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THE HISTORY OF THE MISSIONARY  
SETTLEMENT FOR UNIVERSITY  
WOMEN, BOMBAY,

BY

ELIZABETH LINDSAY.

LONDON GUILDHALL UNIVERSITY  
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PAMPHLET

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AT THE SETTLEMENT.

Arrival.	Name of College.	Departure.
Nov., 1895	Miss Ellen Stones, Newnham College...	Nov., 1896
Nov., 1895	Miss Marian Stones ... ..	Nov., 1896
Nov., 1896	Miss Agnes de Selincourt, Girton and Somerville Colleges ... ..	April, 1901
Nov., 1896	Miss Una Saunders, Somerville College ...	April, 1899
Nov., 1896	Miss Helen E. Boyland, B.A., Alexandra College, Dublin ... ..	Died.
Jan., 1897	Miss A. M. R. Dobson, Mus. Bac., London...	Aug., 1900
Jan., 1898	Mrs. Edwards (May Cooke), Newnham College	Feb., 1920
Jan., 1898	Mrs. Edwards (May Cooke), Newnham College	Oct., 1908
Dec., 1899	Miss Ruth Rouse, Girton College ... ..	Dec., 1902
Oct., 1900	Miss D. de B. Dobson, M.A., St. Andrews University ... ..	May, 1904
Oct., 1902	Mrs. Wood, B.A. (K. Fell), Sydney University	April, 1903
Jan., 1903	Mrs. J. A. Stevenson, D.Sc. (Margaret Adams), Somerville College ... ..	May, 1903
Oct., 1903	Mrs. Sutherland, M.A. (Elsie Nicol) Melbourne University ... ..	Oct., 1906
Oct., 1903	Miss Edith V. Fear ... ..	Oct., 1905
Nov., 1903	Miss E. Picton-Turbervill ... ..	Feb., 1904
Oct., 1904	Miss Lucy G. Ross, Newnham College ...	May, 1908
Nov., 1905	Miss E. Lindsay, Edinburgh University ...	Jan., 1913
Nov., 1906	Miss E. F. M. Peucey, Somerville College ...	Jan., 1908
Jan., 1907	Mrs. Ponsford, B.A. (Winifred Griffiths), Victoria College, New Zealand ... ..	Mar., 1912
Oct., 1908	Miss Gina Barbour, Westfield College ...	May, 1909
Oct., 1909	Mrs. Jenkins (Ada Carruthers), Sydney University... ..	Oct., 1911
Oct., 1909	Mrs. R. H. Whelan (Edythe Crosthwait), Alexandra College, Dublin ... ..	Mar., 1910
Feb., 1912		Oct., 1918
Nov., 1910	Mrs. Sewell (F. Sharp), Newnham College ...	April, 1911
Nov., 1911	Mrs. Briggs (R. Impey) ... ..	Mar., 1913
June, 1912	Miss E. C. Gedge, Cheltenham Ladies' College	
Nov., 1913	Mrs. J. Lyle, B.Sc. (F. B. Hoyte), Westfield College, London ... ..	Jan., 1919
Nov., 1916	Miss A. E. M. Moinet, Somerville College ...	April, 1923
Oct., 1917	Miss F. Willan, Cheltenham Ladies' College	April, 1918
Jan., 1919	Miss O. Stillwell, M.A., Melbourne University	Feb., 1920
Mar., 1919	Miss D. Meek, B.A., Otaga University ...	Feb., 1921
Feb., 1920	Miss K. Elmquist... ..	Feb., 1921
Dec., 1920	Miss E. M. Kitching, B.Sc., Westfield College	
Oct., 1922	Miss C. Tannahill, M.A., Glasgow University	April, 1923
Dec., 1922	Miss Margery Hockett, M.A., Lady Margaret Hall	
Dec., 1922	Miss Marjorie Lambert, Girton College ...	Nov., 1924
Jan., 1925	Miss Phyllis S. Harley, Somerville College ...	

Miss G. L. FREWER, M.A.,  
 (St. Hilda's College, Oxford).

THE HISTORY OF THE MISSIONARY  
 SETTLEMENT FOR UNIVERSITY WOMEN,  
 BOMBAY.

Let us go back in thought for 32 years, that is, to 1893, which is quite a long time in educational matters, and it may sometimes be a long period also from the point of view of missions. It was then about forty years since the first college for women had been opened in the United Kingdom. This was Queen's College, Harley Street, London, which was founded sometime in the fifties. The earliest residential women's college was at Hitchin, founded in 1869, and afterwards known as Girton College. Neither of these was incorporated with any university. The University of London opened its degrees to women sometime in the seventies; but it was then only an examining body; it did not admit women to classes in these early days. So far as I have been able to discover, the first women's college actually to be incorporated with a university was Queen Margaret College, Glasgow. This took place in the Session 1892-93. Women students enrolled as university students that session, but the actual handing over of the buildings and grounds took place in 1893.

We have all read lives of the early pioneers of women's university education, and have thrilled as we have heard of their struggles, of the apparently insurmountable obstacles in their path, of the opposition, and of the tremendous difficulties that were overcome. As we think of these days, and of what, for instance, the first women medical students in Edinburgh had to go through, we value more than ever the education which is ours for the taking—ours, not because of anything that we have done, but because they endured much—persecution is not too strong a word—for the sake of the coming generations; when we think of all this we feel that we cannot let the high tradition of far-sighted endeavour and self-sacrifice slip from our educational life through want of use. The women who entered into the heritage of knowledge made possible for them by the pioneers of university education for girls felt this. Many of them looked about for a worthy use to make of their trained minds and new store of learning,

realising that to whom much is given, of them shall much be required. Among other kinds of work which college women were beginning, between thirty and forty years ago, following the example of men graduates, were Settlements in slum districts. These Settlements greatly appealed to women students.

About this time, to be accurate, in 1892, the S.V.M.U. came on the scene, and it aroused much enthusiasm among college men and women, and indeed among their older relatives too. \*(The Student Christian Movement of Great Britain and Ireland was founded at the S.V.M.U.'s first summer conference, which was held at Keswick in 1893.) The first report of the Missionary Settlement for University Women says, "that within the last five years—*i.e.*, from 1890 to 1895—over 1,300 students in Great Britain and Ireland have joined the S.V.M.U." Of that number, 254 were women. The women graduates were using their new-found learning to help, not only the working classes of their own land, but others across the sea, for whom, as Christians, they had a responsibility.

But in examining into the faculties from which these 254 women came, it was noticed that they were nearly all medicals. Where were the arts and science people? How shew them that the call of the non-Christian lands was as urgent as that of the slums, that those great lands offered as great scope for sacrifice and for trained ability, and also that educated young Britons had responsibilities which did not end at their own coast-line? Christian people felt this problem, and Christian women students were feeling it too, and they used to talk it over together and wonder what could be done. In Cambridge, for instance, a Girton student, Miss Agnes de Selincourt, and a Newnham student, Miss May Cooke, had often discussed this question, and by the spring of 1893 they were working out a definite plan, which, by meeting the women students on their own ground would, they felt sure, capture their enthusiasm for the cause of Christ in other lands. I have several times heard Miss Cooke describe how thrilled they all felt as they discussed their hopes and plans, not only during term, but at summer conferences in Keswick, when they were also helping with the very beginning of the Student Christian Movement in this country. The first report of the Missionary Settlement for University Women sets forth the plan: "For several years settlements of college girls in the poor parts of our great cities for social and philanthropic work have taught us a lesson, long ago learnt by university men. They have shown us that

(\*The Student.....1893).

nothing draws forth the sympathy and effort of the students so much as the thought of representatives sent forth from their own ranks to battle with ignorance and vice. The Bombay Settlement has been started by those who would fain use this representative principle on behalf of foreign missions."

And they were right, the plan did appeal to women students, it kindled the imagination of a number of women students who were to be future leaders in various departments, and it aroused the liveliest interests in a number of colleges. It was to be a thoroughly student mission. The idea was—I quote again from the first report—to "place a strong force of Christian women from our universities at the educational centres of the Indian mission field, seeking to reach the Indian women doctors, lawyers, teachers, and so forth, while they are still in training, and to organise a Christian and missionary movement amongst them on the same lines as amongst the men. Hence the efforts of the Missionary Settlement will be primarily directed to seeking in every way to promote such work amongst the women students in India."

The young undergraduates were greatly helped in their plans by the encouragement and advice of experienced missionaries and Boards of old established societies. Bombay for some time far outdistanced every other place in India in regard to the number of girls that it educated. This was chiefly owing to the Parsi influence. Everybody advised that the first Settlement of university women in India should be planted in Bombay. The pioneer work was done by two sisters, the Misses Stone, who soon had to resign owing to ill-health. The next arrivals were Miss A. de Selincourt of Girton, Miss Una Saunders of Somerville, and Miss Helen Boyland of Alexandra College, Dublin. This was late in 1896. A month or two after came Miss Dobson, a Mus.Bac. of London. They found Bombay in the throes of its first great plague visitation. Everybody who could was fleeing in terror out of the city; hospitals were full, nurses were very scarce. It was an unpropitious moment to start a Settlement, so they did the next thing, and all offered to be plague nurses, until the properly trained women who had been sent for from England should arrive. Miss Dobson was the only one accepted, and she nursed for three months in a plague hospital, while the others worked hard at their language study in different places up country. Such was the beginning of the Settlement. Its subsequent history has been no less eventful. Indeed, I can assure everyone that the charge of dulness and monotony cannot be brought against mission work in India.

The students in the home countries who were interested in this enterprise were, and are still, called home members, with the idea that they and their representatives in India were all members one of another; as was indeed very aptly and quaintly illustrated by Donne's lines on the first membership cards—the lines about the pair of compasses. In 1896 there were 200 home members throughout the country; in 1898 there were 425; in 1900 there were 882; to-day there are 2500.

There was apparently no lack of volunteers for this new work which was to be their very own, for in the third Settlement report, the one for 1898, which gives an account of the Annual Meeting, held, as was their custom then, during the Student Summer Conference, and at which an appeal was considered from missionaries in Calcutta to start a Settlement there as well as the one already set going in Bombay, we find the following:—"The Chairman explained that the Committee had received a long letter from the Rev. P. Ireland Jones, of Calcutta, urging the M.S.U.W. to open a Settlement in that city also. Mr. Ireland Jones' statements were carefully prepared after consultation with missionaries in Calcutta, and contain an outline of proposed work among the native women students, and older girls in Government and Mission Schools and Colleges. But he warned us emphatically against work at a new centre unless we have 'a good prospect of vigorous initiation under a competent and sufficient staff, with reasonable hope of efficient maintenance.' The state of affairs was then laid before the meeting. Did the students feel prepared to face this new responsibility, and to sanction this further extension? Money and workers, the Committee felt sure could be found, but they wished first to ascertain whether the students themselves were ready to face the advance, and to pledge their fullest support. After prayer and consideration the meeting unanimously decided to 'go forward.'"

We see in this a reflection of the enthusiasm that had been aroused and we see the confidence they had in their resources, from extracts also from Miss de Selincourt's letters given in that same report. She says: "Before we attempt another Settlement of four or five workers, we think we ought to place two workers in each part of India for student work. The men workers are stationed singly, but ours should be in pairs. The Committee have sanctioned this scheme, and we now wish two volunteers to go out next autumn with

Miss Ruth Rouse who is now returning from the College work in America, to which we have lent her for the last two winters."

Miss de Selincourt continued to travel in North India, working up Christian Union branches in various places, until in 1900 she was ordered eight months' sick leave. In that year members of the Settlement started and worked up the first two Conferences for women students of India—one in Madras, organised by Miss Rouse, the other in Amballa in the North, organised by Miss de Selincourt.

Already in 1899 we find the Settlement in Bombay co-operating with Y.W.C.A.; and in the 1900 Report we find Miss de Selincourt saying that being unable to start the proposed Settlement of four or five workers in Calcutta, she has handed over the already organised Student Unions in various Colleges and Hostels of Calcutta to Y.W.C.A. workers.

In the providence of God, the Settlement's original wide plans of groups of student workers settled throughout India have been inherited by others, and He has used the Settlement, in more instances than one can tell, to be the inspiration which has brought very great help to other Societies and, indeed, countries. The Student Movement and the Churches in this country, the Student Christian Movement of Australia and the Churches there, the Y.W.C.A. throughout the world, all owe a deep debt to the Settlement for giving in many Colleges the first impulse, and that a very real and true one, to enthusiasm for and knowledge of Christian Missions.

In thinking of the beginnings of the Bombay Settlement I often feel both sad and glad; sad because of the leaders who for one reason and another have had to leave our ranks and have gone to enrich other work—though we have a proverb in Scotland which says, "It's not lost what a friend gets"; and glad to find how much of their deep interest and affection still helps the Settlement on its way. I think of the early Settlers, Miss de Selincourt, late Principal of Westfield College; Miss Una Saunders, in the work she has been doing in recent years for the young women of Canada; Miss Rouse in her work for the young women of the world—both of these last named are members of the Settlement headquarters Committee; then of the home workers, Mrs. Douglas Thornton, Mrs. Lenwood and Mrs. Crichton Miller, all early Secretaries at headquarters who have been giving very largely of their time and thought to Settlement matters.

And looking back at the way in which God has led the Settlement all these years—for that His was the inspiration to begin it, and that the work it is doing is His work, those of us who have lived and worked there have no shadow of doubt—looking back, what do we see? That God has restricted it to the district of Bombay, but that He has most deeply blessed its existence there. That He has a purpose in the future, for it is shown by the steady development of its influence in Bombay city and Presidency. It is an instrument ready to His hand, fashioned and polished through years of trial and experience until it is unique, not only in Bombay, but in India.

It is impossible in a couple of sentences to give an adequate idea of the importance and power of the Settlement's influence in Bombay—both intensive and extensive.

It is intensive in the building up of character and high ideals in our family of 20 to 30 undergraduates, normal students and art students, of all races and creeds, who share our meals and our life in the Hostel in Bombay. Many of these are now scattered over India, filling positions of trust and responsibility, often in loneliness, far away from old friends. Others are constantly coming up from the country and smaller towns in the district to take their places round our tables and share the cheery, friendly life that members of residential colleges have found so valuable, but which the non-residential universities of India do not give to their students. But the Settlement is not merely a Hall of Residence for students with a remarkably happy home-life; it is a Christian home, first, last and all the time. I do not think that any one could spend an hour in the house without knowing it to be a place where Christ is loved and obeyed. And yet non-Christians come in and out freely. A Parsi friend said, with a smile, to me a few years ago: "Why, this house is as much Parsi as English." All Settlement workers and all missionaries at home or abroad, will appreciate that tribute. We want the people whom we wish to help, spiritually, intellectually and in every way, to feel at home with us in our home. But this ready coming and going has not been attained without much opposition and slow breaking down of prejudice.

One very valuable development should be mentioned which came to fruition in 1921, after years of prayer and planning—and that is the bungalow, north of Bombay, by the sea, which belongs to the Settlement, built and paid for by the accumulated

results of hard work by the settlers and other friends in concerts, sales of work, special collections, and other ways. This is a place to which one or two Settlers and Indian friends may go from time to time for Conferences or in smaller groups and, escaping from the turmoil and rush of life in the City of Bombay, may in the quiet face together the realities of life and go back strong again to tackle each her own problems. For many years we have felt greatly the need of some such refuge. In the home countries people tend to think of life in the tropics as a somewhat leisurely proceeding in which, owing to the exigencies of the climate, long deck chairs, punkahs and iced drinks play an important part. But, while the climate remains much as it was, in those spacious days of old, Bombay has become a great city and has added to its life such "improvements" as motor cars and telephones and with their aid people fit into each day as many engagements as it will hold, just as people in other countries do. In Britain and Australia we are accustomed to cities whose population is made up chiefly of one race, but Bombay is peopled by many different communities each with their own traditions, customs, point of view and ambitions, not to mention language. The Settlement has close and friendly contact with members of practically all these communities—in addition, I mean, to those of their number whom we learn to know so intimately because they live with us. To pass from a friendly hour or more spent in a Mohammedan household right on to see a Hindu friend and then to a Parsi house means a constant readjustment of sympathetic understanding. The Settlers too, are in close touch with many of the activities of the city—the Colleges, many kinds of Industrial and Social Welfare-work and also musical circles—to mention only one or two. This is in addition to what we think of as specifically missionary work. And all the time the climate is affecting most people whom one meets—Indians from up country as well as Europeans, a fact we are apt to forget.

What God's plans may be for the Settlement in the years to come we cannot know, but at present I know no mission in India—and I have visited many during the years I was out there—which gets closer to the people among whom it works and which presents to these people at close quarters—for their daily and indeed hourly inspection—a higher standard of Christian love by example and precept.

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THE AIM OF THE M.S.U.W. IS :—

1.—To work among **University Women Students** in Bombay by :

- (a) Providing a **Hostel** where twenty-five women of any caste or creed may live. The Staff consists of five English University Women, who attempt to provide in the Hostel a college life suitable for students in India.
- (b) **Organising Societies and Clubs** in the Hostel to which non-resident Students are admitted.
- (c) Regular **Visiting** of the University Common Rooms and of Students in their own homes.
- (d) Providing a **Holiday House** by the sea both for conferences and for holidays.

2.—To get into touch with **Parsi and other Educated** Indian Women in Bombay by social gatherings, concerts, lectures, visiting and teaching, and to promote the ideal of social service.

M.S.U.W. RESIDENTS, 1925.26.

Miss E. C. GEDGE (Warden),  
(Cheltenham Ladies' College, and  
Hoch Conservatorium, Frankfurt-am-Main.)

Miss E. M. KITCHING, B.Sc.,  
(Westfield College, London.)

Miss G. L. FREWER, M.A.,  
(St. Hilda's College, Oxford).

Miss P. S. HARLEY, B.A.  
(Somerville College, Oxford.)

How to Support the Settlement.

The Settlement has always been a definitely University Mission and Branches exist in most of the Universities and Colleges and also in Schools. Local Associations have been formed in many of the important centres in the United Kingdom.

Life Subscriptions are invited

£2 10s.	to replace	2/6	annual	Subscription
£5	„	5/-	„	„
£10	„	10/-		etc.

All Life Subscriptions will be invested to provide a permanent annual income.

In addition to an Annual Subscription

- (a) Donations are invited to the **Capital Endowment Fund** for a permanent Hostel Building where fifty students can be accommodated.
- (b) Branches or groups of subscribers are urged to adopt a **Named Room** in the Hostel by giving £20 which covers the rent of a Student's room for one year.
- (c) **Bursaries** are needed for the poorer Students.
- (d) **£1,000 Reserve Fund.** Subscriptions still needed. Sums already received £584.
- (e) Donations invited to **Special Fund** to meet cost of sending out new Missionaries.
- (f) **Mary Dobson Memorial Fund**, for endowment of Mary Dobson Scholarships for poor students.

For further particulars apply to the Secretary,

Miss K. L. SPEECHLEY,

Room F, Denison House,  
296, Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W.1.

## How to Support the Settlement.

The Settlement has always been a definitely University Mission and Branches exist in most of the Universities and Colleges and also in Schools. Local Associations have been formed in many of the important centres in the United Kingdom.

Life Subscriptions are invited

£100	to replace 30 Annual Subscriptions
£50	" " " "
£10	" " " "

All Life Subscriptions will be invested to provide a permanent annual income.

In addition to an Annual Subscription

(a) Donations are invited to the Capital Endowment Fund for a permanent Hostel Building where fifty students can be accommodated.

(b) Branches or groups of subscribers are urged to adopt a Named Room in the Hostel by paying £30 which covers the rent of a student's room for one year.

(c) Subscriptions are needed for the poorer students. Reserve Fund Subscriptions still

(d) Donations invited to Special Fund to meet cost of sending out new Missionaries.

(v) Mary Dobson Memorial Fund for endowment of Mary Dobson Scholarships for poor students.

For further particulars apply to the Secretary.

Miss K. L. SPRAGUE

Room 1, Pension House

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PAMPHLET