

## Educational Ideals for Women

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To discuss this question intelligently, some consideration is necessary of the fundamental aim of education in general and of Christian education in particular.

In the past, education was intended to fit one for the duties of his particular station either as scholar, worker, knight or lady, or priest. And while the theory of class distinctions is now repudiated, many of us still find ourselves subconsciously thinking of education above the primary school somewhat after this fashion. If we are right, then there seems little reason, except the philanthropic, why missions should maintain any but schools for Christian workers, discontinuing other types as rapidly as the state can assume that responsibility.

A truer view, however, holds that the end of education is not a facility in some one or even in many directions, but the development of character.

In "The Christ of the Indian Road," E. Stanley Jones posits three elemental human needs :

- a. An adequate goal for character;
- b. A free, full life;
- c. God.

To meet these needs, the aim of Christian education must surely be to offer as goal a Christ-like character, developed by means of rich experience, and fed by a growing knowledge of God.

In view of this aim, how important and permanent a function do mission schools for women perform? Granted, the need for colleges, to supply Christian teachers and leaders; granted, also, that public schools have neither the vision nor the power to meet any of these great human needs: may not other more flexible, less costly means than mission schools accomplish the desired ends? The answer must be sought in several directions.

At first, high schools have not been so expensive as is generally supposed, even when considered merely as evangelizing agencies. Including a proportionate share both of the yearly appropriation and of first cost of land and buildings, the maximum annual cost per student to the mission is not more than yen eighty-five. This comes to less than seventy sen per hour of religious instruction (making no account of other class-

work), as against more than two yen recently estimated as the mission cost per person for each attendance at an aided church.

Secondly, what else can function so well as girls' high schools for either the evangelization or the Christianization of the women of Japan?

Certainly colleges cannot. For the two favourable ages for Christian decisions (13 and 17) both fall below college age.

Neither, on the testimony of Christian pastors, can ordinary Bible class and preaching services. Home and school control over the average girl are still too rigid to allow her time or opportunity to attend these at all regularly, even when she so desires. Girls' clubs influence small groups, for a limited time. But their opportunities how meagre, compared with those in a four or five year school for 300 or more girls!

Hostels, at first thought, seem the ideal solution. Their management, however, becomes exceedingly difficult, when divorced from school control. Again, suitable matrons are much more difficult to find than competent teachers. And furthermore, a girl's respect for even the highest type of matron is much less than that for a teacher.

Altogether, as a means for answering the religious needs of the teen age girls, there seems to be no substitute for the Christian school.

The ideals to be pursued there may now be discussed. Fourteen representative school women, out of twenty-three questioned, have given their opinions in regard to certain phases of the problem, as will be indicated in the proper places.

The ideal teacher must combine professional ability and real Christian character. Without the former, the latter will carry little weight either with students or the public, and without the latter, the school cannot but fail of its unique purpose. In spite of very practical difficulties, it seems increasingly clear that it would be better to leave a subject untaught temporarily rather than accept a teacher who lacks either qualification. The problem is:

1. To increase the power of our present staffs, both professionally and religiously;
2. To bring in well-equipped teachers from other schools or other employments;
3. To train teachers for the future.

Merely to state the problem will suggest methods suited to the individual school. Among others should be recalled the valuable suggestions of Dr. D. B. Schneder in his article on "The

Mission and Scope of Christian Education” (The Christian Movement, 1923).

While the exchange of teachers between Christian schools would be less frequently possible for women than for men, the writer knows of two such cases recently that have already justified themselves. The recommendation that an educational expert be employed to visit all Christian schools for friendly inspection and practical advise would, if adopted, give a tremendous impetus to Christian education. An extension of the pension system (and the linking up of all such systems in a central bureau) might not effect women teachers so much as would salary increases, pleasant working conditions,--such as a separate restroom,--and more actual responsibility. Personally, I do not advocate an effort to maintain salaries at precisely the public school level. Rather, we must seek by every means to arouse a spirit of sacrificial living among those planning to be Christian educators, comparable to that asked of theological students.

Faculties of schools for women should, I believe, consist predominantly of women, especially up through the high-school years. Wherever possible, the director of athletics should be a woman. If the principal is a man, there should be a woman dean.

For a certain and adequate supply of such teachers in the future, therefore, it is important to provide as speedily as possible college courses in History and Geography, Mathematics, and Science including Domestic Science. There is great need also for a music course equivalent, at least in voice, piano, and organ, to that given at Ueno, and for a similar school of physical training.

These requirements lead up to the need of a Christian University, at which women may be accepted and trained as teachers for colleges, principals of high schools, and leaders in all departments of life.

For an adequate supply of Christian kindergarten and primary-school teachers, training schools need to be enlarged and normal courses established.

So much for ordinary branches.

For Bible teaching it is most important that at least one member of the faculty shall have had special training in Bible and Religious Education, in addition to a good cultural course. It is well for her to have a little other teaching, too, so that her contacts with students may be not solely through the Bible class. Moreover it is better, in my judgment, that she should not teach all of the Bible courses, but that other qualified teachers should

share this work. The advantages are obvious, the stimulus of different personalities and methods, the deeper interest of all the teachers in this central function of the school.

The average student is, on the whole, to be preferred to her brilliant sister, who is too likely to prove unstable in character. Provision for the backward child is such a special problem as to lie beyond present missionary resources. Some plan is needed by which students unable to pay their way may earn a small part of their expenses. I say "small" because of the grave danger to health if any considerable time or effort is thus used. Any grant made should be in the form of a loan, to be returned within three years after graduation, unless the student is to take "higher" training, when the time could be properly extended.

The questionnaire revealed a general belief that the ideal Christian education for women includes not only the university, but the kindergarten and primary schools as well. The Interchurch Movement survey placed before us the same ideal, for at least certain communities. How far it is practicable may be a question. Certainly kindergartens can and ought to be multiplied indefinitely. Those earliest impressions are deepest.

Ideally, a large proportion of Christian families should send their daughters to Christian schools. In other lands it is the experience that Christian leaders come chiefly from Christian homes, by way of the Christian school. Should not the Christian schools, therefore, join in some kind of propaganda to secure more of the students? Let us challenge the often thoughtless assumption that "of course the public schools are preferable, for those who can pass their examinations."

There remains the questions of the size and the curriculum of the ideal school.

While recognizing that a large school, of from 700 to 1000 or more students, is necessary for ease of financing,\* yet the answers received to the questionnaire were unanimously in favour(favor) of a small school, of from 200 to 500. For best results as a Christian institution the average figure was 310. For formal education the range was the same but the average 370. As, in 1925, the actual average enrollment of forty mission high schools was 317, the limit indicated above has already been reached. However, the writer is inclined to think that, given the right kind of faculty, a limit of four hundred is not excessive. Nevertheless, in so far as a faculty is Christian chiefly in name or only in part, the number of students will need to be correspondingly limited. In any case, as the average enrollment

of mission high schools increased by 35 percent between 1923 and 1925, any appreciable increase in the number of mission high school students must come, ideally, by the establishment of new schools, perhaps on the Pomona University plan.

It has already been urged that high grade courses in music and physical training are greatly needed, and that the Christian colleges should give normal courses in a variety of subjects. Until they are able to do this, the high schools will, as a whole, inevitably suffer by comparison with public schools in everything but English and music, or will be obliged to continue part Christian and part pagan. This lack in the college curriculum is, I believe, the weakest point in our present mission education for women.

The next weakest point is the immature age at which, for the past ten years, we have been graduating high-school students. When the number of years of compulsory education was increased from four to six, the grade of all high schools was lowered. Previously they had carried four years beyond a four-year *higher primary* course,--or eight years altogether,--while since they have had only four or five years beyond the ordinary six-year primary course. Moreover, many mission schools then maintained two preparatory years for country girls, and gave six years of English. This a considerable number of *honkwa* students stayed on to complete. Thus practically all mission school graduates of that day were a year or two older than nowadays, while many were three or four years older. The recent graduate has been going out from under Christian influence before her Christian faith has developed or her Christian character matured.

The recent addition of two or three years of graduate or Junior College work to fourteen of the forty-eight Christian high schools has come about, therefore, because of pressure both from within and without the schools, to keep in training for a longer period those students who will not or cannot undertake Senior College work. The shorter the course, the fewer students should be admitted from other schools. At present not all high schools need to expand in this way. But certainly within ten of fifteen years many more must do so, if we are to keep pace with opportunity.

The curriculum and extra-curricular activities of the Christian school should minister to a full, free life. To this end, a healthy body is of prime importance. But just here the modern school-girl suffers a serious handicap. Already weakened by intensive preparation for two or three entrance examinations, she

inherits the old Japanese idea that “late to bed and early to rise” is the passport to health, character, and wisdom, with the result that the national curse of tuberculosis falls with heavy incidence upon her.

Teachers may warn, but unless definite steps are taken, little will be accomplished; for parents and even physicians seem as unenlightened as the girls themselves. If the teachers of Domestic Science and of Gymnastics are up to date, or can be converted, something can be done by way of instruction in their classes. Occasional special health talks can be given. Knowledge alone is not sufficient, however. A recent investigation revealed the fact that Senior medical students take no more intelligent care of their health than do Freshmen. Try a milk clinic for the underweight; a balanced ration luncheon offered at cost price; health score cards, indicating number of hours of sleep, fresh air in sleeping room, and such other health habits as need to be emphasized. Encourage out-of-door sports, of course, for those able to profit by them.

Then, somehow or other, the over-burdened curriculum must be lightened. Compare the 20 to 23 class periods in an American school with the 30 to 35 here. It is true that from three to five hours of this excess comes from the addition of Bible to the regular course. But this still leaves one or two additional periods daily. No periods for supervised study makes late night study seem imperative. No periods for relaxation, nor opportunity for making up work lost by illness, further adds to the strain.

With such a schedule it is impossible to adopt any form of individualized study or even to use the subject rather than the year as basis of promotion.

A lightened schedule is also important for the development of the girl's social nature. The lack of time and opportunity to play together and work together at common tasks is doubtless one big reason for the failure of Japanese women to develop initiative and a spirit of co-operation. This lack tremendously limits the power and progress of the Christian church. Where can this spirit be learned, if not in the Christian school? But to accomplish this purpose there must be free time, somehow, in addition to set class periods. In other words, some freedom from the government schedule must be found, in the interests of health, of real intelligence, and of character building.

Two other important tasks: to cultivate a taste for good reading by means of a lending library; and to present high ideals of marriage and of the social relations between men and women.

With a healthy body, an alert mind, and a developing personality, the school-girl may find during her Bible study that “adequate goal for character” presented by the one peerless Exemplar. And she does.

Her next step is “to know God.”

Of importance here is the teaching of reverence, both by precept and example, during Bible study and prayer, in the use of hymns, and in the handling of the Book. The devotional services should all lead towards this knowledge. But real acquaintance begins only when the heart had yielded its allegiance to its Master.

The earlier in her course the girl is ready for this momentous decision, the longer and better training she may have in Christian ideals, in character, and in leadership. She studies her Bible with a new interest and applies its teachings with a new sense of responsibility, after she has become a Christian. Therefore, plan and pray for early decisions! Experience indicates that these may be expected during the second and third years, as a result of faithful Bible teaching, faithful praying; a brief series of meetings at least once a year, where decisions are called for; and private interviews, carried on wisely, tenderly, by women teachers, under the immediate control and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Such will avoid both over-persuasion and lack of persuasiveness. For this high service at least one teacher—missionary or Japanese—must be free from a heavy schedule, to meet enquirers with a leisurely heart.

While “character is caught not taught,” yet practice is invaluable. Then devise and use every means possible for expressing and developing Christ-like character. Let responsibilities of various sorts be freely undertaken: a measure of self-government in school and dormitory; teaching Sunday-school; raising flowers for gifts to the sick; earning money for religious and philanthropic objects; singing in chapels and hospitals; making garments for the needy, and so on.

In the dormitory, small units are ideal, wherever proper matrons can be found. If all students, at least of the first year and senior classes, could be required to be in residence, I believe our finished product would be a better one.

Naturally, the mission school has close ties with the parents of the present student body, and with former students. These

ties may be strengthened both by visits of teachers and religious-work director in the homes, and by special invitations to parents to visit the school, to see the actual work being done. General invitations spell failure. Invite alumnae[sic] living in the city, by classes, for afternoon tea; and send as many cards and letters as possible to those at a distance. Visits during the summer vacation at one or more towns where graduates are living will be well worth while. How easy to say, and how hard to do, none realizes with more sense of failure than the writer!

During school days church membership should, I believe, preferably be in the local rather than the home church, and attendance there, too, in most cases, rather than in a school church. Teach the duty and privilege of attendance, of contributions, and where desired, of help in the Sunday school or Christian Association.

The mission school should welcome and perhaps seek for opportunities to serve its own community. One already has a "Better Babies" clinic. Could not other schools than kindergartens plan for mothers' meetings? It may be well to consider possible community uses for the school gymnasium, playground, and assembly room, at times and in ways that would not interfere with proper school activities. Perhaps more schools might hold night classes,—with a separate faculty and dean. Conference among mission teachers might bring out many suggestions along this line.

Finally, the school should seek to inculcate in its students a sense of responsibility for sharing with their own homes and communities, and all neglected areas, social or geographical, the life and light which they have received.

Not that all, even of college women, can be outstanding leaders. "Are all apostles? ... Do all speak with tongues?"—What, then, may be expected from mission school graduates?

From the few, of exceptional personality and training, leadership. From those called of God thereto, evangelists and teachers.

And from the average high-school girl, returning to the average home? That she carry with her as goal, a Christ-like character; as experience, a freely expanding life; and as panoply, food, and atmosphere, a knowledge of the living God. Then will she be as salt and light to her community; and in the church, as one of those "helps" no less divinely appointed than apostles or governors.

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\* A brief calculation will show that for a school of 300, fees being reckoned at Yen 55 a year, an appropriation of Yen 800 to 1000 is required, if Japanese salaries are maintained at an average of Yen 100 a month, the public-school average being Yen 115.