

The Oxford Woman Student.

One after another the many clocks of Oxford strike seven, and the reproachful voice of her scout wakes the Oxford student from pleasant dreams of an idle existence and rouses her to the stern fact of college life and breakfast at eight o'clock. It avails her nothing to close her eyes—literally and metaphorically speaking—and register a defiant vow to be late for breakfast, for her lectures begin at nine o'clock, and before that time she has, in her own opinion at least, much to do, though to an outsider she might appear to be chiefly occupied in doing nothing. So eight o'clock sees her shaking hands with the Principal as the students file in to prayers and breakfast in the dining-room. It is quite permissible to be late for both of these, but "first come, first served" holds good even in college, and the late comer is apt to be sorry for herself when she has to be contented with what is left!

Breakfast over, the garden gradually becomes an animated scene, for, no matter what the weather, there are always groups of students to be seen walking up and down, discussing every possible subject, from the vexed question of a Sunday hat to that of the authenticity of Shakespeare's works! Then, as nine o'clock draws near, those who are going to lectures in other colleges hurry past on bicycles, scattering their friends in their mad rush up the garden path. At the gate-house, bicycle pumps are in great demand,—as is also the porter's opinion on the weather, with a view to hockey matches and boating prospects.

There are, in an Oxford women's college, a good many written laws which are, for the most part, ignored (!) and a good many written ones which no one would think of breaking. The rules as to chap-

eronage are naturally very strict, and no girl is allowed to go to a lecture alone in one of the men's colleges. If no other woman student, whether of her own or another college, attends the same lecture, she must have a chaperone, provided by the college. It is not very often that this is necessary, as there are four women's colleges, and the lectures are usually well attended—especially at the beginning of the term. A don once explained to a woman student his method of lecturing. "You make your first lecture interesting," he said, "then you give two dull lectures, and the people who are not very keen cease to attend. Those that survive the test are worth lecturing to." The method seems a simple one, but I doubt that it is much in vogue!

The lectures continue from nine till one o'clock, and those who are not attending them stay in college and work. After lunch, work is considered out of place till four o'clock; so unless a student has a catching, she feels quite justified in amusing herself during that time. Winter and summer alike she can go boating, and in addition to this there is hockey or tennis, according to the season. Bicycle rides provide her with a form of exercise if she can find no other—for I think it is safe to say that every Oxford student possesses a bicycle. Men and women alike, they all learn to thread their way through a somewhat perilous maze of traffic—for though not a very large town, Oxford always presents a peculiarly crowded appearance. No electric tram has ever desecrated that sacred spot, and horse-trams and busses are the most usual mode of conveyance. Now and then one sees a taxicab, or an undergraduate on a motorcycle, but either seems out of place among the old gray colleges. Talk-