

Our Contributors.

WOMEN'S EDUCATION ABROAD.

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At the opening of the fourteenth session of the Montreal Ladies' Educational Association, of which Mrs. Redpath is president, Sir William Dawson delivered the inaugural lecture on the above subject, as follows:

He first referred to the great development of the higher education in Great Britain between the time of his last visit in 1870 and the present time. Then there were a few associations only recently established for providing lectures for ladies, but the great movement for the collegiate education of women was merely commencing. Girton College began its work with six students in 1869 and was not fully organized till 1873, and it was not till 1881 that the University of Cambridge granted to the lady students formal admission to its higher examinations. At this moment nearly all the universities are open to women, and the "girl graduate," who was a poetical myth in 1870, is to be found everywhere, and more especially occupying high positions in the profession of the teacher. The existence of the Montreal Ladies' Educational Association began in 1870, about the same time with the initiation of the great movement in the Mother Country, but the latter has far outstripped us in the race. A remarkable illustration of the importance now attached to questions of this kind in England was afforded by the meeting of convocation at Oxford in May last, at which the lecturer had the opportunity to be present, and which was called for the purpose of taking, without discussion, the final vote on the question of admitting women to the university examinations. With reference to the numbers interested, the question was not large, for there are at Oxford only two halls for women, with not more than fifty students, and the regulation to be voted on was similar to that in force for some time previously at Cambridge. Yet the meeting was preceded by a warm and able discussion in the *Times* and other newspapers, and on the day of meeting, the floor of the Sheldonian Theatre was crowded with 800 members of convocation, who had come up from all parts of England for the momentous occasion, including a great number of the more eminent graduates of the universities. The seats around were filled with spectators, principally ladies, and the galleries were crowded with the undergraduates. While the voting was proceeding the whole audience was evidently in a state of intense excitement, and when the result was declared, 464

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to 321 against, it was received with great cheering and other tokens of approval. The vote is said to have been one of the largest ever known, and it was remarked that many who have usually resisted the modern innovations in the university, had evidently on this occasion been won over to the other side. The questions relating to the higher education of women are of two kinds—those that relate to the education itself, and those that relate to the examinations to be undergone and the titles and distinctions conferred. The former is of course the more important, and in England it has been provided for principally through the exertions of the ladies themselves. The latter falls more especially to the authorities of the universities, and acquires importance from the fact that the examinations determine to a great extent the course which will be pursued by the educators, and whether the student shall undergo a genuine training of practical value or shall be subject to a process of cramming. Both of these divisions of the subject have consequently attracted much attention on the part of educators. With reference to the methods of instruction, these in England and Scotland are based entirely or almost entirely on the curricula of the universities, following them as closely as possible, in order that the students may come up for the regular university examinations. Full advantage is taken, however, of the facilities afforded for honour studies, whereby a high training along special lines of study can be secured; and where the students are placed in separate colleges there are special means for branches of culture, more especially those of an æsthetic and artistic character, which are neglected by the universities. With reference to the relation of the sexes in the higher education, three leading methods, or two methods and an intervening

one, containing a portion of both the others, are going on side by side in connection with the English universities. One is what is popularly known in this country by the somewhat objectionable name of co-education—that is, education in mixed classes without any restriction. This is carried on in University College, London, and University College, Bristol, with some measure of success, though the number of students seems to be diminishing in proportion as the other methods gain ground. It was also attempted, but without success, at Owens College, Manchester. The opposite method is that of

ENTIRELY SEPARATE COLLEGES FOR WOMEN.

This has long been in operation with great success at the large Ladies' College at Cheltenham, and also in the Bedford College, London, and the West End College, connected with King's College, London, and several other important institutions, and it is to be carried out on a great scale in the new Holloway College, for which magnificent buildings are being erected at Windsor. The Eclectic or combined system, which provides for separate residence of female students and separate classes for the junior years, and the more especially tutorial classes, with facilities to attend public lectures in the advanced classes along with the male students, is that in operation at Cambridge and Oxford, at Owens College, Manchester, and in connection with the University of Edinburgh. At Owens College the regulations provide separate classes up to the intermediate, and beyond this the council may admit ladies to attend the ordinary and honour classes in the advanced years with other students. Each of these methods may be regarded as an experiment, and each has its advocates urging reasons more or less cogent, but it is to be observed that in England no party proposes to follow one to the exclusion of the other, and that all are being pursued side by side. Thus parents and students can have their choice of methods, and acrimonious discussion such as results from the attempt to force one method on all is avoided. Details were then given of visits to various colleges for women, and as to the special excellencies of each, and the information obtained from the principals and from ladies and gentlemen concerned in their management; with special reference to the applicability of the several methods to this country. With regard to examinations and degrees, the practice of the English universities presents some points of diversity. The University of London gives the degree of B.A., and the lady graduates come up at convocations in caps and gowns to receive it, and are classed with the other students. The new Victoria University also admits women to the degree of B.A. The University of St. Andrew's admits to all its examinations and gives the degree of Licentiate in Arts. The other universities admit to examinations, but do not give the degree, but only a certificate equivalent to it, without any title. Many of the ladies interested in the movement express themselves as quite indifferent to the title of B.A., provided they obtain a certificate along with honours or classing if they have attained to these. They all insist, however, on the examination being strictly equivalent to those for men, and practically the greater number of the young women going up for the degree are not content with the ordinary B.A., but try for honours or classing in the final examinations, and a large proportion are successful. An important consequence of the movement is that many young women are preparing themselves for those teaching positions which have been filled by university graduates, and to such women the honour certificate or degree of the university, is

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of considerable pecuniary value, raising them from the position of underpaid governesses or mere assistants to the higher grades of educational work. Women have already been enabled by the Normal Schools to secure this to some extent in Canada, but the university degree will open to them still higher and wider fields, and will make the profession of teaching more emphatically that of women. The lecturer then referred to the importance of the field opened up to the McGill University by the endowment of the Hon. Donald A. Smith, and to the advantages which McGill will have for carrying on the work, in consequence of the wide field now covered by its course of study, its advantages in apparatus and museum, and the aid which it may hope to receive from the work carried on by the Ladies' Educational Association, the Trafalgar Institute and the McGill Normal School. In conclu-

sion he referred to the efforts in this direction in France, Switzerland and Italy, and to the low position of women in the Moslem countries of the East, with its deplorable results on the state of society there, and to the praiseworthy efforts now being made, more especially by the American missionaries, certain benevolent English ladies, and the German deaconesses, in Egypt and Syria, for the benefit more especially of the women of the Christian population of those countries.

FRENCH EVANGELIZATION.

MR. EDITOR.—The Rev. Mr. Ball, if I understand him correctly, finds fault with the French work of our Church, owing to the manner in which the Committee perform their duties, and the visible result obtained for the outlay.

The first objection can be dismissed in a very few words; if there is bad or mismanagement, it is the duty of the Assembly to remedy it; the means are too simple to stop to discuss them; the result may be disappointing to all who take an interest in this interesting branch of our Church's work. I propose trying to show why this is the case. Those not thoroughly familiar with the Province of Quebec, cannot have the faintest idea of how deeply it is steeped in Romanism, the inhabitants being more Catholic than the Pope himself; what an influence the priest has over the people, what dense ignorance and bigotry prevail none can tell except those who live in the Province, and come into frequent contact with the people; the teaching is under the close supervision of the priest, and his interest is not to allow the spread of knowledge, so that those who are taught, especially in the country parishes, are literally the children of the church.

The want of truthfulness and uprightness among the French Roman Catholics is sorrowfully known to nearly all who have dealings with them. To show how Roman Catholic is the Province, within an easy hour's ride by rail from the city of Montreal, there is a county, according to the last federal census, without a single Protestant in it, and farther away. There must be others in a similar condition. To penetrate this gloom, and to work in so uninviting a field, our Missionaries are sent; what they suffer, what they encounter, we pass over; they actually do make converts; now, what becomes of those who change their religion? In the country, the priest goes about and tells his parishioners to neither buy from, nor sell to, the later convert and this is generally and literally carried out; the upshot is, the weak minded lapse, the strong sacrifice what they have and go where they can worship according to their convictions in peace and quietness and are probably lost in the census of our church.

A friend of mine, interested in a manufacturing company in Montreal, employing a number of workmen said, he had a few French Protestants among them, the great majority being Roman Catholics; these so persecuted the Protestants that the two could not be kept. To prevent the factory being closed, the Protestants had to be dismissed. This is not a solitary case. In conversation in a factory where a large number of hands were employed, male and female, one of the latter, an old country Protestant, came to the foreman in tears complaining of the petty persecutions she was subjected to by the Roman Catholic women. In this instance, the Protestant did not have to be removed, and yet, surrounded as we are with such discouraging influences, converts are made in both city and country. Measured by their money cost, perhaps the number of converts are few, that is, those counted as belonging to our church; is this singular or remarkable? Is it not the history and experience of nearly every missionary Church? What about our own Church in India? Consider the thousands of dollars that have been spent and where are the converts? Has this damped our energy? Not at all. We are sending fresh and increased help to that far-off land, and in doing so, shall we lessen our endeavours to help those who are perishing for the lack of knowledge at our very doors? If I know our people, I say, emphatically, no.

Is Mr. Ball prepared to say that for the salary received since being a minister, he has given money value in the converts that he can count; are any of the ministers of our Church satisfied with their work from this standpoint? Happily this is not what a minister's success is gauged by. There are many old friends of the French work. Perhaps at times their patience has been sorely tried when looking for larger returns for the labour and expense bestowed on it; but they