

# The Canada Citizen

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### MEN, WOMEN, AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

There are at present in attendance at Toronto University College ten young women, all but one of whom are regularly matriculated undergraduates. The latest addition to the number is an ex-student of Norwood College, of high social standing. Disappointed in her expectation of getting a liberal education at Norwood College for women, instead of going off to a ladies' college elsewhere, she very sensibly stays at home and attends such classes as suit her in University College, even at the risk of finding herself listening to lectures along with young men. As the lecturers in University College are scholars and gentlemen, she will, no doubt, find herself amply rewarded for any sacrifice of feeling involved in taking this plan of getting a liberal education. I have no doubt, at all, that her example will shortly be followed by scores of Toronto ladies, many of them not exactly young. It is not generally known that in order to avail herself of the lectures in University College, a woman is not required to pass an entrance examination. She need not even pay for all the courses of lectures in order to enjoy the privilege of attending those she desires to attend. For example, a woman who wishes to attend the classes in English can do so by paying a small sum for the course of lectures delivered to the students of any one of the four years. If she wishes to take the French classes, or German classes in addition, she will have to pay an additional small sum. If she wishes to combine the English of several years into one course, she can do so. In short, the system is so flexible that she can take just about what course she wishes, and at a very moderate cost. At no distant day there will be found in attendance at University College not merely young women from Toronto, but young women from other places, who wish to devote themselves to special lines of intellectual work.

We often hear the argument urged that men and women cannot profitably attend college together, because a woman's education should be different from a man's. It would do something towards clearing up this

old subject of controversy, if those who reason in this way would explain clearly in what this difference should consist. If it be said that a woman's education should include a training in domestic economy—not a bad thing to aim at—then I would ask how far, and in what way, this subject is dealt with in the so-called ladies' colleges. If it be said that it should include what are usually called "accomplishments"—music and drawing, for instance—then again I would ask why these should be regarded as more desirable accomplishments than, say, a thorough acquaintance with English literature, and skill in the use of the English language. The musical education of the average young woman trained in a ladies' college or girl's school, is a delusion and a snare. Thrumming on a piano is not necessarily an artistic performance. Only to the few is it given to be able to render musical compositions in such a way as to impart pleasure either to the performers themselves or to those who are compelled to listen to them. Piano practice has caused the ruin of more minds and more bodies of young women than most people are aware of. To the great majority of those who learn to play on the piano, the task is utterly distasteful, and in very few cases is the practice kept up in after life. For most women, for domestic as well as social reasons, a good mental training would be infinitely preferable, and where in this country can the best intellectual training be had except in one of our excellent universities? Make the course flexible, as Toronto University course is now even for those who wish to take an arts degree, and then let both men and women choose for themselves the subjects to which they will chiefly devote their attention.

One of the Toronto morning papers, commenting on the recent attempt of dynamite fiends to blow up the Tower of London and the Parliament Buildings, charges Irishmen with the crime and points its moral thus: "The more that is done for Ireland, the more that redress of her grievances is accomplished, the more bitterly is the war against England carried on. The more reform and concession the more dynamite. Concession is thrown away on the dynamiters, but still there are people who refuse to see it. Possibly they may see better now, with the new light which has been thrown on the subject." I have no hesitation in saying that the spirit underlying such sentiments as these—and they are only too common—is as inexcusable as the motives of the dynamite fiends. The implied, if not explicit assertion, is that all the legislation by the British Parliament for the amelioration of the condition of the Irish people, has been prompted by a desire to conciliate Irish political extremists. As no exceptions are made, the statement covers the repeal of the penal laws, the Catholic Emancipation Act, the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and the various land laws of the past fifteen years, and it covers also the policy of wise, just, and liberal English statesmen—men like John Bright, Sydney Smith, Joseph Chamberlain, and William Ewart Gladstone—who have advocated the redress of Irish grievances at the cost of their popularity with the people of England.

While it is not unnatural that these dynamite plots should arouse a strong feeling in England against Irishmen, it seems singular that people on this side of the Atlantic should allow their judgments to be warped by either fear or hatred. There is, to begin with, no proof at this writing that the recent attempts were made by Irishmen, but even if they were, must the whole current and tendency of legislation be changed on that account? Either the concessions made to the governed classes in Ireland during late years were just and right, or they were not. If they were not, then they should never have been made, and it should be easy to show this; if they were, then how in the name of common sense can they be designated "concessions to dynamiters?" Ireland is not a nation of fiends. The Irish are a warm-hearted race, whose disposition on the average is the very reverse of cruel. A bad social system has produced discontent, and efforts have been made to allay this feeling by improving the system. The lesson from the dynamite plots is that these efforts were postponed too long, and that they should be persisted in irrespective of such fiendish tactics. The remark quoted above seems to show that the intense anti-Irish spirit of Mr. Goldwin Smith, who is now a monomaniac on the subject, has at last begun to make converts of his fellow-journalists. Surely at this distance from the scene of conflict, we can afford to take a juster and more philosophical view of the situation.