replies from twenty-two denominations, representing more than twenty-five million of the forty-six million list-

ed communicants of religious bodies, as published in 1927. Seven of these twenty denominations recognize women and men equally as laymen and clergy:

Northern Baptist Convention.  
Christian General Convention.  
Congregational.  
Disciples of Christ.  
Society of Friends.  
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.  
United Brethren in Christ.

In nine, laity rights are more or less open, but women are either not ordained at all, or not on equal terms with men:

Southern Baptist Convention.  
National Baptist Convention, Colored.  
Evangelical Church.  
Evangelical Synod of North America.  
United Lutheran Church.  
Methodist Episcopal Church.  
Methodist Episcopal Church, South.  
African Methodist Episcopal Church.  
Colored Methodist Episcopal Church.

The Friends, the Salvation Army, and the Christian Science Church have from the beginning recognized no difference between women and men—women being eligible to the highest office of the Church.

The Commission appointed by the Woman's Missionary Council to study the place of women in the Church sent out a questionnaire to two hundred and ninety-nine persons, men and women. Included in the group were members of the Woman's Missionary Council, members of the Board of Temperance and Social Service, editors of Conference papers, Conference lay leaders, secretaries of Boards, and selected individuals. Of the two hundred and ninety-nine questionnaires sent, one hundred and eighteen went to men, and one hundred and eighty-one to women.

Some interesting facts are indicated by these replies:

Question 1: "Should woman's place in the services of the Church be limited because of sex?"

One hundred and seven answered "No"; twelve answered "Yes"; some said the very fact of sex limited her.

Question 2: "Should women who feel called to preach be excluded from the work and office of the ministry?"

One hundred and four answered "No"; fifteen answered "Yes".

One man said if any woman were called to preach he hoped she would not hear. Another said he did not believe any were ever called.

Question 3: "Do you believe the work of the Kingdom would be promoted if women were ordained on an equal basis with men?"

Thirty answered "No"; seventy-one answered "Yes."

One said that men might feel less responsibility. Another said it would advance the Kingdom in as far as it would promote the Christian principle of democracy.

Question 4: "Do you believe women would be acceptable as pastors in the Church at home?"

Forty-three answered "No"; seventeen said "Yes, in some places."

One man said, "It would do us egotistic men good to get used to women as pastors." Another replied, "Not now, men are still thinking women should serve without recognition." Thus it will be seen that both women and men differ widely in their views on this contested and much agitated question.

The matter of licensing and ordaining women to the Christian ministry came before the last General Conference which met at Dallas in May of this year. The question before the Conference was, Shall the matter be sent down to the Annual Conferences?

Being a constitutional question it required a two-thirds vote.

The vote resulted: Aye, 164; nay, 128. The ayes not having two-thirds majority, the motion to send down was lost.

The question will probably come up for consideration at the next General Conference. What the outcome will be at that time is a matter of conjecture.

### Separate Organizations

Fifty years ago the Woman's Missionary Society was set apart as an independent organization. The movement met a crying need and has been blessed in its ministry. But the question is being asked today: "What is the future of an independent organization for women in the Church?"

Has it served its purpose? Is its day over?" The reply to the question from twenty-five women leaders and workers is interesting and illuminating. Speaking of the advantages derived from a separate organization the situation may be summed up as follows: The obscure woman has been developed. There has been training for service and for leadership in an unhampered atmosphere, where all people were equally inexperienced.

Initiative has been cultivated. Self confidence, creative ability, purposive, tested leadership, power of accomplishment, sacrificial giving, mental independence, financial expertness, courage of conviction, administrative success, spiritual insight and a spirit of sisterhood throughout the world are some of the elements which have come to maturity.

But in spite of these advantages and the success that has come to the movement in the past the trend of the times seems to be toward merging our common interests and to get away from the idea of separate organizations for men and women. And the Southern Methodist Church is taking a leading part in merging these interests.

### Good Judgment

We are willing to admit that women's intuition is superior to that of men; we affirm however, that they are lacking in judgment. But the assertion is not borne out by the facts. While no man perhaps would consult his wife about small and paltry matters, he would not hesitate

to consult his wife about the more important matters, such as, taking a partner into his business, running for public office, or about marrying off his daughter. Such things are of supreme importance; they lie at the foundation of society; they call for the best thought and judgment. Women decide the larger questions of life correctly and quickly not because they have intuition, not because they are lucky guessers or because they are inspired, but simply and safely because they have good judgment. "Women see at a glance what most men could not see with search lights and telescopes." And their judgment is beginning to be recognized in deciding important issues in the councils of the Church.

### **Executive Ability**

We say again that women have no administrative or executive ability. But history proves that the contrary is true. Women have developed a large social interest and ability to organize and execute, in spite of the fact that through many generations they have had but little opportunity for the development of this ability.

They have carried into their Church activities the same characteristics they developed through their contacts and experiences in the family. They have manifested the same spirit of pioneer in different lines of work that they manifested in their early struggles to provide for their families, in so far as they have had the opportunity.

When I was appointed to make this address I visited the archives of the society to learn what subjects had been treated by the speakers who preceded me, and was surprised to find that only a few of these addresses had been sent for preservation in the archives. The curator informed me that these addresses had never been sent to him, and asked me to call attention to the fact that such negligence be avoided in the future.

While on the Spartanburg District I was asked by the editor of our Conference organ for a write-up of the history of Methodism in Spartanburg for the Southern Christian Advocate, and it was with extreme difficulty that I could find from the records of the churches any worth while information on the subject. I dare say this is true of Methodism in other sections of the state and conference.

Certainly we have no right to boast of our superior wisdom and judgment when we show such gross carelessness in recording and preserving Church history.

### **Women and Finances**

We say again that women have no business sense in handling the finances of the Church, but here again statistics tell a different story. Women have always been good collectors. If we will compare the financial exhibit of the Woman's Missionary Societies in the per cent paid on assessments and quotas with our own record we shall be forced to admit that women are expert financiers, and that they put us to shame when it comes to collecting and handling money for Church purposes. It matters not that they get the money from their husbands, and that they may cajole, humor and use all kinds of strategy to extract

it from an unwilling subject; the point is, they get it, and what the Church wants is results.

### **Women and Salaried Positions**

A study of the place of women in the Church would not be complete without an investigation of the salaried positions open to women in the Church. Woman's work in the Church has ever been characterized as a voluntary service. She has used her leisure time in the service of the Church, and worked without pay; and no estimate can be placed upon the value of this voluntary service. This service applies to her work in local churches, in Conference and District societies, and on various boards, especially the Board of Missions, and of the Woman's Missionary Council. Women have rendered this service not only efficiently, but cheerfully and gladly. The question of salaried service in the Church therefore, is one of deep interest. When the Church has money to spend in its service to what extent does it turn to women for employment? The Commission sought to find an answer to this question, but the findings were far from satisfactory. It is not easy to gather these statistics. The service was voluntary and information not general. Many of the Conferences did not send returns.

The following are some of the types of salaried service in which women are employed: Local Churches, City, District and Conference Boards of Missions; Church Orphanages; Church Educational Institutions Conference Sunday School Boards, District Epworth Leagues, and other miscellaneous agencies.

Perhaps the largest field of salaried service in the Church for women is Missionary service on foreign fields. A careful study was made of the annual reports of the Board of Missions and of the Woman's Missionary Council for 1929 to determine the extent of such employment. The reports reveal that the woman's work of the Board of Missions employs in foreign service as missionaries one hundred and ninety-seven unmarried women. Of this number forty-six are in China; twenty-nine in Korea; twenty-three in Japan; three in Europe; thirty-three in Brazil; thirty-nine in Mexico; fourteen in Cuba, and ten in Congo Belge. The general work of the Board of Missions employs ten contract workers as missionaries. The total number employed by the two sections of the Board of Missions in foreign service is two hundred and seven. Of this number one hundred and thirty are employed in educational work; forty-eight in social evangelistic work; twenty-five in medical work; three in literary work, and one in a business capacity.

Beside the salaried service of women on foreign fields there are one hundred and eighty-one women employed by the Board of Missions and Woman's Work in the Home Mission fields. As woman's ability and service are recognized she will be more and more in demand for salaried positions of the Church while woman's service to the Church is voluntary.

### **The Preacher's Wife**

I cannot close my address without saying a few words about the preacher's wife, in relation to her place and work in the Church. Cer-

tainly no woman however capable has made a larger contribution to the success and ongoing of the kingdom than the wife of the average itinerant Methodist preacher.

Susanna Wesley, the wife of Reverend Samuel Wesley, and mother of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, possessed gifts and talents which fitted her for any station in life. Her endowments of body and mind could easily have secured for her an influential place in vital affairs, and yet she was content to dwell in the cold, bleak, ill-furnished rectory of Lincolnshire, almost unknown, that she might smooth the perplexed path of her husband, share his poverty and enlarge his pastoral supervision.

And there are women in many a parsonage home, equally endowed, content to grace the roof and bless the life of an itinerant Methodist preacher that his work might go unhampered and the kingdom of God advanced by his labors. The preacher's wife is expected to measure up one hundred per cent in a large variety of qualifications. In the Christian Advocate of a year ago Dr. W. P. King had an interesting article entitled "The Horns of a Dilemma"; and while the article was made to apply primarily to the preacher, it is no less applicable to the preacher's wife, for the dilemma of the preacher's wife is not a very comforting one, I shall therefore, take the liberty of transposing some of Dr. King's words and phrases to suit my present purpose, and add to the list.

If the preacher's wife is sociable she is a gad-about; if she does not visit she is not interested in the people; if she does visit she always comes at the wrong time. If she mingles with the poorer members of the congregation she is common; if she goes with the best people she is too society. If she is content with her husband's small salary she is cheap; if she timidly makes suggestions in regard to it she is mercenary. If she does not have considerable household furnishings it is an imposition; if she does, the question is asked, why a sensible woman should want to carry so much furniture to be broken in pieces by constant moving. If she has a small family it is a pity for a large parsonage to be unoccupied; if she has an average family what will become of the parsonage furniture and carpets! If she is pleasant and jovial the old people shake their heads and say, she is too frivolous"; if she is not pleasant and jovial the young people avoid her. If she dresses well she is extravagant; if she does not dress well she is slovenly. If she is a very young woman she is crude and inexperienced; if she is not young she is out of date. If her voice is loud she is harsh; if it is soft it is a pity she cannot be heard when she speaks. If she speaks rather fast the people complain that they do not get all she says; if she is deliberate they wonder why she hesitates. If she expresses decided convictions she is stirring up divisions in the church; if she is tactful she is a compromiser. If she is good looking she is vain; if she is homely it is a pity the preacher did not use better judgment in the selection of a wife.

Then it is such fun to see the new preacher and his family come in. How will the preacher's wife look? How does she dress? Does she do her own work? Will she be satisfied with the parsonage furnishings and the old gas stove? Will she borrow things from her neighbors? How

many children has she? Are the children bad? Will she sing in the choir? (Mrs. Jones, "I hope she will." Mrs. Smith, "I hope she won't.") Will she be president of the Woman's Missionary Society? (Mrs. Brown, "I hope she will." Mrs. Robinson, "I hope she won't.") Does she go to the movies? (Mrs. Black, "She better had." Mrs. Green, "She better hadn't.")— Will she teach a Sunday school class?

I wonder which Missionary circle she will join. Surely the dilemma of a preacher's wife is an uncomfortable one, and yet she is only human, and is entitled to the same consideration as other women.

Some poet, whose name I do not know, must have been thinking about the preacher's wife when he wrote:

"One of the Little Women, she came up to heaven's gate;  
And seeing the throng pressing, she signed that she fain would wait.  
'For I was not great nor noble,' she said, 'I was poor and plain;  
And should I go boldly forward, I know it would be in vain.'

"She sat near the shining portal, and looked at the surging crowd  
Of them that were kings and princes, of them that were rich and proud;  
And sudden she trembled greatly, for one with a brow like flame  
Came to her, and hailed her gladly, and spoke to her her name:

"'Come, enter the jeweled gateway,' he said, 'for the prize is thine;  
The work that in life you rendered was work that was fair and fine;  
So come, while the rest stand waiting, and enter in here and now—  
A crown of life eternal is waiting to press thy brow.'

"Then trembled the Little Woman, and cried, 'It may not be I!  
Here wait they that wrought with greatness, so how can I pass them by?  
I carved me no wondrous statues, I painted no wondrous things,  
I spoke no tremendous sayings that rang in the ears of kings;

"I toiled in my little cottage, I spun and baked and swept;  
I sewed and patched and mended—Oh, lowly the house I kept!  
I sang to my little children, I led them in worthy ways,  
And so I might not grow famous, I knew naught but care-bound days.

"So was it by night and morning, so was it by week and year;  
I worked with my weary fingers through days that were bright or drear;  
And I have grown old and wrinkled and I have grown gray and bent;  
I ask not for chants of glory, now that I have found content.'

"'Arise!' cried the waiting angel, 'Come first of the ones that wait,  
For you are the voices singing, for you do we ope the gates;  
So great as has been thy labor, so great shall be thy reward!  
Then he gave the Little Woman the glory of the Lord.'"