

# UNIVERSITY GAZETTE



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### Editorials.

It is rumoured that at the late meeting of the Corporation the question was discussed as to the propriety of admitting females to all the privileges of this College, and to those of the University in so far as they relate to Academic degrees. As the rumour seems well founded, and as it is probable that no very definite agreement has as yet been arrived at, we should like to offer a few general remarks upon the subject, and to remind the members of the august body who have the deciding of the question in their hands, of some facts connected with one aspect of the case.

In the first place, we do not intend to enter into any discussion of the complicated but highly interesting question of Women's Rights. If we did touch on that question in its general character, we should probably not be disposed to run into an extreme on either side—we should, for example, be compelled to admit, on the one hand, that the greatest facilities have not in the past been afforded women for the development of all their powers, while, on the other hand, we should with equal force be constrained to deny that their position has approached in any way the character of miserable slavery. We shall then grant at once for the sake of argument that, as far as the principle of the matter goes, females should be granted a University education equally efficient as that provided for men. We shall even pass

over the very doubtful point of co-education, as it is called, and dwell merely on the special case which now affects us so nearly. That there should be any difficulty in admitting females as candidates for University degrees we cannot understand; indeed it seems strange to us that McGill University has not done so long ago. By this statement, however, we are not to be understood as giving any opinion as to whether the effect upon the female students will be beneficial or otherwise. We merely say that if they choose to try for Academic degrees they should not be debarred from so doing. But the particular subject of discussion now arises, should McGill College in its present position, financially and otherwise, undertake the extra burden of the education of females? If the College feels itself in a position to extend its sphere of usefulness, is the education of females the direction in which that extension should first take place, or are there other fields of work equally or perhaps more deserving of attention? The first point to be determined is whether the admittance of females to the College would involve an extra outlay of time and money, or not. Now, in our opinion, it would involve a very considerable addition to the expenses of the College for the simple reason that extra accommodation would have to be provided. No one will be so bold as to assert that co-education could be satisfactorily carried on in our present class-rooms, and with the same general internal arrangements of the buildings as now exist. It is questionable whether new buildings would not have to be erected, if not at once, at least within a very few years. But, besides this, it is pretty evident that the staff of Professors would have to be increased if any considerable number of female students took advantage of the privileges extended to them, and we are surely to take it for granted that a large number will take advantage of them, or else the proposal to make any change at all is foolish. Our Professors as it is, we have no doubt, feel that they have as much upon their hands as they can well perform, and they must fully recognize the fact that the admission of female students would entail a considerable addition to their onerous duties. True, as the *Varsity* observed, it is to a certain degree anomalous to admit them to the privileges of examinations and degrees by the University, while at the same time the College prohibits their attendance at lectures, yet it does not follow that because the College cannot at present afford to admit them, that they are to be debarred from the University privileges as well. We do not to refuse to give them half the apple because we cannot present them with the whole. If, however, it can be clearly demonstrated, which seems to us impossible, that no expense whatever will ensue upon the introduction of the scheme, and if the members of the Corporation are fully satisfied of the advantage of the innovation on other grounds, we say heartily, admit them at once, but if there is to be a further outlay, let us examine what other claims there are upon the College which may have an equal or perhaps better right to be considered. In the first place,