

A NEW KNOCK AT AN OLD DOOR.

IN my morning journal stand five solid columns of advertisements of girls' schools. "It is fit," says Mr. Samuel Pepys, speaking of some new gown bought for his wife, "that the poor wretch should have something wherewith to content her." But it would seem that some hundreds of New York wives refuse to content themselves with these manifold educational concessions of the Pepysian spirit. For beside the journal lies a petition, very fully signed, a large proportion of names being those of women, which reads:

"We, the undersigned, residents of New York City and neighborhood, beg leave to present our respectful petition: That in view of the present state of public opinion, both here and in other countries, touching the justice and expediency of admitting women to the same educational advantages as men, a state of opinion especially evidenced by the recent action of the English universities of Cambridge and London, and in view of the influential position of Columbia College as among the oldest and most richly endowed educational institutions in the United States, and preëminently representing the intellectual interests of the city of New York, you will be pleased to consider how best to extend, with as little delay as possible, to such properly qualified women as may desire it, the many and great benefits of education in Columbia College, by admitting them to lectures and examinations."

To many sober and conscientious persons, both men and women, this demand sounds absurd, needless, improper, and dangerous. But do these objectors remember that every appeal for a better female education seemed, in its day, equally preposterous? It is hardly three centuries since Mademoiselle Françoise de Saintonge was hooted through the streets of her native village for proposing so disreputable a plan as the establishment of schools for girls in France, and her anxious father called in four learned doctors to determine whether this mad idea was not due to her possession by devils. The doctors pronounced her in her right mind, but her pious fellow-citizens stopped the spread of immoral ideas by the conclusive argument of insults leveled at the teacher and stones addressed to the pupils. The progress of the next century and a half is recorded in Dean Swift's observation that men constantly asked each other whether it was prudent to choose a wife who had good natural parts, some sense of wit and humor, a little knowledge of history, the capacity to relish travels or moral and entertaining discourse, and to discern the more obvious beauties of poetry. The general verdict, he says, was against such attainments in women, because their tendency was

to make wives pretentious and conceited, and not duly subject to their husbands.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, translating Epictetus at nineteen, and sending her work to her kind friend, the Lord Bishop of Salisbury, apologizes at length for attempting a task universally pronounced unfit for a woman, and certain to draw down censure upon her (excusing herself, however, by citing the opinions of Erasmus, in the Latin!) Nearly fifty years afterward, in advising her daughter concerning the education of a bright little namesake, she entreats that free scope may be accorded the child's capacity, for the sake of the pure delight of learning and of her future happiness. But she adds the warning that, to insure a satisfactory marriage, the young girl's wit and acquirements must be as carefully concealed as a deformity, from a world which suspected or despised a learned woman. So strong, almost to our own day, has been this half-conscious contempt of the feminine mentality, that even Charles Lamb, that gentle and charitable soul, could speak of "L. E. L." with an unmanly sneer, and declare that a female poet, or female author of any kind, invited disrespect.

It is but ninety years since an English woman published the first serious demand for the higher education of English women. Her public found the book immodest, irreligious, anarchic. Issued to-day, it would appear a harmless plea, a trifle heavy and conservative, perhaps, for the thorough cultivation of the female mind, urged on social, moral, and religious grounds, and protesting against the sentimentalism of Rousseau, and the now forgotten Dr. Gregory. Mrs. Hannah More's dull novel of "Cœlebs in Search of a Wife," issued in 1808, contained, perhaps, the first argument in fiction that a ninny is not necessarily the ideal wife, or a knowledge of the Latin grammar incompatible with a turn for housekeeping.

It was no scoffer but the sweet-spirited Fénelon who taught that contact with learning would be almost as fatal to womanly delicacy as contact with vice. To Voltaire's love of epigram might be pardoned his saying that, "Ideas are like beards; women and young men have none." But Lessing was serious when he declared that, "The woman who thinks is like the man who puts on rouge, ridiculous." And even Niebuhr, the large-minded, believed that he should not have educated a girl well, for he should have made her know too much.

It was the first care of the Pilgrim Fathers to establish schools. Girls were allowed to attend these, two hours a day. But afterward the system was remodeled in a spirit of wide liberality, and girls were suffered all day—in the summer. When women teachers came to be employed they were required to “teach the English language correctly and the rudiments of arithmetic.” In 1826, after a discussion of three years, the city fathers of Boston resolved to establish a high school for girls, on the model of its admirable high school for boys. But such an army of young women battered the gates of that educational heaven with storms of prayers, that, after a trial of eighteen months, the dismayed corporation decided—to enlarge the building and multiply teachers? No, but to close the school altogether.

We smile at Monsieur de Saintonge and the sages of Boston. The two hundred and fifty advertisements refute the ancient prejudices. The innumerable names of women who have conquered success in literature, science, art; as great organizers, administrators, educators, refute them. The very discussion of the hour puts them to silence, for it declares that the question is no longer whether women are worth educating, but what education is worth most to them. The point of view is changed because the social conditions are changed.

If the cultivated judgment of ages held the female understanding to be inferior, doubtless it was inferior. Without incentives, means, or opportunities for growth, the mind of woman did not grow. And these helps were denied her, not by any mean desire of man to defraud her, not by any divine limitation of her needs, but because her time had not come. Just as war and slavery have been inevitable conditions and natural agents of human progress, so has the subjection of woman. In a rude society, man was her necessary protector, she his helpless dependent. Some sort of marriage utilized the capacity, such as it was, of every woman, because every man needed a household of cheap servitors. If he fought to protect his property in wives and concubines, they canceled the debt by labor. Ignorance was their normal and necessary estate. So long as the exercise of brute force remained the chief satisfaction of man, so long was woman insignificant. As advancing civilization has required them, the feminine qualities have answered, with growing adequacy, to the requirement. But the traditions of the time of man's legitimate supremacy, of course, lived on, and still survive in the general if vague notion that something external, mechanical,

eleemosynary, must continually be done *for* woman; whereas the modern spirit, which has been so long struggling into recognition, maintains that little of permanent value can be done for woman which is not done *by* woman. Growth is from within.

In his attitude of guardian, man—as, in the progress of time, he has felt the need of a companion and ally rather than of a servant and toy—has gradually released to woman the freedom of certain tracts of knowledge, finding his own account in it. And if he has not hitherto been ready to endow her with the whole fair domain, neither has she been free to occupy it. Ever since the Old Testament matrons ground the corn between stones, and sewed the skins their husbands brought home, and baked, and brewed, and made wine, and taught their slaves, and tended their sick, and reared their children, and adorned themselves to find favor in the sight of their lords, have generations of women found their first untroubled rest in the grave. But now machinery does half their work at half the cost, while organization still further relieves them from drudgery. Moreover, the great increase of wealth following on the arts of peace, fosters a growing class of unemployed and luxurious women, free to use the means of the higher education which their higher needs demand.

How, then, shall we make the most of that great indeterminate factor of the new civilization,—the feminine intelligence? It would seem self-evident that those studies which have taken their place in the higher education of man, because philosophy and experience found in them the surest and readiest means of symmetrical mental development, must be equally valuable to woman. If the languages, mathematics, modern science, logic, metaphysics, psychology, best train the faculties of observation, comparison, reflection; if they give flexibility and strength to the mind, and mold it to be always progressive, always acquiring more knowledge by thoughtful experience,—ought not their salutary discipline, as administered in college, to be extended to girls?

It is answered, first, that girls, being different, do not need the same training as boys; second, that they already have it; third, that they could not endure it. But whether likeness or difference predominates can never be known until like training develop the one or emphasize the other. “As long as boys and girls run about in the dirt and trundle hoops together,” wrote Sydney Smith, “they are precisely alike. If you catch up one half of these creatures and train them to a particular set of actions and opinions, and the other half to a perfectly opposite set, of course their un-

derstandings will differ, as one or the other sort of occupations has called this or that talent into action. There is surely no occasion to go into any deeper or more abstruse reasoning to explain so very simple a phenomenon." Teachers of mixed classes agree that what profits the one profits the other. Seneca advocated the study of the Greek philosophy for women, who, he said, needed it as a restraint upon their more impulsive temperament; and Plutarch urged upon his countrywomen the study of the Greek language and literature, for a like reason. No less forcible is Doctor Johnson's plea for this culture,—that whatever withdraws us from the power of the senses, whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of human beings.

The education of women is notoriously defective in the cultivation of definite ideas and the training of the judgment. Familiarity with scientific methods of study would dissipate their general and perilous confidence in "luck," and in that impossible condition known as "about right." Of directly practical value, also, would they find the capacity to deduce a conclusion from its premises, to estimate the worth of evidence, and understand the nature of proof. In every household, affairs daily come to judgment requiring more or less scientific knowledge and a scientific habit of thought. An exact mental training would mitigate the evils and enlarge the best possibilities of woman's existence.

This training both private schools and high schools must fall short of. Girls' high schools afford four years of what is projected as an eight years' term, and girls are expected to be satisfied with what is merely a preparatory course for their brothers. Private schools necessarily reflect the indefinite and various demands of their patrons. Undue stress must be laid upon accomplishments, undue cramming must be encouraged, the period of study being far too short; the methods of teaching must be empirical rather than scientific, and the end aimed at temporary and unreal, having no relation to life beyond the examination and the class-room. Our best private schools are indeed admirable, but there is no recognized standard of worth, and the bad are as ten to one. Besides, in apparatus, cabinets, libraries, and professorships, the richest among them is poor, compared with the richer colleges. There is but so much first-rate teaching capacity existent at any one time, and the larger salaries, honors, and pleasant conditions of the colleges, of course, absorb the most of it. Agassiz thought that a young student would gain more from coming into contact for a single month with a man

of really profound knowledge on any subject than he could from many months spent under the tutelage of one who himself knows but very little more than he attempts to teach. But the majority of teachers fall into this latter classification. Even the women's colleges, proposing the same curriculum as the men's, deserving the most sincere respect for their aims and their successes, must long be hampered by the difficulty of securing the ablest teaching talent and appliances. The best high-class boys' schools are conceded to be those which send the best equipped candidates to the universities. Were pupils from the girls' schools admitted to the same examinations there is no doubt that their standards and their methods of teaching would immediately advance.

If, however, the health of our girls is threatened by hard study, further opportunities of self-immolation must, of course, be denied them. The average health of boarding-schools is, indeed, low. From the graded and normal schools, girls are withdrawn more frequently than boys, by reason of physical inability. But the monstrosity of the prevailing curriculum, the high pressure, bad dressing, bad diet, external distractions, and the almost total want of healthful exercise among girls, explain this difference. The experience of twelve years at Ann Arbor, of eight at Cornell, of nine at Boston University, of much longer terms at the Ohio colleges, and of the entire existence of Vassar and Smith,—testifies to a constant improvement in the health of their girls, and a wholesome and preservative power in severe study, provided the conditions are right.

If it be true that the higher the civilization, the more nearly is companionship of the sexes reached, it seems a paradox that they should be united everywhere except in study, the most refining and least self-conscious of employments. Yet there is a general feeling that some vague danger, to manners if not to morals, lurks in the demand for the admission of girls to the precincts of the college. When the trustees of Cornell were debating the wisdom of accepting the munificent Sage endowment, with its conditions, their committee gathered the opinions of nearly all the educators of note in the country, as to the feasibility and propriety of opening the classes to women. The speculations of the officers of the older colleges (inheriting their traditions from semi-monastic institutions, founded and administered by men vowed to celibacy, and dreading the influence of women), almost uniformly discouraged and disapproved such a step. The testimony of the colleges already open to

both sexes, of academies and high schools, in the hands of men touching life at more points, with equal uniformity encouraged it. In theory it was averred that the girls would become mannish, or the boys effeminate; that the standard of scholarship would be lowered in concession to feminine limitations; and that sentimentalism would be developed, with a consequent deterioration of morals. In practice it was proved that while the boys acquired finer manners, the girls advanced in truthfulness, sincerity, and courage; that the standard of scholarship was raised, and that the predicted period of sentimentalism, though everywhere overdue, had persistently failed to appear. Cornell took the forward step, and President White adds the great weight of his own approval to the side of the innovators.

By some subtle process of reasoning quite inscrutable to the ordinary mind, it is maintained, however, that though coeducation may do for the barbarian regions of Michigan and Cornell universities, the metropolis, as represented by Columbia College, cannot with propriety extend her lectures and examinations to girls. But what then shall be thought of Cambridge?—for, after all, the experience of the great English university offers the best precedent, since the demand upon her was almost identical with that made to-day upon Columbia. It is, perhaps, twenty-five years since the English advocates of the higher education of women began to feel that their educational advantages could never equal those of men, until not only the subjects taught should be the same, but the teachers of equal and equally acknowledged ability. In ten years this feeling organized itself into the opening to them of the Cambridge local examinations, which are simply for standing. A little later the famous Girton College was founded, its object being “to hold in relation to girls’ schools and to home teachings, a position analogous to that occupied by the universities toward the public schools for boys,” and “to obtain for the students of the college admission to the examinations for degrees of the University of Cambridge, and generally to place the college in connection with that University.” It was understood that the immediate instruction should be given daily by the professors, lecturers, and fellows of the universities and its colleges.

The new college went into operation with six students, in a hired building, in October, 1869. It now possesses a building of its own, and even in its first decade recorded the admission of eighty-six candidates, of whom nineteen were graduated with honors, according to the university standard, and eleven passed the examinations which qualify for the degree

of Bachelor of Arts. These examinations, however, presented only an honor standard, and it was not until February, 1881, that the liberal action of the senate placed women students of Cambridge for all practical purposes upon an equal footing with men. In 1875, Newnham Hall was erected for the accommodation of women students coming to Cambridge to avail themselves of the new opportunities. Newnham Hostel was presently added, and the two, constituting Newnham College, to-day overflow with students.

Following on the Cambridge success came the opening of Lady Margaret Hall and Somerville College at Oxford, the free admission of women to the examinations of the University of London, and the granting of liberal opportunities on the part of Edinburgh, Dublin, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Durham, and St. Andrews. The University of London is a young institution, unhampered by the prejudices and restrictions of its elders. “Hence it has been able to take a more decisive step than any other university in the direction of improvement in women’s education. For several years, it tried the experiment of a special examination for women, with a curriculum framed in supposed deference to special feminine needs. But though many women availed themselves of this examination, it soon became evident that the successes they won were all on the old lines—in classics, science, mathematics, literature; in fact, the subjects which belong to an ordinary course of liberal education, and not in any of the special studies which were presumed to be appropriate for them as women. Moreover, it was manifest that a distinctly feminine examination was not what women wanted; for the public believed that it was inferior, or specially lenient, whereas female students desired to have their knowledge and intellectual cultivation tested by the ordinary and recognized standards, and asked for no special tenderness or favor. Accordingly, after much discussion, it was determined, in 1877, to obtain from the crown a new charter, *admitting women on exactly the same footing as men to all the degrees in all the faculties*—arts, laws, medicine, science, music—and permitting them to receive the same honors and degrees. An increasing number of women has each year come up for matriculation and graduation, and some of the successes they have attained have been remarkable. The gold medal in anatomy—one of the chief and most coveted prizes in the medical profession—was won last year by a woman. Another came out first in mental and moral philosophy, and the proportion of women who pass *well* in the examinations is much

greater than that of the men. This, however, is easily accounted for by the fact that at present the numbers are much smaller, and are necessarily made up of students of exceptional ability and enterprise; whereas the crowds of men, of course, include a large number of the rank and file of those who are treading the usual path toward professional life, and who have no special aptitude or enthusiasm for study." This is the testimony of J. G. Fitch, Esquire, inspector of schools, member of the senate of London University, and one of the most distinguished educationists of England.

Professor Jackson, of Trinity College, Cambridge, writes:

"Having taken classes of ladies through the Ethics and part of the Metaphysics of Aristotle, and the 'Republic,' the 'Phaedo,' and the 'Philetus' of Plato, I can speak in the very highest terms of their industry and capacity. I put their attention to a severe test, as I sometimes lectured for an hour and a half, and even for an hour and three-quarters without interruption. As a proof of their capacity, I may mention that at the end of the Academic year, 1877-78, I examined some of my lady pupils in the Aristotle papers, which I was giving to the Trinity men who graduated in 1879, and the Plato papers which I was giving to the Trinity men who graduated in 1880, and that one of the ladies was third in Aristotle and first in Plato. In the following year another lady was second in my Aristotle paper. In both cases these ladies had among their competitors some of the very best men of the time."

J. P. Postgate, Esquire, M. A., Fellow of Trinity, and Professor of University College, London, writes:

"The performances of women in examinations at Cambridge and elsewhere, I look upon as wholly encouraging. The standard by which I should test them is an absolute one, and judged by that they show work which is intrinsically good and worth doing. I have been surprised at the numbers of first-class and other distinctions that they have gained. Both at Cambridge and at University College the women not unfrequently beat the men in the lists. Last year two-thirds of those examined in Comparative Philology were women; and a woman was easily first in the paper, beating another very good candidate, a man who has since taken a scholarship at Oxford, I believe. She did extremely well in the paper, and has been working at the subject since, and showing a very remarkable linguistic aptitude not merely in ancient, but in modern languages. The third candidate was a young lady who has since brought out a Hebrew grammar, which I believe is very well done. She also distinguished herself in Greek and Latin."

From the other colleges come equally favorable reports of feminine application, persistency, and accomplishment. Here, then, are some hundreds of women doing the same tasks as men, submitting to the same tests as men, showing at least as good work as men, without injury to their health. For no complaint of physical inability comes from any source; while at Girton, the pleasant apartment thoughtfully provided as a hospital for the deli-

cate women who were to break down under the strain of constant brain-work has never been used except as a room for examinations. Equally satisfactory is the testimony to the moral safety of the new system, not the slightest suggestion of impropriety having arisen.

From the beginning the most distinguished men in England, both lay and clerical, have been most friendly to this movement for the liberation of learning. At a recent distribution of prizes at the Oxford higher local examination, the Archbishop of Canterbury expressed his great gratification that opportunities for the highest instruction were so rapidly opening to young women.

The fortunate candidates for honors or recognition long since began to reap substantial benefits from having received the Cambridge certificate, not only in being preferred as teachers or governesses, but by commanding better salaries. The standard of girls' schools has been perceptibly advanced, and the character of pupils elevated, "sentimentalism and conceit being lessened, and habits of order, economy of time, and interest in study developed, as well as a new sympathy with those who are engaged in the graver business of life."

So much for conservative England. What is asked of New York? To quote from the admirable address of Dr. Storrs—"that a great, distinguished, opulent institution of learning in the midst of this metropolitan city, which has received, undoubtedly, large endowments from the direct gift of women, or under their influence, should give them the opportunity to pursue the higher branches of study, under the care of the teachers already assembled." Columbia cannot justify their exclusion on the ground that Vassar, and Wellesley and Smith Colleges invite them. Boys are intrusted to her care when Harvard and Yale exist, because New York parents prefer that home influences should accompany college training; and girls do not need these influences less. Besides, the expense of girls' resident-colleges is very great, compared with those of a richly endowed institution like Columbia. It is true that the charter of that venerable college did not contemplate the admission of girls. But it did contemplate the enlightenment and refinement of the community. And it would hardly be too much to say that, in the changed conditions of our time, if it were necessary to discriminate between the sexes in the matter of education, the cause of morality and progress would be better served by giving the higher opportunities to women.

The question of coeducation is not even to be considered,—at most, it is one of method only. If it be found convenient that boys

and girls should listen to lectures in common, as at Cambridge, it is difficult to see any sound objection to that economy of teaching. If it be found convenient to instruct them separately, again, as at Cambridge, criticism is equally silenced. The President of Columbia, who heartily favors the admission of girls, says that the college can provide for them separate entrances, cloak-rooms, and class-rooms. It is not apprehended that a crowd will assail the doors. It is not proposed to compel the many, who have no desire for better opportunities, but only to invite the few, who now stand vainly waiting.

The spirit of justice, of course, would rest woman's claim to the highest educational privileges on the human right to unrestricted growth, for soul is above sex. But here, as everywhere, the way of justice is the way of expediency. Enlightenment is not in proportion to the amount of knowledge on deposit, at any one time; it is in proportion to its diffusion. Because of the devotion of the average American to business, the mother and the school-mistress mold the early and sensitive years of the child's life to what shape they must. To the fitness of the average mother and school-mistress for this high task, what wasted powers, what mean ideals, what mistaken views of life bear

witness! Raise her schools, and the whole standard of woman's existence is raised. For the higher the few can reach, the higher the many rise. It is her perverted love of beauty which makes woman extravagant. It is her uncultivated desire for the higher satisfactions of art which makes our homes museums of upholstery. It is her unenlightened loyalty to the spirit of good which bids her cling to old abuses that were once uses, to harmful superstitions that were once faiths, and to-day constitutes her the most conspicuous bar to progress. Tocqueville says that he ascribes the treachery of some of the first leaders in the reform movements in France to the unhappy influence of wives and sisters on husbands and brothers. The claims of the past and their own private interests were more to them than the welfare of the struggling millions. Their perspective was in fault. But when a thorough culture and a trained judgment are added to the "superlunary virtues" of women, these accusations must fall.

In the time of old Cato the women raised an insurrection to obtain the privilege of riding in chariots, of decking themselves with rings, and of wearing purple robes. To-day they demand the outlook of a broader humanity, the jewel of high culture, the royalty of knowledge.

Lucia Gilbert Runkle.

[Begun in November.]

THE LED-HORSE CLAIM.*

A ROMANCE OF THE SILVER MINES.

BY MARY HALLOCK FOOTE,

Author of "Friend Barton's Concern," "A Story of the Dry Season," etc.

CHAPTER XIV.

LITTLE REST.

"WHY was it called 'Little Rest?'" Cecil asked, as the carriage slowly climbed the hill from the station. She had known the name since childhood, but its familiarity had dulled her ear to its meaning, which struck her now for the first time.

"It was a half-way stopping place for the stages on the old post road," Miss Esther replied. "They changed horses at Sullivan, two miles on. This long hill was hard for the tired teams, and they used to stop at the foot of the first rise to water and breathe them a little. First there was a blacksmith's shop, and a box on the side of the big elm

for letters and papers; then there was a tavern called 'The Little Rest.'"

Cecil softly repeated the name to herself. The horses dropped into a steady, hard-pulling walk, after their first spurt up the long, steep grade, which was broken at intervals by shallow, transverse hollows to lead off the water.

The Hartwell house stood at the end of a broad, grass-grown lane which joined the main road at the top of the hill. Cecil remembered her grandmother's house when she was just tall enough to see her face, distorted in miniature reflection, in the polished brass door-knobs; when, to her small stride, the meadow grass in June was a tropical jungle, and a seat among the low apple-tree boughs

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