

AL/v790

Proposed Admission of Girls to University Local Examinations.

17, CUNNINGHAM PLACE, LONDON, N.W.

Nov. 24. 1863.

My dear Sir

Thank you very much for your kind offer of help in arranging for our examination, & for the suggestions you have made.

In our circular we offer prizes, tho' without giving any particulars about them. I am afraid we should scarcely have time, first to see about getting prizes offered & then to make them known. There is

a little difference of opinion in our
Committee about prizes. The London
Committee for Cambridge does not
offer them at all, & there is some
unwillingness to offer inducements
to girls which are not held out
to the boys. I do not think this
applies in the present case, because
the boys will have the University
Certificate, which we shall not
be able to give. But we do not
say much about prizes, partly because
we are anxious to avoid doing
anything which may seem in the

least like courting publicity. For
this reason we do not advertise,
& that will probably secure us
from being overrun with incapable
candidates. We are sending out a
large number of circulars & have
met with a much more hearty
response than we at all expected,
but it is from the better sort of
teachers. The inferior ones would
rather not have their work tested,
& are besides, excessively afraid
of doing anything unusual. We have
thought of holding such a preliminary
examination as you suggest, to

prepare the girls for the coming
ordeal, but I do not know whether
we shall be able to manage it.

Our examination will certainly be
on a very small scale. The shortness
of the notice gives the girls scarcely
a fair chance, considering that
there are definite subjects set
which must be specially got up,
but we do not like to pass by the
opportunity of trying the experiment,
however humbly. The place is not
yet fixed upon, as it depends
on the number of the boys. Last year
it was Willis's Room, & we hope
it will be the same again, as in

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that case we shall be able to have
a convenient little room to ourselves,
adjoining that of the boys.

Can you give us any hints as to
what course it will be best for
us to pursue with regard to Oxford?

We should like very much to do
a little good to Oxford, as you
say we shall to Cambridge!

Sir Benjamin Brodie advised us
to get Petitions sent in from all
parts, but this is not very easy
to do. Ladies are not used to
getting up Petitions + don't know
very well how to set about it,
& the local Committees do not care

enough to take any active steps.

Two or three have passed friendly Resolutions, but as a rule, they wait for instructions from the Universities.

There would be no great difficulty in getting up one general Memorial, if that would be sufficient.

Of course we should like it much better if we could get what we want quite quietly, without making any fuss at all, but I suppose the University would scarcely alter the Statute (which at Oxford they say would be necessary) without some formal appeal. In any case I suppose we had better wait for the result of the informal Examinations

before taking any fresh steps. We shall be much indebted to you if you will take the trouble to ascertain what the feeling is at Oxford & counsel us as to what we had better do next.

I saw in the Daily News that you had spoken very kindly of our doings, but we were a little disappointed that you did not express any opinion of your own, which would carry much more weight than anything that we can say.

I remain, Dear Sir

Yours very truly

Emily Davies.

I send you a few of our circulars, in case you may find any use for them at Oxford.