

## THE COLLEGE GIRL

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"Sweet is the smile of home; the mutual look,  
Where hearts are of each other sure;  
Sweet all the joys that crowd the household nook,  
The haunt of all affections pure."

"Study rather to fill your minds than your coffers," a wise man hath said. As I am a firm believer in the theory that people should always practise what they preach, and what is preached, for the matter of that—I sat down with the firm determination to make of myself a practical demonstration of the above practical advice. But thoughts are so incomprehensible; in some unexplainable manner they always seem to have a way of their own—especially at this season of the year. "Lives there a girl with soul so dead, who never to herself hath said," thus much translation will I do to-night, and then to her utter chagrin find she has wasted valuable time day dreaming?

With grim determination and more or less appreciation of the delights to be found in a quiet evening's study I commence: "Labor omnia vincit." A strain comes faintly to my ears from a distance. I gaze absently out of the window, through the leafless branches of the old apple tree; I watch the tiny clouds scudding across the gray sky. How dreary things are beginning to look here. Thank goodness in a few days I shall be home again! What a relief it will be to feel that I need not so much as think of, not to speak of mentioning 'Varsity and the things of 'Varsity for a day or two anyway. I really must cut my holidays short this year. I have always heard it stated as an undeniable fact that there is a tremendous amount of reading to be done in one's fourth year; it was an old song long e'er I attained to the dignity of a senior. What a pity it is, that "forewarned" does not always mean "forearmed!" If it did "all were won, all were done and got were all the gain."

But as things have a knack of being what they are, instead of what they ought to be, I'll simply have to stay with my work till the 24th. It is childish to run away and leave it undone. It is something like an ostrich burying its head in the sand when the hunters are upon it.

I smile involuntarily. Outside the bare branches are beginning to sway backwards and forwards in the rising wind. The clouds are larger and are scudding faster. Something over three years ago I was not quite so conscientious and philosophical about finishing up my work. What a time we had that first Christmas I went home! How important and self-conscious I felt! Wherefore not? Had I not spent three whole months boarding—and going to college? True, I had heard and read a good many funny things about "boarding," but I soon found that for all that

the reality was not funny. It isn't funny to have a man rooming in the same house as yourself whose chief business seems to be to play the bagpipes any and every time during any and every evening of the week. It isn't funny, either, to have a weary round of dessert consisting of combinations and permutations of dried apricots, or, for a change, of dried apples. In spite of myself, one comes to feel in course of time, that variety may be the "spice of life," but it is certainly not of the alimentary kind. It is really wonderful how the "comforts of home" rose in my estimation after a three months' trial of "the other things." How eager I was that first Christmas to leave for home the moment I had succeeded in securing my "students' rate" ticket! Indeed, after I had spent the greatest part of my time for the last six weeks in selecting and purchasing Xmas boxes, it could hardly be wondered at that I was somewhat anxious.

What an inspection I had to undergo at home! I'm quite sure dear mother thought ten weeks' "hard work" would surely have worked dire havoc with my constitution. I can remember yet the shout that went up from those incorrigible boys of ours when Matilda Ann, who had been standing in awe-stricken curiosity in the doorway, admiringly voiced her opinion in audible soliloquy: "Well, I declare, if she ain't jest the limit, now!" Of course the neighbors all "ran in just for a moment," they came outwardly indifferent and mightily independent, but inwardly convinced that 'Varsity had beyond a doubt utterly changed and spoiled me. I would not be the same girl. I would do just the same as "May So-and-So," who, after spending six weeks in a "Ladies' College," had spelt her name with an "e" instead of a "y," and after eight weeks had come home to talk volubly and incessantly ever after on every conceivable and inconceivable occasion of "when I was at college, don't you know!" How hard a time I had to convince my friends that I was just "the same," and how utterly impossible it was for me, in spite of every effort, to keep from telling of all the wonderful happenings at 'Varsity! Ah, well! I did not find it so hard the next year to keep 'Varsity and the affairs of 'Varsity at a respectable distance, when I went home. I was beginning to find out that that of a verity "all is not gold that glitters." If the people at home only knew just how hard we have to work sometimes, they would not live much longer under the mistaken impression that a college girl's education consists of fads, fashions and fancies. I was not so anxious to leave home in time to get back for a social function that year, I remember. I was painfully aware after having undergone one examination ordeal, that I had undeniably proven by practical experience that bliss is not always a necessary consequence of ignorance. And as for feeling elated over the honor of being a 'Varsity girl—ah, well, after all "a rose by any other name—"

The snow is beginning to come down in a few wandering flakes. The sky is now a dull leaden color. The branches look bleaker and drearier than ever. How ironical it seemed last year, and yet, after all, what a compliment it was, when the lady across the road incidentally passed the remark to mother that "really, from Mary's manner one would not know that she had ever gone to college." I had, then, passed the stage when a girl thinks it necessary by voice and manner to proclaim to all the world that she does not yet know "that she knows nothing!"

How perfectly humiliating it now seems that I