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Secondary Education

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CHAPTER IV

Secondary Education

Secondary education for girls was limited chiefly to private initiative. The girl's seminary, the boarding school and the academy continued to be, during the first half of the nineteenth century, the most valued means for her education. After that date, the privileges of the high school were open to her on the same terms as to boys.

The American academy marks a transition stage in educational history between the church-supported school and the institutions under state control. It bridged the gap between the weakening church and the yet unrecognized state control. As such it served a valuable purpose. Beginning in the middle of the 18th century with the founding of Franklin's Academy at Philadelphia in 1751, the academy movement soon spread from Maine to Georgia. But the period of greatest development lies between 1820 and 1860.[1] Essentially the academies were private institutions established on church foundations or, more commonly, by local subscription or endowment. Later it became customary for towns, counties or states to assist in their maintenance, thus making them semi-public institutions. Their management, however, usually remained in private hands or under boards of trustees or associations.[2]

So wide-spread did this desire to open academies become that many schools were located with no regard to the natural needs of the community. Rivalry between villages and between denominations was a powerful lever for opening schools. But frequently rival interests alone were not sufficient to sustain them after their location. A corps of well-trained teachers was often not provided nor proper buildings, nor an adequate outfit of apparatus and a suitable library.[3]

During the twenty-five years from 1819-1844, twenty-five "female academies" or seminaries were incorporated in New York state. During the same period of time fifty-one were incorporated for both sexes and there is mention of the incorporation of other academies in the state some of which were, undoubtedly, open to girls although not so designated.[4]

The fifty-one academies open to both sexes were co-educational only in a very restricted sense. Public opinion had not yet advanced far enough to warrant any hasty adoption of this policy. Whether or not girls should be educated in the same classes with boys was still a contro-

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1 Heatwole, Cornelius J. A., "History of Education in Virginia," p. 124.
2 Cubberley, op. cit., p. 79.
3 Report to Regents, Rushfold Academy, 1855.
4 Hobson, op. cit., p. 50.

versial question. Some educators favored it[5] some were willing to debate it[6] while others linked it with free love and the abolition of marriage.[7] As late as 1851-52, an attempt of the trustees of the Rome Free Academy, N.Y., to reclassify the school in order that boys and girls might sit in the same room met with decided disapproval. The citizens of the town were aroused to such an extent that a special meeting was held and the following resolution adopted: "Resolved that the classification of this school by the trustees in placing males and females in the same apartment was inexpedient for the school." In the face of so much opposition, the plan could not be carried out. The trustees resigned in order that a new body might be elected which speedily restored the school to its previous organization.[8]

Since the public was opposed to the education of boys and girls together and yet felt that girls should be educated, the plan of co-ordinate education was devised. When both sexes were admitted as students to the same institution, a "female" department was opened in a separate building, "'at a convenient distance from that of the boys" although the girls might take their meals at the same table with their fellow students.[9]

In some cases the girls recited in the same clases with the boys although it is probable that such was not often the case. The complaint was too frequent that irregularity of attendance on the part of girls and the insufficient length of time they were permitted to remain in school formed a barrier too great to permit of their doing work of the same grade as that done by the boys. However the grading of students, in many instances, was not of such a strict character that hardship would have been worked on anyone had the girls had this privilege. In some academies, the students were graded according to the work done, viz: Minors who studied spelling, reading and writing; Juniors who advanced to grammar, arithmetic, history with the elements of geography; and Seniors who studied the use of the globes, geometry as far as it was connected with the projection of maps, the Latin, French and English languages, *belle lettres,* ornamental needlework, drawing and music.[10] In others, there was no sequence of courses, only a financial differentiation. For four dollars, the student could pursue physics, geometry, algebra, Evidences of Christianity, moral and intellectual philosophy and tech-

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5 Common School Journal, Vol 5, 1846, p. 357.
6 New York Teacher, Vol 5, p. 131, 167, 453.
7 History of Woman Suffrage, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 516.
8 Cookinham, Henry J., "History of Oneida County, New York."
9 Reports to Regents.
10 Ladies Literary Cabinet, Vol. 2, 1820, p. 6.

nology; for three dollars and a half, philosophy and history of England; for three dollars, Watts' on the Mind, Willard's Republic and history and common branches; for two dollars and a half, first book of history, grammar, arithmetic and geography while the first rudiments of education might be had for two dollars.[11]

There was no standard curriculum judged either educationally or financially. During the same decade as the above. Monroe Academy advertised reading, orthography, writing, English grammar, geography and elocution, $4.00; the above branches in connection with polite literature, rhetoric, history, mathematics, natural and moral philosophy, astronomy, chemistry and the Latin and Greek languages $6.67; ornamental needlework (no price stated); pianoforte, $10.00.[12]

With little or no variation, the curriculum in the academies remained unchanged until well toward the middle of the century. Society demanded that girls be lady-like according to its standards, one of which was the virtue of being useless. In the words of one reformer, "they were taught to make rare and delicate cake but no bread; they learned how to embroider pink dogs on worsted but not how to make a shirt; how to crochet but not how to make any garment for themselves."[13] On the other hand, by the second quarter of the nineteenth century, certain academies were maintaining such a high degree of scholarship that there was talk of granting them the privilege of conferring degrees on young women. In the meeting of the University Convocation of the State of New York, 1865, the question was debated and the following resolution was passed "that the Regents ask the legislature to confer the degree of A.B. upon such ladies as pass a satisfactory examination in the course prescribed for them or such a degree as they choose to confer on ladies; that the Regents ask the legislature of this state to designate a title for ladies which shall signify that they have finished a course of study equivalent to the college course for gentlemen and that the whole course of female education be submitted to the Board of Regents for their consideration and further action, if they deem it desirable."[14] Owing to the founding of large numbers of colleges for girls, such action was not found necessary.

In New England, the founding of Dummer School in Massachusetts in 1762 may be said to mark the beginning of the academy movement

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11 "History of Delaware County, New York," Lathrop, C. D., Editor, Delaware Literary Institute, p. 182.

12 Advertisement, Rochester Republican, November 18, 1834.

13 Lewis, op. cit., p. 76.

14 Reported in New York Teacher, Vol. 15, p. 52.

there. But it was twenty years before this institution became a full-fledged academy. The first true academy in New England was the Phillips Academy at Andover opened in 1780, whose founding was soon followed by that of the Phillps Exeter Academy in New Hampshire. Both of these schools were open only to young men. By 1830, the academies in New England numbered:

Maine	33
New Hampshire	35
Vermont	20
Massachusetts	55
Rhode Island	15
Connecticut	25

Paralleling the development in New York state, the greatest development in New England was from 1830-1850 also. This was a time of great social and economic change in this section of the country which may account for the educational activity shown in the academy movement.[15]

Of these schools, Bradford Academy, 1803, was opened for both sexes but in 1836, the boy's department was closed. Adams Academy, Derry, N.H., 1823, was the first academy in New England opened exclusively for girls, while Ipswich, 1828, was the first school of this kind to be opened in Massachusetts.[16]

The students in the academies were usually more mature than those in the girl's seminaries. They were, also, of more serious purpose as one reason for their attendance was a desire to fit themselves to be teachers. It was this function which the academy both in New York and in New England performed to a praiseworthy degree. Another service which the academy performed was to meet the demand for service and leadership. The new national government had left the problem of education to the states which were too weak to receive it. It was through the privately owned and endowed academy that the way was paved for the democratic high school.

The year 1820 marks a new era in the national life. Before this date, America had been uncertain of itself and torn by internal dissensions. The War of 1812 had given the nation self-confidence and had proved a driving force to unite the several states into a nation. It was this psychologic moment which Emma Willard chose to present her plan for the

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15 Quarterly Register and Journal of American Education Society, II, p. 137, quoted in "Origin and Development of the High School in New England before 1865," Grizzell, Ernest D., p. 31.

16 Bush, op. cit., 395.

education of girls to the New York legislature. Following her presentation of the subject, Troy Female Seminary was opened and, under the direction of Mrs. Willard marked the beginning of the higher education of women in America. To quote but one of many enthusiastic admirers: "Persistent excellence of the work done at Troy Female Seminary and at Albany Female Academy dispelled any lingering doubts as to the ability of the feminine mind to absorb learning." By these schools the fact was established that "female scholars have more quickness, comprehension and strength of intellect than males."[17]

So extensive was the influence of Troy that large numbers of girl's seminaries scattered over the country were opened owing to its leadership. Heads of schools advertised that they were permitted to use a recommendation from Mrs. Willard and that they had enjoyed the advantage of having been educated at Troy.[18] In other instances, the work of the school was placed in personal charge of Mrs. Willard and the fact noted in the advertisement.[19] Both institutions, Troy and Albany, were held to be the equal of any school designed for boys, both in their buildings and in the thoroughness of the course which was offered.[20]

However, the unusual excellence of Troy and Albany should not blind us to the failings of the many seminaries established for the exclusive use of girls. Superficiality and cramming could only be the result of such a curriculum as the following: reading, writing, dictation, English grammar, mental arithmetic, abridged astronomy, abridged geography, abridged history, Phelps Geology, and composition, $5.00. The same with bookkeeping, Adams' Arithmetic, Woodbridge's Universal Geography with the use of maps and the use of globes, Willard's American History. Whelpley's Compressed Blair's Rhetoric, Hedge's Logic, Watt's On the Mind, Kames' Elements of Criticism, Paley's Moral Philosophy, Day's Algebra, Playfair's Euclid, Olmsted's Natural Philosophy, Day's Logarithms, trigonometry, mensuration, navigation and surveying, chemistry, botany, Steward's Philosophy of the Mind, five volumes, $7.00. Extra charges per quarter for music on pianoforte $10.00; drawing, painting and use of patterns, $5.00; French and Spanish, each $5.00; Greek and Latin, each $3.00; calisthenics, $2.00.[21]

In comparison with this mass of undifferentiated material called by

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17 Young, Samuel, "Suggestions on the Best Mode of Promoting Civilization and Improvement or the Influence of Women on the Social State," p. 29.

18 "Spirit of the Times Batavia," February 20, 1824.

19 Emerson, George, op. cit., p. 422, Adams Seminary, 1832.

20 Howe, H., "Academies, New York Teachers," Vol. 3, 1855, p. 177.

21 Rochester Female Seminary, Advertisement, Rochester Republican, April 8, 1834.

courtesy a curriculum, Troy Female Seminary offered, 1838, three subjects which required outside preparation, and some light pursuit "requiring no mental effort, such as penmanship, painting or music.[22]

The school was divided into classes according to age and capacity not according to the price paid for the subjects studied.[23] The aim of teaching was made clear not swamped in a mass of eloquence such as "We desire to give due attention to the manners and habits of the young ladies" and "special attention to their moral and religious instruction."[24] "We design," Troy reported to the Regents, "as far as possible to cultivate and strengthen uniformly all the faculties of the mind. We never encourage the improvement of the memory to the neglect of the judgment and reason. Our object is twofold: first to impart a correct knowledge of the branches taught, second to improve and cultivate the mind by learning, (sic) it to perform its own labors and to become its own source of thought. To effect this object, we find it of great assistance to illustrate truth by experiment and familiar lectures and thus show their practical application."[25] That Troy as well as Albany was successful in carrying out its ideals is vouched for by many contemporary witnesses. To cite one only "Competent judges who attended the examinations of the scholars in the Female Seminary of the City of Troy have borne testimony to similar advancement (the comparison is with Albany) and to the same aptitude for improvement."[26]

It would be difficult to overemphasize the influence of Troy Seminary. George Combe, writing in 1837, assures Mrs. Willard that, in his opinion, she was the most influential individual at that time acting on the condition of the American people of the next generation.[27] Some justification for this sweeping statement is found in the influence exerted by the large numbers of teachers trained at Troy and in the number of pupils from all parts of the United States, Canada and Europe, who were trained there. Fifteen thousand students were connected with the seminary during the period from 1821-1875.[28]

The Albany Female Academy has enjoyed as long and as honorable a career as Troy. Founded in 1814, by private subscription, it was, in 1821, incorporated by the legislature. From that date to the present time it has rendered an unbroken service to the education of girls.

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22 Report to the Regents, 1838.
23 Ibid.
24 Rochester, op. cit.
25 Regents, 1838.
26 Young, op. cit., p. 29.
27 Quoted in Public Document 74, State of New York.
28 Catalogue, 1899-1900.

Its stated aim was to "offer a course of instruction for young ladies commencing with the common rudiments and terminating with the higher branches of science in which the ornamental may be appropriately combined with the useful. . . . . There has been an especial effort to cultivate, together with the mental faculties, grace of manners and deportment which constitute the appropriate ornament of the sex and which, in the intercourse with the world, is of such acknowledged utility."[29]

Happily for a better understanding of the extent to which this aim was carried out, a compilation of prize essays written by the pupils at the school has been preserved. The list comprises a poem on Silence, essays on *Parallele entre Corneille et Racine,* The Mysteries of Being, The Benevolence of God not fully demonstrated without Revelation, Journeyings of the Wind, and The Feelings of the Orphan. One brief quotation will show what was considered writing worthy of commendation by one of the best seminaries of the day. Its rather poor reflection of the essay form popular at the time is clearly apparent. The title is "The Mysteries of Being." "Man is wonderful! visible! and invisible! mortal and immortal! Dust of the earth! Breath of heaven! the master work of Diety. *Upon* him is the impress of the Eternal and *about* him are wrapped transcendent mysteries." . . . The essay then touches on the Soul, the senses, imagination, memory, reason, the will, the passions and the moral nature, ending, "Yes, man is wonderful! endowed with faculties with which he can investigate the laws and explain the phenomena of the world around him and still is unable to penetrate the veil of mystery in which he himself is enveloped. He is a mighty and glorious emanation from God standing between two eternities with infinity around him in majesty sublime."[30]

It is impossible, of course, to tell how much of the above compositions was original but that this spirit was acceptable to the faculty of the academy shows that even the highest type of girl's school could not rise higher than the intellectual milieu in which it found itself.

In New England, of the pioneer seminaries aiming at serious study on the part of young women, Dr. Stockbride's High School for Young Ladies at Providence, R.I., deserves a high place. Here for thirty years, 1828-1858, John Kinsbury worked for the education of girls.[31] During the existence of the school it educated five thousand girls in spite of Dr. Kingbury's motto that "no school can remain good which is not in some things distasteful to the young and which clashes with the current opinion of much which is called good society." Elaborate examinations and

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[29] Albany Daily Advertiser, August 31, 1833.

[30] Prize Essays, Albany Female Academy, 1841.

[31] Carroll, Charles, "Public Education in Rhode Island," p. 181.

public exhibitions, so dear to the heart of every school principal of that day, were discarded. In taking this stand, Dr. Kingsbury felt that greater sincerity in the work and less striving for effect would be shown in the school. Another innovation was to place both girls and instructors on their honor, a step in striking contrast to the espionage which was prevalent in the fashionable school.[32]

At Boston, in 1823, George Emerson, a teacher in the English classical school, was asked by one of its patrons to teach his daughter and twenty-five other young ladies. With some misgivings, Emerson consented. A large room in a boarding house on Beacon Street was rented as it was decided that the largest number of pupils whom he could accommodate would be thirty-two. Quite contrary to his expectations more than this number appeared on the first day and a waiting list was opened. This list was maintained during the whole period of the existence of the school. "My object," he writes, "was to give my pupils the best education possible, to teach them what it was most important for everyone to know and to form right habits of thought and to give such instruction as would lead to the formation of the highest character, to fit them to be good daughters and sisters, good neighbors, good wives and good mothers." To accomplish his aim, he taught his pupils a "complete knowledge of the English language, Latin, French and Italian to those who did not study Latin, and Colburn's Mental Arithmetic." Such was his success with the last named subject that his pupils repeatedly told him "that it constantly happened that, in their dealings at shops, they knew instantly the amount of their purchases, while the sellers had to cipher it out on their books or slates and often made mistakes." History was taught from maps in the hands of each pupil who followed on the map the talk of the teacher. For natural philosophy, Emerson had to resort to the English texts as the American ones were too poor to use.[33]

The most famous of the New England seminaries for girls was Mt. Holyoke. in 1836, at South Hadley, Mass., Mary Yyon opened a school hoping that it might prove a new era in education.[34] She had the same broad ideals as had Emma Willard, who was working in New York to accomplish similar ends. Miss Lyon felt that higher schools for women must be "founded and endowed and sustained" but unlike Mrs. Willard she looked to private benevolence to accomplish her result.[35] However, in spite of the tremendous initiative shown in opening the school, she lacked

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[32] Mayo, op. cit., p. 1611.

[33] Emerson, George, "Reminiscences of an Old Teacher," p. 64ff.

[34] Douglas, Elizabeth B., "Life Story of Mary Lyon," p. 53.

[35] Gilchrist, Betty B., "Life of Mary Lyon," p. 162.

courage fully to carry out her ideas. For ten years she waited for the community to become reconciled to teaching girls Latin and forty before venturing on French.[36] Since the work was looked upon by Miss Lyon as more or less a missionary enterprise, the teachers were expected to work for a very low salary and the girls to do the greater part of the household work to lessen expenses.[37] But it was no part of her plan to teach domestic economy, which she considered could be taught better by mothers at home.[38] In taking this position she differed from both Mrs. Willard and Miss Beecher who felt very strongly that domestic work should be taught in schools and there raised to the rank of a science.

One of the greatest contributions which Mt. Holyoke made to the education of girls was in setting up an ideal of a trained teacher and in providing opportunity for girls to receive such training. Of pedagogical methods there were none. Therefore Miss Lyon thought out some for the use of her teachers. The effect was to be traced from the cause not given as pure memory work. The children were to have a definite aim in learning and then to be trained in self-help in achieving it, at the same time the work was to be made interesting by introducing different elements into it. Comparison and contrast were to be emphasized and the necessity of including each child in the recitation was stressed.[39]

Like Miss Beecher, she was impressed with the feebleness of the race in America, especially the "females," and of the necessity of providing ways by which the next generation should be stronger and more healthy.[40] Every student was required to take long walks daily, two miles at least. No excuse except illness was accepted although in the spring when the snow was melting and the slush might be over the tops of overshoes, some allowance might be made.[41]

There was no time for idleness as a day's schedule shows—two hours in preparation for each lesson, one hour for each recitation, one hour in public devotion, one hour in private, one hour in having the rules of the institution explained and insisted upon, one hour in domestic work, fifteen minutes in calesthenics, fifteen minutes in prayer meeting, some additional time in taking care of the bedroom and in walking. In addition to the above mentioned tasks, there was washing, ironing and mending to be attended to.[42] Undoubtedly this was an exceptional day. It seems

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36 Stowe, Sarah D., "Mt. Holyoke Seminary and College," p. 409.
37 Ibid, p. 409.
38 Gilchrist, op. cit., p. 162.
39 Ibid, p. 147.
40 Ibid, 154.
41 "Reflections of Long Ago Days," op. cit., p. 211.
42 Ibid, p. 216.

hardly possible that such a schedule could have been carried out every day. It looks as if the writer, one of the students, wished to impress her family with her industry thereby making certain claims for consideration.

Mt. Holyoke had other features unique in the education of girls at this date. Mathematics was emphasized as being of immense importance[43] and science was taught by way of experiments.[44] No prizes were given and rivalry was not encouraged[45] except in the religious life. For the whole tone of the school was strongly religious; missionaries were frequent visitors and both teachers and pupils were urged to enter the mission field as their life work.[46] Teaching was the other profession emphasized. It was constantly brought to the student's attention that those who were planning to teach needed thorough teaching themselves. Certificates were given only to those who had finished the whole course and year by year additional subjects were added to make the work more complete.[47] Such a broadening of the curriculum which necessitated staying at school three years instead of one was not relished by the pupils. On the contrary, it was considered a great waste of time.[48] But in this respect Miss Lyon stood firm, and such was the value of a certificate from Mt. Holyoke, there was no lack of eager, interested students willing to conform to her requirements.

New England was dotted with girl's seminaries similar in character to Mt. Holyoke if not actually patterned after it. The more excellent of them, such as the Hartford Female Seminary, Ipswich and Bradford, became the lode stone toward which ambitious girls turned. For example many girls worked half a year in the mills at Lowell in order that they might spend the other half in one of these schools.[49] Also they were one element among the causes of the standardization of secondary education for girls. Not the least of their achievements may be reckoned the establishment of a course of study covering a stated number of years, a regular schedule of work, the training of teachers, specialized teaching positions, the insistence on regularity of attendance, classes graded according to the attainments of the public not according to the whims of the parents, and an ideal of intellectual honesty which had never been applied to the education of girls in America. By thus demonstrating that

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43 Gilchrist, op. cit., p. 147.
44 Douglas, op. cit., p. 22.
45 "Reflections of Long Ago," op. cit., p. 221.
46 Ibid, p. 211.
47 Ibid, p. 218.
48 Ibid, p. 222.
49 Larcom, op. cit., p. 223.

girls could and would do honest work, the pioneer girls' seminary made possible the girl's college.

A third type of private school only too prevalent in the education of girls was the select boarding school. This institution was not indigenous to any one locality nor was it limited to any specific time. From Portland and Boston in the east to Rochester and Buffalo in the west; from Long Island in the south to Vermont in the north, it flourished and passed away. There is abundant record of many select schools which were opened, continued for a year or so, and closed only to be succeeded by another venture of the same character. The effect which these schools had on the whole trend of education for girls in lowering standards and in emphasizing false ideals was felt by more than one earnest laborer in the field. Emma Willard, more outspoken than others, said that "not merely was the balance of society disturbed by educating one sex and leaving the other uneducated but to supply the demands which the wealthy were making for places in which their daughters might learn accomplishments, the old European plan of boarding school was fast coming in to corrupt us with its follies; not brought here by those who were esteemed at home in their profession but, ordinarily, by those who had tried their 'wits and failed for want of capital.' "[50]

That Mrs. Willard spoke only too truly seems evident from the following account of the most fashionable school in Boston in the days when there were no public schools for girls there. The sketch was furnished to the *Common School Journal* by an old lady, a former student at the school and, for fear that it may seem over-drawn, the *Journal* vouches for its authenticity. About 1779, there came to Boston a French lady who had taught in both France and England. "Being a dignified looking person with considerable confidence and pretension in her manner, her school became very popular." Its fame spread abroad and, as there was no school in the little village in which the sisters lived, their father determined to send them to the city to a boarding school. He left them there confident that they were being well cared for. The description continues: "The school room was large, desolate and miserably furnished; no carpet was on the floor and there were not enough chairs to accommodate all the pupils so that those who were not fortunate enough to seize a chair on first entering the room sat upon the bare floor. In this room, we recited what few lessons were required of us and the rest of the time we quarrelled, played or amused ourselves as best we could, there being no classification and no regular hours for recitation. Nearly all our time was taken up in working scripture pieces on satin because

[50] Willard, Emma, "Advancement of Female Education," p. 18.

Madame D. provided the materials and made the supply of her pupils very profitable to herself. . . . . We read a little every day and spelled a very little and worked embroidery. We learned to write after a fashion and once a month we wrote a letter to anyone of our schoolmates, always signing our letters with the most romantic name possible. My favorite name was Florabella. . . . . None of the teachers ever came near us after school was over, unless we were very noisy and disturbed Madame and her company. We were literally a law unto ourselves. . . . . We were kept on such miserable fare and had so little of it that we were constantly quarrelling for what was on the table. The older girls snatched away the food of the little girls who were at last obliged to watch for the opening of the dining room door in order to rush in first and thrust their hands into their bowl of chocolate so that it might be rendered unpalatable to the older girls. I think that had it not been for the young gentlemen of our acquaintance few of us would have lived through the year." The laxness of the discipline may be imagined from the fact that, once or twice a week, the girls climbed out the window to go with young men to some pastry shop where they were regaled with much-needed food. All of which was kept from the parents since the teachers wrote all letters home, the pupils simply copying them during school hours. "Sunday was our great day. We rose early that our toilets might be made with care, for Madame imputed a great part of her success to the genteel appearance of her pupils as they walked in procession to church." When, at last, the father became cognizant of the lack of progress in his daughters' education, he withdrew them. "Madame was very indignant and inquired where he would find a better school. At this question he sorrowfully shook his head and acknowledged that he knew of none better."[51]

As no catalogues were published in connection with the fashionable school, the advertisement in the local paper was made to do duty as such. Here was set forth the aim of the school, the qualifications of the principal, the tuition charges, the course of study and whatever else might make a good showing to the public eye. The statement of the aim varied with the school. It might read "Every opportunity is afforded to facilitate their (the young ladies') mental and moral culture,"[52] or the principal "hopes by her attention to the morals, minds and manners of those who may be committed to her care to merit encouragement."[53]

As there were no college degrees owned by women by means of which their fitness for the task might be advertised, the principals were obliged

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51 "Old Lady Speaks," Common School Journal, Vol. 11, p. 118.

52 The Evening Mirrow, New York, September 18, 1849.

53 The Spectator, New York, December 14, 1803.

to state whatever virtues might be claimed for themselves. Thus "A lady admirably fitted by genius, education, experience, manners and moral deportment for the highly responsible station to which she has been called"[54] or "that an experience of three years in conducting some of the most respectable schools in New York, with an anxious endeavor to give general satisfaction, will enable her to a share of public patronage. Respectful references can be given if required."[55] However there were some educational attainments which seemed to carry weight, viz: "Having received her education in some of the best schools in New England and this state (New York), it is presumed that she will be able to fulfill all reasonable expectations,"[56] or that the "course of studies to be pursued and the general regulations of the school will be similar to those established in the Troy Female Seminary."[57] Higher claims could scarcely be made by any teacher at this date.

There was no uniformity in the length of the school year. The time was divided into quarters according to the desire of the principal. Some quarters continued twenty-two weeks;[58] some, eleven;[59] while others ran for twelve.[60]

The time of entrance was equally as elastic. "The pupils can enter any class that may be desired immediately upon their admission into the school,"[61] one advertisement stated. But some schools made an effort, however feeble, to induce the students to appear on time. "Those parents who desire to place their daughters in this institution are particularly requested to send them, if possible, during the first week, in order that there may be a proper arrangement of the different classes."[62] An attempt such as this to arrange students in classes seems to have been so rare an event as to warrant special mention. "Pupils are divided into classes according to their attainments."[63]

One way of enhancing the value of the school was to limit the number of the pupils. Forty to sixty might be the favored number[64] or the

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54 Ladies Literary Cabinet, Vol. 2, 1820, p. 24.

55 Rochester Republican, September 30, 1839.

56 Spirit of the Times, Batavia, N.Y., August 2, 1822.

57 Ibid, January 2, 1824.

58 Rochester Republican, November 10, 1838.

59 Ibid, May 28, 1838.

60 Spirit of the Times, Batavia, March 12, 1824.

61 Buffalo Patriot, April 25, 1826.

62 The Chronicle, Geneva, N.Y., November 25, 1829.

63 Ladies Literary Cabinet, Vol. 2, 1820, p. 24, Rochester Republican, May 23, 1838.

64 Ibid, p. 86.

selection might be confined to fifteen.[65] Strict count seems to have been kept of the number admitted and the public kept informed of the fact: "Six young ladies having completed their education with her (the principal) since Christmas last, there will be vacancies for four, the other two being engaged."[66] In such ways as these was the exclusive character of the boarding school maintained.

The price of tuition varied even in the same locality. For example Penfield Lyceum advertised its terms as follows:

Board from $1.00 to $2.00 per week for a quarter of eleven weeks.

TUITION	
Juvenal, per quarter	$ 2.00
Junior class	3.00
Senior class	4.00
Mathematics, French, drawing, extra	1.00
Music, including use of the instrument	12.00

Two shillings is charged for fuel during the winter session.[67] While the Rochester Female Academy in the same town made the following charges:

Primary department, for quarter of 11 weeks	$ 5.00
Junior department	6.00
Senior department	7.00
French extra	3.00
Drawing	5.00[68]

As in some academies, a definite price is attached to each subject:

Reading, orthography, grammar, composition, geography, Evidences of Christianity, needlework, etc., $3.00. For each of the higher branches such as history, logic, rhetoric, mathematics, etc., there will be an addition of $1.00. For drawing and painting $5.00. No bill of tuition to exceed $5.00 per quarter, except lessons in French which will be a separate and additional charge."[69]

The curriculum did not vary from school to school except in a few minor details. There was almost unanimity on the part of the public as to what it wanted and the fashionable school was too dependent upon

[65] Ibid, Rochester Republican, May 28, 1838.
[66] The Spectator, May 11, 1803.
[67] Rochester Republican, November 10, 1838.
[68] Ibid, August 27, 1838.
[69] Spirit of the Times, Batavia, March 12, 1824.

popular approval to risk any innovations. The expressed aim was to provide a "thorough English, classical and ornamental education."[70] The course in detail consisted of

1. Reading, writing, English grammar, orthography and arithmetic

2. Geography, history, rhetoric, chemistry

3. The elements of geometry, physical philosophy, astronomy, bookkeeping (if directed) and composition

4. Latin and Greek (although these studies were not usually included)[71]

To the above studies plain and ornamental needlework was usually added together with more elaborate handwork such as tanbouring, filigree and embroidery, tapestry and ricework, Japanning and gilding, drawing, figure flower and landscape painting.[72] The drawing of maps and charts and the use of globes were considered worthy of mention as adding something of value.[73] French, the language of polite society, and music were invariably found as extras in the curriculum.

What the method of teaching was is problematical. Reviews at the end of every term and a general review at the completion of all courses was one method stated.[71] As a means to excellence in study, Abbott's Institute in New York City suggested that "at least one hour of efficient study out of school is expected of all, excepting those, who by the wishes of their parents, are excused."[75] As the course included studies such as mathematics and natural and intellectual philosophy as well as modern languages, there can be no doubt as to the lightness with which it was taken.

At the close of each year, there were public examinations, a custom which was almost universal. To these examinations "the friends and patrons of the school were respectfully invited."[76] Sometimes "parents, teachers and literary persons generally" were invited not only "to attend but to interrogate the pupils."[77]

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70 Ladies School, Rochester Republican, September 30, 1839.
71 An English Classical School, Buffalo Patriot, April 25, 1826.
72 Albany Argus, May 14, 1914.
73 Union Academy, Ladies Literary Cabinet, Vol. 2, 1820, p. 86.
74 Buffalo Patriot, April 25, 1826.
75 The Evening Mirror, October 23, 1849.
76 "Young Ladies Boarding School," Spirit of the Times, June 25, 1824.
77 Ladies Literary Cabinet, Vol. 2, 1820, p. 86.

That such questioning was somewhat of a farce may be gathered from the following remonstrance which appeared in a reputable metropolitan magazine: "Is it true that when public examinations of some of these schools take place, the most dishonorable means are resorted to on the part of the teachers to create a good reputation for the school? . . . What can be a more open countenancing of deceitful practices and downright falsehood than to let the scholars know beforehand precisely the question that will be put to them, in each branch, so that they may carefully commit the answers which are to serve as the test of their general acquaintance with the study to suffer them to commit, by rote, a sentence of French or any other language with the translation and then to read it out of a book as a specimen in translation? to take up a new study just before examination on purpose to make a display at that time and then drop it? Indeed, it is to be feared that at schools generally, the examinations are not quite so honest as they would be if the teachers had greater reference to the moral good of the pupils, than to their own reputation. I have known, however, some very honorable exceptions in this respect."[78]

That the public examinations were not always a pleasure and profit to the pupils themselves is suggested by the following letter written by a girl of twelve years of age.

"The term is at a close. All thoughts are given to examinations. I dread the time when I must make parade of my acquirements. . . . . I do not think such examinations are a good test of scholarship. Timid and retiring persons get confused. . . . . The teachers have brought forward many arguments to prove their utility. . . . . People must have a poor opinion of our motives for writing if they think we do it for a prize. . . . . It engenders bad feelings . . . . . (and is) like giving sugar plums to a child."[79]

What effect the education given in the boarding schools had on girls was a matter of opinion. To the conservative minded, there could be no questioning not even of the value of the ornamental branches. The value of these lay in providing "relaxation from intellectual effort, domestic recreation, resources of charity, the endearing of home to the youthful members of the family, and amusements of solitude and protracted disease. They may, also, become the means of support in the event of an adverse change in pecuniary affairs."[80]

But to one of a more penetrating cast of thought, the fashionable school represented a very undesirable catering to a superficial view of

78 The Knickerbocker Magazine, 1835, p. 383.
79 Common School Journal, Vol. 2, 1840, p. 76.
80 Literary Emporium, Vol. 4, 1846, p. 167.

life. To Horace Mann, it seemed that "as the tone of society now is, the daughters of the poor do not suffer more from the want of the comforts and the refinements of life than do the daughters of the rich from never knowing or feeling what the high destinies of woman are. But it is beginning to be perceived that the elevation of the character, the condition and the social rank of the female sex produced by Christianity and other conspiring causes has, by conferring new privileges, also imposed new duties upon them."[81]

But such a change in public sentiment was long in making its appearance. When it did arrive the fashionable school became the refuge of the lazy and backward student who was deficient in the rudiments. Such pupils were ashamed to go to the public school where there was no mercy shown for bad spellers and poor readers. "In spite of their age, their silk dresses and gold watches, if they read badly or did not know the multiplication table, they were placed in the class with small boys and girls, which was a position not to be tolerated."[82]

Public secondary education for girls may be dated from the establishment of the girl's high school in Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1824. In August, 1823, a report of a special committee appointed in the Center district suggested the opening of "a female school to be kept in each of the other houses from April to November inclusive."[83] The plan, however, failed to meet the approval of the selectmen who controlled the Latin grammar school and was not carried out at this time. The next year, the plan met with success and a girl's high school was opened. "It was intended to occupy a position for girls similar to that of the Latin grammar school for the boys. It was adopted only after the plan to open all schools to the girls had failed."[84] Six years later, 1830, a local historian says: "Highest in rank is the Female High School corresponding with the Latin grammar school to which promotions are made from the primary schools."[85] So far as is known, the girls' high school had its origin here and throughout the period from 1824 to 1845 this institution provided a superior type of secondary education for girls.[86]

The following year, Boston made a similar venture in opening its public high school for girls. Here "in May, 1925, at a meeting of the School Committee, on the motion of the Rev. John Pierpont, a special committee was raised to consider the expediency and practicability of

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81 Mann, Horace, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 99.

82 Lewis, Dio, "Our Girls," p. 219.

83 Report of the Committee of the Center School District in Worcester, 1823, p. 6ff., quoted in Grizzell, op. cit., p. 49.

84 Jones, "Early Schools of Massachusetts (Educational Administration and Supervision)," IV, p. 419. Quoted by Grizzell, op. cit., p. 51.

85 Lincoln, "History of Worcester," p. 304, quoted by Grizzell, op. cit., p. 51.

86 Grizzell, op. cit. p. 53.

establishing a public school for the instruction of girls in the higher departments of science and literature. . . . . This committee reported on the 22nd of June in favor of establishing a school of this character, to be conducted on the monitorial system, and the city council was requested to appropriate two thousand dollars for this purpose."[87]

The plan was to admit only the brightest girls, ranging in age from eleven to fifteen years, to qualify them to teach and to test the usefulness of the monitorial system, a type of organization which had been used in New York with great success.

The course of study as worked out was to cover three years, and one large room was set aside for the accommodation of the pupils since not more than ninety pupils were expected.[88] Much to everyone's consternation, three hundred applied, a number so large that the room could not accommodate it, so larger quarters were engaged. To curb the excessive attendance, the age limit was raised to thirteen and a half years. Naturally the parents resented such restrictions as they felt that their daughters, who were the pick of the grammar and the private schools, were quite worthy of profiting by the instruction given. Although the course of study was planned to cover all branches of education usually taught in colleges, with the exception of Latin and Greek, or maybe because of this extensive programme, girls flocked to the school in ever increasing numbers. It was calculated by the distracted school committee that, at the rate at which applications were coming in, there would be fourteen hundred pupils in the school each year, since none would leave to go to work as did the boys.[89] The great expense of such an undertaking, an outlay of public funds to which public opinion was much opposed, led to the closing of the school in 1827. It was not until a quarter of a century later that another and successful attempt was made along the same lines.[90]

The severe criticism of the mayor, Josiah Quincy, and of the school committee caused by this debacle seems hardly justified. The school was really intended for a girl's college under municipal control, a step too advanced for the early nineteenth century to countenance. There was, also a feeling by those in authority that too large a proportion of the school funds would in this way be allocated to the education of the few. Therefore it seemed wiser to add the expense of these years to the grammar school, thus affording more opportunities for the many.[91] At the same

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87 Barnard, American Journal of Education, 13, p. 243.

88 Boston, Report of Sub-committee, 1828.

89 Quincy, Josiah, "A Municipal History of the Town and City of Boston during two centuries, p. 216ff.

90 Ibid, p. 225.

91 Ibid, p. 269.

time this decision was reached, the subcommittee which investigated the matter reported that it was only fair to state that had only a limited number of girls desired higher educaion, as was true of the boys, the privilege would not have been denied them.[92]

A year after the Boston venture into higher learning for girls, New York City attempted a similar school under private auspices. The success of the privately owned high school for boys had been such that a considerable number of stockholders were anxious to found a similar institution for "females." A meeting of the High School Society was therefore called and it was unanimously agreed to purchase a site and to erect a building large enough to accommodate four hundred pupils. Following instructions, the trustees purchased a lot in Crosby Street, near Spring, not far from the boy's school, on which was erected a three-story brick building.[93]

The school opened February first, 1826, when every place was occupied by children of the stockholders. There were six teachers, two in each of three departments, all women since, "the trustees had been induced by the strongest evidence of very uncommon qualifications to commit to ladies the chief direction and instruction of the high school and they confidently anticipate that it will greatly increase the means and elevate the standards of females in our city."[94]

The course of study progressed both educationally and financially from department to department. Introductory department, $3.00 per quarter, the alphabet, spelling, reading, writing on slates, writing on paper, elementary branches of arithmetic, grammar, geography principally by maps, some branches of natural history and plain needlework. Junior department, $5.00 per quarter; spelling, reading, definitions, writing, geography, English, grammar, arithmetic, mental and mechanical as far as through the rules of proportion, continuance of natural history, linear drawing, use of the globes and maps, plain sewing, marking, cutting and making female dresses.

Senior department, $7.00 per quarter: Spelling, reading, definitions, writing, English grammar, composition, geography with the use of maps and globes, mapping, higher arithmetic, the first three books of Euclid, bookkeeping, moral philosophy, history and *belle lettres* and ornamental needlework; the French language, drawing, painting, lectures on astrono-

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92 Boston, Report of Sub-committee, 1828.

93 American Journal of Education, Vol. 1, p. 59.

94 Hardie, James A. M., "The Description of the City of New York, containing its population, institutions, commerce, manufactures, public buildings, courts of justice and places of amusement," p. 243.

my and natural history, per quarter, extra, $3.00.[95] This curriculum was very like that of any girl's school of the day. No pretense was made of doing college work, the aim being to follow the work in the boy's school.[96]

The school had a very auspicious beginning, with three hundred fifty-nine pupils in attendance but it soon ran its course. Its opening was purely a speculative venture and the mistake was made of not giving the principal any financial interest in the enterprise. Nor was the head of the school chosen for her business ability. On the contrary her chief qualification for the post was her proficiency in flower painting. Surely it is not to be wondered at that the project came to an untimely end.[97]

In 1828, two years after the opening of the Female High School in New York City, Buffalo in the same state proposed to erect a high school with a branch for the education of girls containing the same number of departments found in the boy's high school. It was to be a private venture for which sufficient funds were subscribed to enable it to open its doors.[98] Some ten years later, Rochester took another step in advance by opening a high school for both sexes. Six hundred and fifty-four pupils took advantage of this opportunity.[99]

The founding of high schools for girls in New York state was a process of slow growth. As late as 1865, the superintendent of public instruction reported that the pupils in the state were taken from school at the age of twelve to fourteen. The wealthy sent their children to boarding-schools while the sons and daughters of the poor went to work.[100]

Three years later, New York reported that there were no public high schools for girls there. Students desiring such education were obliged to content themselves with a supplementary grade in the grammar school. Whenever there were fifteen girls who had gone through the regular grades and wished to remain, two years additional work was provided for them under a special teacher.[101]

In the state, the total number of high schools established between 1820 and 1840 was ten. From 1840 to 1860, the number was increased to fifty-one,[102] a number not adequate to meet the needs of the state. But with the rapid growth of cities after this date and the material progress

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95 Ibid.

96 American Journal of Education, Vol. 3, p. 121.

97 Griscom, John H., "Memoir of John Griscom," p. 215.

98 American Journal of Education, Vol. 3, p. 234.

99 Common School Assistant, Vol. 2, 1837, p. 39.

100 11th Annual Report, Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1865, and 9th Annual Report, 1863.

101 14th Annual Report, Ibid 1868.

102 Inglis, A. J., "The Rise of the High School in Massachusetts," pp. 11, 46, 155, quoted in Inglis, A. J., "The Principles of Secondary Education," p. 193.

following the civil war, a more rapid growth took place. In this development girls shared as well as boys.

In New England, before 1840, the practice of providing separate high schools for boys and girls was common. The prevalent belief that girls were different in their mental makeup from boys may be responsible for this organization. The Latin grammar school, doubtless, contributed to the belief in the desirability of segregation for the girls by not admitting them within its sacred walls.

Co-education began, in all probability, in the Lowell high school in 1831, although this policy was not generally accepted before 1841. Portsmouth, Maine, had the only Latin high school for girls although established as late as 1850.[103]

From 1840-1865, the development of the high school in New England varied little from the standard set in the period before 1840. As a rule, the high schools of Massachusetts developed naturally out of the public common schools by the addition of the higher branches. In Maine, the development of the high school was retarded by the district system and the academies. It was not until 1873 when state support was given that expansion began in real earnest.

Practically all the high schools established in New Hampshire after 1840 were co-educational. This was true, also to a large extent, of the towns in Connecticut and Vermont. In Rhode Island, the Providence High School set the standard for the state in providing secondary education for girls in the same schools with the boys.[104] So when public secondary education was established as a public right by the court decision in the Kalamazoo case, the settlement of this vexing question meant as much to girls as it did to boys.

The high school, the academy, the seminary, and the boarding school were not the only agencies active in promoting education for girls. Owing to the irregularity of attendance upon school and the early age at which they were supposed to have finished their education, large scope was given for the establishment of special schools of various kinds. Such institutions made due allowance for the peculiarities found in the education of girls. Among the agencies which catered to things as they were, writing schools were among the most popular. From colonial days, writing had been taught as an accomplishment distinct from the instruction given in the reading school and to a more selected group of pupils. From such an

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103 Grizzell, op. cit, Chapter 4, pp 123-126.

104 Ibid, p. 271-274.

advantageous position, it can be readily seen that the art would develop along different lines from the other school subjects and, as time passed, become elaborated. "The pen all common instruments transcends and with its usefulness itself commends"[105] was the statement of one teacher of the subject. But usefulness was not the only nor the chief reason advanced for attendance upon a writing school. The student might wish to learn the "epistolary" hand, "ornamental Italian" or the "secretary;"[106] the "ante-angular" system[107] or the "art of Gold and Silver penmanship" for use in albums, commonplace books, visiting and invitation cards and the "affectionate epistles of the fair."[108] If any further inducement were needed it was furnished by the recommendation of the subject as a beautiful art which had received much attention in the "first families of France and Italy."[109] And an art it continued to be until past the middle of the century when engraving had been developed to an extent where it supplanted the more personal art of writing.

Although dancing was considered necessary to complete the education of every girl with any pretension to social position, yet the art was not looked upon with whole-hearted favor. Some academies condemned it openly. In the words of one Board of Trustees, an opinion passed in open meeting, for students to attend dancing schools in term time was "disreputable to them as scholars and incompatible with their improvement and the best interests of the institution."[110] On the other hand, the girls of New York City as seen by the Italian ambassador "adored amusement." "They skate as they dance," he found, "and engage in any exercise without restraint but with decorum."[111]

In many of the large cities dancing schools were opened at hours which did not conflict with regular school duties or with domestic pursuits. Classes for young women were held at a different time from that designed for young men. The afternoon hours were usually set apart for girls while the men came at six or seven in the evening.[112] Perhaps once a fortnight a "public" might be held which both men and women attend-

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105 Albany Argus, July 14, 1815.

106 Boston Daily Times, October 6, 1836.

107 Boston Daily Advertiser and Patriot, September 10, 1832.

108 Ibid, June 11, 1832.

109 Ibid.

110 Lathrop, C. D., "History of Delaware County, N.Y.," p. 182.

111 Living Age, Vol. 312, No. 4053, Senator Luigi Adamoli, Letters from America, 1866-67.

112 Albany Argus, November 30, 1813. Boston Daily Advertiser and Patriot, January 27, 1815.

ed,[113] thus adding zest to the regular lessons. Some decades later, dancing became a more complicated art which included a "variety of cotillions and other dances with new steps and balances well adapted to the beginning dances with wreaths, garlands and shawls."[114] The hornpipe was, also, taught together with the gavot, waltzes and the Spanish dances while "strict attention was paid to improve the manners and deportment of those entrusted to the care" of the dancing master.[115] By the middle of the century waltzing had become such a fashionable accomplishment that separate schools were opened called "Waltzing Schools." Here waltzing and the waltz quadrille were taught, together with other quadrilles, the scottish and the polka.[116]

Music, the twin sister to dancing, had a more decorous history. Early in the century music schools were established both in connection with the churches[117] or independently.[118] By the eighteen-forties, this subject had been introduced into so many schools in New York State that report was made of it to the regents in the annual reports of the district superintendents. By the middle of the century, special normal schools for the training of teachers of music were opened under private management and were largely patronized owing to the demand for such teachers in the common schools.[119]

Another type of school popular at this time owing to the possibilities inherent in it for providing education for poor girls was the manual labor school. Influenced by the Fellenburg Movement, farm schools for boys had sprung up especially in connection with theological seminaries. Here the pupils not only paid their way through school by their manual labor but contributed to the upkeep of the institution as well. It was this idea adapted to the abilities of girls which led to the opening of many schools known as domestic seminaries. Brook Farm in Massachsuetts was one such institution, although not planned for the exclusive use of girls. Agriculture was offered to the boys while the girls were expected to be trained in domestic work. The communtiy was located on a farm where agriculture and domestic work could be made the foundation of a new system of social life.[120] An infant school was operated for children under six, a primary school for children from six to ten and a preparatory

113 Albany Argus, November 3, 1815.
114 Boston Daily Advertiser and Patriot, March 10, 1832.
115 Ibid.
116 Boston Transcript, March 15, 1853.
117 Albany Argus, December 29, 1815.
118 Ibid, May 28, 1813, Boston Transcript, January 5, 1853.
119 The New York Independent, May 17, 1860, June 21, 1860, August 23, 1860.
120 Codman, John T., "Brook Farm, Historic and Personal Memoirs," p. 3.

school for pupils over that age.[121] Each student worked one or two hours daily at manual labor, the boys on the farm, the girls at dishwashing and other household tasks. Such was the popularity of the school that, during its existence 1841-1849, students came to it from many parts of the world including Manila, Havana and the then far distant Florida.[122]

In New York State several domestic seminaries were either opened or projected. One at Clinton had for its stated aim the "education of future mothers," its "peculiarity being domestic arrangements." The pupils spent a portion of each day in domestic avocations, viz: the care of house, of clothes, of dishes, cooking, nursing and sewing. The rest of the curriculum consisted of vocal music, linear drawing, calisthenics, religious instruction based upon a study of the Bible and a review of public discussion.[123] This school achieved a certain amount of fame and was patronized by both the wealthy and the poor.[124]

In 1834, the principal of the domestic seminary at Clinton visited the Female Seminary at Ipswich, Mass., conducted by Miss Grant and Mary Lyon, for the purpose of making an address there. So interested did Miss Lyon become that she returned the visit and, it is claimed, modeled her own seminary, Mt. Holyoke, after Clinton.[125] However that may be, within a short time Monticello Seminary in Illinois, Oberlin College, Ohio and Elmira College in New York were all founded on the same lines.[126]

So popular did Mt. Holyoke become and such was its reputation that, in the eyes of some New Yorkers, too many daughters of that State were going over to Massachusetts to be educated. To offset this tendency, in 1852, the plan was formed to raise thirty thousand dollars to found a school at Auburn, New York, patterned after the famous New England institution. Its aim was to be that of providing an education at a cheap rate in order that the daughters of poor but respectable parents might obtain an education. The prospectus stated that "hundreds and thousands of young women in our state are waiting and sighing for an opportunity to complete their education but they have not the means necessary to carry them through the course of our higher Female Seminaries. The class of women whose education would be most needed by society is shut out from all those high privileges in consequence of the enormous expense

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121 Ibid, p. 11.

122 Swift, Lindsay, "Brook Farm, Its Members, Scholars and Visitors," p. 69.

123 American Annals of Education, 1834, p. 99.

124 Wagner, Daniel E., "Our County and Its People, a Descriptive Work on Oneida Co., New York," p. 277.

125 Durant, Samuel W., "History of Oneida Co.," p. 277.

126 Ibid.

necessarily incurred in our fashionable boarding schools. They would gladly become teachers and go to the destitute settlements to elevate the masses now groping in ignorance and degradation. They are willing to go out as missionaries to the heathen but the means of a thorough education are denied them."[127] Such was one reason for founding domestic seminaries. In other instances, as at Gardiner, Maine, no distinct school was started but a "female department" was established in connection with the agriculture school.[128] This step was taken at Kents Hill, also, in the same state and seems to have worked out very well.[129]

Domestic work, in addition to affording a means of earning one's way through school, was considerd good physical education, the advantages of which, however, were limited to the poor. To the rich and aristocratic it made no such appeal. For one of the most tenacious of the traditions brought over from England was that of the delicate woman as being the ideal aristocrat. So persistent was this tradition that the American woman undermined her own health and that of her daughters very gladly rather than suffer the imputation of being considerd a plebian which ruddy cheeks and a healthy body would seem to indicate. Having no caste system and no established church to uphold her, the American woman was compelled to face the world as an individual and one way, socially recognized, of proving her worth was by disclaiming all knowledge of her body and of the laws of health. A clergyman of Virginia expressed the prevalent ideal when he said that he wished his pupils "to consider themselves a mass of accumulated matter of which God would take care if they loved and served Him."[130] However, such sentimentality could not long withstand the advance of medical science and the awakening of women to their own disabilities. Certain far-sighted women, together with some like-minded men, both lay and medical, made appeals year after year for better health, more sensible clothing and more outdoor exercise. Physiologists lectured and the press commented until it was felt that some extreme step must be taken since so little progress was being made. Since tight lacing and full, long skirts flowing over hoops were responsible for much of the ill health suffered by woman, it was felt that a few women should adopt the bloomer costume.[131] But the step proved too advanced and had to be abandoned to avoid mob violence since the consensus of opinion still held that a "woman presents the front of gracious,

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127 The New York Independent, June 24, 1852, p. 103.
128 Scientific Monthly, December, 1921, Vol. 13, No. 6.
129 French, E. R., "History of the Maine Wesleyan Seminary."
130 Eastman, Mary F., "Biography of Dio Lewis," p. 45.
131 "History of Woman Suffrage," Vol. 1, p. 470.

gentle feeling which her soft touch, her lovely features, her yielding sylph-like form and persuaviness do sweetly represent."[132]

Fortunately for the cause of progress constant dropping will wear away even a stone and at last some response came to this agitation for better training of girls along health lines. As early as 1839, Troy Female Seminary had reported to the regents that diet was considered part of the physical education given by the school. Lunch was provided at eleven A. M. and at nine P.M., of sweet, home baked wheat bread, in addition to three regular meals a day, and that chairs were used for studying as being more hygenic than benches.[133]

Another school, also in New York State, advertised a Parisian method of strengthening and developing the physical and mental faculties of the pupils.[134] In some of the larger cities, special gymnasiums for "ladies" were opened in which calisthenics and apparatus work were taught.[135] But these were sporadic attempts to attack a very difficult problem. The credit for placing the subject on an educational basis and standardizing it belongs to Dio Lewis who for many years was a national figure in his field.

In 1863, Professor Lewis bought a summer hotel at Lexington, Mass., in which he opened a school of physical education for girls. He advertised for young women who had broken down while studying in other schools as he wished to put his plan to the most severe test possible. During the four years of its existence, unfortunately it was destroyed by fire in 1867, three hundred young women were trained both bodily and mentally. The distinguishing mark of the school was its insistence on health and physical exercise. The girls were measured at entrance and watched carefully to note any improvement which might be made.[136] Dr. Lewis believed that the graduates of a young ladies' seminary should, like the graduates of a German university, be as much improved in body as in mind by their student life. That girls should leave school pale, thin and bent, no matter what their knowledge of mathematics, languages or music, was to him only a proof that they had been humbugged.[137]

Feeling the need for teachers trained in his work, in 1861, Dr. Lewis incorporated the Boston Normal Institute for Physical Education which ran its course in seven years. However the extent of his influence should not be measured by the short life of this school. His success was very

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132 "An Appeal Against Anarchy of Sex."

133 Report to Regents, April, 1839.

134 The New York Independent, October 4, 1849, p. 175.

135 Ibid, Oct. 28, 1858, Boston Daily Transcript, Aug. 4, 1853, Oct. 22, 1853.

136 Eastman, op. cit., p. 93.

137 Ibid, pp. 90, 92.

great indeed. Owing to the influence of his school, his books and public lectures, his method was soon in use in every state in the Union and was introduced into England by Moses Coit Tyler. Here enthusiasm ran high and Tyler made addresses in various parts of the country, the most noteworthy being that before the British College of Preceptors in London in 1864.[138]

Undoubtedly, Dr. Lewis made a much-needed contribution to the work in physical education. He introduced new apparatus discarding the heavy appliances of the old gymnasium. His exercises were planned in series and could be performed in any room where there was sufficient space.[139] All bodily movements were performed to music in bloomer costume, an innovation so extreme that even as progressive a woman as Catherine Beecher repudiated the idea. Such exercises, she declared were "so violent as to tend to impair the health of delicate young girls."[140] However such criticism grew less as time advanced and the pioneer work of Dio Lewis stands today as the foundation upon which later educators have built.

While education was left to private enterprise there were more schools for the rich than for the poor. In spite of the charity school provided for the lower classes there was a large group in society for whom no education was available. It was to meet the needs of this group that evening schools were opened. Here the rudiments of learning were taught to those who had been deprived of early opportunities or who were employed during the day in some occupation. New York City in 1847-48 established public night schools and by 1853 six of these schools were set aside for white "females" and one for colored.[141] Some years earlier, 1850, Brooklyn had given permission for a night school for "females" while Massachusetts had enacted an optional law in 1847.[142]

As many of the students on entering could neither read nor write nor perform even the simplest problem in arithmetic, the evening schools were originally of elementary grade. Later, in 1866, New York opened an evening high school and in 1870 Boston followed its example.[143]

Private benevolence was, also, aware of the need for education facilities in the evening. Two schools of this type may be mentioned. One at Providence, R.I., was conducted for many years before 1849 by teachers

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138 Ibid, p. 80.
139 Lewis, Dio, "The New Gymnastics."
140 Beecher, Catherine, "Woman Suffrage," p. 80.
141 Report of Board of Education, New York City, 1852-53.
142 Cubberley, E. P., "Public Education in the United States," p. 421.
143 Ibid, p. 421.

in the Sunday School. The term was five months in duration and the curriculum consisted of reading, spelling, writing and arithmetic.[144] A second school of the same benevolent character was established in Boston by William Woodbridge about the same time. His aim was to offer girls subjects which were not taught in the public schools, such as grammar, geography and composition.[145] But such schools did not compare in usefulness nor in the extent of their influence with the public evening schools.

After 1870 the lines laid down for the education of girls continued to be followed as before but with a very different emphasis. No longer were the finishing and the boarding schools the most esteemed agencies to accomplish this end. Only the rich patronized them. For those planning a life of usefulness the public school had become the best recognized social agency.

The progress of society, too, away from the country aided the movement for public education. With the rise of cities and the improvement in the means of transportation the need for boarding schools became less. As an accompaniment to the growing refinement of life, not the least of which was a difference in the ideal of discipline, the public schools became desirable places to educate girls as well as boys. The standardization and extension of girl's colleges, also, formed a powerful lever in raising secondary education for girls to a higher level. At the same time the increasing demands of progressive women for better education for their sex made the glaring insufficiencies of the finishing school and the select seminary more and more apparent. Finally the same social forces which were at work in promoting democracy in the political as well as in the social world made inevitable an increasingly high standard for the education of girls.

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144 Common School Journal, Vol. 11, 1849, p. 263.

145 Bush, George G., "History of Higher Education in Massachusetts," p. 397.