

some skepticism as to the capacity of woman for the severer studies, and as to the utility in her case of that deep and systematic culture which is considered necessary in the case of educated men. There is also much confusion of ideas as to the proper range and extent of the education of women, in connection with very different questions as to the right of the softer sex to enter upon certain kinds of professional training. Let us endeavour to get rid of some of these misconceptions. In the first place, no one denies the right to an equality of the sexes in all the elementary education given in ordinary schools. This is admitted to be an essential preparation in the case of all persons of both sexes and of all grades of social position for the ordinary work of life. But when we leave the threshold of the common school, a divergency of opinion and practice at once manifests itself.

Only a certain limited proportion either of men or women can go on to a higher education, and those who are thus selected are either those who by wealth and social position are enabled or obliged to be so, or those who intend to enter into professions which are believed to demand a larger amount of learning. The question of the higher education of women in any country depends very much on the relative numbers of these classes among men and women, and the views which may be generally held as to the importance of education for ordinary life, as contrasted with professional life. Now in this country, the number of young men who receive a higher education merely to fit them for occupying a high social position is very small. The greater number of the young men who pass through our colleges do so under the compulsion of a necessity to fit themselves for certain professions. On the other hand, with the exception of those young women who receive an education for the profession of teaching, the great majority of those who obtain what is regarded as higher culture, do so merely as a means of general improvement and to fit themselves better to take their proper place in society. Certain curious and important consequences flow from this. An education obtained for practical professional purposes is likely to partake of this character in its nature, and to run in the direction rather of hard utility than of ornament: that which is obtained as a means of rendering its possessor agreeable, is likely to be æsthetical in its character rather than practical or useful. An education pursued as a means of bread-winning is likely to be sought by the active and ambitious of very various social grades: but that which is thought merely to fit for a certain social position, is likely to be sought almost exclusively by those who move in that position. An education intended for recognized practical uses, is likely to find public support, and at the utmost to bear a fair market price: that which is supposed to have a merely conventional value as a branch of refined culture, is likely to be at a fancy price. Hence it happens that the young men who receive a higher education, and by means of this attain to positions of respectability and eminence, are largely drawn from the humbler strata of