

THE HIGHER EDUCATION.

(Natural gifts are to be found in both sexes alike.)

PLATO.)

In the afternoon of one of those lovely days in May, when the world outdoors is a dream of freshness and greenness, when the sun strikes slantingly through screens of branches and tender early leaves, and flitting lights and shadows fall upon the lawns and grassy slopes that lie around the old-world magnificence of the edifice we are all so proud of, the hour, the season and the scene according perfectly, as in some delicate etching,—a little after four in the afternoon of such a day, while robins are running about the broad University lawn, and pens in Convocation Hall are still racing over page after page, few having yet reached the last page of all, two visions of loveliness enter the ladies' room, and find themselves alone. It is to be regretted, indeed, that we are quite unable to divine the divers turns their sprightly discourse has taken since they left the Hall two minutes ago; as the door opens, the theme would seem to be tennis.

MISS SMITH (a charming girl, her low forehead shaded by thick, blonde hair, and with dark lashes to the sweetest blue eyes in the world,—she wears a locket, and a sleeve slightly open at the wrist).—"I couldn't return at all, but it was just perfectly lovely, and when we were tired playing we walked under the trees, and Harry quoted—I think it was Tennyson. Wasn't it ridiculous?"

MISS TURNER (a pretty, vivacious brunette, possessed evidently of perfect taste, and a love for a graceful outline in dress,—with a gleam of rose-color at her throat).—"Oh, you dear,"—indifferently—"how I envy you!"

MISS SMITH (giggling).—"Don't you think him awfully sarcastic?"

MISS TURNER (fervently).—"He's just lovely!"

MISS SMITH.—"I was looking languid and interesting, half-dead almost, and—"

MISS TURNER.—"Yes, Kate, I know. It's very taking during the Exams,—that's if one is judicious, of course!"

MISS SMITH.—"I was telling Harry that I just felt like sleeping a week after it's all over, without wanting to wake once, and he said"—imitating young Mr. Stevenson's drawl—"Gawd, I tell Mamma, Miss Smith, that it will take at least six weeks at Lake George to revive me!"

MISS TURNER (musing).—"I think he has such a nice voice, when he speaks low . . . and then his manner!"

MISS SMITH (slowly).—"M—yes?" A pause. "And in the evening Mrs. Roberts was there"—vivaciously—"with her dear Bella."

MISS TURNER.—"Spiteful, giggling thing!"

MISS SMITH.—"The dear gawk sang, and used her eyes, and made frantic attempts to attract Harry,—and Mrs. Roberts was crushingly sweet to me."

MISS TURNER.—"Oh, I can imagine!"

MISS SMITH.—"Dear Bella is so young and inexperienced," she said, 'and knows so little of the world! I'm afraid she is too refined and delicate to attend the University,—but I'm so glad to see how intimate she is with you, dear! She is so artistic, so gifted—'

MISS TURNER.—"How ridiculous!—as if no one ever tried to paint on plush before!"

MISS SMITH.—"Bella is so sweet and beautiful, Mrs. Roberts, I fibbed, 'that you ought to be content now to shine by your daughter's reflected light!'" A ripple of laughter.

MISS TURNER (recovering).—"Oh, how could you be so cruel? The poor woman might as well sit in the outer darkness at once!"

MISS SMITH.—"She will go to Italy in a year or two," Mrs. Profundo said, 'to finish her studies in music,—although Mr. Profundo and Professor McThorax have told me that she needs very little further training, and—'

MISS TURNER.—"It's not likely dear Bella will get any nearer Italy than Hamilton."

MISS SMITH.—"No, indeed. Have you ever noticed the amount of gold in Mrs. Roberts' mouth? The woman's teeth are actually more gold than anything else!"

MISS TURNER.—"She must be a brilliant conversationalist

when she opens her mouth wide. But Bella's strivings to be a *caulatrice* are a great deal more hopeless than the strivings of that mauve china monkey"—vivaciously—"to climb up to the chandelier by the crimson silk cord."

MISS SMITH (giggling).—"Oh, infinitely!—you mean in that hideous room where she spends so much time at the piano making herself sallow every day."

MISS TURNER.—"Yes, and narrow-chested. . . . Oh, Kate," turning from the mirror quickly, with one hand brushing back from her forehead a truant wisp of hair, "When we were at the Commencement at Atonement College, Friday night, you remember, George Munro told me, while the Bishop of Kamschatka was delivering his address on Foreign Missions, that he would take the services at the Church of the Innovation on Sunday, and—"

MISS SMITH (who has at last succeeded in arranging to her liking that delicate straw fabric, her hat, with its mass of silky, fluffy I know not what, and its knot of pale-blue flowers,—reproachfully).—"And you never told me, Sadie!"

MISS TURNER.—"I am so sorry! But it was just beautiful, Kate, at the church,"—enthusiastically—"George preached exquisitely, and I wore"—the beauty of the toilet which is described *must* have impressed even ecclesiastical susceptibilities. "And"—the fair speaker is ecstatically at a loss for a moment or two—"Oh, yes! and he came into my Sunday-school class in the afternoon, and was so nice—oh, you can't think!—and—"

MISS SMITH (rapturously).—"Oh, it must be just too lovely for anything to really *belong* to the Church of the Innovation!"

MISS TURNER (with more composure).—"Oh yes, indeed." She goes to a window which looks out upon the lawn.

MISS SMITH.—"Are there many out from the Hall yet, Sadie?"

MISS TURNER.—"There are quite a few. There's Jack Edwards,—and Frank Brown is with him."

MISS SMITH.—"Oh, I thought I should die that day Jack and Ed. Draper came into McConkey's,—don't you remember?" She goes to the window. "Oh, Sadie, who is that funny little fellow talking to them?—with the check suit,—there positively isn't half a yard left of his gown!"

MISS TURNER.—"That's Harry French,—he's in the First House. They use their gowns in Residence to clean their lamp-chimneys, you know. Isn't it shocking?"

MISS SMITH.—"Just *think* of it!" Appalled, perhaps, by this glimpse of Bohemia, Miss Smith is silent for a time, the two, in the meanwhile making preparations for departing.

MISS TURNER.—"Did you notice Grace Dixon in the Hall this afternoon?"

MISS SMITH.—"You mean the way she came in late, and went up to the table simpering, so that everybody—"

MISS TURNER.—"Oh, she's always doing that! I mean when she was going out for the oral. She thinks"—with a quick flash of ill-nature—"that she's a very giddy young person."

MISS SMITH.—"Oh, yes. Isn't she a fright in that lilac and navy blue?"

MISS TURNER.—"I often think it must be her eyes that give her such an unpleasant appearance."

MISS SMITH (giving the matter her consideration).—"They are rather starey. And then her mouth—"

Miss Dixon, a slight, graceful girl, wearing a breast-knot of violets, comes into the room.

MISS SMITH (effusively).—"Oh, how well you are looking! dear!"

MISS TURNER (sweetly).—"What a pretty dress, Grace!"

MISS DIXON (without embarrassment).—"I'm so thankful that one more paper is passed. I haven't another now until Friday." She bears up under the pretty, graceful ways of feminine affection lavished on her.

MISS SMITH.—"Oh, Sadie and I have two to-morrow,—haven't we, Sadie?"

As Miss Turner and Miss Smith leave, several of the ladies are coming in, and the room presents a notable scene of animation and vivacity. The two friends, however, pass demurely along the corridor, by no means unfrequented at this hour of the afternoon. At a yard's distance from the young ladies one would hardly perceive that they are speaking together.

MISS SMITH.—"Do Jack and Frank write to-morrow?"

MISS TURNER.—"In the afternoon. . . . Isn't that Lessing you have there? Why are you carrying such a—"