

way or other, has moved in good society. Yet the book cannot be spoken of except in terms of unqualified condemnation. The story is simple enough. A young lady, precocious and uneducated, suddenly encounters an ex-college-athlete endowed with those broad shoulders and chiselled features which the heroines of modern novels appear to find utterly irresistible. It is fair to add that there is nothing at all objectionable about this particular "boxer"—as it seems, in some way, to be funny to call a retired athlete. He is very good-natured simple-hearted and harmless; and appears to have no particular vice, unless that which may be supposed to be inseparable from utter vacuity of character. In fact, he is far too good for the heroine. But, such as he is, surely never before, in fiction or reality, did the course of true love run such a rapid and tempestuous career. They meet as strangers in a churchyard for a moment. They sit together at a dinner party. And at the third interview the father of the young lady is, naturally enough, astonished to find "his favorite daughter sitting, in the dusk of the evening, with a man, whom, to his certain knowledge, she had seen but twice before in her life, lying at her feet clasping her hand, and apparently unforbidden." And from thenceforth the reader continually finds himself in the presence of familiarities and endearments, which, in real life, would be very embarrassing to behold, and are by no means edifying to read about.

Now this is all very cleverly done—as well, perhaps, as such description of work admits of being done. But the effect intended to be produced upon the mind of the reader is, that it is a very fine thing indeed, to be truthful, and impulsive,

and natural, and unconventional. Only, when one comes to think of it, it is pleasant to reflect that such proceedings are, in reality, neither truthful nor natural; and, though they are certainly impulsive, it is to be hoped they may long continue unconventional. There is in the order of nature—and not only in the world of novels, or poems, or plays—a certain elevation and sublimity about true love, which raises even coarse and common natures into refinement and nobleness. Its typical development is not a struggle for kisses, between a bartender and a chambermaid. There is a modesty, a reticence, a shamefacedness in woman's nature, which is not to be confounded with mere wilfulness, and lightness, and passionate impulse. If such wooing—if, indeed, in the true sense of the word, it be wooing—as is here described, were the fashion with American maidenhood, then would it utterly have cast away its crown of the gentle dignity and refined purity, and unconscious self-respect, and sweet reserve, and patient self-control, that give its holiness to love.

But repulsive as all this is—disgusting as it is to hear of this American maiden "hurling herself at the not-particularly-delighted head of the big athlete," as her practical-minded sister truthfully described the process—it is, perhaps, merely that bad taste which is sometimes produced by exuberance of animal spirits. There is worse yet to come. The lovers are parted, by a deceit which is certainly most base and cruel; and the lady is married to a very estimable country gentleman. Of course the reason of the separation is discovered at last, and then comes a scene which we will transcribe: "Looking into his haggard, beautiful, terrible face, I forgot all I should have remembered; forgot vir-