

IS COEDUCATION A FAILURE? TUFTS AND PENNINGTON SAY "YES"

IS co-education a failure? There are signs that it may be approaching its end in this country. Almost at the same time two of the institutions which have been pointed to as the most notable successes of the system have given it up. They are Pennington Seminary in New Jersey and Tufts College in Massachusetts.

In both cases co-education was given up because it was found a positive detriment to the students and a drawback to the institution. The reasons given by President Hamilton of Tufts and President Read of Pennington are similar.

And in both cases the decision of the authorities was received with approval by the students of both sexes.

The trustees of Tufts College voted in favor of placing Tufts on the same basis with Harvard University as regards the education of men and women. Harvard has its Radcliffe, presided over by a Dean and Faculty of its own, taught by Harvard instructors, and with its degrees countersigned by the President of Harvard. Henceforth, from the opening of the Fall term, Tufts will have its Jackson College, which will be solely for girls, and hold a position similar to that of Radcliffe.

President F. W. Hamilton of Tufts College said when asked the reasons for the Trustees' action:

"Co-education at Tufts did not prove a success. It did not develop any of the moral and social objections urged against it oftentimes, but for various reasons which I pointed out in my report it did not seem educationally successful.

"It seemed to have a distinct tendency to impede the growth of the college. After a good deal of informal discussion at the annual meeting of the Trustees in October a committee was appointed to take the matter under advisement.

"This committee consisted of the Hon. H. W. Parker, the Rev. H. W. Rugg, T. H. Abinstrue, E. H. Clement, and A. E. Mason. Severally and collectively the members of the committee looked into the matter of abolishing co-education. Many meetings were held, and the conditions existing at various colleges of both kinds were looked into.

"Finally a few days ago it came time for the committee to report. In this the committee said that it had held personal conversation upon the matter with a large number of members of the Faculty

of Liberal Arts. Each and every one gave it as his opinion, formed carefully and deliberately after several years' teaching and observation, that the interests of both men and women would be best served by a segregation of the sexes. Some of the professors admitted this to be a reversal of their earlier opinions and judgment. The committee stated that it could not learn that there was any professor who now feels that co-education at Tufts has proved so satisfactory in its results that it should be continued.

"The committee says that the conclusions arrived at by the various professors were along these lines. In a few studies, the delicacy of treating fully a subject where both men and women were present in the class, they believed to be very apparent. This was not, however, by any one considered a sufficient cause in itself to justify a change.

"The invariably different viewpoint (due to the difference in sex) from which men and women approached nearly all of the subjects, and the difficulty, in the hour of recitation, of properly presenting the subject to the comprehension of both sexes.

"A natural diffidence on the part of both sexes to enter during the recitation into any argument with the other sex over any subject under consideration.

"The tendency of women to enter, during a recitation into any argument with the other sex over any subject under consideration.

"The tendency of women to enter courses in which from the nature of the subject and their natural aptitude and ability they will secure high marks, coupled with the general desire of women for high marks. This secures to the women students a higher average standing than the men, and consequently a rather disproportionate part of the awards, prizes, and prestige which under co-education are always awarded in common for both men and women.

"It was admitted that the presence of women served slightly as a stimulus to the men, and the sentiment was quite generally expressed that their presence on the hill had served to help the tone of the community—had exercised a sort of refining influence on the men.

"Outside of these causes and the clear-cut opinion of each member consulted, to the effect that in this particular subject

"A Menace to Any College," Says President Hamilton of the Former--President Read of the Latter Announces a Change

he was firmly convinced that better results for both men and women could be secured if he were to teach them separately; the professors advised the committee that in their dealings with the students they found a feeling or sentiment pervading the whole student body, both men and women, (there being very few individual exceptions,) that each sex would be better off in its work were the other absent. This was confirmed in many communications from students and graduates to myself and the committee, including a letter which was received from the association of women graduates which contained a formal indorsement of the association for the proposed change; but I desire it to be understood that in no sense does this sentiment or opinion appear as an open or veiled hostility; on the contrary, the committee found that it always had been the custom of each sex to treat the other with respect and consideration.

"The committee also presented a mass of statistical data drawn up from the years since 1892, when women were first admitted to the college, a comparison of Tufts and other co-educational colleges and other figures, which showed that the attitude which we had taken against co-education was quite justifiable. The committee also went into the question of ways and means, and figured out how much the change would cost, how the additional expense of maintenance could be met. It even figured out what houses and halls could be set aside for the work of the women's college.

"The committee says that in its conviction if any, when any move for the segregation of the women of the college were to be undertaken it must be full and complete. It having been determined that the thing itself was desirable the committee recommended that no halfway steps be taken. It said that what is done must certainly be so done that the women shall be able to say that they have equal opportunity with the

men. It did not seem to the committee that this would be accomplished by opening a department for women, but that to secure success a separate institution exclusively for women, with an appropriate name and the right and power to grant separate degrees, should be established. The institution should have its own officers and faculty.

"The committee, therefore, recommended that in its opinion the best interests of the institution require the separation of the sexes; the best way of accomplishing this is by the establishment of an independent college for women; the importance of the matter is so great that even though the financial resources are not at this moment in hand to meet the extra cost the action should be taken at the earliest possible moment, and efforts be made at once to secure the necessary funds.

"Since the report of the action of the trustees became public we have received many telegrams, letters, and telephone messages from friends of the college commending us for our action.

"That the undergraduates of both sexes were rejoiced to hear of the change was evidenced by the manner in which they received the report. Immediately a twenty-four hours' celebration of the event opened up, and I am informed that lights did not go out in either the men's or women's dormitories until a very late hour. While we were obliged to restrict the actions of certain of the over-enthusiastic men, yet we were pleased to note that the celebration was not more on one side than on the other.

"We aim at the establishment of a women's college with the relation to Tufts that Radcliffe has to Harvard University.

"The outcome of the move for segregation is the result of an agitation which I started in my report of 1906 and 1907, which was issued about a year after my assuming the Presidency of the college. I had become absolutely convinced that

the best thing that could happen to the college was a separation of the sexes.

"In my report of that year I said in part: 'Many of the older graduates of the college find their chief interest in the College of Letters, that institution that stands for culture and for broad and general education in arts and letters rather than for the more technical training of the various schools which from time to time have grown up around the parent institution. When we speak of Tufts College we older graduates think of the College of Letters, and when we consider the success which the college has won in its university aspects we ask how this part of the institution has shared in the triumphs.'

"Unfortunately it appears that with the single exception of the Theological School this department appears to have shared least in the general growth. The registration for the current year shows that there has been a falling off in admissions to this department, and an examination of the records for many years will show that it is here that the growth has been slowest. Probably the increase of tuition fees and the changes in terms of payment are sufficient to account for the decline of the present year, but they are not sufficient to account for the general condition.

"I said that the co-education system kept away both men and women, sending many of the latter who would naturally come to Tufts to Radcliffe, Smith, or Wellesley. I stated that the future of the academic department of Tufts College, as a man's college, depended upon the immediate segregation of the women into a separate department or college. I did not believe, however, that the college should go out of the business of educating women.

"The magnificent gifts of Albert Metcalf, of the late Mrs. Jackson, and others interested in the education of women would of themselves hold us in honor to the continued performance of the task

that we had undertaken. I believed, however, that the women should be educated separately, should have their own dormitories, lecture rooms, and dean. I believe that there is a distinct advantage to women to be taught by teachers who at the same time are instructing men. The training is greater in depth and breadth.

"I mentioned the expense, the fact that a new gymnasium for the women should be erected ultimately, and other dormitories as well. The work of instruction would not be much greater, as although the instructor would have to go over his lesson twice he would be obliged to prepare it but once. I said that \$250,000 should be available for buildings and salaries. That would be a beginning, but a larger amount would ultimately be required.

"I said that I did not fear disaster for Tufts if the proposition were not carried out, but that it did involve imminent disaster to the College of Letters.

"The matter as contained in my report was taken up the following Fall by the trustees and considered in a general way. This was true of my next report, in which I brought up the same question. This was considered at greater length and a committee appointed to take the matter up.

"It was this committee which has recently reported to the trustees, who took the immediate and unanimous action in favor of segregation. There has been practically no objection from any source raised to the proposition.

"I am sure that the segregation of women will prove a great boon to Tufts College. I look for an immediate increase in registration both among the men and the women."

As for Pennington co-education has had a trial there for fifty-seven years. It has always been regarded as a shining example of the system. On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary Dr. Willis Fletcher Johnson, President of the Board of Trustees for many years, said in his address:

"Fifty years ago it was thought that for a young woman to attend schools and colleges where the barbarity of the young men was displayed, as in their games and 'hazing,' was to rob her of her attractions; but to-day Pennington's boys are willing to vindicate the ladies in this respect. To-day co-education is so

knowledge to be a success, and this seminary is to be congratulated in her part of the work in breaking down these barriers."

Yet the commencement exercises on June 8 next will be the last that will ever be held under the co-educational system. President Read, in announcing the change, said to the students:

"Shortly after I came here the subject of changing this system of the school was spoken of to me by some of the trustees. I would not listen to such a suggestion then, feeling somewhat that it was disloyal to the girls at present with us, and to the great body of magnificent women who have gone from these halls.

"The thing, however, kept coming to my attention in many ways, one of them being the remark of a young lady who graduated last year. In making her adieus to the President she said she had had a splendid time at Pennington Seminary, but would never advise her sister to attend a co-educational school to have her womanhood hampered and dwarfed by the restrictions and rules absolutely unnecessary for a co-ed school, and many other reasons which I cannot now mention. This caused me deep thought, and then in our Summer canvass for students Prof. Perry and myself, to use a common vernacular, found ourselves 'up against it.'

"Parents would not send their children to a co-educational institution. Then the trustees took a decided stand, saying with me that the best interest of the school must be above the interest or desires of individuals if the victories in the past history of this glorious old institution are to be duplicated in the future. And who can say that Pennington Seminary has not had a glorious and victorious past?"

"So after mature consideration by the governing body of this school, while I hesitate to do so, I am yet here to-day to announce that, while we trust that ladies will have no less interest in the school, after the end of this term Pennington Seminary will be a boys' school.

"Girls, I know you are not all angels, but there is not one of you but I would like to see come back next year. I have no special interest in any other school, but if you will come to me I will do all in my power to so arrange that you will have easy access to any other school you may select, without loss of grade in your studies."