

representative of the New England feminine surplus—there was a distinct suggestion of character under her unimportant little features—and her profession was proclaimed in her person, apart from the smudge of chalk on the sleeve of her jacket. She had been born and brought up and left over in Illinois, however,—in the town of Sparta, Illinois. She had developed her conscience there, and no doubt, if one knew it well, it would show peculiarities of local expansion directly connected with hot corn bread for breakfast as opposed to the accredited diet of legumes upon which consciences arrive at such successful maturity in the East. It was at all events a conscience in excellent controlling order. It directed Miss Kimpsey, for example, to teach three times a week in the boys' night school through the winter, no matter how sharply the wind blew off Lake Michigan, in addition to her daily duties at the High School, where for ten years she had imparted instruction in the "English branches," translating Chaucer into the modern dialect of Sparta, Illinois, for the benefit of Miss Elfrida Bell, among others. It had sent her on this occasion to see Mrs. Leslie Bell, and Miss Kimpsey could remember circumstances under which she had obeyed her conscience with more alacrity. "It isn't," said Miss Kimpsey with internal discouragement, "as if I knew her well."

Miss Kimpsey did not know Mrs. Bell at all well. Mrs. Bell was president of the Browning Club, and Miss Kimpsey was a member. They met, too, in the social jumble of fancy fairs in aid of the new church organ. They had a bowing acquaintance—that is, Mrs. Bell had. Miss Kimpsey's part of it was responsive, and she always gave a thought to her boots and her gloves when she met Mrs. Bell. It was not that the Spartan social circle which Mrs. Bell adorned had any vulgar prejudice against