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SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

ON

WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

REPORT

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Owing to war conditions, it was possible for the members of the Mission to see the women's side of University Education in more normal conditions than that of men, to attend lectures and classes and talk to the students; for this reason, and also because it has certain problems of its own, Miss Sidgwick and I had decided to append a short report on our impressions of our visit and of University Education in America, more especially as it affects women. I am, unhappily, now deprived of her invaluable assistance, and, as we had not discussed the Report or put anything down on paper, I can only occasionally indicate any specific views as being hers, although I know that our impressions and conclusions were to a large extent similar and that we agreed on many fundamental points.

The list of co-educational Universities and Women's Colleges we visited will be found on pages 11 and 12 of the main Report. In this supplementary Report will be described the general impression we gained of American College education for women, as well as some characteristics of the teaching. This will be followed by a statement of views and problems connected with the interchange of women students and teachers, ending with a brief summary and some recommendations.

1. GENERAL IMPRESSIONS.

The general impression of American College education made upon an English visitor really resolves itself into an impression of the chief ways in which it differs from that in England. Some of these have already been detailed in the main Report, but it may be useful to emphasise here a few which specially affect women. These may, for convenience, be divided into (a) Facts; (b) Atmosphere.

(a) FACTS.

(i.) Various types of Institutions for the higher education of Women.

There are, in America, three classes of institutions for Women's University Work.

(1) Women's Colleges : independent, privately endowed institutions, which have grown up gradually to meet the needs of women's education. Such are Vassar, Smith, Mount Holyoke, Wellesley, or Bryn Mawr. With the exception of Bryn Mawr, the main work of these Colleges is to prepare students by means of a four years' course for the Bachelor's Degree, which is conferred by the College, and little or no post-graduate work is done.

(2) Women's Colleges which are a graft on men's Colleges and are affiliated to a University. Such are Barnard College, Columbia University, or Radcliffe College, Harvard. In some cases these Women's Colleges are self-governing, and have a separate staff with a system of interchange of lecturers, such as obtains between Barnard and Columbia ; or, as at Radcliffe, the teaching is done entirely by the staff of the affiliated University.

Many of the older Universities in the East, however, such as Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and the University of Pennsylvania, while excluding women from their undergraduate departments, admit them freely to their graduate schools, and where there is no women's College, as at Yale, the graduate women students live in a hostel of their own.

(3) The great co-educational Universities in the West and Middle West, where nearly all Colleges and Universities are open in all departments to women on the same terms as to men. Some of these are endowed Universities, such as Chicago or North-Western, but, on the whole, the great State Universities carry out this system most fully and with the greatest measure of success, such, for instance, as the Universities of Michigan and Wisconsin.

(ii.) Distinction or cleavage between graduate or undergraduate work.

(iii.) Tendency to carry out a University course at two different Institutions.

These last two points are really interdependent, and they appear to be the outcome of a recognition of two different aims in education :

1. A general education for all men and women up to the standard of a Bachelor's degree.
2. A professional or expert education.

The College—whether it be a small separate institution or the undergraduate school of a great University—prepares students, broadly speaking, only for the first degree. Whereas a University, in addition to a collegiate

department, includes a large number of professional schools, such as law, medicine, theology ; or, in recent times, commerce, household science or journalism, and it prepares for and grants higher degrees.

So that a woman who had graduated—say at Vassar or at Wellesley—and who then wished to qualify herself professionally as a scholar, teacher, or expert in some special calling, would very probably go on to Columbia or Yale or Chicago to qualify for her doctorate. Or, if she had done her undergraduate work at a great co-educational University, such as Michigan or Wisconsin, she would get an entirely different type of experience in working for her higher degree in a small Eastern Women's College, such as Bryn Mawr. The change involved of surroundings and teachers and the consequent widening of experience has much to recommend it.

This difference between general and professional education specially affects women, because, as a result, a large number of American girls go to College as a matter of course and quite apart from any special calling for a scholar's life or a professional career. Hence a considerable proportion of American girls of the leisured and wealthy classes are getting the benefit of a College education, and consequently have better mental training and are more fitted to take a part in public work than the similar class of English girl, who, even yet, as a rule only receives an amateur and unsystematic education. The contrast is very marked between this system and that at Oxford and Cambridge, where there is only space for a very small number of women, who are consequently restricted to those who intend to read for an Honours Degree, and it emphasises how different are the facilities and possibilities for University life and training not only for the Englishwoman of average ability as compared with the average Englishman, but for the English woman as compared with the American woman.

(b) ATMOSPHERE.

(i.) A sense of space and of untapped resources, more especially in the West.

The sense of amplitude of space, both in buildings and grounds, is very noticeable to the English visitor ; the size and beauty of the campus grounds at such Colleges as Vassar (1,000 acres) or Wellesley ; or the beauty of surroundings and vast spaces at such a University as Wisconsin, situated as it is on rising ground in an old forest sloping down to the edge of four beautiful lakes. The size and dignity of the University and College buildings, the lecture rooms and great libraries and their equipment have already been noticed in the main Report, but especially remarkable are the magnificent buildings everywhere for students' activities, and these are to be found

in the women's Colleges just as much as in those for men. They are really students' club houses, containing reception-rooms, reading-rooms, work-rooms, committee-rooms, tearooms, a theatre, a lecture hall; and sometimes as well the various athletic activities are centred there—the gymnasium, swimming pool, bowling alley, and so on. They add immensely to the possibilities and development of social life and give it dignity and stability.

(ii.) A SENSE OF FREEDOM.

The sense of freedom is very definite, particularly in the co-educational Universities, where the free natural intercourse of the men and women students is very pleasant to see; and we were assured by the University officials that it was most satisfactory in its working. Certainly here an excellent free discipline appears to be carried to brave and logical lengths which is very refreshing.

The system of student self-government among the women adds to this sense of freedom. The self-government Associations in Women's Colleges, and among the women students at the co-educational Universities, are organised bodies formed from the students (all of whom are members of the Association) who are responsible for the management of all matters—other than academic—concerning the conduct and social life of the students.

Owing to the free social intercourse at co-educational Universities, and also owing to the fact that large numbers of American girls go to college because it is fashionable or because the life is pleasant, and not exclusively as in earlier days because they are eager students or desire a professional training, there is in America a greater need than with us of this system of discipline imposed from within by the public opinion of the students themselves.

These student self-governing bodies regulate all questions of house custom or rules for residents, closing hours, study or quiet hours, arrangements for visitors, evening engagements and permission for and notification of these; they organise the junior advisor system, by means of which one or two "Freshman" girls are handed over to the care of a junior student (not a senior, for they already are sufficiently burdened with work and other offices) for advice and guidance; and they interest themselves in and assist in organising other activities, such as vocational conferences, which are held from time to time to discuss openings and opportunities for women in occupations other than teaching. It would undoubtedly appear that this system not only creates a feeling of considerable freedom, but that it also develops a sense of responsibility and self-control, strengthens independent social life and affords much training in organisation and tact.

It may partly be this system of self-government, together with the national character and temperament, which results in what very specially impressed both Miss Sidgwick and myself—the charming manners of the American College girl. She makes the most perfect of hosts, entirely free from self-consciousness, and concerned only in assuring the comfort and well-being of her guests, showing them every courtesy and giving them every kind of information in her power. That this result is not wholly fortuitous, but is definitely aimed at by the authorities appears to be suggested by the fact that one of the subjects of discussion at the Conference of Deans at the general meeting of the Association of Collegiate Alumnæ in 1917 was "The responsibility of the College for elevating social standards and cultivating good manners."

(iii.) A SENSE OF PHYSICAL WELL-BEING AND OF EVERY ENCOURAGEMENT FOR IT.

This last, peculiarly important for women, very markedly differentiates American Colleges and Universities from those in England. In English Universities the physical well-being of men has—according to the standards of the time—always taken a foremost place, but with regard to women we are deplorably retrograde.

The comfort, spaciousness and hygiene within doors, the charming students' rooms, committee rooms, sitting-rooms, the large gymnasiums and swimming baths, the ample and even luxurious washing accommodation, the labour-saving appliances, the good and well-cooked food, the outdoor space, the beautiful grounds in which most of the Colleges are placed, the woods and lakes, the arrangements for games and sports, aided, of course, by the climate, all these profoundly impress the English visitor, who is continually forced into comparison with the conditions for women university students at home.

We pride ourselves on our classical scholarship and our attitude towards a knowledge of Greek, to be valued chiefly as the key to a knowledge of Greek life and ideals, yet, as regards women, we seem largely to have forgotten the place played in Athenian education by physical development and well-being. This is not so in America, where an all-round development, physical and social, as well as intellectual, is definitely aimed at.

(iv.) A SENSE OF REAL DEMOCRACY IN THE ATMOSPHERE.

This is very striking, more especially in the great co-educational Universities of the West and Middle West. One finds in these State Universities a combination of high standards of physical life, together with a simple acceptance of the need on the part of some members of the community to earn their College fees by any kind of honest work.

For example, at the University of Michigan, the chief women's dormitory is a remarkably beautiful and comfortable building, with dignified and handsome dining-hall and reception rooms, magnificently decorated and panelled in oak, charming students' rooms and guest-rooms, with every kind of comfort and equipment, far beyond anything to be found in our best women's Colleges at home; yet the dormitory is entirely run by those of the students who have to work their way through College. They keep it clean, and wait at table, and do it extremely well. There is no thought of any class distinction or of looking down on the students who do this; on the contrary, they are respected for it. Another example of the same spirit may be quoted in the beautiful and luxurious students' Alumnæ House at Mount Holyoke, the money for which was entirely subscribed by old students, who are not at all a wealthy body, and who did every kind of work in order to raise the necessary sum, from boot-cleaning upwards.

It is a significant fact that in America men and women who are totally without means aspire to a University education, and the whole question of the custom of and facilities for women working their way through college is an interesting one. The provision of work for such students as desire it is, in a co-educational University, one of the duties of the Dean of Women, who advises and arranges for this. The most usual work done by women students is household work and waiting at table, looking after children in the afternoon and evening, stenography and typing, filing and other office work, library assistance, tutoring and acting as agents for commercial firms. In 1913-1914 of the 1,200 women at the University of Wisconsin, seventy-five were working their way wholly or in part.

The University fees, of course, as compared with those in England, are small. In Wisconsin tuition is free to residents; to non-residents it is $100 (£20) a year, while in a co-operative dormitory a girl may live comfortably for $150 (£30) a year; or she may live with a family in the University town, giving in return so many hours a week of household service. At Michigan yearly tuition fees are $42 (£8 8s.) to residents and $52 (£10 8s.) to non-residents, and board and lodging can be had from $5 (£1) a week. The tuition fees in endowed and women's Colleges are somewhat higher. $200 (£40) a year seems a usual sum, while board and residence brings expenses up to about $600 (£120).

(v.) A REVERENCE FOR EDUCATION, A DESIRE FOR IT AND BELIEF IN IT—HENCE A READINESS TO SPEND MONEY ON IT.

The vast sums of money freely spent, both by the State and private individuals, on University Education in America creates envy in the mind of any English man or woman who cares for and believes in education. There is behind this expenditure an enthusiasm and idealism which is

refreshing and invigorating, which can be felt in many ways, as, for instance, in the avowed aims and aspirations of the richly endowed and quickly growing Rice Institute at Houston. Women have specially benefited by this liberality for educational purposes, and it can scarcely be realised by those who have not recently visited America what magnificent buildings and equipment have been provided for them in the last few years, in many cases within the last five or ten years. These have been given by private donors, either men or women interested in women's education, or old students of the College or University, or those who wish to build a memorial to a former woman student. Such are the great buildings of Barnard College in New York, the magnificent Students' Hall for instance, built in 1917; or the Women's Halls at Chicago, and more especially the beautiful Ida Noyes Hall, which is a group of buildings (costing nearly £100,000) entirely devoted to the social life and activities of the women students.

This liberality, whereby women have been enabled to enjoy, as a right and heritage, higher education amid dignified surroundings, reacts naturally and favourably upon them, giving them that independence of outlook and confidence without need for self-assertion which is characteristic of the American College woman.

2. SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TEACHING.

It would be impossible, and indeed impertinent, to offer any considered reflections on the teaching based on the small amount we were able to see in such a rapid survey. There were, however, certain facts which struck us, or impressions we received, which it may be of some value to record.

As regards the standard of work done, speaking generally, it would seem that American women, on the whole, go to College rather younger than with us (16 or 17 instead of 18 or 19), and that therefore the first two years of College work is rather more comparable with advanced school work than with our University work. The last two years are probably about the same as that required for a Pass Degree with us.

There is no system of Honours Courses and degrees; therefore, independent and advanced work of the type done by our students for these is more likely to be found in the post-graduate curriculum in American Universities; but this again, in some ways, seems to go beyond our Honours degree work, and approximates often to that required for the M.A. in London or provincial Universities, or, in certain cases, for the Doctorate.

On the whole, the impression received was that American students are left somewhat less to their own initiative than with us; their work and

reading is more rigidly planned and, owing to the sessional examinations on courses of lectures attended, more definitely disposed of. There does not seem to be quite so much encouragement of or facility for individual and independent growth; so that graduates of average ability coming from an American University to work for an Honours School or Tripos at Oxford or Cambridge might at first find themselves considerably at sea and curiously undirected. On the other hand, many of the methods of teaching appeared to be lively and original, making considerable demands on the powers and personality of the teacher, and keeping the mind and attention of the student alert and adaptable. The teaching is not so exclusively done by lectures as with us; and we were specially interested in the system of recitations, seminaries, quiz, inverted quiz, and research examinations.

Recitation classes seem to be the most usual form of teaching. In these a problem or topic is selected, which the students prepare, and so are able to sustain their part in the discussion which is held between them and the teacher, but guided and directed by the latter. Seminaries are a more formal type of the same method in which two or three students prepare and bring with them written work, which they read and discuss. Quizzing is practically oral or written questioning of the students by the teacher, whereas in the inverted quiz it is the students who set the problems or put the questions. One method of doing this is when, at the close of a course of lectures, the students bring their notebooks and ask the lecturer questions on any points which are obscure to them, or any links which they have missed or additional information they desire.

A research examination is one in which the students are given one or two or three problems which are of the nature of a small piece of research, and they are allowed a week, with full access to libraries, to see what they can make of these, presenting the result in written form.

As regards subjects taught, there is among the newer and special subjects much more variety than in England (see main Report, page 15), in some cases going outside what we consider academic or within the scope of a University, and belonging rather to a Polytechnic or technical school.

The difference in attitude is well exemplified in the recent establishment of schools of Journalism in some of the Universities. The English view would be that in order to be a good journalist a knowledge of history, politics, economics, and literature is needed, together with a trained power of writing English; or, in other words, that an all-round training and culture of the mind is the best preparation for this special vocation; whereas the American view would rather be that Journalism is an expert profession for which a specialised training is desirable. We were interested, however, to find, in spite of the strong general tendency towards vocational schools, that it was

the English view which obtained at the great State University of Wisconsin, as expressed by the late President Van Hise.

In connection with vocational training it may be noted that in addition to the inclusion of many vocational departments in a University there is also in America a very definite and organised effort to give information to women students and to guide them in the choice of careers other than teaching.

Instances of how this is done are :—

(1) By vocational conferences at the Universities.

(2) By the periodical visits of a "vocational" expert to the Women's Colleges.

(3) By the publication of a bulletin, such as that issued by Wellesley College, in which information is given as to the requisite training for some 200 different occupations, and the most suitable preliminary College courses are in each case suggested.

There are two subjects in especial which are rather a feature of the women's work, and seemed to us worth attention.

One of these, Home Economics or Home Science, we have already established in London as a diploma course. But any student or teacher interested in it might profitably study the provision made for it, for example, in the University of Wisconsin, where a large and flourishing department exists, magnificently housed and equipped with a staff of twenty-eight Professors and Instructors, laboratories for applied work and dietetics, a practice kitchen and cottage for practical housekeeping, as well as a model farmhouse, which is in course of construction.

The purpose of the course is to give a general knowledge of the subject for use in the home, to train teachers and research workers; and in addition to prepare students for other vocations, such as dietitians in hospitals, managers of institutions and directors of salesmanship in large shops, state demonstration agents for work in cities and rural districts to give aid in problems of food production and health generally, house decorators, expert buyers, sanitary inspectors and journalists or specialist writers and advisers on food, clothing and housing problems.

The second subject is that of Fine Arts, which we do not, as a rule, look upon as part of a University course. When the provision made for this study at such Colleges as Wellesley and Bryn Mawr is investigated, one is led to think that some similar training, under expert guidance, in the history and principles of painting, architecture, decoration and sculpture, as well as in the study of facsimile reproductions of the drawings of great artists, would be peculiarly valuable for women at our English Universities.

3. VIEWS AND PROBLEMS IN CONNECTION WITH THE INTERCHANGE OF WOMEN STUDENTS AND TEACHERS.

This interchange, much to be desired for both men and women, is on the whole more important for women than for men, and especially for Englishwomen of the professional and teaching class. Men, owing to their work as soldiers, sailors, engineers, administrators and so on, have naturally more opportunity for travel than women. Yet women, owing to the very fact that they are perhaps less adventurous in spirit, more restricted to the home atmosphere and more absorbed in detail, have peculiar need of the broadening and widening experience of travel and of life in countries other than their own. It is important for them, and extremely educative, to see life at a different angle, to come up against different social problems from those at home, and to make acquaintances and friends among the men and women of a different nationality. It would be difficult to imagine many experiences more stimulating or educative for a woman graduate of one of our provincial Universities, who is going to make teaching her profession, than to go out for a year to one of the great American co-educational Universities of the West or Middle West, either to do advanced work under a selected teacher, or as a junior teacher in her own subject.

The possibility of sending out selected Training College students for their second or third year to Colleges like Vassar, Mount Holyoke, or Smith, was one which occurred to Miss Sidgwick and much appealed to her. The free discipline, glorious surroundings, and opportunities for physical development, as well as the enlarged experience, would be peculiarly valuable to these students, and would tend to raise their standard as to the conditions under which educational work should be carried on.

There is a very general desire among American women students to come to England, and from an international point of view it is important that we on our side should as speedily as possible do all we can to facilitate this. It is felt, however, that as regards women there are certain difficulties and restrictions, especially at our older Universities, which have a discouraging effect, and more especially the fact that at Oxford and Cambridge no woman can qualify for a degree. It may be useful in this connection to record here certain resolutions which were adopted at the Conference, at which Miss Sidgwick and I were present, held at Radcliffe College on December 6th, 1918, in connection with the Meeting of the Association of American Universities and under the auspices of the Committee on war service training for Women College Students of the American Council on Education and the Committee on International Relations of the Association of Collegiate

Alumnæ. There were present at this Conference a large number of the heads of Women's Colleges and of the Deans of Women of the chief eastern Universities.

It was there resolved—

(1) That it is the sense of this meeting that it is highly desirable that free access to all possible graduate opportunities in instruction and research in Great Britain be offered to American women students, and that proper facilities to give due publicity to these be secured.

(2) That it is the sense of this meeting that as far as degrees in British Universities are open to American students, they should be open to women as well as to men.

(3) That it is the sense of this meeting that English Universities should not be asked to modify their degrees with special reference to American students.

(4) That the meeting approve as a good plan for additional scholarships between British and American Universities, that one, according to which the country from which the student comes, should supply the money stipend, and the country receiving her should supply free board and tuition.

(5) That it is the sense of this meeting that all steps taken in the establishment and maintenance of an Institute of International Education should contemplate representation of Women's Colleges in the committee of control.

Our experience was that there is in America a general desire to know what specific policies—to quote President Butler—" should be instituted or developed in order to attract advanced women students from Great Britain to American Universities, or make it desirable for advanced women students from America to go to British Universities; how and by what authority such students may best be chosen; what amount of stated supervision and oversight they should have during their study in a foreign country, and how these should be provided; and what are the subjects or fields of activity in which most interest is likely to be developed and in which the greatest service can be rendered in multiplying and strengthening the relations between the British and the American peoples."

The study and elucidation of these and kindred problems would be part of the work of the Committee or Institute which in the main Report we recommend should be established for facilitating the interchange of students and teachers.

4. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

As regards women, in addition to the advantages of an international kind already pointed out, we in England will be helped towards a higher standard of women's academic needs, we can study the results of a freer system of co-education and social intercourse than we have as yet achieved, and we can gain much general inspiration by sending over our students and teachers to see for themselves the provision and the opportunities which America offers to women.

It is clear that as regards higher education our two countries have much to learn from each other, and chiefly for this reason. It would seem that England and America have by force of circumstances been constrained to attack the problem of University education from opposite ends. In England it has been essentially aristocratic, slow of growth and conservative, providing facilities for the favoured few only, and carrying the work done, at its best, to a very high degree of finish and perfection. In America the needs of a large democracy, both men and women, with an insistent desire for education, have had to be provided for very rapidly. This has resulted in the establishment and equipment of vast Universities on a scale undreamt of here, and also in the evolution of social organisation and student self-government of a high order. The time is rapidly approaching when we also will be called upon to meet the educational needs of a large democracy, and we may learn much from what has been so admirably done in this respect overseas; while America, on her part, will perhaps benefit from the tradition and accumulated experience of centuries of scholarship centred at our old Universities, and from them radiating throughout the country.

With a view therefore to facilitate this interchange, especially as regards women, I beg to add the following recommendations to those already made in the main Report :—

1.—Recommendations to H.M. Government.

(a) That pressure be put on the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge to open their degrees to women, as this has now become a matter of international as well as of national importance.

(b) That a small grant be made to the Committee on University interchange of Women Students which has been already established to promote University interchange and Scholarships for Women of the Empire and the United States. This would enable the Committee to start its work effectively and give it the sanction of Government approval.

2.—Recommendations to the Universities of Great Britain and Ireland.

(a) That in the establishment and maintenance of any Committee or Institute to deal with International Education there should be representation of Women's Colleges on the committee of control.

(b) That among the staff of any such Committee or Institute there should be a woman official as assistant to the Director.

CAROLINE F. E. SPURGEON.