

MISS FAWCETT'S ACHIEVEMENT.

FOR the first time in the history of the University of Cambridge a woman has been placed at the head of the Mathematical Tripos and practically declared to be Senior Wrangler for the year, remarks the *London Times*, which proceeds to say that so remarkable a result of the movement for the Higher Education of Women "gives new dignity and encouragement to efforts which have not always secured the sympathy of everybody and to institutions which have had to struggle in their time against much opposition, indifference, and disdain." The lady who has distanced all her competitors "is the only daughter of a statesman whose strenuous life and consistent career have made that name known and respected throughout the length and breadth of the British Empire, while his untimely death and his heroic mastery of an infirmity (blindness) which might well have quenched the energies of a man of ordinary fibre have invested his memory with a deep and widespread sentiment of personal sympathy.

"Miss Fawcett, though the first Senior Wrangler of her sex on record, is not the first lady who has attained the place of honour in a Cambridge Tripos. Her triumph was anticipated a few years ago in regard to the Classical Tripos by Miss Ramsay, now Mrs. Butler, the wife of the Master of Trinity. But though the number of the celebrated female mathematicians has, perhaps, exceeded that of celebrated female classical scholars, and though it might be thought, on abstract grounds, that mathematical eminence is more easily attainable by women than classical, yet it can hardly be doubted that the achievement of Miss Fawcett is more likely to strike and impress the popular imagination than the previous achievement of Mrs. Butler. The Mathematical Tripos is to the popular mind the Cambridge examination *par excellence*. The Senior Wrangler of his or her year—as we must henceforth say—is pre-eminently the Cambridge hero or heroine of that year. It is no disparagement to classical scholarship as compared with high mathematical attainment that this should be the case. It is simply the result of a time-honoured system which has impressed the popular mind."

One of Miss Fawcett's friends writes for the *The Pall Mall Gazette* an article about the young lady in which she says:

"Of course, Mr. Editor, you and the public want to hear all about the Lady Senior Wrangler, the Newnham girl who has put the copingstone upon all that Newnham represents. It would be very wrong of you and the public if you didn't. But the idea of Philippa Fawcett being 'interviewed!' To those who know her it is quite laughably unthinkable; for she is the quietest of girls, with a perfect hatred of all formality and show. As for talking about herself, your interviewer would have required a thumbscrew; unless, indeed, he could have somehow argued this very clear-headed young lady into believing that the ordeal was positively demanded by the interests of the Cause. In the interests of the Cause, Miss Fawcett has been for years the most docile subject of King Conventionality—at least so far as is reconcilable with the possession of strong, active faculties, and original and fearless mind, and a habit of looking at the inside of things instead of the surface.

"When she was younger, Miss Fawcett dressed aesthetically, had no proper horror of old clothes, wore her thick brown hair down on her shoulders, and has even been known (so I have heard) to ride on the top of a 'bus. I could tell you lots of simple, natural, delightful little unconventionalities—but no; when Miss Fawcett came to Newnham she knew that if there the remotest pretext, even the most innocent, it would be seized on by all the silly scribblers who try to make out that the women's colleges are peopled by a sort of impossible race of eccentrics. Trifles, after all, matter little. If to be commonplace will reconcile silly prejudice, conscience can save itself for more important things. The cause demanded it, and Miss Fawcett with a sigh resigned herself into the hands of the milliner. You must take this as a figure of speech, of course, for I have never seen her slight, tall, girlish figure dressed in any but the most unassuming style.

"Well, this is clearly a case for the judiciously indiscreet friend. You shall hear how it all happened. You have already told how coolly Miss Fawcett approached the contest, declining to 'go down' for a week, because she preferred to 'go in in the swing of one's ordinary work,' and answering the question, 'Don't you wish it were all over?' by the cheerful remark, 'No, I don't want to have three weeks taken out of my life.' Well, that is Miss Fawcett all over. Sage people up here, who did not know her personally, used to shake their heads and conclude that a girl, however brilliant, would not be able to stand the nervous strain. She would fall behind at the end, they surmised.

"As a matter of fact, probably no one ever went in with more complete self-control. Keen as she was to succeed, Miss Fawcett made a rigid habit of going to bed at eleven and rising about eight. None of that traditional wet-towel-and-teapot business to which even the male Wrangler is supposed to succumb! When the ordeal drew nigh, Miss Fawcett simply faced it with the consciousness that she had done her best, and that worrying would only do harm. She slept every night as soundly as ever in her life. She wrote her papers coolly, deliberately, without erasure. She thought, of course, that she had done badly, but one thing which gave her this idea was the most notable fact that she did not feel tired at the end. On the day when the list was to be read, Miss Fawcett did indeed wake early with

excitement, and confessed to reading 'Mansfield Park' in bed, in order to occupy and calm her mind. But now, after all the excitement on the top of the work, she looks pretty nearly as well as ever in her life. Indeed, throughout her Cambridge course, Miss Fawcett's health has rather improved than otherwise, and the lady Senior Wrangler, like the lady Senior Classic, adds one more to the striking statistics lately published by Mrs. Sidgwick to prove how unfounded is the assumption that you ruin a woman's body the minute that you improve her mind. Never have the friends of Miss Fawcett seen her brighter and more active than at the present moment.

"I am sure it is a great lesson to you all," said Miss Clough at the dinner on Saturday evening, 'a great lesson to you to go to bed early.' A chorus of laughter followed this homely moral, pointed by the most beloved of Principals; both laughter and cheers, in this assembly of Newnhamites, sounding queerly shrill and feminine besides those 'rougher voices of the men' to which cheering generally belongs, and which were contributed later by the chivalrous invaders from Selwyn. Very sweet and very venerable looked the sister of Arthur Hugh Clough as she presided proudly over the hour of Newnham's triumph. Well might Miss Fawcett allude to the privilege of being 'three years with Miss Clough' as the distinctive privilege of Newnham life. 'Never mind, dear,' the Principal is said to have whispered to Miss Fawcett when, in the confusion of the Senate House, the announcement of her place relative to the Senior Wrangler sounded for a moment like 'bracketed.' 'Never mind; it is just as well, because now they will not be so fierce!' But nobody was fierce at all; everybody was glad, and only sorry for the gentleman who was first read out as Senior Wrangler, only to find that he was really second. By the way, in your account of the dinner you forgot to mention that one girl read out a lay of triumph in the Macaulay manner, which she had composed for the occasion.

"When Miss Fawcett got back to Newnham she walked into 'Clough Hall,' the new wing where her rooms are, marched in the most every-day way up to the pegs on which the 'in' and 'out' labels are hung, and put her own right before proceeding to her room. It is a pretty little chamber, looking out at two aspects on the pleasant lawns and gardens in which the three wings of the college are set, where you may see girls sitting under trees, playing lawn-tennis, or strolling about in twos and threes, arm-in-arm, with the easy abandon and good-fellowship which men learned long ago to associate with college life. For furniture, a mahogany bureau, an old oak table, a bed in one corner, and a thoroughly cozy chair; for decoration, a low relief of Donatello's in white plaster, some photographs and autotypes, a few panel designs in paper, and a water-colour bit from the shore near Mrs. Fawcett's little house in Sussex hang on the severe plaster walls. In the book-shelf, above rows of mathematical tomes, are volumes of very varied reading—science, poetry, economics, and novels. A few have been prettily bound by the fingers of their owner, who is also, by the way, not too emancipated to be an expert needle-woman, with a nice skill in embroidery. If it be teatime, a kettle singing on the hob completes this characteristic little corner of Newnham life.

"Among many other interests, Miss Fawcett has inherited from her father and mother a strong one in political and social economics, and her speeches on these and other subjects in the college debating society have always been markedly practical and to the point. Rhetoric is foreign to her nature, and clearness and cogency are the only qualities at which she aims. At the time when she was attending in London a course of mathematical lectures from Mr. Karl Pierson, one of the advanced wing of Socialistic teachers, she used to express sometimes a half humorous fear lest the course should be interrupted by the lecturer getting himself put into jail. 'You see, it's "and the instruments of production,"' Miss Fawcett would remark, dwelling on that dangerous pendant, which Mr. Pierson favoured, to the comparatively innocent doctrine of the nationalization of land. From the political economist she differed profoundly; but she would have regretted the teacher. Mr. Pierson tells the story how when he first saw Miss Fawcett attending his advanced class he said to himself: 'Dear me, there's a poor little girl turned ambitious; of course she won't understand a word,' when presently, what was his astonishment to hear a question from the 'poor little girl' which showed that she understood to some purpose.

"Up here at Cambridge they say that her work is marked by extreme clearness and decision of method. She always knows in tackling a problem exactly what she means to do, and does it. She generally sees the shortest way, and by having to erase very little gains on others in comparison with whose fluency she might at first appear slow. It is not always the hare that wins the race, and Miss Fawcett more than makes up in method what she loses in speed. Hence her extraordinary superiority all through the Tripos. Every paper was written with the same unflinching coolness and decision. All this is highly characteristic; but you must not run away with the impression of grim, business-like seriousness in daily life. No picture of Philippa Fawcett would be at all complete which did not add that she has a most freshening and refreshing sense of humour, and that nobody ever laughed at jokes with a quicker or a heartier relish.

"I have saved for the end what I think is the prettiest saying of all. Twenty years ago, when Miss Philippa Garrett Fawcett was only a year and a-half old, the first of the meetings which, under Prof. Sidgwick's auspices

resulted in the foundation of Newnham, was held in Mrs. Fawcett's drawing-room at Cambridge. 'We did not think of this in 1869, did we?' said the professor as he congratulated the mother of the first lady Senior Wrangler.—*The Critic*.

WHEN THE LIGHT SHINES.

(ROUNDEL.)

DAY in and day out that the worn eyes see
Are years upon years, as the tired lips say;
"And when shall the night of our sorrowing be
Day?"

"And what shall we answer, if speak we may?
Give we warning of death, or a pitiful plea?
Let us arm them with strength in a brave man's way,

"Saying: Where is more triumph for you or for me
Than in this, to escape while the tyrants stay?
Or to see, when the "bands of the alien" flee,
Day?"

Montreal.

HUGH COCHRANE.

ART NOTES.

PAUL PEEL, R.C.A., has returned to London, Ont., to receive the congratulations of his relatives and friends on his success at the *Salon* Exhibition in Paris.

PROFESSOR HERKOMER has been elected to the vacant membership of the Royal Academy, and it is said that his election is very popular, as he has painted some of the most impressive and touching pictures of the R.A. exhibitions of late years.

MR. HARRY FURNISS has published a volume called "Royal Academy Antics," which has created a great sensation among English artists, not only on account of the truth of his accusation against the Academy, but of the fun and sarcasm he brings to bear on the subject. It is published by Cassell and Company.

MME. RONNER's paintings on cat and dog life, now on exhibition at the Fine Art Society's galleries, London, Eng., are said to be better painted and to show more vigorous execution than the works of Rosa Bonheur, while the animals have all the truthfulness and life of the celebrated cats of Lambert the French cat-painter.

MR. POYNTER, R.A., is now exhibiting in London, Eng., his great picture of "The Queen of Sheba before Solomon," on which he has been engaged for the past eight years. It is described as a work of great conscientiousness and knowledge. King Solomon's court with its great crowd of courtiers and wealth of quaint accessories is a miracle of research and splendour, the very excellence in the rendering of which it takes away, to some extent, from the importance of the chief actors in the scene.

THE recent sale of Meissonier's picture of Napoleon, "1814," to which reference was made in this column, has occasioned some enquiry as to others of the great French artist's portraits of the Emperor. That one which shows Napoleon reviewing his troops at Friedland, the "1807," as it is called, is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, a gift of Mr. Henry Hilton. It was formerly in A. T. Stewart's gallery, having been purchased for \$60,000. In the present exhibit of the "Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts" is another, the latest of the series of Napoleonic portraits. This is the "October, 1806," which shows the Emperor descending to the battle-field in the very heat of the conflict.

In Mr. Scott Taylor's "Modes of Painting Described and Classified" (Winsor and Newton), there is an essay on the causes of decay of modern oil-paintings in comparison with the works of the Old Masters, in which it is pointed out that (1) modern chemistry has extended the list of colours without controlling their conditions of permanence; (2) mediums are chosen for their excellence of drying and working, rather than for their endurance; (3) more white lead than ever is used in modern paintings, and (4) white lead is substituted for *gesso*. In the painting ground Mr. Taylor puts his points well and clearly, and artists ought, in common honesty, to heed what he says and beware of using colours that are fugitive or materials that are not permanent; but Professor Church's "Chemistry of Painting" deals with this subject in a more thorough manner, and we hope to give some extracts shortly from this work.

In the July number of the *Art Magazine* there is a history of Ford Madox Brown and his works, giving some characteristic examples of engravings from his pictures. Whatever may be said of him, and opinions have differed widely, it is at least true that he has maintained his own individuality and given his own view of things to the world, which is the essential quality of art. The great trouble with the majority of artists is that they lose themselves in the school they adopt, and, ceasing to be teachers, merely repeat broken fragments of the lessons they have learnt, not from nature, but from greater men than themselves. What, for instance, are American or Canadian artists teaching? Almost entirely French, German or Dutch ways of looking at nature, not American or Canadian artists' ways. But Ford Madox Brown is thoroughly English to begin with, and the eccentricities and peculiarities of his work are simply the way he sees things and desires to express them.