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EDUCATION AND CO-EDUCATION.\*

BY PRINCIPAL GRANT, D.D., QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, KINGSTON.

BECAUSE the aims of your Association are modest, and therefore suited to the present condition of popular sentiment with regard to Education for ladies in this part of Canada, because they are in the right direction, and promise to lead to greater things, I had much pleasure in acceding to your request to give the Inaugural address of this year. The higher education of women and such various questions connected with it as co-education in the recognized colleges of the country, and the fitness of women for professional and industrial careers other than those to which they have been usually limited, are now discussed everywhere. Sides have been taken, with more or less vehemence, and as usual in the heat of discussion extravagant language has been used all round. We may classify the positions taken on the whole subject into the customary three, Extreme Right, Extreme Left, and Middle. The Right wing includes those

who resent all interference with use and wont. Departure from traditional views of education and life by any woman they associate with, a tendency to part the hair at the side, and with lax views of morals and religion. They hurl the vigorous words "unmaidenly," "unwomanly," "indelicate," at the innovators, well aware that such words are offensive, perhaps not so well aware that they could be easily retorted against themselves, were retorts desirable. Is it more unwomanly to walk to college than to ride to hounds? More indelicate to sit in the same room with young men listening to lectures on philosophy or science, for two or three hours in the day time, than to dance fast dances with them all night? More unmaidenly to practise the healing art than to cultivate the art of husband-hunting? Is it less unworthy of the sex to know something than to know nothing, to do something than to do nothing, to cultivate faculties than to dwarf them?

\* The Inaugural Lecture of the Ninth Session of the Montreal Ladies' Educational Association. From the *Canadian Monthly* for November, by permission of the publishers and the author.