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THE
STUDY AND PRACTICE
OF
Medicine
BY
W O M E N .

JAMES R. CHADWICK, M.D.,
BOSTON, MASS.

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THE STUDY AND PRACTICE OF MEDICINE BY WOMEN.

THE struggle of women to free themselves from the social fetters which have for centuries proved an obstacle — in most cases an insuperable one — to their pursuit of knowledge, has of late been chiefly centred on the profession of medicine. The reason for this is not to be sought in any peculiar fitness of women to practise medicine, but must be attributed to the fact that in this direction their cause has found support in certain sentiments common to all civilized communities. The delicacy which led Queen Charlotte to employ a midwife while Dr. Hunter waited in the adjoining room among the ladies of the bed-chamber, and induced the Duchess of Kent to be delivered of Queen Victoria by the hands of Madam Siebold, has been steadily gaining in strength everywhere. There is, however, nothing very novel in the idea of woman's fitness to practise medicine, in some of its branches at least.

The earliest records of the world's history bear testimony to occasional instances of the successful practice of medicine by women. Mythology corroborates the current belief in woman's capacity for this career by ascribing to the Egyptian Isis the duty of watching over the health of the human species, and the discovery of several drugs. Among the Romans, Juno Lucina presided over childbirth and hastened delivery. Hygieia, the daughter of Esculapius, and Ocyroe, the daughter of Chiron, were learned in medicine. Esculapius is portrayed as followed by a multitude of both sexes who dispensed his benefits. As early as the eleventh century before Christ there existed in Egypt a college of physicians, who seem to have been of the sacerdotal caste, and were certainly of both sexes. The Iliad and Odyssey both refer to women skilled in the science of medicine; among the Greeks, Olympias of Thebes, Aspasia, and Agnodice were pre-eminent for their ability and medical writings. The skill of Agnodice is said to have been such as to have brought about the legal opening of the medical profession to all free-born women of the State. Phænarete, the mother of Socrates, was a midwife.

Between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries several women acquired wide-spread renown as teachers in the great school of Salerno. In the succeeding centuries many female physicians held professional chairs in the Universities of Italy, especially that of Bologna. In this University, about the middle of the eighteenth century,

“there was an Anna Morandi Mazzolini, whose husband held the chair of Anatomy. It happened that he fell ill, and she, being a loving wife, sought to supply to him the place of his enfeebled powers. So she became an anatomist, and presently delivered his lectures for him from behind a curtain. She became famous, and was offered a chair at Milan, which, however, she refused, and remained at Bologna till her death, in 1774. Her anatomical models in wax are the pride of the Anatomical Museum at Bologna.”

During the next half-century several other women followed in her footsteps, of whom the most distinguished was Maria della Donne, who received her degree at Bologna in 1806, and was afterwards appointed by Napoleon Bonaparte to the chair of midwifery in that University.

In the other Continental countries of Europe a like success in medicine has been from time to time achieved by women. We are told of Frau Dorothea Christiania Erxleben, who, after receiving the medical degree on June 12, 1754, upon proper examination, subsequently practised in the small city of Quedlinburg, and was wife of the deacon of the St. Nicholas Church. In the history of her life she wrote “that marriage was no obstacle to a woman’s studies, but that their pursuit was far pleasanter in the companionship of an intelligent husband.” Early in this century, Frau von Siebold and her daughter, Frau von Heidenreich, both obtained medical degrees at Giessen and rose to great distinction. The latter died as late as 1859.

In France the names of Mesdames veuves Lachapelle (1759-1821) and Boivin (1779-1841) stand pre-eminent in the annals of French medicine. Both held successively the position of “sage-femme en chef de la Maternité de Paris,” and rivalled in repute the most renowned accoucheurs of their age. Madame Lachapelle left a complete *Mémoire de l’art de l’accouchement*. Madame Boivin wrote many memoirs, and a *Traité des maladies de l’utérus et de ses annexes*, in 1833. Neither of these women confined themselves to the practice of midwifery.

In England, although a few midwives have acquired transient reputations for proficiency in that branch of medicine, and two — Mrs. Sarah Hastings and Mrs. French — even secured mention in the

Philosophical Transactions for 1694, none have made any notable contribution to the science of medicine. "Wise women" have been numerous, and are still to be found in the rural districts and in certain parts of London. The most famous of these was Joanna Stephens, who, about the middle of the last century, was so successful in advertising a certain nostrum as to secure a purchase of the secret by Parliament for the preposterous sum of £5,000.

In America, although a few women in former generations earned and deserved reputations as successful midwives, none have made any lasting impressions upon the science or practice of medicine.

These few instances drawn from history are not mentioned as adding great weight to the present claim of women to be admitted to the medical profession. They do, however, testify to the fact that in all ages there have been women who possessed qualities so pre-eminently fitted to render them successful practitioners of the art, and even promoters of the science of medicine, that they have risen to be the peers of the most distinguished men of the time, in spite of their lack of early mental training and special medical education.

One of the arguments against the admission of women to the medical profession, upon which great stress is laid, may be properly considered here. It has been pointed out that little, if any, advance was made in the science and practice of midwifery during the many centuries in which that branch of medicine was almost exclusively in the hands of women. The fact cannot be denied, but the inference that women have thereby demonstrated their unfitness to cultivate a branch of science so inexact and so progressive as medicine, does not necessarily follow. *Felix qui potuit cognoscere causas.* Two circumstances have probably combined to effect this result: first, the fact that none of the women who followed this calling ever had their reasoning powers properly trained in preliminary schools, or had the benefit of a thorough education in all the branches of medicine, and but few of them had instruction in midwifery other than that derived from their own experience or from other equally ignorant practitioners; secondly, the circumstance that obstetrics is the one branch of all others in which women, owing to their physical and mental characteristics, are least likely to succeed. Physical strength, calm judgment, and steady nerves are the qualities most needed in one who would succeed in the practice of midwifery; with regard to these characteristics no one can question the superiority of man over woman. Education and training may, in a measure, modify the amount of this natural advantage, but it cannot be supposed that they will eradicate it.

We may now take up the present agitation in favor of a "fair field and no favor" for women in the profession of medicine. It is quite natural that such a movement as this should first come to the surface in a country like America, where a general education is provided for all classes of society, regardless of sex, color, or caste. We therefore find that in this country the first effort was made by a woman to obtain a full medical diploma. It will be well, however, to consider first the efforts which have been made in England and on the Continent to secure a medical education for women.

As the University of Zurich has attracted much attention by the large concourse of women who have sought to avail themselves of the opportunity which it has offered for the study of medicine, it may be of interest to give a detailed history of events there.

Previous to the year 1864, the Zurich University had, with two exceptions, been opened only to male students. Two ladies of Zurich had received, by special act of Government, the privilege of attending the lectures of the philosophical Faculty; they were admitted, however, only as listeners (*Auditoren*), and were not matriculated.

In the autumn of 1864, Miss K., of Russia, made application at the rectorate for permission to attend the lectures, not only upon scientific subjects, but also those upon anatomy and microscopy; this was granted on condition that the instructors raised no objections. It transpired, after a while, that this young lady intended to pursue the whole regular course of medical studies.

About Easter, another Russian, Miss S., who had already made some progress in the study of medicine, arrived, and attended the lectures on the same footing as her fellow-countrywoman. As the presence of two ladies pursuing the regular course of studies somewhat altered the aspect of affairs, the question whether they should be matriculated or altogether excluded was brought before the academic senate. After a long session, in which the matter was fully discussed in all its bearings, it was voted to lay the subject on the table for the time being, with the sole requirement that any woman who wished to attend more than two courses of lectures must obtain special permission.

The first Russian, who proved less capable than the second, vanished in 1867, but the latter prosecuted her studies with such energy and persistence that she soon won the respect of both professors and students. She fulfilled all the requirements of the regular course without having gone through the form of taking her matriculation.

In February, 1867, she demanded to be admitted to the examination for degree, but was directed first to obtain her matriculation papers. The Rector, after consultation with the Swiss Minister of Education, interpreted the law — in which the matriculation of female students was neither allowed nor forbidden — in favor of the applicant in question. As the young lady had now been matriculated, admission to the examination for degree could not be refused her ; so that after her acquirements had been subjected to a rigorous test in every branch of medicine, she received the medical diploma.

This success was not, as had been anticipated, the signal for an influx of female students. In the following two years only three Englishwomen, one Russian, and one American studied medicine in Zurich and came up for degree, while one Englishwoman and three Russians were matriculated, but left soon after. In the summer term of 1868, the first female student, an Englishwoman, was matriculated by the philosophical Faculty, but left at the end of the term. In the winter term of 1869-70, six Russians appeared, of whom three departed without examination. In the summer term of 1870, three Russians arrived, who also left without degrees. In the winter term of 1870-71, the number of those newly matriculated rose to eleven, of whom five left without degree. In the summer term of 1871, a single female student was matriculated, whereas two left without, and one with, the diploma.

Thus far the study of medicine by women had developed but slowly in Zurich. Of the twenty-five female students who had attended the medical lectures for irregular periods since 1864, three left with, and seven without, their degrees ; of the seven matriculated in the philosophical department, three had departed without the diploma. In the summer term of 1870, but fifteen women studying medicine, and four philosophy, remained.

In the next term, 1871-72, the number rose from nineteen to thirty-one, and in the summer term, 1872, from thirty-one to sixty-three. With the increase in quantity a decrease in quality was perceptible ; this was due chiefly to the fact that quite a number of them had not the requisite age, training, and devotion to their studies. Among the sixty-three there were fifty-four Russians, in whose country, though no university was open to women, yet so-called public lectures for women were delivered in two years' courses. The first Russians stated that in the interior of that great country there were long stretches where no physician could be found, and where they

intended to practise; this induced many lecturers to favor their admission to the courses on the score of humanity.

That the prosperity of that institution was not impaired was evident from the number of students then frequenting it; this had increased from 232 in 1864 to 354 in 1872. The gain was especially marked in the medical department, which was attended by 107 male students and one female in 1864, whereas in the summer of 1872 there were 208 students, of whom 51 were women. The greater throng of these last then stimulated the Faculty to appeal again to the Government for a special examination for women.

In this connection, one fact is deserving of mention. In July, 1871, the principal medical bodies in most of the Swiss Cantons explicitly voted by a large majority in favor of the admission of female candidates to the so-called medical "Concordats" examination; the action was induced by the announcement that the first Swiss girl, who had been studying in Zurich, had applied for the State examination. As a consequence of this, the young lady referred to honorably passed the first State examination. It was admitted by all the professors that the experiment of women's study of medicine in Zurich was perfectly successful in the first four or five years, when only six or eight women were there enrolled. No irrelevant conduct on the part of the students was noticed; in fact, the modest and sensible demeanor of the young women exerted rather a favorable influence upon the behavior, habits, and earnestness of the men.

The first female students in Zurich were however so convinced of the importance of a more strict discrimination in the admission of women to the courses, that they took the initiative in demanding that certificates or tests of proficiency should be required, to which a part of them begged to be subjected. They foresaw that the whole experiment would fail if too young or immature girls should attend the lectures without sufficient preliminary training or devotion to the work.

In 1873 the number of female students rose to 88 of medicine, 25 of philosophy, and one of social science, making a total of 114, of whom 100 were Russians. The immature and plastic minds of the young Russians, however, fell a ready prey to the wiles and machinations of political adventurers, so that the steady and praiseworthy devotion to study which characterized the pioneers in that field was supplanted by political agitation, and — what is worse — in some instances by an indulgence in the delusive fascinations of free love. In consequence

of these events the Russian government felt called upon to interfere, and announced to "all the Russian women who attend the lectures at the University and Polytechnic School of Zurich, that such of them as shall continue to attend the above lectures after the first of January, 1874, will not be admitted, on their return to Russia, to any examination, educational establishment, or appointment of any kind under the control of the Government." This action was attributed by the official organs to the "unfavorable reports that have reached the Government relative to the conduct of these young women. . . . 'A Slavonic Democrat-Socialist Society,' a 'Slavonic Central Revolutionary Committee,' and a Slavonic and Russian Section of the International Society have been formed at Zurich, and they number several of the young Russians of both sexes among their numbers. In the Russian library, to which certain editors send their periodicals and newspapers gratis, lectures of a very revolutionary character are delivered. It has become a daily occupation of young Russian girls to attend the meetings of workingmen; political agitation absorbs their youthful and inexperienced minds, and leads them into wrong courses. The young women who have thus been dragged into politics are entirely under the influence of the leaders of the emigration, and have become their obedient instruments. Some of them go two or three times a year to Russia and back again, taking with them incendiary letters and proclamations. . . . Others allow themselves to be deluded by the communistic theories of free love, and, under the protection of a fictitious marriage, act in utter forgetfulness of all the fundamental principles of morality and decorum." These were the charges made against the Russian female students at Zurich by the Government of their country, and the threats which followed were undoubtedly elicited solely by the political agitation to which the women lent themselves, and by means of which their instigators were furthering their schemes.

Previous to this time, six women had passed with honor the examination for the medical degree. Four received "good" as a comment, and two "very good." Several of the professors, at their graduation, took the opportunity of expressing in public their perfect satisfaction at the progress made by the female students.

All but twelve Russian students left Zurich in obedience to the order of their Government: twenty-one of these obtained admission to the University of Berne, where, in the session of 1874-75, there were thirty-two female students, twenty-eight of medicine, three of

philosophy, and one of law ; and where two women, an American and an Austrian, took their medical degrees in 1878. The number studying in Zurich was reduced to six in 1877. Between 1864 and 1878 only fourteen women had graduated in Zurich ; but, in considering these figures with the comparatively large number of matriculants, it must be borne in mind that very few of the Russians intended at the outset to take their degrees. The University of Geneva has since been opened to women, in which there were recently two studying medicine. The Concordats examination of Switzerland has also been granted to women, which gives those who pass it successfully the right to practise in the Republic, of which one Swiss lady at least has availed herself. The report that no more women would be admitted to the University of Zurich because their presence had led to evil moral results has proved to be unfounded. Not only is the Faculty well satisfied with the result of the experiment, but two young ladies have recently been appointed assistants, — one to Dr. Hermann, Professor of Physiology and Rector of the University, and one, an American, to Dr. Rose, Professor of Surgery.

In Russia we find that in 1862 Mademoiselle Souslowa began to study medicine at the Medico-Chirurgical Academy of St. Petersburg. After she had attended the lectures of natural philosophy, chemistry, and anatomy for two years, in company with several other women, the privilege was suddenly withdrawn by an edict of the Imperial Government, on the alleged ground that "women did better *as such* when they knew nothing and understood nothing," although no complaints had been made either by the professors or the male students. Women were thus debarred from studying medicine in St. Petersburg, with the exception of a few midwives educated by Government to send out to the wild tribes of Russian Asia, who had petitioned for them. One of these midwives was allowed to remain and complete a full medical education after the University had been closed to her companions.

In 1860 a Russian officer was sent to inspect the Woman's Medical College of the New York Infirmity, and report to the Imperial Government upon the medical education of women in America, owing to the fresh application of a dozen or more respectable Russian women for admission to the Academy at St. Petersburg. This application seems to have been granted, for in 1869 Mademoiselle Kaschewarowa received the degree of M. D. from the Academy. In 1872 a lady interested in the higher education of women offered the sum of forty thousand dollars to the Minister of State for the establishment of

classes for women at the Imperial Academy of Medicine. In the same year the Medico-Chirurgical Academy formally admitted women to study under the same instructors as the men ; but the requirements for graduation were different, and the diploma applied only to practice in the diseases of women and children. The prescribed course was reduced from five years for men to four for women. The Medical Department of the University of Moscow opened its doors in 1871 to women, exacting the same tests of capacity as for male students. In 1874-75 there were one hundred and seventy-one women studying at the Academy, of whom one hundred and two were of noble birth, seventeen belonged to the commercial class, fourteen to that of shop-keepers, and twelve were clergymen's daughters : twenty-three were married. They were instructed in the same buildings and by the same teachers as the men, but at different hours. Three small wooden hospitals had also been built, in which seventy young women were being trained ; twenty of them as resident pupils. No men were admitted. The professors have expressed themselves as highly satisfied with the scholarship and demeanor of the women.

In Finland the Emperor of Russia has ordered the University of Helsingfors, through the Senate of Finland, to admit women to its medical school.

In France the medical schools have always been nominally open to women, yet none sought the privilege until a lady applied to the Faculty of Montpellier¹ in 1866 and was refused. She immediately applied to the Minister of the Interior for permission to study in Paris, which was granted on condition that she would practise in Algeria, whence she came. The first woman, however, to graduate in Paris, after passing the five requisite examinations, was a native of England, Miss Garrett (now Mrs. Garrett-Anderson), in June, 1870. The next was an American, Miss Mary C. Putnam (now Mrs. Jacobi), of New York, who took her diploma with great honor in August, 1871. In 1874 there were twenty female students at the *École de Médecine*, each having obtained the requisite special permission from the Minister of Instruction. At the end of the session, 1876-77, there were twenty-two female students, — five French, six English, eleven Russian, in the school. During that year five women had received the medical degree, — two English, two Russians, and one German. In 1877-78 there were fourteen English alone studying medicine there. Between 1870 and 1876, however, only ten women have graduated in France. Women are eligible to the post of Internat of the Hospitals. In July, 1870, at

the moment France was entering upon the war with Prussia, a small commission under the presidency of M. Duruy, ex-Minister of Public Instruction, was elaborating a plan for the complete education of women under the patronage of the Empress. Its object was to educate physicians for countries subject to Islamism. All was arranged to give the most thorough instruction, including clinical opportunities at the hospitals; but the scheme disappeared with the Empire.

In Germany there has been but little demand for the medical education of women, yet whenever the privilege has been sought, it has generally been granted. According to the "Pall-Mall Gazette," there was one woman studying medicine at Munich in 1865, two in 1866, four in 1867, eight in 1868, and sixteen in 1869; in the last-named year the Dean of the Faculty reported that the innovation had greatly improved the discipline of the School. Women were admitted to the Medical School of Vienna in 1870; three years later there were four female students at the School. Since that time some opposition has been aroused, yet women are still admitted to certain courses by special permission, but are not allowed to matriculate. In 1874 women were given permission to study at the University of Leipzig, although the privilege of graduating was not assured. A young lady was granted in 1872, by the Government, an examination for a dental degree at the University at Erlangen, on the ground that it was absurd to exclude a person desirous of submitting herself to authorized professional tests of ability, by reason of her sex.

In Holland in 1865 the daughter of a deceased *pharmacien* applied for authority to enter as a student of pharmacy in order to qualify herself to be of use in the pharmacy of her late father. The demand was refused on the ground that the law confined its provisions to *pharmaciens*, entitled to the pronoun *il*, and made no allusion to the *elle*. In 1866 a new law allowed women to present themselves for examination as *pharmaciens*. In 1868 the woman in question obtained her regular diploma. In the succeeding eleven years one hundred women entered as students in pharmacy, and underwent the examination necessary to enable them to keep a shop. Among an equal number of applicants, twice as many women have succeeded as men. At Gröningen the first medical student passed her examination in physics and mathematics in 1873; and in the same year the University of Holland opened its doors to women.

In Belgium women have been refused permission to study medicine.

In Italy, the Universities have never been closed to women, but in 1876 the fifteen Universities of the kingdom were formally thrown open to them by a State decree, and in the same year a woman took her degree of M. D. at Pisa.

In Denmark, all departments of the University of Copenhagen, except the theological, were opened to women in 1875; but few have taken advantage of the opportunity.

The Swedish University of Upsala was opened to women on the same terms as men in 1864, with the exception of the departments of Theology and Law. About 1870 the University of Stockholm admitted women; and soon after three women passed the examinations as surgeons, and two as dentists. A medical school exclusively for women was to have been established at Göthenburg in 1870.

In Great Britain, the Medical Act of 1858 only admitted to registration and to the practice of medicine such persons as had passed the examination and obtained the license of one of the nineteen examining bodies of the kingdom, whose representatives, together with the persons appointed by the crown, constituted the "General Council of Medical Education and Registration of the United Kingdom." The only exception was in favor of those who at that time held degrees of M. D. from any foreign or colonial University, and were already practising before Oct. 1, 1858. Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, having a degree from the Geneva Medical College of New York State, availed herself of this clause and obtained registration. In 1860 Miss Garrett, with a view to practising medicine in compliance with this act, was admitted as a student at Apothecaries' Hall (one of the licensing bodies), where she attended some classes in common with male students; in other branches she was obliged to pay heavy fees for private instruction by recognized teachers. After having overcome many difficulties in obtaining the requisite hospital instruction she was registered as licentiate of Apothecaries' Hall in 1865. Her title of M. D. was obtained several years later from the University of Paris. Apothecaries' Hall, after admitting Miss Garrett, took action effectually to prevent a recurrence of such an event by passing a vote forbidding students thereafter to receive any part of their education *privately*.

In March, 1869, Miss Sophia Jex-Blake applied to the University of Edinburgh for permission to attend the lectures of the Medical Faculty for the purpose of ultimately obtaining the degree of Doctor of Medi-

cine, which would entitle her to registration. As the application was from one woman only, a tentative attendance on the classes of botany and natural history was suggested by the Dean of the Medical Faculty, with the assent of the two professors, the question of matriculation being postponed for the time. This plan received the formal approval of the Medical Faculty and the Senators, but was vetoed by the University Court on the appeal of several dissentient professors. A favorable response was however given to Miss Jex-Blake and four other ladies who joined her, to be allowed to make arrangements for separate classes; regulations were then officially issued admitting women to matriculation and to subsequent instruction for the profession of medicine. The five ladies were at once matriculated after having passed the examination in arts. After the first session opposition was raised among the professors and male students, but through no fault of the female students. The former refused to teach the women, the latter mobbed them: The women appealed to the courts, and obtained a verdict in their favor; this was however reversed by the whole Court of Sessions in June, 1873, by a bare majority. Appeal was now made to the highest tribunal in the kingdom, the cause of the women being presented to Parliament in 1874, and again in 1875, when it was finally defeated by a vote of 196 to 153.

In 1874 the idea was conceived of founding a medical school for women in London. Chiefly through the efforts of Dr. Sophia Jex-Blake, with the co-operation of the late Dr. Anstie, the London School of Medicine for Women was opened in the autumn of 1874 with a staff of teachers, who were, with one exception, recognized lecturers at other medical schools. The examination and license of the graduates of this school at the end of the three years' course depended upon a removal of the disqualification resting upon the sex by a previous act of Parliament, and a subsequent recognition of the instruction there received as sufficient to entitle the students to examination. A still greater obstacle was the clause in the medical act requiring that every student coming up for examination should have had practical clinical instruction in a hospital of no less than 150 beds.

In July, 1876, the Government accorded its support in Parliament to a bill "enabling the British examining bodies to extend their examinations to women as well as to men," with a single proviso that the qualification conferred by any examining body should not carry with it any right to take part in the government of that body. This bill was passed, received the royal assent, and became a law. The Uni-

versity of Edinburgh was thus enabled to do justice to its matriculated students, but refused. The Queen's University, and the King's and Queen's College of Physicians, of Ireland, however, both granted the request for admission to examination preferred by Miss Edith Pechey. As the regulations of the former made obligatory the attendance upon four courses of lectures in one of the Queen's Colleges, the assent of four professors at Galway was obtained; but the Council of the College vetoed the arrangement, and the immediate opening of the session made further action at that time impossible. The College of Physicians granted examinations to Dr. Elizabeth W. Dunbar, Dr. Frances Hoggan, and Dr. Louisa Atkins (M.D.'s of Zurich), and of Dr. Sophia Jex-Blake and Dr. Edith Pechey (M.D.'s of Berne) during the early months of 1877, thereby admitting them to registration as qualified practitioners.

The Woman's Medical School still needed hospital opportunities for its students. No hospital in London would grant admission to women until the Royal Free Hospital in Gray's Inn Road agreed to do so for five years in consideration of an annual subsidy of £715, it having no school for male students connected with it. Finally, in the autumn of 1876, the Senate of the University of London passed a resolution to admit women to medical examinations and degrees, on application of Miss Edith Shove.

The London School of Medicine for Women opened in 1874 with twenty-three students, a strong staff of lecturers, and the special countenance of such men as the late Dr. Anstie, Dr. Burdon-Sanderson, Dr. Chambers, Dr. Bastian, Mr. Ernst Hart, and Professor Huxley. During the second year six new students were admitted; during the third, two new students; during the fourth (1877-78), nine. The small number entering in the second and third years is probably due to the fact that the arrangement with the Royal Free Hospital was not made until the spring of 1877, and consequently up to that time there was no guarantee that the graduates of the school could obtain certificates of attendance at a hospital large enough to be recognized as qualifying them for registration. In 1877 the school was placed on the official list of medical schools recognized by the Irish College of Physicians. The school requires the students to pass a preliminary examination in arts, and to be at least eighteen years of age. The course is four years, three in the school and one in hospitals. The fees are £90 for the three years' instruction in the school, and £40 for the four years' hospital instruction.

This brief recital shows clearly the various obstacles successively overcome by the female students under the generalship of Dr. Sophia Jex-Blake, to whose enthusiasm and energy the ultimate achievement should be credited. The registered female practitioners are now kindly received at many of the hospitals of London, notably the Children's Hospital in Great Ormond Street, the Cancer Hospital, the Moorfields Ophthalmic Hospital, and to some of the services of the Brompton Consumption Hospital. The Soho Square Hospital for Women has flatly declined to allow a female physician to enter its doors; on the other hand, Dr. Thomas Chambers at once granted them admission to his wards of the Chelsea Hospital for Women.

While immense steps have been taken in securing for women the privilege of studying and practising medicine in England, the antagonism is not by any means entirely allayed. In January, 1876, three women applied to the College of Surgeons to be examined for the license in midwifery, which is a registrable license. In the opinion of counsel the College was bound to admit them; the Committee reported their certificates of four years' study satisfactory, whereupon Dr. Robert Barnes, one of the examiners in midwifery, resigned. Soon after came an official letter to the women promising their admission to the next examination, which was followed by the resignation of Drs. Farre and Priestley, — that is, of the whole examining board. Since then there have been no examiners and no examinations. There was, however, immediately a meeting of the Obstetrical Society of London, at which a vote of thanks to these gentlemen was carried by "universal acclamation." At an extraordinary meeting of the Royal College of Physicians on March 18, 1878, the motion of Sir George Barrows, that the College should not grant licenses to women to practise medicine, was carried by an overwhelming majority. Near the end of the year 1877 Dr. Wilson Fox addressed to the Secretary of the British Medical Association a letter inquiring of the Council, "whether women are to be permitted in the future to attend the meetings of the medical, surgical, and other sections of the association and to take part in the discussions?" To this he received the reply that "the Council have no powers to prevent ladies who are members of the association from attending the meetings of the association." As a result of this, Dr. Fox withdrew from the association. At the annual meeting in 1878 the following article was carried after long discussion: "No female shall be eligible for election as a member of the association." There is now but one lady

member of the association, Dr. Garrett-Anderson. Seven women are now on the Medical Register ; six more have presented themselves to the Irish College of Physicians for the first examination, of whom four have passed.

In Australia women were admitted to the University of Melbourne in 1872.

It is estimated that of the one hundred million women in India at least two thirds are, by their social customs, debarred from receiving the visits of a male physician at their houses, and from attending for gratuitous advice at the hospitals and dispensaries. The lying-in hospitals of Madras, Manargoody, and Madura have for many years been educating midwives ; but if a Mahometan or Hindu woman of the higher castes is attacked with any severe disease, or has any bones injured, she cannot receive the benefit of medical knowledge so long as it is exclusively in the possession of men who are not admissible to women's presence. To meet this want, a medical school for women was founded at Bareilly in 1867, which has since been teaching native women, and giving them certificates as general practitioners. In 1871, there were thirty girls between the ages of twelve and seventeen years in the school, of whom twenty-eight were native Christians and two Mahometans. The course of study was three years.

The Madras Medical College, which supplies the military and civil establishments with physicians, admitted women in 1875, the lectures being in common with men except on certain special subjects. In 1878 four women received their degree, after five years' study, during which they had greatly distinguished themselves. At Benares, Brahmin widows were receiving a regular medical training in 1877. At Bombay a midwifery class of women is connected with the hospital. The midwives who have graduated from all these establishments have been generally successful in India, in spite of the custom which assigns a certain part of every city or village to each native midwife, in which she has the exclusive right to practise ; the monopoly being transmitted from mother to daughter.

Coming now at last to America, we find that, in 1848, Miss Elizabeth Blackwell, an English woman, after having studied medicine for several years, applied for admission to many different medical colleges of the United States, all of which refused it except the Geneva Medical College, then a flourishing school in Western New York. She attended two full courses at that institution, and graduated creditably in

1849, being the first woman to receive the degree of M. D. in the United States. The discussion caused by this event led to the exclusion of woman students from all the colleges, in deference to the general sentiment of the medical profession. A few years later Miss Sarah R. Adamson (now Mrs. Dolly) found the doors of the Geneva Medical College closed against her, and no medical college of the country willing to admit her as a candidate for a diploma. She was consequently driven, against her wishes, to enter the Central Medical College at Syracuse, N. Y., an eclectic institution, where she graduated in 1851. The Rush Medical College of Chicago soon after admitted Miss Emily Blackwell to attend her first course of lectures, but withheld the permission the next year, owing to a vote of censure passed by the Illinois State Medical Society. After many fruitless applications elsewhere, she was finally admitted to the Cleveland Medical College, where she took her degree in 1854, after one course of lectures.

In 1853, Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell sought the post of physician in the department for women of one of the dispensaries of New York. The refusal of this application led to the organization of the New York Infirmary for Women and Children, which was extended as a hospital of ten beds with a dispensary attached in 1857, with Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, Dr. Mary E. Zakrzewska, now of Boston, and Dr. Emily Blackwell as attending physicians. At this time there was no hospital open to women in America. Meagre instruction was here given to small classes for several years. In 1865 a charter was obtained for the Woman's Medical College of the New York Infirmary, a graded course of three years being adopted from the start. The first chair of Hygiene in the country was here instituted. The board of examiners, independent of the College Faculty, was composed of eminent physicians, professors in the different schools of the city. This board consisted, in 1878, of Drs. Willard Parker, Isaac E. Taylor, Austin Flint, Stephen Smith, B. W. McCready, A. L. Loomis, C. F. Chandler, and E. H. Janes. A preliminary examination in English branches is required, unless the students bring "a diploma from some established literary school." The sessions are of eight months' duration. The first class of five women graduated in 1870. In the nine years during which students have been graduating, the total number who have received degrees amounts to fifty-three. During the session 1877-78 forty-seven students were pursuing their studies. Nine of the graduates were married women, five being wives of physicians,

who are all now engaged in practice with their husbands. Three graduates are daughters of physicians who now practise with their fathers. Four have gone abroad as missionaries, one having established in China a hospital for women. Sixteen graduates occupy positions as resident physicians to hospitals, or as physicians to large women's colleges, such as Vassar and Mt. Holyoke. Seven graduates have since pursued their studies in European universities. Two graduates have been applicants for hospital positions given by competitive examination, both being successful. One received a position at Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York. The other was refused the post of *interne* at the Charity Hospital in New York, although successful in examination, because, as was alleged, there were no arrangements for having these posts filled by women. The Hospitals and Dispensaries of New York are now as much open to the mass of women students as to men. Women are admitted to the lectures in the Bellevue Amphitheatre by the physicians of the three colleges for men who lecture there, to private courses, and to the free city clinics at all the dispensaries. In 1871, Dr. Mary Green, the physician to the Woman's Prison Association, was elected a member of the New York Medico-Legal Society.

In the autumn of 1850 the Female Medical College of Philadelphia was opened with a class of forty women. In 1853 it adopted the longest course (five months) of any medical school then existing in the country. A dispensary was established in connection with it in 1854, which was enlarged to a hospital in 1861. In 1868 it received a bequest of \$60,000 from the estate of Mr. Isaac Barton. The option of a progressive course of three years was introduced in 1869. The female students were admitted to the Philadelphia Hospital (Blockley), and to the Wills Ophthalmic Hospital in 1869, and to the medical and surgical wards of the Pennsylvania Hospital in 1870. In addition to these clinical facilities the female students are admitted to the daily dispensary service, and the weekly medical, surgical, and gynæcological clinics of Dr. Anna E. Bloomall at the Woman's Hospital, of which the capacity is now forty beds; to the Orthopedic Hospital and Infirmary for Nervous Diseases; the Eye and Ear Infirmary; and the Mission Hospital and Dispensary for Women and Children, and to the Philadelphia Lying-in Charity. During the past years women have been admitted to the lectures of the auxiliary Faculty of the University of Pennsylvania. An Alumni Association was formed in 1875, which now numbers 263. Twenty students received their de-

gress at the twenty-seventh annual commencement on March 13, 1879. In 1853 the Penn Medical College of Philadelphia, an irregular institution for the co-education of men and women, was instituted, but was discontinued in 1864. The Pennsylvania College of Dental Surgery having opened its doors to women in 1873, two were returned as graduated in 1874.

It must not be assumed, however, that all these concessions to women were made in Philadelphia without opposition. As early as 1859, the Philadelphia County Medical Society passed a vote recommending its members "to withhold all countenance and support from the Faculties and graduates of the Female Medical Colleges; and that, consistently with sound medical ethics, they should not hold professional intercourse with them." In 1867 a similar action was again taken. When the Pennsylvania Hospital first admitted women to its clinics, the male students made strenuous but futile objections to their presence. In 1870 admission into the State Medical Society of Pennsylvania was sought by the women and not granted. The venerable Dr. S. D. Gross, as one of the most rigorous opponents, advanced the amusing argument that "woman was taken from the side of Adam to show that her duty and promise was to lean upon man for all time to come."

The Department of Medicine and Surgery of the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor was opened in 1851. Women have been admitted since 1871 to separate courses, except in chemistry, but under the same requirements as men. It has a session of nine months and a graded course of three years. The number of female students has increased from eighteen in 1871 to forty-two in 1879. In the years 1871 to 1878 have been graduated eighty women. The number of male students ranges from three to five hundred.

In 1865 the Chicago Hospital for Women and Children was opened, and has for many years been in successful operation with Dr. Mary H. Thompson as attending physician and surgeon. In connection with this institution was organized, in 1870, the Woman's Hospital Medical College for the instruction of women, with Dr. W. H. Byford as President of the Faculty and Professor of the Clinical Surgery of Women, and Dr. Mary H. Thompson as Professor of the Diseases of Children, and a full Faculty of other able instructors. The graduates must have studied medicine three years, have attended two full courses of lectures, and passed a satisfactory examination. In 1875 eight women graduated. The Medical Class of 1877-78

consisted of thirty-two students. There were seven graduates in 1878.

The Syracuse University in the State of New York was incorporated on March 25, 1870, making from the outset no distinction with regard to the sex of the students. There were graduated in medicine in 1875 three women and ten men; in 1876, three women and sixteen men; in 1877, two women and six men; in 1878, three women and fourteen men; in 1879, no women and six men. The President writes that the absence of women from among the graduates of 1879 was "a mere accident," and is in no wise attributable to any evil effect upon the morals of the students from co-education of the sexes.

The University of California, at Berkeley, a suburb of San Francisco, was organized in 1868, and opened for instruction in 1869. Attendance at three full courses of five months is required before graduation in medicine, the studies being graded. Women are admitted on an equality with men, — the number of all students in each class being but ten or fifteen, of whom two or three are women. The Pacific Dispensary for women and children in San Francisco was incorporated in 1875, and is in successful operation under the management of three female physicians.

In New England, as elsewhere, during the Colonial times, much of the medical practice was in the hands of women, who, however, had for the most part the rearing of a large family as their only qualification and the sole test of their proficiency. The former prevalence of a belief that women were the proper and only qualified custodians of their own sex in child-bearing is made evident by a town record printed in the first volume of the Collections of the Maine Historical Society. The General Court, held at Wells on the 6th of July, 1646, "presented Francis Rayus for presuming to act the part of midwife. The delinquent, examined by the Court, is fined fifty shillings for his offence; and, paying the fees, five shillings, is discharged." Such evidence, and it can easily be amplified, drawn from old records, does not of course testify to any peculiar opinion on the part of the Colonists with regard to the fitness of women to practise medicine as a whole, or certain of its branches, but merely reveals customs which were founded upon tradition or imposed upon the communities by the exigencies of a sparse population in a new country.

To Massachusetts is nevertheless due the credit of establishing the first medical school for women in the world. On November 23, 1848, was organized in Boston the Female Medical Educational Society, and

incorporated in 1850. The first term of the Boston Female Medical School (subsequently the New England Female Medical College) began November 1, 1848, with twelve students and two professors. While the attendance on the school was comparatively large, only a small number graduated; the total number of graduates between the years 1848 and 1871 being but eighty-three. In 1874, while a proposition to transfer the College to Harvard University was under consideration by that corporation, the Trustees suddenly merged the College in the School of Medicine of Boston University, which is under the exclusive control of homœopaths. While this act may have involved no betrayal of trust on the part of the trustees in a legal sense, it certainly was an indefensible breach of trust toward those who had contributed funds to enable women to obtain a medical education in accordance with the tenets of the regular school. As the scope of this paper does not include an historical account of the various homœopathic, eclectic, botanic, and other schools which have admitted women to their courses, it is sufficient to state that no disturbances or other untoward results have arisen from an association of the sexes in the Medical Department of the Boston University.

Recent events, however, have drawn attention to the position of the Harvard Medical School with regard to women, and it may not, therefore, prove devoid of interest to pass in brief review the history of the various attempts which have been made by women to attend the lectures at that institution.

In the autumn of 1847 Miss Harriet K. Hunt, who had been practising medicine in Boston for several years, applied for permission to attend lectures, and was refused. Application for the same privilege was again made by the same lady in 1850. On November 23 of that year it was voted in a meeting of the Medical Faculty, at which all the seven members were present, that "Miss Hunt be admitted to the lectures on the usual terms, provided that her admission be not deemed inconsistent with the statutes." Drs. Jacob Bigelow and James Jackson voted in the negative. At a meeting of the President and Fellows of the University, on November 30, it was voted "that this Board, if the Medical Faculty deem it expedient, perceive no objection arising from the Statutes of the Medical School to admitting female students to their lectures, expressing hereby no opinion as to the claims of such student to a medical degree." These votes, appeared to have removed all obstacles to the fulfilment of Miss Hunt's aspirations; but another, which proved to be insuperable, arose

on the part of the students. At the beginning of the session of 1850-51 two colored persons had been found to be among the students, and were the cause of much dissatisfaction. A few weeks later another black made his appearance, and soon after it was reported that a woman had taken tickets for the lectures. The indignation of the students now found vent in a meeting in December, 1850, at which two series of resolutions were passed remonstrating against the amalgamation of sexes and races. These were referred by the Faculty to a committee, which reported through its chairman, Dr. Jacob Bigelow, the following votes, relating to the admission of the woman, which were adopted:—

“Voted, that the Faculty are at all times anxious to promote the gratification and welfare of the members of the medical class as far as their duty and the great interests of medical education permit.

“Voted, that the female student who had applied for liberty to attend the lectures, having by advice of the Faculty withdrawn her petition, no further action on this subject is necessary.’

This concession of the Faculty to the predilections of the students was probably unavoidable, owing to the fact that the Medical School was at that time without any considerable endowment, and entirely dependent for its support upon the fees of the students. In 1866 permission to attend lectures was denied to two women who made application; and the like again occurred in 1867. In 1868, it having been reported to the Medical Faculty that women were attending the lectures of one of the University lecturers (not a member of the Faculty) by his permission, this action was declared to be inconsistent with the rules, and the women were ordered to discontinue such attendance.

At a meeting of the Corporation of Harvard University on April 8, 1878, a letter was read from Miss Marian Hovey, Trustee, offering to give the sum of ten thousand dollars, from a fund for benevolent purposes bequeathed by her father, Mr. George O. Hovey, to the Harvard Medical School, if its advantages were extended to women on equal terms with men. The Corporation referred the communication to the Board of Overseers, which has only advisory powers in such matters. At a meeting of this Board on April 10, it was referred to a committee of its members, viz. the President of the University, and Messrs. Wyman, Agassiz, Cabot, and Le Baron Russell.

On May 3, 1879, the committee presented two reports: the majority, signed by Alexander Agassiz, Dr. Morrill Wyman, Charles W. Eliot, and J. Elliot Cabot; and the minority, by Dr. Le Baron Russell.

The majority of the committee recommended the acceptance of the trust offered by Miss Hovey for the Medical School upon the following conditions : —

“ That, after the completion of a new building, women be admitted to the Medical School, as an experiment, for a period of ten years.

“ That they be not less than twenty-two years of age.

“ That the requisitions for admission and the course of study be the same as for men.

“ That the examinations for women and men shall be identical.

“ That nothing shall be countenanced which will in any way lower the standard of the school, or affect the execution of the plans laid out for its development.

“ That the courses of lectures in which students take no active part be open to both men and women ; that for personal instruction in laboratories and for recitations the two sexes be separated ; and that a complete separation be made in such subjects as obstetrics, the diseases of women, certain portions of anatomy and physiology, and the like.

“ The first cost of this experiment need not, we think, be very great ; for the present a probable outlay of twenty or twenty-five thousand dollars for additional laboratories and recitation-rooms in the new building, and an increase of some three to five thousand dollars annually, in the salaries of instructors, would be sufficient. It may be roughly estimated that a sum of sixty to sixty-five thousand dollars would amply cover the pecuniary cost of this experiment ; but should the change be permanently adopted, a considerable endowment would be required to meet the increased annual charges.

“ It should be distinctly understood, however, that the experiment can be continued only so long as, in the opinion of the governing boards, it does not conflict in any way with the best interests of the school.”

The report continues as follows : —

“ Your Committee are well aware that the Harvard Medical School owes its high standing to the devotion of its staff of professors, and that their voice should therefore have great weight in the decision of the question, and in determining the duration or cessation of the experiment. To them and to their successors the school must look for the maintenance and increase of its intellectual activity. It is a critical moment of its history. The members of its staff are all earnest in their endeavors to raise the standard of the school ; for this they have made, and are ready to make, great sacrifices. Besides the continuous need of broadening and elevating instruction, there is urgent need that the new building for the Medical School should be supplied with all modern appliances for teaching and for original investigation, without which the school cannot hold its place among leading institutions. These improvements will be costly. The professors, therefore, naturally hesitate to undertake just now a change of policy which seems, to some of them at least, of doubtful issue, without ample provision against the case of failure.

“ Of twenty-one members of the Medical Faculty, who expressed their views in writing, six are in favor of admitting women to the school with restrictions. Three are in favor of making the experiment, but have strong doubts of its expediency or

success. Seven are strongly opposed to the plan. Five are opposed, but willing to try the experiment under certain conditions.

“Of the six in favor, only one is in favor of admission without restrictions.

“Of the nine more or less in favor, four require a guarantee fund of \$200,000.

“Of the twelve more or less opposed, five consider \$200,000 as the sum necessary to warrant the trial of the experiment, if it is to be tried at all.”

The minority report, signed by Dr. Le Baron Russell, opposed the acceptance of the gift on the terms proposed.

“But while opposed to the admission of women to the Harvard School, he cordially recognizes the reasonableness of the desire for greater opportunities than are now afforded for the higher education of women, as well in medicine as in other departments of knowledge. There is reason to believe that there exist, at the present time, a legitimate demand for, and an important place to be filled by, well-educated women as physicians. The position which some of them have already taken, and the large and apparently increasing class of persons who wish for their services, make it on all accounts to be desired that means for a thorough medical education should be provided for them. This object can, in his opinion, be best attained by the establishment of a separate medical school for women, in which all the inconveniences and embarrassments attaching to other plans will be avoided, and the fullest opportunities be enjoyed by them without restraint. Such a school, while equally thorough in its requisitions with the best medical schools for men, should yet recognize to a certain extent the different paths of practice which will naturally be pursued by women, and, while neglecting nothing essential, give particular attention to those branches most important to be studied by them. A positive gain would thus be reached which could not be attained by women in medical schools for men, as at present conducted. The same system of careful examination should be required for admission, as well as in the studies throughout the course and for a final degree, as are now required at the Harvard School. The professors and instructors should be of the highest character, and nothing omitted which belongs to a school of the first rank. Many of the instructors of the Harvard School would undoubtedly be found willing to repeat their lectures and other exercises for the benefit of the school for women, and others could be obtained if more were needed. Among the large number of persons who have manifested their interest in the subject of the medical education of women, there must be many able and willing to contribute the necessary funds. The amount required for such a school could hardly exceed very considerably that said to be required for the guaranty and expenses of the experiment of the admission of women to the Harvard School, and its superior advantages would more than compensate for the additional cost.”

The reasons adduced in support of this report were primarily the danger to the permanent interests of the school, and to its large classes of male students at this stage in the attempt to elevate the standard of the school. Since 1871 a graduated course of lectures and recitations had been arranged to fill each of the three years of the term of study; a preliminary examination had been required for several years;

and the final examination for degree had been made more rigorous. The changes had proved successful in every sense ; but other changes were in contemplation, such as the addition of another year to the required term of study, and the qualifications for entrance and graduation were to be still further raised. While these modifications were pending, the report deemed it unwise to jeopard the result by introducing so doubtful an innovation as the education of women. The report further pointed to the divided opinions of the Medical Faculty, of which a majority opposed the scheme as likely to impair the successful working of the plan. It expressed a fear of the effect upon the attendance of male students on the school from the opposition of so large a number of the physicians of the State ; and a fear that opposition would arise among the male students themselves. Finally, the peculiar difficulties of co-education of the sexes in medicine were dwelt upon at some length.

A vote was immediately taken upon the adoption of the majority report, with the result of seven votes in the affirmative, and nine in the negative. As several of those who voted against the motion announced that they had done so solely because they had not had time to consider the question properly, it was voted to reconsider the motion two weeks later.

The closeness of this vote on the adoption of the majority report, and the knowledge that several of the voices in the negative might be reversed when their authors had had time to consider the question on its merits, created a great stir in the academic and medical portion of the community. The Medical Faculty was especially aroused at the prospect of being called upon to assume the education of women, which it was generally supposed would be impossible at the high figure (\$200,000) which they had specified as the minimum price at which they could safely undertake to grapple with the task. It must be remembered in this connection that the gift of Miss Hovey was proffered merely in order to test the sentiments of the University and Medical Faculty. Although the \$65,000 mentioned in the majority report would probably suffice to meet the additional expense to be incurred, no fund had been provided for as a guarantee against a possible falling off of male students whereby the present income of the school might be curtailed. In seeking to arrive at a decision between these contrary opinions, it must be borne in mind that the committee of the Overseers had had the matter under consideration for a year, during which no pains had been spared to collect information from all parts

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of the world ; while the Medical Faculty on the other hand had committed itself to the higher estimate after an hour's discussion.

A meeting of the Medical Faculty was at once called, and passed the following resolution, by a vote of thirteen to five : " *Whereas*, the Medical Faculty has now engaged in radically changing the plan of study in the School, an undertaking which will take several years for its completion, and will demand all the time and ability of the teachers which are available for the purpose, we deem it detrimental to the interests of the School to enter upon the experiment of admitting female students." It was also " *Resolved*, that it was not advisable to open the course of study at the Medical School to women," by a vote of fourteen to four. Under these circumstances, it was but natural that, at their next meeting, the Overseers should pass the following resolution, "That the Overseers find themselves unable to advise the President and Fellows to accept the generous proposal of Miss Hovey," by a vote of seventeen to seven. A long discussion ensued, which was concluded by the passage of a motion — sixteen votes in the affirmative and ten in the negative — proposed by the President : "That in the opinion of the Board of Overseers it is expedient that, under suitable restrictions, women be instructed by Harvard University in its Medical School." It is fair to infer from these two votes that, while the Overseers, who are supposed to give expression to the voice of the community in the government of the University, did not deem it wise or expedient to impose upon the Medical Faculty an obligation to which the majority of its members were opposed, they still remained unconvinced by the arguments adduced, and hoped to see in the future a more liberal spirit evinced by that body.

The strongest arguments on the side of the Faculty in this agitation were, that the experiment of carrying out a system of education upon which they were embarked, radically differing from those hitherto prevailing in this country, was still in a problematical stage ; and, secondly, that the cost of the experiment, including a guarantee fund to meet the possible reduction in the annual income from students, was put too low by the majority report. With regard to the first of these points, there is certainly room for difference of opinion. The system has been in operation for eight years ; under its operation the number of students, at first greatly reduced, has risen until it is now nearly as great as under the former system ; the aggregate of annual fees from students is greatly in excess of any hitherto received ; the Faculty has up to this time been unanimous in its assertion that success had

been achieved ; the whole country is resounding with the praise of Harvard for having demonstrated the feasibility of that system which all had previously admitted to be the best, but for which they had unanimously predicted failure. The addition of a fourth year to the term of study, which is announced as in contemplation, is no integral part of the new system : it does not change the method of instruction, it simply extends the amount of it. On the other hand, it is undoubtedly a measure which would tend to reduce the number of students, and therefore is entitled to weight in determining the future policy of the College. But it must be remembered that the majority report did not recommend the admission of women to the School until the completion of the new building of the Medical School, for which the Corporation has held the funds for several years. The promised elevation in the requirements of the preliminary and final examinations is a fresh indication of a laudable spirit of progress in the Faculty, but, being gradual in its application, would subject the School to no sudden strain in its operation.

The disagreement as to the amount of money required to justify the adoption of the scheme was fair ground for further consideration, and, if need be, for compromise. It was well understood that the supporters of the movement would have found it difficult, if not impossible, to have raised \$200,000 to effect their cherished aim ; yet there is no reason to doubt that half that sum, or even more, would have been freely contributed.

It has been alleged, editorially, in the columns of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, that the promoters of this movement are disingenuous in alleging as their motive for this application to Harvard, "the total lack of means to obtain a proper medical education [for women] in this country." The success of the various medical schools for women is pointed at in proof that "abundant opportunity for a good medical education for women does exist in the country." Undoubtedly, some of these schools do present opportunities for study equal, and perhaps superior, to the average schools for men ; but the Harvard School stands pre-eminent for the thorough plan of its course of study, the rigor of its examinations, and the high standard of its requirements. If now women voluntarily seek for their sex such superior advantages for study and such severe tests of proficiency as there prevail, it is much to their credit, and not a fair subject for reproach. The question of the admission of women to the Harvard Medical School is not regarded in academic circles as definitely

settled, but will probably be left in abeyance until some public-spirited individual revives it by the offer of such a sum of money as will silence all opposition on this score.

An independent movement in favor of female physicians was inaugurated in 1878 by the petition of the Middlesex South District Medical Society for the admission of female practitioners into the Massachusetts Medical Society, of which it is a section. The committee appointed to consider and report upon the petition sent to the Fellows of the Society throughout the State a circular of inquiry as to their opinions. About 60 per cent replied; of these about 72 per cent were in favor of some sort of formal recognition of female practitioners by the Society, either by their admission to fellowship, or by a certified examination by the censors of the Society. There is every reason to believe that this ratio of 72 to 28 per cent fairly represents the sentiment of the Society.' The New York State Medical Society has already pledged itself to women's interests, by admitting several to its membership, and a similar step has, I believe, been taken by several of the other State societies. The American Medical Association in 1878 admitted three women to its membership, two of whom were graduates of the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania.

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What, in brief, are the inferences to be drawn from the above historical summary?

(1.) That there is a wide-spread and ever-growing movement in all parts of the world in favor of allowing women to study and practise medicine.

(2.) That their claims for admission to the existing medical schools for men have in many instances been acceded to, even in countries like Germany, where there is no considerable number of applicants for the privilege.

(3.) That nowhere, except in Zurich during the two years of Russian invasion, have the predicted social, moral, or educational calamities befallen the colleges or communities. The testimony as to these points is full, authoritative, and unequivocal.

(4.) That the extent and force of the demand for the medical education of women in the several countries is in direct ratio to the general enlightenment of the people, finding its loudest expression in England, and notably in America.

No observant person can fail to admit that all the larger cities of America contain many female practitioners, who, despite their general

lack of attainments and proper qualifications for the profession of medicine, are on the average as well patronized as those of the other sex. We have reached that absurd stage — and the sooner we recognize it the better — when the burning question is no longer, Shall women be allowed to *practise* medicine? They are practising it, not by ones or twos, but by hundreds; and the only problem now is, Shall we give them opportunities for studying medicine before they avail themselves of the already acquired right of practising it? It is clearly the interest of the community to give to women the fullest instruction in accordance with the most approved systems and under the most eminent teachers; and also that their proficiency should be tested by the most rigid ordeals before they finally receive certificates. By a recognition of these certificates, and their comparative values, the community would be able to protect itself from the impositions of ignorant or fraudulent pretenders to medical knowledge.

JAMES R. CHADWICK, M.D.

CLARENDON ST., BOSTON.

ADDENDA.

¹ Women are now admitted to the Medical School of Montpellier. In 1878 Miss Agnes McLaren, daughter of the Member of Parliament from Edinburgh, received the Medical Degree, and at the request of Professor Courty remained another year as his assistant.

² Dr. Rosa Welt, of Vienna, has been recently appointed Assistant to the Chair of Ophthalmology at the University of Berne.

³ At the October meeting of the Councillors of the Massachusetts Medical Society it was voted, by a majority of forty-eight to thirty-two, that women shall henceforth be eligible to membership of the Society.