

practice the professions, share equally with men in all the strife and competition of business, take part in political matters, and compete with men in the race of life; or to bear children, rear up a family, and act the part of ministering angels in robbing sickness of half its pain by their soothing influence; whether it is better they should take care of themselves, row their own boat, rely upon their own strength and efforts in the battle of life, or be the mothers, the companions, the helpmeets, and the solace of men. It is a highly important question, affecting our entire domestic and social system. If the former is their proper sphere, co-education may the better fit them, if the latter, it will not.

If it were possible to complete the education of boys and girls before the age of thirteen or fourteen, or before that period at which nature develops the peculiarities of each sex, there could not probably be any weighty arguments brought forward against co-education, from a sanitary standpoint; but this is not possible; the brain of either at this age is not sufficiently developed to receive a high education. After the age of thirteen, or in the case of some, of fourteen, the influence upon the sexual system, and through it upon the *constitution generally, of the constant and inordinate excitement* to which co-education naturally gives rise, is physically injurious,—prejudicial to the health of both boys and girls, especially of the latter. Furthermore, co-education tends strongly to give rise to a too early or premature consciousness of sex and emotional development. After the above age, too, the brain of the female must not be crowded, but on the other hand, especially at certain periods, it should have almost absolute rest, or proper and complete sexual development will be seriously interfered with, and actual disease will be likely to follow; and the fresh, blooming, and promising girl will be blighted at the very threshold of womanhood.

As a question of physical endurance, it is probable that girls are equal to boys. It is probable that the former may bear a certain amount of pushing and strain to the rank, intellectually, of the latter. Women, it is true, have a smaller brain by several ounces than men, but it may be of a higher