

# The Educational Weekly.

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BRYN MAWR is a name fast coming into general knowledge. It is that of a college, near Philadelphia, built and endowed with funds arising out of a munificent gift of the late Dr. Joseph W. Taylor, a member of the Society of Friends, amounting to nearly a million and a half of dollars. It is intended for the higher education of women, and as its courses are arranged somewhat after the manner of those of Johns Hopkins, many of its students will be those who have already undertaken an ordinary college course. The munificence of the founder intended not merely a teaching institution, but also a home for those in attendance, and Merion Hall, one of the group of the Bryn Mawr buildings, has every accommodation for the students, the domestic arrangements of the institution being modelled after those of Vassar. The members of the professoriate number sixteen, among whom is Miss Charlotte Angus Scott, who, a few years ago, at the examination for the mathematical tripos at Cambridge, stood eighth in the list of Wranglers, or rather would have stood in that position had women been allowed to take a degree. Since that time she has been mathematical lecturer at Girton College, and before leaving England for Bryn Mawr she received the degree of D.Sc. from the University of London in the subject of pure mathematics. The president of Bryn Mawr is Dr. James E. Rhoads. Though it was founded by a member of the Society of Friends the membership and professoriate of Bryn Mawr are open to all denominations alike. At the formal opening on September 23rd, thirty-seven students and five Fellows were in attendance. Congratulatory addresses were delivered by Dr. Gilman, president of Johns Hopkins, and James Russell Lowell. Bryn Mawr begins its history under exceedingly favorable auspices. Vassar had to prepare for itself its own students. Insufficiency of endowment makes of Wellesley and Smith expensive institutions for students. Girton College, and Newnham College, Cambridge, and Lady Margaret and Mary Somerville Halls, Oxford, have to contend against the traditions of an illiberal age, and prejudices which are born of these; but Bryn Mawr is so well endowed that it can establish a professoriate capable of giving post-graduate courses to the graduates of its sister institutions, and supply its advantages to all its students at a cost of not more than \$300 or \$350 per annum, for fees, room rent, board, and all else.

ONE of the most important questions to be settled in regard to the higher education of

women is the effect upon their health of study and the strain of a college course. Not long ago, the Association of Collegiate Alumnae sent out an exhaustive schedule of questions to the 1,290 women graduates of the United States, to which replies in detail were received from 905. The average age at entering college was 18.35 years. On entering, 78 per cent. were in good health, 2 per cent. in frail health, and 20 per cent. in poor health. Deterioration in health during the college course was experienced by 19.58 per cent., and improvement in health by 21.13 per cent.; or the percentage of those to whom a college course was beneficial was 1.55 greater than that of those to whom it was injurious. Among those who studied severely the most prevalent cause of disorders was constitutional weakness. Only thirty cases in all of brain trouble were reported, and only twelve in all of diseases of the eyes. These replies were sent into the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor, by whom similar enquiries were made of women in other occupations; and in the conclusion of their report they make the following statement, which should allay the fears of those who imagine that upon women more than upon men does a course of higher education entail serious consequences in respect of health:—"The facts which we have presented would seem to warrant the assertion that the seeking of a college education on the part of women does not in itself necessarily entail a loss of health or serious impairment of the vital forces. Indeed, the tables show this so conclusively that there is little need, were it within our province, for extended discussion on the subject. The graduates, as a body, entered college in good health, passed through the course of study prescribed without material change in health, and, since graduation, by reason of the effort required to gain a higher education, do not seem to have become unfitted to meet the responsibilities or bear their proportionate share of the burdens of life."

WE have heard of some opposition to the recent regulation of the Education Department requiring undergraduates in arts who wish to obtain certificates as qualified assistant masters in high schools, and graduates in arts who wish to obtain professional first-class certificates of grade "A" or "B," to attend the training institutes which have been established and to pass the required examinations thereat. With this opposition we have not the least sympathy. Whether the institutions which have been constituted

training institutes are the best available, whether the regulations respecting attendance, and the subjects and books prescribed for examination, are the best possible, are open questions; but whether a professional training and a professional examination *per se*, are good things for those for whom they are intended, and for the profession generally, there is no doubt; the history of education, common experience, and common sense justify them.

THE bane of educational progress are the inexperience and incompetency of those engaged in teaching. A young lad enters college with no serious thoughts concerning his future profession; he probably has never given one moment of consideration to the methods of teaching as practised in his school; he spends two years or four at an institution, whose methods are the very negatives of those fitted to a school, absorbed in his studies, and perhaps more so in his amusements; he has never been in any school other than the one he was trained at; he has never read an educational book, or heard a lecture on the science or art of teaching; and with this utter lack of preparation he offers himself as a teacher on the strength of his second year's examination or his bachelor's degree! Some by native merit succeed. But the great majority of such novices fail sadly; and their failure means both loss of time and loss of opportunity, and, what is worse, mental misdirection for those so unfortunate as to be their pupils. It may be that after six months or a year they do better and perhaps do well. This is not relevant. The only question that the Department has to settle is that of best protecting the youth under its care and securing for them the most capable teachers that the resources of the country can supply. Four months of careful observation of the methods of others, of the application and correction of his own crude methods under experienced criticism, and of the study of the principles and history of education with a view to examination, will do much towards giving a candidate for the higher walks of the profession a fair qualification for his prospective duties. Something too is gained beyond this. Our high school masterships are too often used as mere make-shift occupations by which a candidate for medicine, law, or divinity earns a little money to put him through his subsequent course. No harm in this, if he is qualified for his work and faithfully and conscientiously performs it. The compulsory attendance at a training institute and accompanying its examination, however, will make such an one think twice before he technically qualifies himself for one profession, when his heart is set upon another.