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## “A Life Lived and Not a Message Delivered”: Challenge and Change in Interwar Missions

In 1934 an article called “Ideals of the Missionary Enterprise” appeared in the *Indian Social Reformer*, a nationalist weekly whose editor provided considerable space for exponents of Christian missions even as he subjected them to his critical gaze. The text of a sermon preached at Cambridge by former missionary Paul Gibson, the article dealt with the challenges that had confronted the enterprise since the First World War. The war, Gibson wrote, had exposed to the rest of the world the lack of real Christianity in the so-called Christian nations. The Jerusalem Conference of the International Missionary Council a decade later had rightly acknowledged “that the imminent danger lay not in non-Christian religions but in the rapid spread of secularism.” With nationalism also on the rise, missionaries could no longer afford to arrive from the West with a complacent sense of superiority. Instead, they must demonstrate a willingness to be co-workers with increasingly vigorous indigenous churches. As for the non-Christian religions, now that the sophistication of their texts was known, their adherents could no longer be regarded as benighted victims, dependent for salvation on missionary preaching. The central challenge of missionary work had passed “from enunciation of doctrine to the compelling power of the Christian life.” Yes, Christ offered something unique and “universally needed” in the personal link He provided between God and man. Nonetheless, what was required of the modern missionary was a “life lived and not a message delivered.”<sup>1</sup>

As anyone familiar with this period in the history of the mainstream Protestant missionary movement can attest, observations such as those made by Gibson were the stock in trade of missions-minded men and women of a moderate to liberal bent at the “home base” and in many “foreign fields.” (Even these once-routine geographic signifiers were now under scrutiny.) The one point raised by Gibson that was perhaps not as routinely made was that governments were now taking up the kinds of educational, medical, and agricultural work that missions had pioneered. Although he did not

elaborate, the implication was that missions would need to improve their performance in these areas in order to avoid redundancy.

Like Gibson's article, this chapter deals with changes taking place in the world of missions in the period after the First World War. Inevitably subjective and necessarily selective, it focuses on developments that had broad significance for the careers of Oliver, Murray, and Wrong, and makes frequent use of representative individuals and illustrative anecdotes. Although I have taken challenge and change as the broad theme for this chapter, I have tried not to lose sight of the fact that this was very much a transitional era, both within and beyond the world of missions. Alongside new institutions and the "ideals" and threats that Gibson identified, there were continuities with an earlier time, unevennesses in the shifts taking place, even in individual lives, and sometimes reversions to old norms and attitudes. For the moderates and liberals of the mainstream Protestant missionary movement with which this chapter is concerned, the old certainties were undeniably gone, and there was a new sense of a need for circumspection and humility in living out a missionary calling. But the new approach did not automatically foster healthier relationships with the missionaries' Other. An exemplary "life lived" could breed its own kind of arrogance; zeal in applying Christianity through social reforms and the application of Western techniques and technologies could, in practice, be even more culturally invasive than a narrowly focused zeal for conversions; and it always proved easier to "talk the talk" of devolution than to put it into effect.

These risks and conundrums confronted missionaries of both sexes. Many professional women in the movement experienced them while also moving away from the "women's work for women" paradigm that had defined the role expectations – if not always the practices – of their predecessors.<sup>2</sup> Neither Gibson nor other contemporary commentators on the interwar mission enterprise were attentive to that particular change. Nonetheless, it had a significance that reached well beyond the women most directly concerned.

### **Ecumenical Superstructures**

Some major structural features of the interwar foreign missionary movement had begun taking shape prior to the First World War. The establishment of a permanent international and ecumenical organization to facilitate the achievement of shared mission goals was perhaps the most important such development. American dominance in the movement, in terms of broad approach and values as well as volume of personnel and financing, was increasingly evident (and here, too, there were pre-war roots).<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, the international missions bureaucracy would have its base and key actors in Britain. The historic international missionary conference at Edinburgh in 1910 was chaired by the dynamic American layman John R. Mott, but another layman, Joseph H. Oldham (who was India-born of Scottish

parents), was responsible for conference preparations, and it was he who became editor of the *International Review of Missions (IRM)*, established in 1912, and salaried secretary of the Continuation Committee that worked after Edinburgh to establish a permanent organization. The outcome of the latter effort, delayed by the First World War, was the establishment of the International Missionary Council (IMC). The stages in its creation reflected the attempt to have British, continental, and North American involvement in organizing international mission structures. The groundwork meeting was held in Crans, Switzerland, in 1920. The official founding took place at Lake Mohonk, New York, a year later, and “head office” was Edinburgh House, London, where the Conference of British Missionary Societies (CBMS) also had its headquarters. John Mott became the IMC’s first chairman, and another American, A.L. Warnshuis, was Oldham’s associate secretary, based in New York from 1924. Still, Oldham remained the key figure in IMC planning and networking, even for some years after he had persuaded the peripatetic Mott to make the chairmanship his main commitment and after William Paton (a fellow Scot) had joined him at Edinburgh House in 1927 as associate secretary.<sup>4</sup>

IMC “members” were national or regional organizations of mission boards or churches rather than individual institutions, the CBMS and the Foreign Missions Conference of North America (FMCNA) being the largest of these. Canada’s leading Protestant denominations were members of the FMCNA. The United Church of Canada, the home church after 1925 of Choné Oliver and Florence Murray, and the chief Canadian supporter of Margaret Wrong’s work, was affiliated with the FMCNA through its Board of Foreign Missions and its Woman’s Missionary Society. Created as a result of the union of Methodist, Congregationalist, and most Presbyterian churches, the new United Church – now the largest Protestant denomination in the country – was a vibrant expression of practical ecumenism and as such a good fit within the IMC family of member organizations.<sup>5</sup>

The IMC did not interfere with the doctrines and faith practices of the denominations in its member organizations or with their particular missionary policies. But its ecumenism and its focus on institutional and social service work nonetheless made it an unacceptable umbrella body for some conservatives and fundamentalists. Large numbers of fundamentalists, strongest in the US, withdrew from mainline denominations in the 1920s (more would leave in the 1930s) and went on to establish their own mission organizations. The British and Canadian member-organizations, having experienced less dramatic ruptures from modernist-fundamentalist controversies, perhaps had a greater diversity of theological views to bring to their participation in the IMC, but overall the dominant tone was moderate.<sup>6</sup>

The IMC functioned as a coordinating and central planning body and, in theory at least, only in an advisory capacity, pursuing its goals through the

extensive travels of its senior officers and the routine work of their permanent staff, the activities of ad hoc and permanent committees, and periodic administrative and international conferences. Margaret Wrong would come to be part of the IMC fold in 1929 as secretary of one of its specialized committees. What looms largest in contemporary and later accounts of the IMC, though, is not its routine work or specialized committees but rather its international missionary conferences. In these accounts, the words "Jerusalem" and "Tambaram" are immediately understood to refer to the conferences and to have momentous significance. The first, held in 1928, and, to an even greater degree, the second, held in 1938 at Tambaram, near Madras, brought together delegates from the "older" and "younger" churches. Following a pattern begun in preparation for the Edinburgh conference, these men – and some women – were expected to have done much advance preparation by reading position papers and printed agendas that were previously circulated and to return to their own region as publicists and promoters of what they had seen and learned.<sup>7</sup> As will be seen later in this chapter, the conferences could be dramatically effective as sources of inspiration and empowerment. The first IMC conference held after the Second World War, at Whitby, Ontario, in 1947, is presented as a smaller and less noteworthy event in the history of the organization, its significance undoubtedly overshadowed by the formal establishment a year later of a long-sought goal of many IMC leaders: the World Council of Churches.<sup>8</sup>

Between 1921 and 1948, member organizations of the IMC in the non-Western world increased from just four, out of a total of seventeen, to eighteen out of thirty.<sup>9</sup> Mott and Oldham had made it an early priority to establish such organizations and to encourage a strong indigenous presence in them rather than a mere token representation of nationals in mission-dominated bodies. The national Christian councils established in the early 1920s in China, Japan, and India were notably successful in this respect. For instance, the constitution of the National Christian Council of India, Burma, and Ceylon (the NCC), which replaced the National Missionary Council in 1923, required the council to have a governing body that was at least 50 percent Indian. Its structure and function replicated that of the IMC, with representatives drawn from provincial and regional councils, a periodical to further its goals, salaried executive secretaries, and others employed in specialized roles, the number of whom inevitably grew. Choné Oliver was responsible for the NCC's medical committee in her capacity as secretary of the Christian Medical Association of India, and, for much of the period, for its social hygiene work as well. National or regional Christian councils were slower to be established in sub-Saharan Africa, and indigenous Christians had more limited roles. The 1920s saw the establishment of a national Christian council in Korea, but its successful functioning hinged uneasily on the participation of Presbyterians, the leading Christian denomination, and in

1938 it was dissolved by Japanese colonial authorities, to be reborn only after the Second World War.<sup>10</sup>

Unlike Oliver and Wrong, Florence Murray had no direct link to these ecumenical structures until after the Second World War. Nonetheless, her work world was also affected by them, even if only indirectly. Ecumenical initiatives, especially in higher education and medical work, had, of course, preceded the establishment of the IMC and the national mission organizations and Christian councils that came under its umbrella. Severance Union Medical College and Hospital in Seoul, where Murray worked from the late 1940s, was a good example. But the new ecumenical organizations could assist – and occasionally disrupt – even pioneer institutions through their capacity to facilitate coordination and rationalization and to discourage duplication, all in the interest of “modernizing” and “efficiency.” For all that its role on paper was that of an advisory body, the IMC, especially under the leadership of men like Mott, Oldham, and Paton, had access to the corridors of political power, and this, as well as its ability to influence the spending priorities of mission boards, could significantly affect the circumstances of missionaries’ work.

### **Challenges and Responses**

As Brian Stanley has observed, “Missions in the twentieth century ... had to relate, both to the mature forces of Western imperialism which enveloped them, and to the emergent forces of indigenous nationalism which they helped to bring to birth.”<sup>11</sup> Necessarily, they also had to relate to changes in Western society. This section deals with the impact on missions of interacting challenges from both worlds, beginning with the most worrisome phenomenon in the West.

### **Secularism: The Home-Grown Enemy**

The IMC officials who organized the Jerusalem conference identified secularism and materialism rather than non-Christian religions as the greatest foe of Christianity. A preparatory paper written by an American Quaker, Rufus M. Jones, at the request of Mott and Oldham, urged delegates to go to Jerusalem

not as members of a Christian nation to convert other nations which are not Christian, but as Christians within a nation far too largely non-Christian, who face within their own borders the competition of a rival movement as powerful, as dangerous, as insidious as any of the great historic religions. We meet our fellow Christians in these other countries, therefore, on terms of equality, as fellow workers engaged in a common task. More than this, we go as those who find in the other religions which secularism attacks, as it attacks Christianity, witnesses of man’s need of God and allies in our quest of perfection.<sup>12</sup>

The new challenges in the West were evident on a number of levels. The most directly felt impact was in the decline in the prestige of missions and their power to attract new personnel. Numbers generally held firm in most mainstream sending societies in Britain and North America until the late 1920s (in fact, they increased in the first decade after the war), but significant groups like university students were beginning to criticize past missionary methods and to show less interest in volunteering.<sup>13</sup> Veteran Canadian evangelist Louise McCully, home on furlough in 1923, typified a certain kind of reaction among older missionaries when she lamented "the declension in spiritual things in our own land" and longed to return to Korea, where "the atmosphere is so much purer in every way."<sup>14</sup> To people like the planners of the Jerusalem conference, a skipped Sunday service or a cigarette-smoking woman (the kinds of "declension[s]" that troubled McCully) were less of a concern than the fact that in the most advanced societies the natural and social sciences were distancing themselves from religion. Far from allowing the transcendent assumptions and social policy values of elite Protestant Christianity to frame its questions and shape its agenda as it had done in its early days, social science in 1920s America was, in the words of R. Laurence Moore, "moving away from transcendent references into the realm of the rational and secular" and coming to regard religion "as a cultural artifact to be placed for purposes of objective study alongside all the other cultural artifacts that determined or circumscribed human conduct in any time and place."<sup>15</sup> Faced with this new context, mission reformers like Oldham did not react by attacking the sciences, for they were themselves intellectuals who recognized the power of scientific thought to reduce physical suffering and improve many facets of everyday life. But neither were they prepared to accept the view that a belief in transcendence, however labelled, could be abandoned without loss to human relationships and individual lives.<sup>16</sup>

It was, then, hardly surprising that, far from continuing to regard the great religions as their main enemy, many moderates and liberals in the missionary movement began to emphasize their value in the shared project of resisting a secular explanation of life. Especially in Hinduism's greatest living guru, M.K. Gandhi, they recognized a religious leader whom they, too, could revere. Certainly, conservatives and moderates never ceased to hope that Gandhi would "graduate" from recognizing Jesus as a great prophet to accepting him as God incarnate, and they grumbled privately (and sometimes publicly) when he challenged missionaries' goals and their methods of seeking converts. But given the common enemy they shared with him, their praise was genuine as well as (in India at least) pragmatic.<sup>17</sup>

Enthusiasm for Gandhi extended to the West and probably in most cases – and undoubtedly in Protestant Canada – owed more to his spirituality than his nationalist views.<sup>18</sup> In its own way, this enthusiasm provided

evidence that secularism had not yet won the day. There was, of course, much more to show that Protestant Christianity's reaction to postwar skepticism and materialist explanations of life extended beyond support for religious conservatism. On both sides of the Atlantic, the Oxford Group movement appealed to middle-class people seeking a religious experience that was at once based on "sharing" (small groups were the favoured venue) and personally enriching, while neo-orthodox theology attracted those who wanted an intellectually rigorous, faith-based theology rather than a social-gospel-type understanding of the problem of evil and the Kingdom of God.<sup>19</sup> The social-gospel approach remained evident at the institutional level in Canada, perhaps most notably in the efforts of the United Church to make the social sciences vehicles for vivifying social Christianity rather than substitutes for it.<sup>20</sup>

In Britain, profoundly disturbed by the extent to which a Christian outlook was disappearing from his country's institutions and popular consciousness, Oldham turned his primary attention in the 1930s from missions and race issues in Africa to a many-faceted effort to promote a Christian understanding in his own society of such problems as totalitarianism. For many years he was joined in one facet of this struggle by a remarkable group of intellectuals collectively called "the Moot," its membership including such diverse figures as modernist literary icon T.S. Eliot and social scientist Karl Mannheim, a German Jewish refugee. The Moot's existence was testimony to the desire of individuals, vastly different in other respects, to reflect seriously on ethical and spiritual issues in a society apparently indifferent to them.<sup>21</sup> Few of Oldham's colleagues in the upper echelons of missions bureaucracy chose, like him, to devote their mature years to a mission to their own society, however necessary they believed it to be. Many, however, did share the concern he had expressed to Mott in 1924 that missions must effectively reinvent themselves if they were to be "adequate to the demands of the hour."<sup>22</sup>

### **Social Activism on Mission Ground**

Mainstream Protestant missionaries in Asia and Africa encountered the Oxford Group movement, Barthianism, and other new religious tendencies in the course of their reading and when they were home on furlough. As Choné Oliver's diaries make clear, such encounters could have a significant impact on their private faith lives.<sup>23</sup> In their working lives, however, it was characteristically in terms of increased institutional and social service activity that they responded to "the demands of the hour." For fundamentalists, this was proof positive of the triumph of theological liberalism and the retreat from conventional evangelism. Some fundamentalists who had visited overseas missions insisted that liberal missionaries should frankly acknowledge what they were doing there: steeped in social gospel and

modernist teachings, they had given themselves over to "physical and social agencies, to the detriment of simple gospel preaching," though they dared not admit that fact to their constituencies at home for fear of losing financial support.<sup>24</sup> Missionaries who favoured an activist approach did not, of course, understand or present their work as a retreat from their historic faith but rather as an attempt to make Christianity relevant and attractive through practical demonstrations of Christian values.

It has been commonplace for historians as well as contemporary critics to link mainstream Protestants' social activism in their missions to the influence of the social gospel.<sup>25</sup> Yet it is important to remind ourselves that educational and medical work had been an important part of Anglo-Saxon missions in the nineteenth century, particularly where women and unordained men were participants, and that other factors in addition to the spirit of the social gospel were also at play in the interwar era. What was new was not social activism in itself but rather its role and rationale, its volume and quality. With regard to all of these factors but perhaps especially the issue of quality, it is essential to take the values and assumptions associated with professionalism into consideration. Increasingly, men and women trained in Britain and North America in education, medicine, agriculture, social work, and other fields were unwilling to have their expertise used amateurishly or as bait in proselytization when they took it abroad. They wanted opportunities and facilities to do solid professional work.

The readiest examples come from the field of medicine. In the nineteenth century, medical missionaries had understood that they were expected to use their skills to "open doors for the gospel." Many went abroad with incomplete training and without any clinical experience in order to get on with this task in settings where, it was assumed, "good enough" would be good enough for people unfamiliar with anything better. When personal inclination or the immediate priorities of the mission required it, medical missionaries sometimes devoted themselves wholly or mainly to evangelism or other work for extended periods of time. Thus, in Central India, Choné Oliver was temporarily put in charge of an orphanage in 1909 when she returned from furlough, an experience that still produced painful memories decades later.<sup>26</sup> The author of *The Way of a Doctor*, published in the last half of the 1920s, offered an enthusiastic picture of the new era in missionary medicine:

Medical Missionaries are not only urged to prepare themselves in the most thorough manner on the medical side, but in most instances Societies insist upon a high professional standard ... And intending Medical Missionaries are counselled to become familiar with the latest advances in Medical Science. The enthusiasm of the young Missionary Doctor is not damped but encouraged, and his plea for the best Hospital provision that can be given to him is viewed sympathetically.



Medical missionaries' journals and conferences, he wrote, also signalled their new desire to be active participants in the larger world of medical science.<sup>27</sup>

That this new approach was still far from being the norm was shown when *Re-Thinking Missions* was published in 1932, following a critical examination of mission fields in Asia by a team of American laymen. The book's depiction of veteran missionary doctors as jacks of all medical trades, used to running one-man shows, out of touch with new knowledge and standards and thus unacceptable colleagues for the new breed of professionals, gave great offence, but it was not declared to be wholly inaccurate. Acknowledging that the professional standards of "the medical pioneer in the jungle" could not be the same as those of the university professor of medicine, *Re-Thinking Missions* nonetheless insisted that "the work of the medical missionary in the jungle should be the best available in that jungle."<sup>28</sup> Georgina Gollock, associate editor of the *IRM*, made a similar point about professional qualifications in a paper written for the founding meeting of the IMC in 1921 and subsequently published in journal and pamphlet form. Whether preparing for ministry, educational work, or medicine, she maintained, missionary candidates should have the same standard of training as those preparing to work in their own country.<sup>29</sup>

As concerns about the quality and efficiency of missions' institutional work increased, it seemed to many mission modernizers, both on the ground and in the West, that union institutions supported by various denominations and, where feasible, modification of the earlier pattern of gender segregation, especially in higher education and medical work, offered appropriate routes to achieving these goals. Consolidation of effort in the fields, it was argued, would mean fewer but better institutions. Of course, for those whose institutional ox was to be gored, this was not an attractive proposition.

Pressure for the development and improvement of mission institutions for advanced education did not come only, or perhaps even mainly, from Westerners themselves. Modernizing young men with personal and/or nationalist ambitions looked to such institutions to further their goals. But, even if they were Christians, they were often quite ready to turn to state-run or other educational institutions if these promised better training and greater opportunities for advance. In early twentieth-century China, as historian Lian Xi has explained, competition from government colleges was an added incentive to move towards union education work in missions.<sup>30</sup> In the case of colonial Korea, state facilities for advanced education provided far too few places to meet the demand from upwardly mobile Koreans. Nevertheless, Korean students were anything but docile when it came to putting pressure on missions to improve the quality of their educational offerings.<sup>31</sup> In India, missions recognized that they were under particular pressure to provide high-quality educational, medical, and social services in

the interwar era in order to demonstrate that they were worthy of having an ongoing place in a future, independent India.

Such pressures also contributed to the tendency in mainstream missions to sever the link between social services and proselytization. Conservative critics of this tendency associated it with modernist teaching and the new cultural milieu in the West. The missionary products of this milieu, they charged, were quite prepared to confine their efforts to good works, to live in peace with the non-Christian religions, and even to promote "syncretism." Yet as the title of Lian Xi's monograph, *The Conversion of Missionaries: Liberalism in American Protestant Missions in China, 1907-1932*, suggests for the China context, increased social activism and openness to other faiths were also responses to pressures on the ground. The old-style confrontational approach in preaching, and the linking of medical treatment and schooling to compulsory sermons and Bible lessons, was increasingly less likely to be tolerated by educated Asians as nationalism brought resentment and resistance into the open. What Gandhi called "the double purpose" in the social service work of missions, that is, helping the vulnerable with a view to weaning them from their native faith, was an aspect of missionary practice of which he was particularly critical.<sup>32</sup> In 1933 an unidentified but presumably Christian writer in the *Indian Social Reformer* gave a critical definition of proselytization in order to denounce it and to counter the editor's claim that Christian missions "are primarily proselytizing agencies." Proselytization, he wrote, was the practice of trying to win converts "by deprecating the faith of others, by any kind of pressure, or any kind of bribery, however subtle; anything, in a word, that does violence to the personality of others." It was the "ideal" of Christian missions, he added, to avoid any of these tactics, "though individuals may occasionally fail in achieving the ideal."<sup>33</sup>

The writer's claim that hearing the Christian message was entirely voluntary in normal circumstances was certainly wide of the mark when it came to mission schooling in India. Under the terms of imperial legislation dating from the mid-nineteenth century, privately operated schools had been entitled to receive government grants-in-aid without being subject to interference with their religious teaching. Mission schools had proliferated under that legislation, but in the interwar era their compulsory classes in Christianity became a subject of increasing controversy and much missionary soul-searching. Even before the Government of India Act of 1919 (the so-called Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms) made education a "transferred subject" and thus a matter for Indian-controlled provincial legislatures, there was much talk about the likely introduction of a "conscience clause" that would allow students to opt out of a religion class whose teachings conflicted with their own faith. Only one province introduced such a clause in the immediate wake of the Government of India Act, but many

missionaries saw it as only a matter of time before more provincial governments would legislate against compulsory religious teaching in grant-aided schools, and some believed that mission educators should take the initiative and end compulsion voluntarily. Especially as nationalism increased, non-Christian young men in the upper ranks of the mission educational system expressed resentment about compulsory religious education.<sup>34</sup>

### **“Native” Evangelists and “Young Churches”**

Full-time evangelism among non-Christians as well as much basic education was, in any case, increasingly in the hands of indigenous Christians. Like the work of the national Christian councils, much of the routine work of mature missions was with, and for, established Christian communities, a matter of supervisory roles and institutional or social service activities. Ordained Western missionaries and women evangelists who went out from their stations to the urban or rural “unreached” typically did so as a break from their routine work. Thus, when Lesslie Newbigin (a future architect of the merger of the IMC and the World Council of Churches) arrived in Tamil Nadu in the late 1930s with his Cambridge theological training, and when Hilda Johnson returned to the Central India mission from furlough in 1945 as one of the first women ordained by the United Church of Canada, neither was deployed in full-time work among non-Christians, and not only because of language barriers.<sup>35</sup> In India, as in East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, white missionaries, whether ordained or unordained, generally worked in supervisory or teaching or other professional roles. In the case of Africa, historians Lammin Sanneh, Richard Gray, and Adrian Hastings have all argued that virtually from the outset of missionary activity, African Christians themselves played the leading role in presenting the gospel and “translating” it into the cultural idioms as well as the vernaculars of its new audiences.<sup>36</sup> As “missionary work” came increasingly to include such varied matters as organizing YMCAs and YWCAs, and teaching Western agricultural techniques and social hygiene, as well as the kinds of tasks already mentioned, there was correspondingly less opportunity for old-style proselytization even if the inclination lingered.<sup>37</sup> Perhaps the most dramatic instance of the torch being passed was in Japan in the early 1930s, where Kagawa Toyohiko’s Kingdom of God Movement with its goal of “a million souls for Christ” was regarded as a source of leadership as well as inspiration for Western missionaries, some of whom hoped that his evangelistic tours of North America could also spark revivals there.<sup>38</sup>

Indigenous Christians were also increasingly in charge of their own churches, which, in turn, were increasingly entities outside the direct purview of the missions, operating parallel to rather than “under” them. Here again, perhaps the most dramatic case was in Japan, where the small but able middle-class Christian community directed its own affairs and was

encouraged by the imperial government during the late 1930s to distance itself further from Western missions and to undertake its own missionary work in the Japanese empire. Yet even in Korea, where the Christian community was poorer and less sophisticated than in Japan (being drawn, as in many other parts of Asia, from marginalized groups), missionaries took delight in reporting that the churches there had moved rapidly towards financial independence and responsibly handled self-government, becoming "truly indigenous to an extent perhaps unique among mission fields."<sup>39</sup>

In India and sub-Saharan Africa, the churches remained financially dependent on Western funds to a greater degree and for longer, but especially as they gained advanced Western education and the confidence that came with it, their pastors were anything but "yes men" to their erstwhile mentors. The African independent churches (AICs) that began to appear in the late nineteenth century were the ultimate expression of this assertive spirit, but they were neither the norm nor necessary to its further growth (as is shown in Terence Ranger's riveting account of Thompson Samkange's Christian and nationalist leadership in what is now Zimbabwe).<sup>40</sup> Missions in British colonial Africa were slow to advance African churchmen to positions of senior leadership. They became much more reluctant to do so after Church Missionary Society (CMS) missionaries in Nigeria determinedly undermined Samuel Ajayi Crowther, who had been appointed Bishop in 1864 at Henry Venn's insistence in an early effort to establish an indigenous African church. A different time and place allowed for a much more successful outcome following the appointment in 1912 of V.S. Azariah as the first Indian bishop within the Anglican communion. Indeed, Azariah went on to great success, becoming, in the words of his recent biographer, "the leading Christian statesman of India and the most successful Christian evangelist among the untouchables."<sup>41</sup>

The desire of the so-called younger churches to move beyond being treated as junior partners was evident at the IMC conferences of 1928 and 1938. At Jerusalem, C.Y. Cheng concluded a session he had chaired on relations between the younger and older churches by calling for missions and churches "at least to begin to look forward to the day when the work will be truly church-centric rather than mission-centric."<sup>42</sup> The numbers and participation of indigenous Christians at the conference showed how much things had changed in the preceding two decades. At Edinburgh in 1910, the few non-Westerners present had attended under the auspices of their missions, and as Azariah had learned from the shocked response to his address, they were expected by most to be grateful and tractable, rather than even mildly critical of mission policies and practices. At Jerusalem, about one-quarter of the delegates were non-Western, chosen through the national Christian councils. Ten years later, at Tambaram, their number had increased to about half the total number of delegates, and, according

to the IMC's chief historian, they "shared full equality ... in initiative, leadership, and responsibility."<sup>43</sup> Not only could the subaltern now speak; their collective tone was a good deal more forceful than Cheng's had been at Jerusalem just ten years earlier, and for Western delegates there was a certain *cachet* to being associated with them and their views. Samkange, representing the Methodist Church and the Native Missionary Conference of Southern Rhodesia, did not give an address as his sophisticated fellow African C.G. Baëta of the Gold Coast (Ghana) did (calling for a reconsideration of the ban on polygamy in the Christian church), but he was greatly impressed by the confidence with which Baëta and the Asian delegates spoke and by the seemingly natural and easy relations between Western and non-Western delegates. Ranger considers that Samkange was re-made by this conference. Back home, he named his new farm "Tambaram" and was more than ever determined not to be a "yes man" for his white mentors.<sup>44</sup>

Evangelism and church work were the areas of responsibility that were yielded soonest to indigenous Christians. YMCA and YWCA secretaries from the West also seem to have had Asian counterparts and successors at an early date, and from this source would come a significant number of indigenous Christian leaders in the national Christian councils and delegates to the Jerusalem and Tambaram conferences.<sup>45</sup> Although there was much talk about devolution in other areas, it was a good deal slower in coming, especially in higher educational and medical work, and in supervisory roles generally. But in these areas, too, there was pressure for change, and it met with varying responses. For example, nationalist student movements in 1920s China challenged, among other things, foreign control of mission higher educational institutions and compulsory religious instruction. American medical missionary Edward Hicks Hume, responsible for the Yale-in-China medical education program, was one who responded positively to the new mood, but others had more difficulty in yielding.<sup>46</sup> As will be shown in Chapter 2, medical missions in India were particularly slow to practise devolution.

### **Beyond Paternalism: "Give us FRIENDS"**

As more indigenous Christians achieved high levels of education and attained leadership positions in churches and mission institutions, the possibilities for cross-race collegiality in workplaces and for friendships in social situations increased.<sup>47</sup> Near the end of her more than four decades in India, Choné Oliver observed that it was not until she had come to live and work in Nagpur in 1929 that she had known educated Indians.<sup>48</sup> This was probably something of an exaggeration: her church's Central India mission was proud, for instance, to claim the Rev. Yohan Masih, a nationally known Christian leader, as one of its own. Still, the nature and locations of her work in the Central India mission had limited her opportunities for such contacts, while her new life as a missions bureaucrat meant routine interaction with Indians who were her

professional equals or superiors, and with whom workday encounters could evolve into social relationships.<sup>49</sup> To a much greater degree than Victorian-era missionaries could perhaps have imagined, friendships were developing based on shared interests and mutual regard rather than kindly condescension on the missionary's part and real or feigned acceptance of the status quo on the part of the "native Christian."

Nonetheless, the road to the new type of relationship was often rocky. Dr. P.V. Benjamin, whose interwar career flourished in a union mission sanatorium in South India, memorialized his white mentor as his colleague and friend at the time of the mentor's death in 1943. Yet Benjamin's son remembers hearing of a tension-filled event early in that relationship: the white mentor's refusal to let his new assistant borrow the station car on the grounds that it was exclusively for the use of missionaries. A professional friendship developed in this case because the self-respecting young Indian doctor, aware that he had other options, challenged rather than accepted the status quo.<sup>50</sup> But many of his fellow Indian Christians still did not – could not – do so. Lesslie Newbigin's diary recorded his reaction to the huge gap that still separated "the missionaries and the people" when he arrived in South India a few years after the incident involving Dr. Benjamin and his mentor. Here again an automobile figures in the memory of racial distance, this time as Newbigin accompanies some veteran missionaries in supervisory mode: "We drive up like lords in a car, soaking everybody else with mud on the way, and then carry on a sort of inspection, finding all the faults we can, putting everyone else through their paces. They all sort of stand at attention and say 'Sir.' It's *awful*." Newbigin recognized how much he himself depended on the car and all the other artifacts of white privilege in his new environment, and that as a newcomer he should avoid making self-righteous judgments. But he was nonetheless horrified: "surely they won't stand this sort of thing from the white man much longer."<sup>51</sup>

Just how much genuine friendships – as well as opportunities for collegial exchanges and career advances – mattered to educated indigenous Christians in professional relationships with missionaries is evident when we return to their presence at the international missionary conferences. At Edinburgh in 1910, Azariah called not only for workplace changes but also for missionaries to stop being "fathers" and become "friends." Indeed, it was on this note that he ended his address: "Give us FRIENDS." It was the easy friendship that seemed to prevail between Western and non-Western delegates even more than the addresses and deliberations that impressed Samkange at Tambaram in 1938. "We sat at meals anyhow and anywhere," he recalled. "It was a wonderful sight, there was no colour or nationality, all were one in Christ." It was this sense of camaraderie that made it impossible to accept the old indignities and gratuitous insults back in Southern Rhodesia. Samkange had always chafed. Now, increasingly, he would speak

out, though with a strong residue of respect for the father figures of his youth, who had led him into literacy with all its promise, as well as into the Christian faith that he had made his own.<sup>52</sup>

The increasing possibilities for friendship across race lines may have reflected changing scientific ideas in the West about the significance of "race"<sup>53</sup> as well as a sense that if Christians truly were "all one in Christ," that conviction should be manifested in daily interactions. Nonetheless, increased exposure to the educated Other in a context that began with, but moved beyond, work relationships was probably the most significant factor. For example, Choné Oliver first referred in her diary to meeting Dr. Hilda Lazarus in the mid-1930s when she was seeking the eminent Indian doctor's support for her medical college project. As the contacts continued, a personal as well as a professional element entered the relationship. Lazarus became more than a valuable potential ally: she was an admirable Christian, a highly qualified doctor (with credentials and specialties superior to Oliver's), and, like Oliver, an enthusiastic gardener. There were, in short, bases for personal bonds.<sup>54</sup>

Florence Murray's career in Korea was marked by a similar evolution. During her first term in Hamhung, northern Korea, writing to her parents as their "dutiful daughter," Murray tended to describe social gatherings with Korean co-workers as affairs in which she participated only for the good of the missionary cause. But decades later in Seoul, where many of them had come as refugees, she was united to those same co-workers by shared memories of the loss of the Christian and medical work that they had helped build together in the north, and full of sympathy and admiration for their resilience in the face of great hardship. Now, Murray herself took the initiative in organizing social get-togethers. With Hyo-Soon Kim, the Korean woman doctor who had put herself at risk to help Murray when she was under house arrest in Hamhung following the outbreak of hostilities with Japan in 1941, and who later became a refugee from the Communist north and, in turn, in need of Murray's help, the bond was particularly strong, surviving time and distance after Murray's retirement.<sup>55</sup> Of such shared experiences were friendships made. But lest this paragraph end with too rosy a glow, it is important to reiterate that there were many painful episodes along the road to such friendships and many instances where a speaking subaltern was perceived as a threat and held to a higher standard for failures and shortcomings than his or her white counterparts. *That* was the experience of Thompson Samkange in the Southern Rhodesia of his old age, as he experienced the rigid regulations and professional standards of a new generation of colonial and missionary educators and looked back with nostalgia on the days when his own most important missionary mentor had practised a kindly if classic paternalism.<sup>56</sup> Tambaram, then, was an inspiration, but it was not the real world.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, there may have been a number of "native Christians"

who, like Edward Said's great-aunt Melia, a teacher in the mission-founded American College for Girls in Cairo, were members of elite and close-knit families and communities that were sufficient unto themselves. As such, they would have had little interest in social interaction with their Western co-workers, especially when those co-workers seemed incapable of moving beyond the condescending workplace attitudes of an earlier era.<sup>58</sup>

### **Taking Stock and Re-Thinking Missions: Formal Investigations**

If the interwar era was an era of halting steps towards cross-race friendships in the changing world of missions, it was also, as has already been suggested, a period of re-evaluating the strategies and even the basic aims of Christian missions in response to changed conditions. What should be done differently? Were there some strategies that should be altogether abandoned? To what extent could missions collaborate with colonial governments, foundations, anthropologists, and other interested actors to obtain assistance without being diverted from or sacrificing essential principles and goals? What sorts of attached "strings" would be tolerable? Such stock-taking took place in numerous informal conversations and group discussions at home and abroad, but it was also undertaken in a good many formal studies and commissions.

Education received a good deal of attention in these studies. After the First World War, an initiative that began with US mission boards (and that subsequently won support from British missions officials) led to a survey of education, broadly understood, in west, southern, and equatorial Africa. Financed by the Phelps-Stokes Fund, the 1921 commission was headed by the Fund's director, Thomas Jesse Jones, a Welsh-born American with strong preconceptions that the "right" sort of education for African Americans would also suit Africans. In undertaking such a study, the mission boards were, as Oldham's recent biographer, Keith Clements, notes, undertaking "an exercise in self-criticism." They recognized their need for a more coherent educational policy for their work in Africa based on a sound knowledge of their current practices. At the same time, British colonial officials were taking a new and pragmatic interest in missions' educational work in Africa on the basis of their own needs and concerns and in response to growing African demand. The key figure in bringing these constituencies together was Oldham. The report of the commission was published in 1922. A year later, following discussions Oldham had initiated with Colonial Office officials and a memorandum he had prepared, the Colonial Office established the Advisory Committee on Native Education in Tropical Africa, made up of government and missionary representatives and educational experts. At Oldham's urging, one of the Advisory Committee's first acts was to call for a second commission, this one mainly directed to East Africa. Like the earlier one, it was headed by Jones and included the American-educated



African doctoral student J.E. Kwegyir Aggrey, who, until his untimely death, would briefly serve as assistant vice-principal of the Gold Coast's newly created and much celebrated Achimota College.<sup>59</sup> Following these investigations and new arrangements for collaboration, missions remained by far the most important agents for providing Western-style schooling in British colonial Africa, but they now had more reliable access to government educational grants, came under government inspection, and shared with government officials in the development of broad lines of policy.

While mission officials like Oldham were in general agreement with Jones's view that education for Africans should relate to their overwhelmingly rural environment and provide mainly vocational rather than academic training (the so-called Tuskegee model), they by no means shared his assumptions about Africans' general inability to benefit from a different sort of education. Nor were they prepared to be merely the educational agents for meeting colonial economic and manpower needs. However paternalistic their approach may seem in retrospect – and the paternalism is palpable – they were anxious to make schooling more readily available and more directly useful to Africans in the face of the growing demand. They also wanted to foster respect for “worthy” indigenous “traditions,” to screen out “inappropriate” aspects of Western culture and technology, and to identify, mould, and encourage future social leaders by giving them advanced education informed by Christian beliefs and values.<sup>60</sup> In these circumstances, the challenge for mission leaders was how to work in partnership with colonial officials and with the new, mainly American, philanthropists and foundations without losing control of their own agenda. Some studies largely fail to recognize that the mission enterprise *had* a separate agenda and that Africans themselves had some agency in determining what happened after groups like the Phelps-Stokes commissioners had filed their reports and gone home.<sup>61</sup> In appointing Aggrey to his commissions, Jones may have wanted him to serve as a particular kind of object lesson, but as Richard Gray has pointed out, the message to be read from Aggrey's success was not in Jones's hands:

Dr. Aggrey ... might advocate rural adaptation and racial moderation, but, quoting Latin tags at Fourah Bay, feted by [Gold Coast governor] Guggisberg, welcomed as an equal by missionaries and liberals throughout the continent, he symbolised for his countrymen in the Gold Coast and for the thousands of Africans who saw and heard him elsewhere, the successful seizure from the whites of the advantages of their classical education.<sup>62</sup>

An educational investigation of a quite different sort took place in India and resulted in 1931 in the publication of the *Report of the Commission on Christian Higher Education in India*. Constituted by the IMC following a 1929

request for such an investigation by Indian Christian and missionary educators in India, it was known as the Lindsay Commission for its chairman, the Master of Balliol College, Oxford. The request from India had asked for a commission that would deal with the decline in the influence and quality of Christian colleges resulting from such changed conditions as the growth in number and resources of government and private non-Christian colleges. The Commission was asked to set in motion a policy of coordination and concentration, even at the cost of closing down some existing Christian colleges.<sup>63</sup> Once established, it undertook an enquiry broader than that called for by the India group. At least in theory, it was prepared to consider the possibility of having missions altogether abandon the field of higher education to government and other agencies, or, alternatively, the establishing of a full-fledged Christian university. Ultimately, however, what it recommended was a new, unified, approach to the task of Christian higher education within the existing educational system in India, with permanent, ecumenical committees to facilitate its objectives. A central committee within the NCC, working with responsible persons in provincial Christian councils, would serve as a liaison among existing colleges and as a united voice for them in dealing with the national and provincial governments, the universities, and the general public. At the same time, a "Joint Committee on Christian Higher Education in Britain and America," composed of persons with expertise in the field, would be appointed by the mission boards and have as its priority a unified appeal for men and funds for all the Christian colleges.<sup>64</sup>

A central board for Christian higher education was in fact constituted as part of the NCC in the wake of the Commission's report, and unified fundraising was undertaken in Britain and North America under the IMC's William Paton, who had played a leading role in getting the Commission established.<sup>65</sup> The Depression, however, had a dampening effect on efforts to finance the upgrading of the Christian colleges on the scale envisioned. Meanwhile, by drawing high-ranking colonial officials into its orbit at fundraising meetings in London, by taking a less conciliatory approach to Hinduism than the Jerusalem conference had done, and by stating that the long-term goal of such colleges should remain the making of converts as well as educating the Christian community, the Commission raised the ire of nationalists such as the editor of the *Indian Social Reformer*. Declaring an ongoing interest in making converts may have seemed necessary to reassure those who thought the colleges needed to recover their original sense of purpose. But it was both unrealistic and out of keeping with what had been happening on the ground, where mission colleges often seem to have had a better record of producing nationalists than converts to Christianity.<sup>66</sup>

The commissions to Africa and India had focused on education and dealt with what were essentially questions of strategy. Reporting a year after the

Lindsay Commission, the American Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry had a much broader geographic focus and asked much more fundamental questions: should foreign missions continue to exist in the changed conditions of the modern world, and, if so, what should their role be? Instigated and funded by John D. Rockefeller Jr., the inquiry idea won acceptance from Rockefeller's Baptist denomination and went on to have the support of seven US Protestant denominations. The actual Commission of Appraisal contained no clergy. Its members were university presidents and professors, lawyers, businessmen, physicians, and others, including three women. Its fields of inquiry were India, Burma, China, and Japan. Prior to its visit to these countries, the commission, chaired by Harvard philosophy professor William Ernest Hocking, sent out an advance guard of data gatherers and research workers under the supervision of the Institute of Social and Religious Research (also a Rockefeller-funded institution). Their reports were published only after the 1932 publication of Hocking's controversial summary volume, *Re-Thinking Missions: A Laymen's Inquiry after One Hundred Years*, seemingly as an exercise in damage control.<sup>67</sup>

While it depended on the cooperation of organizations like the IMC and the national Christian councils, and individual mission boards and their personnel in numerous mission sites, the Laymen's Inquiry was in no sense a mouthpiece for any of these bodies. Indeed, its consultations extended well beyond the world of missions and indigenous Christians in the countries visited. Several aspects of its report were troubling to the missions-minded public and some gave great offence – especially its criticism of mission personnel. After paying a formulaic tribute to the “saintliness” of some missionaries, *Re-Thinking Missions* went on to say that the “greater number” seemed to be “of limited outlook and capacity” and that there were “not a few whose vision of the inner meaning of the mission has become obscured by the intricacies, divisions, frictions and details of a task too great for their powers and their hearts.” This, followed by the suggestion that missionaries often deliberately exaggerated the flaws in the cultures and religions of their field of work out of “a sort of professional interest in deprecation,” would have come as an especially painful piece of revisionism to veteran workers accustomed to the reverential regard of those at home, who in turn had been accustomed to regard missionaries' accounts of “the field” as beyond doubt.<sup>68</sup> More generally disturbing to fundamentalists and, for different reasons, to missions supporters influenced by Continental neo-orthodoxy (more numerous in Britain than in North America) was the apparent willingness of the Laymen's Report to interpret “mission” in the modern world primarily as a matter of social service and to take a sympathetic, even a syncretic, approach to other world religions.<sup>69</sup>

Among the developments following from the publication of *Re-Thinking Missions* was a fundamentalist breakaway from mainstream American

Presbyterianism. The acclaimed writer Pearl Buck, who had spent much of her life in China mission circles (the daughter of one Presbyterian missionary and the wife of another), created shock waves when she gave the book a glowing review and then used the occasion of a large gathering of Presbyterian women and Board officials in New York to present her own critique of the conduct and personnel of the missionary enterprise, not sparing those at the home base.<sup>70</sup> Although it was a pronouncement by US laymen on (mainly) US work, *Re-Thinking Missions* inevitably aroused interest among the Americans' partners in mission. At Edinburgh House, Paton, whose commitment to evangelism was intense, sought to contain its effects and worried that it would "jeopardize the implementation of the Lindsay Report." Oldham, a friend and admirer of Hocking, had himself for years called for many of the specific changes recommended by the book, perhaps most strikingly the concentration of effort as a route to improved mission social services. Having recently come under the influence of Barth, he was, however, troubled by what he saw as the lack of theological rigour in *Re-Thinking Missions*.<sup>71</sup> Yet despite the controversies it aroused, the book's findings and recommendations were not officially condemned by most mainstream boards, for as Hutchison writes of the American context, "the incursions of liberal thinking had been substantial." The United Church of Canada's *The New Outlook* contained several discussions of *Re-Thinking Missions*, including a generally favourable assessment by Choné Oliver, who had served as a resource person for the medical personnel on the Inquiry. In the foreword to the book, Hocking had declared that its proposals lay "in well recognized directions of advance" and "call[ed] far less for innovations than for the emphasis and encouragement of tendencies already present in the field and at home."<sup>72</sup> While the controversies it stirred up have received most of the attention from historians of missions, Hocking's statement was not wholly wide of the mark.

### **Mission Change and Gender**

The implications of the changes in this era for gender roles and relationships in the mission enterprise were considerable, both in the new ecumenical bureaucracies and on the ground. In his history of the IMC, Hogg documented (but evidently did not feel a need to account for) a pattern whereby women came to play important roles in the new structures. One can speculate that the combination of the lower salaries for which they worked (a few were volunteers) and the extraordinary educational background and talents that they brought to their tasks made this group of women attractive to cash-starved organizations such as the IMC. Hogg acknowledges the women's skills and education in a matter-of-fact way when introducing IMC staff. While the chairman and the three secretaries appointed in the 1920s were men, women held important secondary roles. Thus,

Georgina Gollock was from 1921 to 1927 Oldham's co-editor at the *IRM*, while Betty Gibson was associated with him as a translator, researcher, and, later, author, officially receiving the title of assistant IMC secretary in 1925. Four years later, Wrong and Oliver were appointed to their specialized committee work within the IMC and the NCC, in London and India respectively. For many years Alice Van Doren was Oliver's colleague within the NCC, with broad responsibilities for facilitating rural education.<sup>73</sup> All these women seem to have maintained a strong interest in developments affecting their own sex, and yet all seem to have found great satisfaction in roles that took them beyond the separate-spheres approach of an earlier era. Some would work mainly with and for men, and eventually be succeeded by men.

The working relationships in these ecumenical organizations could not be described as egalitarian. Even in 1936, in the context of discussing an impending new secretarial appointment, which they wanted to go to a woman, some of Oliver's women colleagues spoke of Oldham as having a problem in remembering that "half the people in the world are women."<sup>74</sup> Yet over time, the relationships in the ecumenical bureaucracies do seem to have evolved in the direction of greater formal acknowledgment of women colleagues' contributions. It was Oldham himself who suggested in 1921 that Gollock's position at the *IRM* should be upgraded from assistant editor to co-editor. As for Gibson, in a self-mocking letter to her family written the same year, she declared that at work she sat "like a mouse and listen[ed] to the words of wisdom" of her seniors. In the course of the 1920s, though, as Oldham took on ever more tasks, he came to rely more heavily on her expertise, particularly on African matters, and he acknowledged that fact. It was he who recommended in 1925 that she be officially appointed to the IMC secretariat, and when *The Remaking of Man in Africa* was published in 1931, both Oldham and Gibson were credited, and recognized by colleagues, as its co-authors.<sup>75</sup> Paton was evidently somewhat less ready to acknowledge publicly the contributions of female colleagues: even Eleanor Jackson's seldom-critical biography of him reports that Margaret Sinclair, his able associate at the *IRM*, was "annoyed ... that he would pirate her ideas without acknowledging them."<sup>76</sup> Yet there was no denying that the new ecumenical structures had given rise to a need and opportunity for able men and women to work collegially.

Changes in the gender organization of mission work also took place in mission sites, of course, although by no means evenly or easily. As mission institutions strove to be more efficient and up-to-date, there was a growing tendency to favour coeducation for higher academic and professional education wherever local circumstances made it feasible, especially in the face of the greater need for economies brought about by the Depression. In China the majority of the Christian colleges were already coeducational by 1932. The same trend was emerging in India's Christian arts colleges by the end of

the decade. Nationwide, higher education still affected only a tiny minority of India's women, but those with such schooling had an influential voice, and by the 1930s many saw coeducation as a route to higher quality training at advanced levels. Thus, the 1934 meeting of the All-India Women's Conference called for Allahabad and Benares Hindu universities to become coeducational and for other institutions to consider the same move. In its brief discussion of female colleges, the Lindsay Commission took note of this sentiment in the new India and observed that, especially for women planning to enter professional life, coeducation was good preparation. Although it declared the women's Christian colleges to be far superior to the men's in terms of their spiritual life and influence (having a far larger proportion of Christians among staff and students), it nonetheless recommended experiments in coeducation, while warning that, if implemented, "it must be real co-education with women members on the teaching staff alongside of men, and with such facilities for the women students as will enable them to have a real college life and not be merely appendages of a men's college."<sup>77</sup>

When they turned to the issue of how best to teach and practise the ideals of Western scientific medicine in postwar Asia, many missionary and secular modernizers were even more strongly drawn to the possibility of institutions that somehow integrated work for both sexes in the same facility. In view of the costs involved in medicine, the economic arguments were compelling. Given the existence of *purdah* traditions, the Laymen's Inquiry was doubtful that integration of women's and "general" hospitals was as feasible in India as in China, where the celebrated Peking Union Medical College and other important medical institutions were coeducational.<sup>78</sup> But it recognized that some government hospitals in India and a few mission medical reformers wanted indigenous women nurses to be trained in the care of both sexes as a way of modernizing hospitals.<sup>79</sup> With regard to the training of indigenous doctors, as Chapter 3 will show in the case of Korea, young men eager to acquire Western expertise and professional qualifications were prepared, if necessary – although it often came as a struggle – to put aside the patriarchal assumptions in which they had been raised and accept women medical missionaries as instructors and colleagues in general hospitals. As such, these young men were a good fit with doctors like Murray who, as part of the new, postwar, generation of women missionaries, often understood their calling in a more expansive way than their predecessors had.

Not surprisingly, in both academic education and medicine, there were women missionaries who resisted such changes. Those, especially, who were part of an earlier generation often clung to the separate-spheres approach, insisting on the necessity of distinctively female institutions for the respectability, security, and access to opportunities of their female clients. Probably, too, they recognized in the new approach a threat to the niches they

had carved out as powerful, influential figures in settings where local indigenous women were their particular – and often devoted and subservient – constituency. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when few other agencies and individuals had been in a position to do so, they had provided small islands of opportunity for indigenous women, Christian and non-Christian, through the training and the examples of independent female initiative they offered. By the interwar period, much had changed: home-grown mentors had come forward to challenge gender-based restrictions and inequalities and to serve as role models.<sup>80</sup> Yet many old-style missionaries continued to generate universalizing discourses about downtrodden Indian womanhood and to resist restructuring in their institutions, whether in the direction of gender integration or the devolution of responsibilities to indigenous female co-workers. By comparison with their male counterparts in mission institutions, they had a smaller pool of well-educated, confident professionals to draw upon as indigenous colleagues and successors, and within that small pool there were few who were militant in pressing for devolution. Meanwhile, in the West, the mission public, and particularly the women's societies that funded their work, had some difficulty in moving beyond familiar images of benighted Eastern women dependent on their Western "sisters" for leadership and protection from abuses. In these circumstances, many of those Western "sisters" were inclined to allow old patterns to continue.<sup>81</sup>

Missions certainly remained gendered spaces in the interwar era, notwithstanding specific changes in work roles and institutional organization. Both as mission personnel and as the missionized, women remained the second sex. Given missions' origins in patriarchal Western societies, and the deeply patriarchal cultures in which they were planted in Asia and Africa, it could scarcely have been otherwise. The debates about the merits of sex-segregated versus integrated mission work that took place in this era intersected with and reflected other forces for change, discussed above. Modernizers who favoured a gender-integrated approach to mission institutional work were typically concerned with questions of efficiency and economy. But they also maintained that the interests of indigenous women would be well served by coeducation and "general" institutions. Those who argued otherwise were not free of personal and institutional self-interest in predicting dire outcomes, but neither would history always prove their predictions to be wrong. While the modernizing of missions was essentially a project initiated by men, it enlisted the enthusiastic cooperation of some able professional women, among them Oliver, Murray, and Wrong. It is time to consider their respective projects.