

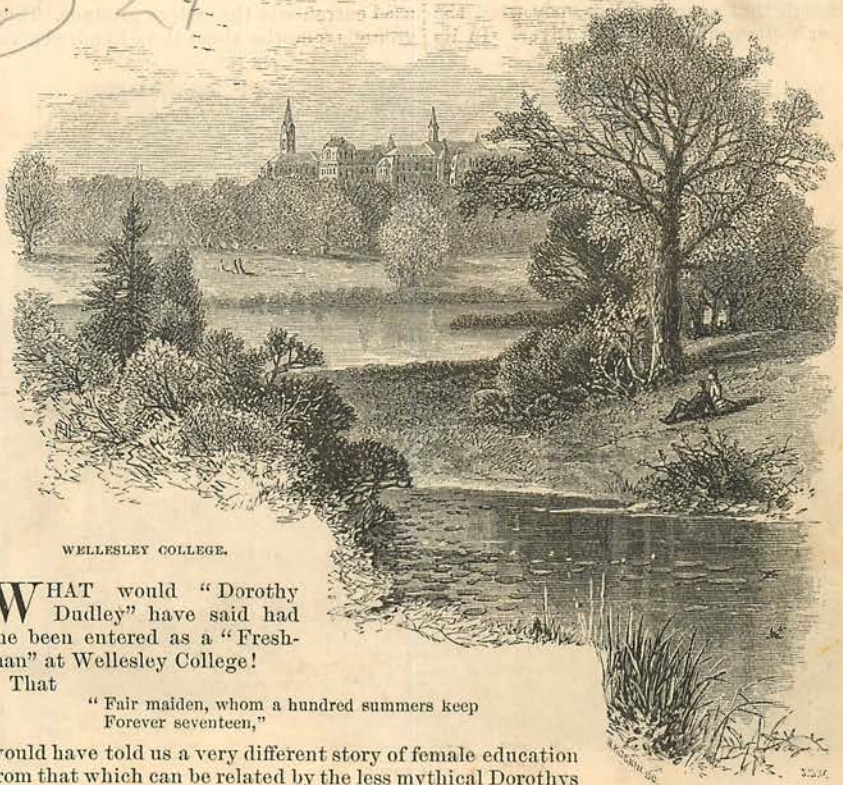
# HARPER'S NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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WELLESLEY COLLEGE.

By EDWARD ABBOTT.

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WELLESLEY COLLEGE.

**W**HAT would "Dorothy Dudley" have said had she been entered as a "Freshman" at Wellesley College!

That

"Fair maiden, whom a hundred summers keep  
Forever seventeen,"

would have told us a very different story of female education from that which can be related by the less mythical Dorothys and Dudleys of to-day. At the time to which the first entry of her "Diary" introduces us, when nine British redcoats stopped at Bradish Tavern, in Cambridge, for dinner, and then galloped on toward Lexington with suspected design of seizing John Hancock and Samuel Adams, there was no female seminary or young ladies' boarding-school in all the colonies, and no college to which a girl might go. Our nineteenth-century ideas of education were largely nebulous matter. The now rising project of the co-education of the sexes was very far below the horizon. Not even at William and Mary College was there any place except for the Williams. The Marys were left to shift for themselves. Their facilities for the acquisition of knowledge were few, the obstacles in their way were many. A view of such an institution as Wellesley College becomes, therefore, an important part of the general inspection we are all now so much interested in making for the measurement of the century's progress. And it is doubtful if at any point the contrast between the two extremities of the hundred years be more striking than at this of the education of young women.

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Half an hour's ride by a swift train due west from Boston, over the Boston and Albany Railroad, brings one to Wellesley, fifteen miles away. A tasteful church, one or two stores of the common country kind, a junction of several roads, and a few dwelling-houses, scattered rather than clustered, give only the slightest emphasis to the spot selected by the railroad for its station, while of the whereabouts of the distant college building there is no hint except to those who know exactly where to look. Neither is there any intimation to one alighting at this station of the beautiful rolling country that stretches away to the southward. Through that country pleasantly wind the upper waters of the Charles River. In its

nadnock still farther in the other. If the college has a soul—and one may sometimes think it must have—it may daily study the grace and beauty of its form in the mirroring waters of Lake Waban, which stretch away at its very base, a most lovely sheet for beauty, and a most admirable one for use.

Years ago Dr. Bowditch instituted careful research to ascertain the most healthful town in Massachusetts, and to this was accorded the honor.

We may reach, by a short walk or drive along the South Natick road, the pretty lodge which marks the main and commonly used entrance to the college grounds. These grounds comprise about three hundred acres,



PORTER'S LODGE.

midst lies the historic village of South Natick—the "Oldtown" whose "Folks" Mrs. Stowe has so pleasantly delineated—sacred with the associations of John Eliot, apostle to the Indians, and containing a monument to his memory. Around are the rural towns of Grantville, beautiful for situation; Weston, wooded and retired; Natick, once the home and now the burial-place of the lamented Henry Wilson—busy and noisy with the plying of a great and useful industry.

Over all of this wide and varied prospect the eye can rove from the heights of Wellesley College, and, clear air permitting, can mark the blue hills of Milton far in one direction, and the dim outline of Mount Mo-

beautifully diversified. It does not seem as if the most accomplished landscape gardener, with fifty years of time and unlimited supplies of money, could have created the like out of any material. Nature, one would almost think, must have anticipated the want, and striven by long and patient process to meet it. The estate was kept as a gentleman's country-seat for many years, and the old forest trees are carefully preserved. The surface rises occasionally into picturesque summits, and as often sinks away into wild and retired dells. Miniature forests dispute with carefully nourished lawns for the supremacy. Established evergreens and ancient oaks join with the flowering shrub



and the young tree fresh from the nursery in contributing to the foliage that screens the soil. Yet nowhere is there an appearance of rawness and immaturity. The scars of engineering surgery are mostly healed. It is a delightful drive, after you leave the lodge, for three-fourths of a mile along the wide, smooth avenue, under the shade, if it be summer, and following easily the varying contour of the grounds. At one point on the left a glimpse is to be had of the farm-houses and accompanying buildings, of which a spacious greenhouse is one. The en-

One is not long upon the avenue approaching it before the building bursts upon the view. At no point probably do its qualities of size, proportion, and style more impressively present themselves to the eye. So far as such an inanimate structure may be pictured as having a countenance, the expression which this wears is one in which dignity, grace, and repose predominate. There is, moreover, a certain feminine delicacy to its aspect befitting its character, but with nothing of weakness blended. It is evident that the architect



GENERAL VIEW OF THE COLLEGE BUILDING.

graving presented of this, however, is taken from another point of view, the beholder in this instance being supposed to stand in the town road outside the college grounds. The pretty effect of the inclosing trees, through and beyond which the greenhouse is here seen, is only one of countless little touches upon the landscape which on every side delight the eye.

The farm, it should be understood, is a very important adjunct of the institution, though space will not allow more than this passing reference to it.

was an artist. Mr. Billings—Hammatt Billings—did indeed consider it his chiefest work. From our side of Providence, it seems a thing to be deplored that he could not have lived to witness its completion, and so to have had his share in the enjoyment over its occupancy.

Architecturally described, the building is in the form of a double Latin cross, designed in a style of the Renaissance, crowned with a Mansard-roof, and set off at various points with towers, bays, porches, pavilions, and spires, the whole producing an irregu-





THE GREENHOUSE.

lar but harmonious exterior, which is ornate without a touch of the finical, and substantial without being unwieldy. The combination of such masses in a form so light and airy must be set down as a rare achievement of architectural skill. The extreme length of the building is four hundred and seventy-five feet; the extreme width at the wings about one hundred and fifty. There are, in the main, four stories, though at points these expand into five. The material is brick, laid in black mortar, with plain trimmings of brown freestone. The outside walls are of unusual thickness, and to a considerable extent the minor partition walls throughout the building are of brick, with fire-proof floors at exposed points. The interior wood finish is of Western ash. The best of materials and the most thorough workmanship were every where made a first consideration in building; all was done under a scrutinizing supervision that spared no expense and no effort to have the utmost possible degree of excellence.

The building is approached upon its northern side. The generous and inviting

entrance, sheltered by a spacious *porte cochère*, opens into an imposing hall which occupies the entire length and breadth and height of the central section. The centre of this hall is appropriated to an immense marble basin planted with palm-trees and other tropical growths, whose size and curious beauty seem worthy of such an uncommon setting. Standing by one of the polished granite pillars, two rows of which flank the court, and by means of arches support the ceiling above, one looks up through the great opening to the very glass-capped roof, story rising above story, column ranging upon column, balustrade crowning balustrade. The general plan of each floor comprises broad corridors running from this central court to each distant extremity, with rooms opening therefrom on either side. Arched doorways, occasional wainscotings, hard-wood floors, bits of fret-work and touches of fresco, contribute to the prevailing elegance, which, however, is always chaste and subdued. Easy stairways at the rear angles of the central hall and of the two main transepts afford communication



between the different floors. The taste with which these stairways are treated is well illustrated in the accompanying view.

Having entered the building, and paused in the noble central hall long enough to take in its general plan, the visitor may turn to the left into its eastern half. Here, upon this same ground-floor, is, first, the reception parlor, a stately apartment, its walls of hard-wood wainscot and Pompeian red hung with pictures, including autographed portraits of Longfellow, Bryant, and Tennyson, each of which has a history. Opening out of this is the president's room, fitted with a safe and the other appurtenances of a business office, which it is. A short walk along the corridor brings one to the east transept, whose northern arm, that which faced the visitor as he approached the college, constitutes the library. This library, all things considered, must be accounted the gem of the building. It is arranged in alcoves, and superbly finished throughout in solid black-walnut. It is the very ideal of a library for young ladies, with cozy nooks and corners, where a book

is twice a book; with sunny windows, some of them thrown out into deep bays; with galleries, reached by winding stairs, where the girls seem to have a keen delight in coiling them-

selves away in such mysterious fashion that you can only see above the balustrade a curly head bending over some book, doubtless found more fascinating than it could be if simply spread out on the table below. There is shelf-room for one hundred and twenty thousand volumes.

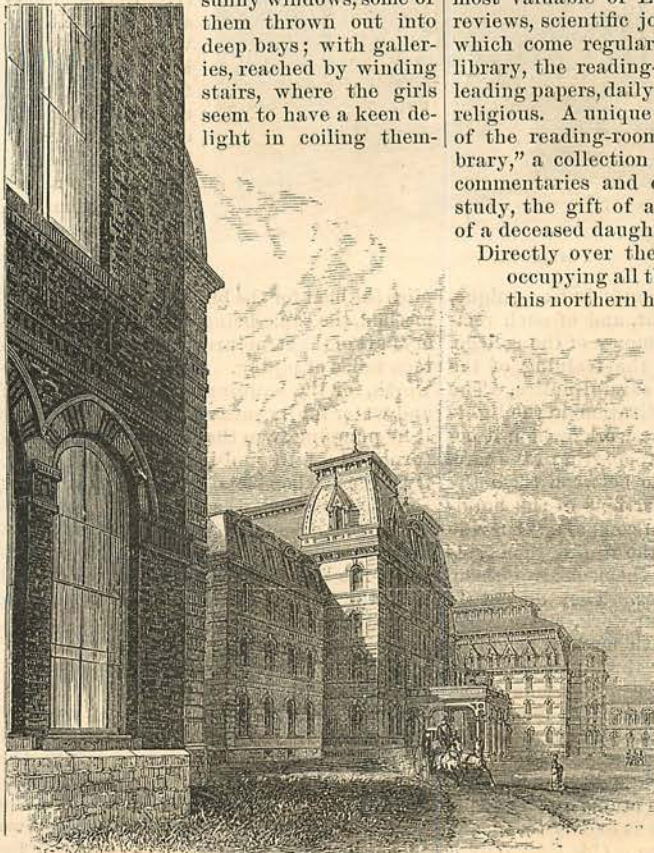
Compared with its capacity, the contents of the library at present seem inconsiderable, but, taken by itself, a collection of ten or twelve thousand volumes is a very respectable one. Already the library is rich and valuable for its size. It is quite complete in standard English works and in Greek, Latin, French, German, and Italian classics, while possessing also some rare old folios, many choice editions, and not a few precious memorials of the great and good whose names are imperishable in literature.

Opposite the library is the reading-room, a sunny room, as it should be, well supplied with the periodical literature of the day. The teachers and students of this college are to have not only abundant access to the intellectual treasures of the past, but every means of following the progress of modern thought in all its currents. Besides the most valuable of European and American reviews, scientific journals, and magazines, which come regularly to the tables of the library, the reading-room is provided with leading papers, daily and weekly, secular and religious. A unique and interesting feature of the reading-room is the "Gertrude Library," a collection of about one thousand commentaries and other helps to Biblical study, the gift of a gentleman in memory of a deceased daughter who bore that name.

Directly over the library is the chapel, occupying all the remaining portion of this northern half of the east transept.

This too is a gem in its way, a spacious and lofty apartment, conveniently adapted to its purpose, and handsomely furnished. The prominent window of the deep bay is one of impressive design in painted glass, executed in Munich, and presented by ex-Governor Claflin, of Massachusetts, in memory of a deceased daughter.

Retracing now our steps, and exploring in like manner the western half of the building, we find on this same floor, in the transept corresponding to that which contains the library,



A NEAR VIEW—NORTHERN SIDE.



the dining-room, where, three times a day, the three hundred students and their instructors gather to their meals. Here we are brought suddenly face to face with the college life, and at a very interesting point of it too. The domestic labor of the students is an incidental only of their daily routine, and, measured by the time it takes,

The domestic offices of the establishment, among which we are now lingering, are all clustered at this extreme western end of the building. They are a sight by themselves, as has already been hinted, though it is not every visitor who has the privilege of looking into them. The domestic hall, linking the dining-room and the kitchen, is fitted with



A STAIRWAY.

rather an unimportant one; but so unique, so essentially important, and of such relation to the internal economy of the college, and of such value in the training of the students, as to require careful notice. The young ladies of the institution do the lighter portion of the "house-work" which it occasions. Of their own rooms they take care, of course. They divide between them the care of those public portions of the building which are shared in common. They do all the table-work in the dining-room, setting the tables, serving them, clearing them, and washing the dishes. They do not do any cooking or kitchen-work, the kitchen being so furnished with modern scientific apparatus that two or three men-servants, under the direction of a professional cook, can easily prepare the food. The experience thus acquired by the students is priceless, and they fully appreciate its value. Indeed, the domestic work is decidedly a popular feature among the students. Division of the labor distributes it evenly to all, and makes little for any one. One hour only is given by each student to her share.

soap-stone sinks and hot closets, and adjoined by an immense china closet. The kitchen, which is separated into a wing at the north-west angle, is furnished with huge ranges, and steam-boilers for soup and vegetables. Beneath these apartments are to be found the laundry, which includes a large steam-drying room, and also the bakery and the larder. In the upper story of the kitchen wing are the sleeping-rooms of the Swedish laundresses and the few other house servants. In this same direction, too, at a safe remove from the main building, are located the boilers whose steam supplies

the heat for the building by the indirect method, the same being distributed into every part of the structure by not less than fourteen miles of piping. Hard by are the gas-works, for the building is lighted with gas; and water for its various uses is carried over it by pumping from the Artesian well, which furnishes a pure and inexhaustible supply. Over the kitchen is the gymnasium, and over the domestic hall the hospital. This hospital, with its open fire-places, cheerful wood fires, and adjoining rooms for visiting mothers of the sick, the whole carefully sheltered from the bustle of the building proper, and occupying its sunniest and brightest corner, is one of the most pleasing precincts of all.

With this survey of the physical basis of the life which goes on at Wellesley College, the reader may be supposed to be quite ready for introduction to its social and intellectual aspects. Viewed as a huge dormitory, the unit of the structure is, of course, the student's room, into which all will wish to take a peep. The plan provides a suit of two rooms for each two students—a parlor for common use and a bed-chamber for common





THE LIBRARY.

use, the latter, however, being provided with two single beds, two bureaus, and other articles of furniture in duplicate. The furniture is of uniform pattern throughout, being made of black-walnut after artistic designs in tasteful but simple styles. The rooms are carpeted, and present, without exception, a very cheerful and inviting appearance. Occasionally two suits have been combined in one for the accommodation of four students. Commonly a single suit occupies a space of about fourteen feet by twenty. For the professors equally suitable quarters have been provided, the rooms of the president of the faculty being in the extreme part of the east wing, and those of her associates conveniently distributed about in other parts of the building, so as to keep the whole of it under a proper degree of supervision. Special provision is made for the social wants of the professors by their private parlors, while for general uses there is a stately drawing-room, about fifty feet square, looking out upon the lake. The arrangement of the building is such, with its bold projections and many angles,

and the living-rooms have been so located, that with few exceptions all have the sunshine during some portion of the day. All are finely lighted and most effectually ventilated. All command pleasant views, while from some, those especially along the southern front, the prospect is one that for breadth, variety, and loveliness is not often to be enjoyed. Nothing that can contribute to the cheerfulness of the rooms or to the sanitary condition of the establishment has been neglected. The natural advantages of the situation and the soil have been supplemented by the most careful attention to scientific principles, and the most thorough application of the best modern methods. While pure air is constantly being supplied to the interior, the impure air is as constantly being withdrawn. A resident physician gives personal attention to hygienic discipline, as well as to the wants of the sick; and it is safe to believe that whatever physical evils may have crept into systems of female education as commonly administered, all such will to a great extent be avoided here.





THE CHAPEL.

Emerging from these more retired portions of the building, set apart to the private uses of the students, we enter those public precincts devoted to the college work proper. There are sixteen recitation-rooms scattered about upon the several floors, averaging about twenty feet square. These rooms are all as finely finished as any, and many of them are fitted with appropriate photographic views, maps, charts, and other illustrations relating to the studies pursued. A laboratory, replete with every convenience, adjoins the chemical lecture-room, and facilitates the study of applied chemistry. A natural history room, one hundred feet by fifty, contains already three hundred and seventy feet of cases for the display of specimens, and, by means of a gallery encircling the apartment, can be made available for three times that amount. There is a large art gallery, occupying the upper story of the west wing, and in the same quarter a lecture-room and laboratories for the use of the professors of physics and natural history. There are also a large number of music-rooms for piano practice.

to correspond? Such a building is properly only a means to an end. Grand as the means is, the end ought to be grander.

The plan of work at Wellesley College is the fruit of the years of observation and experience of the distinguished college presidents and professors who constitute so large a proportion of the Board of Trustees. It is the intention to graduate from Wellesley students who shall be fully on a par in scholarship with the graduates of Harvard and Yale. The curriculum of study will, of course, differ somewhat from that of these and other colleges for men, but the very highest standard of culture is to be maintained.

The greatest practical difficulty to be overcome at the outset in the execution of this important design is that students present themselves with such irregular and imperfect preparation. They come from all parts of the country—from Maine to Texas, and from Georgia to Colorado—trained in differing studies by different methods, from all grades of private and public schools. It has been impossible to arrange all of them

After all that has thus been written in attempted description of this building, the reader can have but a faint idea of its vast dimensions, its fine proportions, the symmetry of its lines, the harmony of its forms and colors, the response of the interior to the expectations awakened by the exterior, its excellent general plan, the convenience of its arrangements, the refined nicety of all its details, the solidity and delicacy which are seen blended at every point, the mingled sumptuousness and simplicity which characterize it throughout. We are fully justified in the statement that there is no finer building of its kind in the world.

And now is all this a mere shell? Within this magnificent body is there a living soul



at once into regular and fully graded classes. Hence has arisen the necessity of a preparatory department alongside of the college proper. This preparatory department is more than a feeder to the college. It provides classes of different grades for making up deficiencies on the part of candidates for the college. Students are examined as they enter, and instead of being sent home if unfitted, are placed in proper course of training for the Freshman Class.

The college proper is intended only for those young women who wish to become scholars in the very highest acceptation of the world. The trustees resolved at the outset on thus establishing the very highest standard, and on providing facilities for advanced study in every department. They have provided especially for those scholars who desire to become teachers. The daughters of the wealthy are not forbidden to come

to Wellesley, but it is easy to see that none will stay who do not seek to become learned women. The low price, the high requirements for admission, the extended course of study, the simple style of dress, the methods of instruction and discipline, all point to the fact that life at this college is work and not play.

It is really remarkable how quickly the new college has shaped itself in accordance with these principles, and established its character as a place for thorough study. The *esprit de corps* in this respect is already very high. It has become the fashion to study. An honorable ambition for the best scholarship is the rule, and not the exception.

The reader may be interested to know in particular of the conditions of admission. For the preparatory department these are very moderate. Candidates therefor must be over fifteen years of age, and must pass



STUDENT'S PARLOR.



satisfactory examinations in reading, writing, spelling, English grammar, modern geography, arithmetic, history of the United States, Latin grammar and reader. In the case of those who are sixteen years or older, a thorough knowledge of French or German and of the elements of algebra is accepted in place of Latin. The course of preparatory study covers two years of thorough training in Latin grammar and Latin prose composition, Cæsar, Virgil, Cicero, the elementary part of Olney's University Algebra, geometry, German or French, geography of the Roman Empire, and outlines of its history to the Augustan age, English grammar, analysis and composition, physical geography, elocution, English literature, and drawing. Those who intend to elect Greek in the college course also commence the study of it in the preparatory department.

While the college is confined to its present building, bringing the students of the two departments under the same roof and similar regulations, it is the plan of the trustees that the preference should be given to those candidates for admission who are fitted to enter the college proper, since they must reap the greater benefit from the advantages provided. At the same time many of the finest college students must be those who have enjoyed the exceptional training furnished in the preparatory department. It is, therefore, hoped that the Christian public, as it becomes interested in this seat of learning, will in some way provide funds for erecting another building in the ample grounds of the college, when the important preparatory department can be separated to a still higher usefulness. The instant success of the college warrants this extension of its resources. There were so many applications at the opening in September, 1875, that between two and three hundred were refused of necessity, and if there were other buildings on the grounds equal to the first, they would doubtless be as readily filled.

The requirements for admission to the collegiate department in September, 1876, have been established by the trustees to meet the comparatively low standard of preparation among young women; but they are to be increased year by year, until the full standard adopted in the leading colleges for young men shall be reached. Candidates must be at least sixteen years old, and are required to pass examinations in ancient and modern geography; physical geography; arithmetic; algebra through involution, evolution, radicals, and quadratic equations; geometry through five books of Loomis's Geometry or their equivalent; Latin grammar; and four books of Cæsar, four books of Virgil, and four Orationes of Cicero. An equivalent amount of reading in other Latin authors is accepted. Candidates are further

advised to be prepared for examination in French and German. No Greek is positively required, being, in fact, an elective throughout the entire course; but a preparatory study of Greek is most strongly urged upon those who intend to fit for the college, and it will probably soon be made a requisite for admission.

We can not give space to a detailed account of the studies of the four years' college course, for which those who desire it are referred to the published circulars. It must be enough for the general reader to state that elaborate courses are laid out in all the branches of learning commonly pursued in our highest institutions. No doubt will be entertained by those who examine the courses of study that this is to be a college of the highest standard of culture. The studies are mostly elective, and the students can pursue any in which they may desire to become specialists as far as they can be pursued in most colleges for young men. The course in modern languages which has already been arranged and announced is very comprehensive and thorough; but with the next college year it will be supplemented by an extended special course, which shall carry students to the highest degree of proficiency and culture, and remedy some of the many deficiencies which mark the common methods. The students receive general instruction in vocal music, and also in drawing, unless already practiced in that useful accomplishment; while for those who intend special and advanced study of either art the best facilities are at hand. The art gallery is furnished with an extensive array of casts and models, selected in Europe by Walter Smith, Esq., the distinguished State Director of Art Study in Massachusetts; and the certain prospective demand for competent teachers of drawing makes this department one of great importance. In general, classroom instruction is supplemented at every point by lectures, to the delivery of which specialists in art, science, and literature are summoned; while Friday evening is usually appropriated to a concert or a more popular lecture in the chapel.

There are many things about the Wellesley methods of study which are new and interesting, for which we have no space. We wish, however, to notice the chemical department. The instruction in chemistry is confined almost exclusively to actual work in the laboratory. This is fitted up with every convenience for a class of ninety-six students, divided into four sections of twenty-four each. Every one of the ninety-six has her own drawer and cupboard. There is no committing of text-books to memory, no waste of time in witnessing sensational experiments by the teacher. The students work out their own experiments.

In addition to the regular college classes,



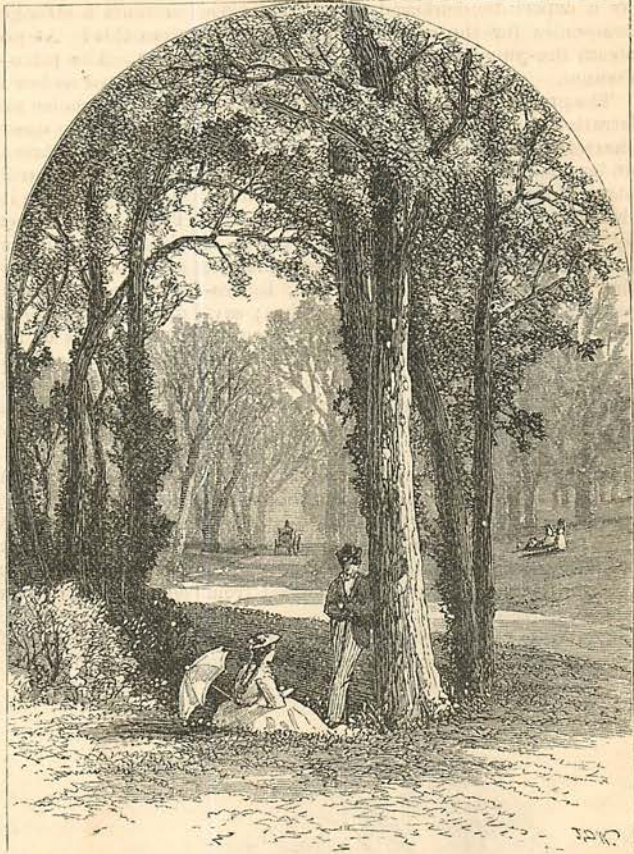
non-resident students in chemistry are received. They can spend all their time in the laboratory, and thus qualify themselves as teachers for that instruction in chemistry with laboratory practice which is now considered so essential.

At the opening of the second year of the college, in September, 1876, it is the intention to receive, to a limited degree, non-resident students in other advanced studies, the desire being to give to teachers, who wish to qualify themselves for higher situations, opportunities for becoming specialists. This privilege is given to teachers only. They will be "special students," not connected in any other manner with the college.

But the intellectual life is not made the sole object of pursuit at Wellesley College. The place which Biblical study receives in the curriculum indicates the importance

which is attached to it here. Christianity is accepted as a great fact to be studied. And more, it is esteemed as an experience which is to be individualized. The cross which is carved into the key-stone of the arch which spans the entrance door, and which rises above the highest pinnacle of the noble pile, is emblem and pledge of the sacred aim which has inspired all.

To the bracing tone of the Wellesley atmosphere and the wholesome effect of Wellesley ideas the students themselves are the best witnesses. Three hundred healthier, happier, more blooming girls it would be hard to find in company together. They are not cumbered with much serving; they are not hampered by many rules. They appreciate their privileges, and are worthy of them. To a large degree they are their own governors. Never had young women finer opportunities for study in the midst of surroundings more attractive. If in their beautiful rooms they ever grow weary, all the beautiful grounds without are before them. They ramble at will through all the broad domain. The lake is their skating park in winter, the scene of their boating exploits



ON THE GROUNDS.

in summer. When Mr. Longfellow visited them last autumn, it was a delightful row they gave him in an eight-oared barge, called the *Evangeline*; and after a season or two of practice, it would be a fine crew which they could doubtless send to compete, in grace and skill, if not in strength, with their brothers of Harvard and Yale.

Who ever heard of a fire-brigade manned exclusively by women? There is one at Wellesley, for it is there believed that, however incombustible the college building may be, the students should be taught how to put out fires in their own homes, and be trained to presence of mind, to familiarity with the thought of what is to be done in case of fire, and to a full realization of the most important fact that any fire can be put out at the beginning. Twenty hand-pumps are distributed throughout the building, each supplemented by six pails filled with water. Every pump has its captain and company of six girls, one of whom is lieutenant; and all the companies are drilled at convenient opportunities in handling the pumps, in forming lines, and in passing the pails. The whole organization is officered

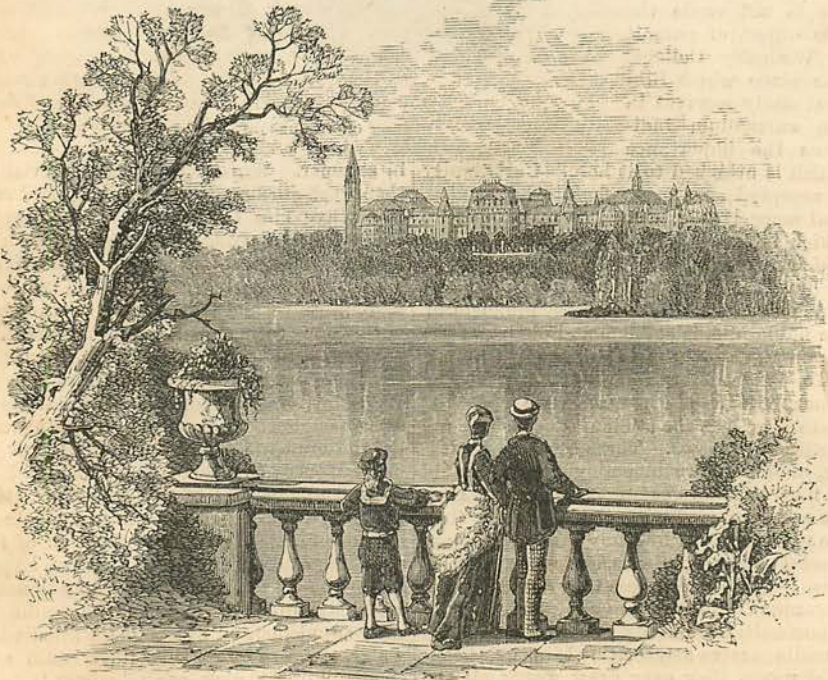


by a superintendent and secretary. Hose companies for the operating of the great steam fire-pump are organized in a similar manner.

The property of the college and its administration are vested in a Board of Trustees, chartered as a perpetual legal corporation, under the name of Wellesley College. President Porter, of Yale College, is president of the Board of Trustees, and Dr. Howard Crosby, chancellor of New York University, is the vice-president. The trustees represent the Congregational, Presbyterian, Episcopal, Methodist, and Baptist churches; several universities, colleges, and theological seminaries; the leading foreign missionary society of the country; both sexes; and the laity as well as the clergy. The evident design is to keep the college in close affiliation with the great academic centres, and under the eye of experienced educators, at the same time securing for it the special confidence of all those Christian denominations known as evangelical, the knowledge of affairs possessed only by business men in active life, and indispensable counsel from woman herself.

Wellesley College needs the generous remembrance of the rich. What institution

presents a stronger appeal for endowment than this? At present there is no endowment. The price of board and tuition has been fixed as low as \$250 a year, in order to bring its choice privileges within the reach of many who deserve them, but would otherwise be debarred from them. But at that price it can hardly be expected that the college will pay its own current expenses. The benevolent here see a grand foundation already laid to their hand, and, by the creation of an endowment, may communicate an immediate and immense impulse to the usefulness of the institution. The many vacant shelves of the library likewise invite contributions. One hundred thousand dollars could be at once most profitably expended in supplying them with those costly works which are such a boon to both student and teacher. There is great need of an observatory. And then, how much good could be effected by the creation of scholarships! Our colleges for young men are beginning to be liberally provided with them; but there is even more need for them in a college for young women, whose means are just as likely to be moderate, and whose opportunities for self-support are more likely to be restricted.



VIEW OF WELLESLEY COLLEGE FROM THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE LAKE.