

physical, intellectual and moral characteristics.

This naturally leads to the consideration of another objection—that concerning the physical effect of higher education upon young women. Some rather singular statements were made in this connection in the discussion in the Legislature. One was, that the ability to win medals and honours was not the result of superior intelligence, but of superior physical endurance! If this were so, we should find that college honours and medals were invariably or usually taken by the biggest and strongest young men, quite irrespective of their intellectual qualities. This may be true in athletic sports, but certainly is not in any other branch of competition. There are a few other things besides physical endurance that have fully as much to do with winning university distinctions. Some of them are quickness of perception, power of memory, perseverance, steadiness of aim and purpose, self-control, and in these qualities young women not infrequently surpass their masculine contemporaries, while they are entirely free from certain habits, such as smoking and drinking, which do not tend to promote either study or physical endurance. In these ways, they more than make up for any deficiency in physical endurance, though of this, also, women not seldom show more than men. But they are not asking for medals and honours, of necessity, but simply for their right to pass through the ordinary University course, which is not too great a strain for any healthy and properly prepared female student. If they should go too far in their ambition to win distinction, that is an evil which must be left to cure itself, just as it is in the case of male students.

Further, we are told that the extent to which higher education for women has been pushed in the United States is responsible for the lack of health, of beauty, of symmetry, in American women. One might well stop here to

interpose a query as to facts. Certainly American women, in their youth at least, are generally admitted to be, as a class, the most beautiful, if not the most symmetrical, women in the world. And if in the matter of health there is very much to be desired, there are a hundred other causes to which this deficiency is usually and reasonably attributed. High-pressure life under unnatural conditions, climatic peculiarities, unwholesome diet, dissipation of all sorts, are quite sufficient to account for the general lack of health and vigour so common among Americans of both sexes, and of all classes. Even granting that in the matter of education, as in other things, their superabundant nervous energy goes to extremes, the percentage of female graduates even there, is far too small and too recent to produce any generally appreciable effect. But so far as facts have been collected concerning the healthfulness in later life of women who have graduated in American colleges, the evidence has all been in favour of the healthful, not the unhealthful, tendency of such a course of study. American women, as a rule, live far too fast in all walks of life. The careful housewife is almost as apt to fall a victim to her excessive industry and household ambition, as the fashionable woman to her extravagant round of dissipation; and an improvement can be hoped for only when a more thorough education shall have implanted hygienic and sanitary principles more firmly in the minds of women of all classes. To this end higher education is doing something, and will yet do much more.

But there is something to be said about the question of lower female education also, and to this, in the present writer's opinion, some of the reasoning which is irrelevant to the question of higher education might, with great benefit, be applied. The question of common-school education for girls does require some serious reconsideration. There are much greater