

and who, being alive to its importance and responsibility, will not be unwilling to hear the views of one who has long looked on this matter with interest, though from a somewhat different point of view. I can assure you that I shall always regard it as no small honour to have been called on to deliver the opening lecture of the first session of this Association; and I trust that, with God's blessing, we shall have cause to look back on this day as one marked by an event fraught with the most important and beneficial consequences to this community. That it may be so requires that we shall appreciate the full responsibility of the step we have taken, and pursue our course with vigour and energy. With reference to these points I cannot better close than with an extract from the introductory lecture of my friend, Dr. Wilson, of Toronto, delivered two years ago, at the opening of the classes for ladies which have proved so successful in our sister city, and in which he brings up two of the most important topics to which I have directed your attention:—

“It is not, therefore, unmeet that I should aim by every argument to enforce the idea that, as high culture and profound scholarship interfere in no degree with man's fitness for the roughest and most prosaic duties; but rather that the cultivated intellect quickens into renewed vigor every inferior power: so is it with woman also. The development of her highest faculties, her powers of reasoning, her range of observation, and compass of knowledge, will only make mind and hand work together the more promptly, in obedience to every tender impulse, and every voice of duty.

“Once satisfied of this, I doubt not your hearty co-operation may be relied upon; without which all efforts on our part for the higher education of woman must be vain. Yet I feel assured that, in spite of every impediment, such a scheme lies among the inevitable purposes of the future. It may be rejected now; it may be delayed and frowned on still, by the prejudices inherited from a dead past; but it cannot be prevented. It is one of the grand promises which make thoughtful men almost envious of those who are now entering on the life, for some of us so nearly an accomplished thing.

‘Its triumph will be sung,
By some yet unmoulded tongue,
Far on in summers that we shall not see.’

The thoughts of men are widening; and we stand in special need of this as an element which will accelerate the world's progress onward and upward to noblest ends. Whether or no this generation shall, in our own province at least, share in any degree in the effort, or partake of its rewards, rests mainly with yourselves.”