

in the more advanced communities. In the meantime, in aid of that higher appreciation of the benefits of education that may supply a better, if necessarily less effectual stimulus, I desire to direct your attention to a few considerations, which show that young women,—viewed, not as future lawyers, physicians, politicians, or even teachers, but as future wives and mothers,—should enjoy a high and liberal culture; and which may help us to understand the nature and means of such culture.

“The first thought that arises, on this branch of the subject, is that woman was intended as the helpmate of man. And here, I may first speak of that kind and loving ministry of woman which renders life sweet, and mitigates its pains and sorrows, and which is to be found not solely among the educated and refined, but among the simplest and least cultured,—a true instinct of goodness, needing direction, but native to the heart of woman, in all climes and in all states of civilisation. Yet, it is sad to think how much of this holy instinct is lost and wasted through want of knowledge and thought. How often do labour and self-sacrifice become worse than useless because not guided by intelligence; how often an influ-

ence that would be omnipotent for good, becomes vitiated and debased into a power that enervates and enfeebles the better resolutions of men, and involves them and their purposes in its own inanity and frivolity. No influence is so powerful for good over young men as that of educated female society. Nothing is so strong to uphold the energies, or to guide the decisions, of the greatest and most useful men, as the sympathy and advice of one who can look at affairs from without, (from the quiet sanctuary of home,) and can bring to bear on them the quick tact and ready resources of a cultivated woman's mind. In this, the loftier sphere of domestic duty, in her companionship and true copartnership with man, woman requires high culture, quite as much as if she had, alone and unshielded, to fight the battle of life.

“It may be said that, after all, the intelligence of the average woman is quite equal to that of the average man, and, that highly educated women would not be appreciated by the half-educated men who perform most of the work of the world. Granting this, it by no means follows that the necessity for the education of women is diminished. Every Xantippe cannot have a Socrates, but every



wise and learned woman can find scope for her energies and abilities. If need be, she may make something even of a very commonplace man. She can greatly improve even a fool, and can vastly enhance the happiness and usefulness of a good man, should she be so fortunate as to find one.

"But, it is in the maternal relation that the importance of the education of woman is most clearly apparent. It requires no very extensive study of biography, to learn, that it is of less consequence to a man what sort of father he may have had, than what sort of mother. It is, indeed, a popular impression that the children of clever fathers are likely to exhibit the opposite quality. This, I do not believe, except in so far as it results from the fact, that men in public positions, or immersed in business, are apt to neglect the oversight of their children. But it is a noteworthy fact that eminent qualities in men may often be traced to similar qualities in their mothers. Knowledge, it is true, is not hereditary, but high mental qualities are so, and experience and observation seem to prove that the transmission is chiefly through the mother's side. But leaving this physiological view, let us look

at the purely educational. Imagine an educated mother, training and moulding the powers of her children, giving to them in the years of infancy those gentle yet permanent tendencies, which are of more account in the formation of character than any subsequent educational influences, selecting for them the best instructors, encouraging and aiding them in their difficulties, rejoicing with them in their successes, able to take an intelligent interest in their progress in literature and science. How ennobling such an influence, how fruitful of good results, how certain to secure the warm and lasting gratitude of those who have received its benefits, when they look back in future life on the paths of wisdom along which they have been led! What a contrast to this is the position of an untaught mother, finding her few superficial accomplishments of no use in the work of life, unable wisely to guide the rapidly developing mental life of her children, bringing them up to repeat her own failures and errors, or, perhaps to despise her as ignorant of what they must learn! Truly, the art and profession of a mother is the noblest and most far-reaching of all, and she who would worthily discharge



its duties must be content with no mean preparation. It is worth while also to say here, that these duties and responsibilities in the future, are not to be measured altogether by those of the past.

"Several features of the present movement afford, I think, especial reasons for congratulation. One is, that this is an association of ladies for educational purposes, originating with ladies, carried on by them, and supported by their contributions. Another is, that the movement is self-supporting, and not sustained by any extraneous aid. It will I hope attract to itself endowments, which may give it a stronger and higher character, but its present position of independence is the best guarantee for this, as well as for all other kinds of success. Again, this association embraces nearly all that is elevated in social and educational standing in our city, and has thus the broadest and highest basis that can be attained among us, for any effort whatever.

"We are not alone, nor are we indeed in the van of this great work. I need not speak of the United States, where the magnificent Vassar College, (with which the name of one of our excellent and learned women was con-

nected so usefully), Cornell University, the University of Michigan, and others, have marked strongly the popular sentiment as to the education of women. In Canada itself, Toronto, and even Quebec and Kingston, have preceded us, though I think, in the magnitude of our success, we may hope to excel them all. In the mother country, the Edinburgh Association,—which has afforded us the model for our own,—the North of England Educational Council, the Bedford College in London, the Cheltenham College, the Hitchin College, Cambridge, (since developed into Girton College), also Newnham College, the Lady Margaret Somerville Halls at Oxford, the Alexandra College in Dublin, are all indications of the intensity and direction of the current. On the continent of Europe, Sweden has a State college for women; the Victoria Lyceum at Berlin has the patronage of the Princess Royal; the University of Paris has established classes for ladies; and even St. Petersburg has its university for women.

"All these movements have originated not only in our time, but within a few years, and they are evidently the dawn of a new educational era, which, in my judgment, will see as great an advance in the education of our



race as that which was inaugurated by the revival of learning, and the establishment of universities for men, in a previous age. It implies, not only the higher education of women, but the elevation, extension, and refinement of the higher education of men. Colleges for women will, as new institutions, be free from many evil traditions which cling about the old seats of learning. They will start with all the advantages of our modern civilisation. They will be animated by the greater refinement, tact, and taste of woman. They will impress many of these features upon our older colleges, with which, I have no doubt, they will become connected under the same university organisations. They will also greatly increase the demand for a higher education among young men. An Edinburgh professor is reported to have said to some students who asked ignorant questions, 'Ask your sisters at home, they can tell you,'—a retort which, I imagine, few young men would lightly endure. So soon as young men find that they must attain to higher education before they can take a creditable place in the society of ladies, we shall find them respecting science and literature almost as much as money, and attaching to the services of the college pro-

fessor as much importance as to those of their tailor."

Simultaneously with the institution of the lectures of the Ladies' Association, we were moving, in the Protestant Board of School Commissioners, for the establishment of a high school for girls. It was not, however, until 1874 that the requisite means for this purpose were in possession of the Board,—the urgent claims of the elementary schools having very properly been given precedence over all other schemes. On February 4th, 1874, the minutes of the Board record, that, "Dr. Dawson brought forward the subject of the Girls' High School. A committee was appointed, consisting of Dr. Dawson, Dr. McVicar, and Mr. Lunn, to make inquiries as to a suitable site, and to suggest to the Board a plan of operation for the same." The committee acted promptly, and on February 28th, presented a report on an eligible site, of which they had secured the refusal, and on a plan for the organisation of the school. Unforeseen delays, however, occurred in the matter of the site and building, but on May 27th, 1874, it was determined to engage temporary rooms and begin the school; and before the end of June premises were secured, and Mrs.



Scott, (now Mrs. Morton), a lady trained in the McGill Normal School, was engaged as first lady principal, together with four teachers trained in the same institution.

Though not directly connected with each other, the Ladies' Association, and the Girls' High School were not without mutual relations. When the idea of a high school for girls, in addition to the long established high school for boys, was first suggested, there were many objections to it, and the Commissioners might have had some hesitation in facing the obloquy which they incurred, had it not been for the new interest excited by the lectures for ladies, and the growing wish for some systematic study, leading to an actual college education. Fortunately, we could always depend on the Normal School for a supply of qualified lady teachers.

The consideration which, to my own mind, constituted the great responsibility of the movement, was its possible bearing on the University. The High School for boys had been one of the best feeders of the college, and it was expected that, ere long, a demand would arise for a college training on the part of those who had passed through the Girls' High School. We opened to them, as one

distinction, the examination for Associate in Arts, and a class of ten passed in 1877. The examinations for Senior Associate were then opened to them, in the hope, that provision might be made, partly by the Ladies' Association, and partly by private tuition, to enable them to attain a standing equal to that of the second year of the college course. Few, however, were found able to avail themselves of this privilege.

Up to this point, we had slowly and laboriously worked since 1855, and now the questions remained:—would women ask admission to collegiate classes, and if they did, what means could be adopted for supplying the demand? For my own part, I felt persuaded that the public opinion of the Protestant community of Montreal, would not tolerate the method of mixed classes, in use in some other communities; and that, when the demand came, the means would be found to meet it. I waited, however, patiently, both for the demand, and for the means, and meanwhile prepared to make it part of the business of another visit to Great Britain, which I had in prospect, to collect all the additional information possible, so as to be armed on my return, for all contingencies.



As already said, I returned to Canada in the summer of 1884. Shortly afterwards, a deputation of ladies who had already passed the examination for Associate in Arts, called on me, and expressed their earnest wish to proceed to the examination for the degree in Arts, if the necessary means of education could be provided. Here, then, was the demand, and coming from those who had distinct claims on our consideration, but what of the means? It was but a few weeks later, (as before mentioned), that Sir Donald Smith asked me if it was desired to establish collegiate classes for women, and stated that, if so, he was prepared to give the sum of \$50,000 on conditions to be settled by him. I confess that the coincidence of the demand for higher education, made by those who had so great claims upon us, and the offer of so liberal a benefaction, by a gentleman to whom no application for aid had been made on my part, seemed to me to constitute one of those rare opportunities for good, which occur but seldom to any man, and which are to be accepted with thankfulness, and followed up with earnest effort. From that time, the subject occupied my closest attention. The offer was duly communicated to the Board of Governors, and

was accepted by them, the conditions being that the classes were to be wholly separate and distinct, and that no expenditure was to be incurred beyond the income of the endowment. This sum, however, proved sufficient to provide the necessary duplicate courses, for the first and second years in the Arts Faculty, and in the autumn of 1884, the first session for women was commenced, with fourteen regular, and thirteen occasional students.

In October 1886, Sir Donald Smith increased his endowment to \$120,000, with the view of providing sufficient income for courses in the third and fourth years. In the session of 1886-87 there were already 20 regular, and 58 partial and occasional, students in this special course of the Faculty of Arts. During the next year the number increased to 26, and 82, respectively, thus making 108 students in all, and at the end of this session eight young women received, for the first time in McGill, the degree of B.A.

This great work is not yet complete. We look forward to a college for women, either a college of the University, co-ordinate with McGill College, or affiliated to the University. Such college, while taking advantage of the Museum, Laboratories, Library, and other



appliances of McGill College, and to a certain extent of its staff, will have its own building, provided with all modern improvements and refinements for educational work. It will have several professors and lecturers of its own, for certain of the standard subjects of the course, or for some of the accessory and optional subjects, now imperfectly, or not at all, represented in McGill. It will thus be enabled to give reciprocal aid to the work for men, and with the united staffs of two colleges working in harmony, the course of McGill, whether for men or women, will be stronger, more complete and more varied, than that of any other university in the Dominion. The writer of these reminiscences would fain live to see the realisation of all this, but delays have occurred which have rendered this prospect less likely than it was some time ago. In any case he may hope that it will be realised under his immediate successors, and he leaves to them the results of thirty years of work, which, whatever their failures and shortcomings, have, at all events, been carried out with earnestness, perseverance, and honesty of purpose. I thank God, that we have been able to do what we have done up to this time, and desire to express my

sincere gratitude to the many friends and members of the University, from the Chancellor downwards, who have taken part in the work, or have diminished its labours and anxieties by their advice and sympathy.

I have not entered, except incidentally, into the question of the relative expediency and success, of methods of mixed and separate education of the sexes, in collegiate institutions. I desire to express, as a matter of personal opinion and experience, my entire sympathy with those who hold that the education of women should be conducted, as far as possible, in separate classes. We should aim at a culture for woman, higher, more refining, and better suited for her nature, than that which we provide for men, and I feel convinced, that even when the course of study is the same with that for men, this result is to some extent secured, if the classes are separate.