

## Closing Year.

AN ESSAY READ BY MISS HERECOA WATKINS AT THE VESPERTINE ENTERTAINMENT, JUNE 10, 1879.

For the past few months (few indeed they seem to me, though ten in number) we, fellow-students, have been journeying in the same direction, actuated by the same motives, traveling the same road, step by step, day by day, toiling and climbing, slowly but surely, up the side of the steep and rugged hill of science, stumbling and falling here and there over difficult problems and tasks, with various degrees of success, being frequently disheartened by failures, and as frequently encouraged and lifted to our feet by the kind words and learned counsels of our teachers who have acted as amiable and worthy guides to us on our ten months' literary tour, for which they have our heart-felt gratitude.

How often have they bade us be of good cheer and have prompted us to move onward and upward, when we fain would have turned back? They told us that the road leading to the summit now concealed from our vision was no more difficult nor impracticable than that we had already passed over.

Placing implicit confidence in them and knowing that they were perfectly familiar with every obstacle that we were liable to encounter in the zigzag trail, by reason of their having once traveled the same road, as we now are, and afterwards having acted as guides to so many who safely reached the summit, we summoned new courage, bade defiance to every opposing barrier, adopted the motto "Excelsior" used by a youth on a similar journey, and strove manfully onward and upward.

To-day, we, who have not yet reached the summit, halt on a table land to rest and take breath before proceeding further, both we and our guides are wearied and worn; and a pause here for a couple of months is very acceptable as well as highly necessary to our well being. When the vacation shall have ended we hope to resume our journey with renewed vigor.

Right here too is a beautiful place to make a halt. It is now the early summer, the most lovely time of all the year when the fields and meadows are clothed in gorgeous robes of green, bedecked with flowers that vie even with the rainbow in hue, such as no artist could imitate.

Myriads of nature's feathered songsters pour forth their choicest carols and lend ten fold charm to the enchantment of the scene. With all these surroundings in the midst of our friends how can we do otherwise than spend a happy vacation.

From our present position, glancing back over the last ten months, we are not a little surprised to note that the barriers that then seemed almost insurmountable to us, now look comparatively smooth and easy of access, made so by the incessant toil and well directed efforts of our teachers, to whom all honor is due. Resting on the next table-land below whence we ourselves started at the beginning of this school year now ending, we see others of our fellow-student laying aside their staves and also preparing to rest and recuperate for a time. We wave our hands to them and wish them God speed and a pleasant vacation.

Turning our eyes heavenward, the road leading upward looks even more difficult than any we have yet passed. The summit, the goal of the persevering student is not yet within the range of our vision, but our hearts are made strong by the beconing of hope when we see and recognize the familiar foot-prints of many of our friends who have preceded us in the way and successfully reached its terminus.

To-morrow some of our friends and fellow-students will have reached the dizzy heights. They will be crowned

with all the honor and respect due travelers after long years of hard and incessant toil crowned with success.

How their brows stern with thought will relax, their faces fixed with anxious care give way to smiles, and their bosoms heave with conscious joy.

We can imagine the quiet pride and pure happiness that must pervade the minds of those as they look back over many—very many obstacles met and successfully overcome. Well they may feel proud; for no coward or sluggard ever reached the pinnacle they now occupy.

They are fully armed and equipped for the great battle field of life, and they will soon take their position in the busy world which is ready to receive them.

All honor to those who enter the contest with strong wills and brave hearts; may they fight a good fight and live long and happy lives to enjoy their well-earned laurels.

Our associations here, notwithstanding we have been burdened with much work, have been of the most pleasant character, and we feel loath to part with, even for a time, the kind friends we have made here.

Many—very many—are the happy hours we have spent in the society of each other, and they will ever be looked back upon, by me, at least, as an oasis in my early life.

It is barely possible that we have not in our journey occasionally rudely jostled each other in the way. We are all human and are oftentimes liable to commit errors of a very grave nature, even in our most guarded moments.

Then, if ever I have offended, I hope you will forgive as you hope to be forgiven.

At the beginning of next school-year we trust we shall have the pleasure of meeting you all and renew our journey with you; and until that time—teachers, school-mates and friends, adieu.

## "Life is Real, Life is Earnest."

AN ESSAY READ BY MISS MAGGIE BUTLER AT THE ALUMNI REUNION OF CHRISTIAN COLLEGE, JUNE 9, 1879.

Some one has said that within the memory of the past and the unknown destiny of the future, lies the magic charms of our existence, while there may be much truth in this sentiment, yet is there not great harm in thus thinking of life only as some far off dream? many persons seem to live only in the events of the past, and are continually walking among its mouldering ruins, they mourn over the departed virtues of mankind, and pray for the return of the good old days of primitive simplicity, they speak of the past as though it had been one undimmed scene of joy, and only the present held the bitter cup of which they had to drink. Others have no thoughts of the past but live in the air castles of the future, they even speak contemptuously of the present but are saving all their matchless wisdom for some larger enterprises of the future, they imagine their dearest wishes and loftiest flights of imagination will soon be realized, and that sometime they will fill the proudest position earth can afford; thus great intellectual powers are often lost to the world, some decaying in the temples of memory, others lost in the deceptive creations of hope. There are a few who look to the past for wisdom, to the future, for hope but to the present for labor; these are the men and women who stand so far above the rest of mankind, their names are watchwords set high on the temple of fame, their words have a power their names a charm and their deeds a glory, they are only common men and women, but instead of sitting still and dreaming of probable developments yet to come, they have by persevering industry and toil worked out the problems of Success. To succeed in life we must have something to do, some object definite and worthy, then

whether it be great or small be true as steel to it, the secret of success lies in doing what we can do well without a thought of fame or honor, he who lives for fame lives for the shadow, and not the reality, it is a bubble which bursts in attempting to secure it, to make this the object of life is to miss it, real fame comes because it is deserved and not because it is run-after, we should live to be what we ought to be and to do what we ought to do, then fame will come delighted to crown us with her wreaths of honor. It is not necessary that all shall be public speakers, or writers, that our influence shall be felt about us, the mighty Ocean, that bears on its bosom, the transports of a nation's commerce, has done a great work. Yet the little dewdrop descending to revive the drooping flowers has done its part equally as well, then we should not for a moment indulge the thought that we can do nothing because our sphere of influence is limited, and our position in the humbler walks of life. Some can do more others less, but there is a deep, earnest work for all, life is no idle farce to amuse for awhile and be forgotten. It is stern, busy and real, as full of duties as the sky is full of stars and no dreamers can "fight its battles or win its victories."

## Women Workers in Paris.

I find in my note-book a humorous entry that I have seen no country in the world where the right to labor is more generally conceded to women than in France. In the early morning one is helping to sort the refuse from the houses. See that basket with bits of paper. Here is a pile of nice green salad leaves, and there a basket of bits of bread. Perhaps they have a little donkey-cart to haul these out of the city, where they will feed the provender rabbits, and chickens, etc. These people in general have not the degraded look of our rag-pickers. How few people in France have a degraded look! Perhaps two-fifths of the women in Paris wear caps, and I did not note a dirty one. See women helping to sweep the streets with big heavy brooms made of twigs. Other women hard-looking but tidy, I see waiting on the Place St. Augustine for some one to hire them. One woman sets down a heavy basket of bread and takes a loaf into a grocer's; another has a great load in her apron, her long apron whose ends are tied over one shoulder. In her hands she has three of those long slender loaves that are cut into bits at the restaurants. The loaves are about two pards long looking like poles or stakes. She wears no bonnet, and to rest herself she sets the ends of them down on the pavement, or rests them against the wall. How much they carry bread uncovered in Paris! Once on the street I saw one of the infinite number of cap-women seated behind the little box on which she cleans shoes. She had fallen asleep, and her knitting and folded newspaper lay on the box before her. I see a woman walking the street and knitting. Did some of the women of Paris really take knitting and sit down in the streets to see the heads cut off in the great Revolution? Paris is the grand hotel of the world. It is now full of guests. Paris is content. But what if Paris were sullen or sad? What if Paris were desperate?

At the Restaurant Duval, at the Exposition, notice the force of waiters with black dresses and white caps and handkerchiefs. One says that they used to pay on coming each morning a franc and a half, but now they must pay two. On a bench in the Garden of Plants sits a woman working button-holes in machine-made collars—military false collars. She is working them beautifully, five in each collar. She gets ten sous for the dozen collars and she can earn thirty sous a day. Poor woman! In the same neighborhood I go into a little creamery and

and get a bowl of chocolate for five sous. A woman says that the shop is hers, and she has a small custom. Her husband works on the railroad, and her two children are boarding with her parents, who are alone near the Vosges Mountains. Not far off, upon the street, a woman is frying potatoes very nicely. She has a stove in which she burns coke. She sells her potatoes for one sou and two sous, and sells a good many at breakfast and dinner time. Riding on the circular railway to the Exposition, there is a nice young woman in the car with a basket and can. She buys milk and makes that soft cheese of which the French are so fond. She puts hers up in bits of cloth and lays each pat into a bit of a basket. She has a custom at the restaurants outside of the Exposition. She has been married a year, and her husband sells flowers near the Madeleine Church. How many women are helping to pull hand-carts, or pushing them themselves! Here is one loaded with flowers there another with meat and fish. In the corner of a court yard sits a warding wool for mattresses, card the wool and put it into a clean cover. I go one morning to the grocer's and find only a woman there; and when I go to the office of tobacco near us—the government office—to buy postage stamps, what a pretty woman is at one counter ready to sell stamps or the precious taxed weed? I go to the druggist's, and find Mrs. Apothecary at the desk on one side with her crocheting, and account book open before her. After her husband's death the law allows her one year to settle his affairs.

At the Exposition I see my friend Mrs. C—, from "the provinces." Her husband exhibits, and she explains that she must see that the sales-women are polite. I visit a public school where three of the four teachers are married. The directress or head teacher tells me that she has taught in the public schools seventeen years, and has been married fifteen. Her son is twelve, and attends the college—where his father is prof. She tells me that living is very dear.

In the Louvre gallery, among the artists at work, there are a number of women. One of them is drawing from Paul Veronese's picture of "The Marriage at Cana of Galilee."

Widows are engaged in business at Paris. I go into a bookstore and find a woman. She says that she is all alone, and gives me her card—"Widow—". She asks me to send my friends, and sells me pretty note-paper at two sous for six sheets. At the Exposition, in a plantation of trees, I see a board set bearing "Widow Durand, Bourg-la-Reine." On a hand-bill in the street are the names of Widows Renon, Maulde, and Cook, printers, Rue de Rivoli. My landlord jestingly says that their husbands were printers, and that having well wept them, they continued the business.—PHEBE EARLE GIBBONS, in *Harper's Magazine* for June.

## Nell Gwynne.

She was a neglected waif, and as a mere child was sent to hawk oranges in the pit of Drury Lane, where her pretty ways and bright saying always attracted a crowd. Her personal popularity among the *habitués* of the playhouse won the attention of the manager, and as a natural transition, by his aid, she passed from in front of the foot-lights to behind them. The old diarist Pepys has left clearer indications of her style of acting than any one else, and his testimony, as well as all criticism of her which I have been able to glean, points conclusively to the supposition that Nell Gwynne was an actress much of the Lotts type—a gay, little creature, full of dash and spirit in comic parts, but who failed altogether in sentiment, and in heroic tragedy was most abominable. Pepys notes that he "was most infinitely displeased with her in a great and seri-

ous part, which she does most basely." Dryden took her measure well, probably, when he wrote the following lines for her to speak after the burlesque "business" of having stabbed herself and then come to life again:

"I come, kind gentlemen, strange news to tell ye:  
I am the ghost of poor departed Nelly.  
Sweet ladies, be not frighted; I'll be civil;  
I'm what I was—a little harmless devil.  
To tell you true, I walk because I die  
Out of my calling in a tragedy."

But in farcical characters she must have been bewitching. Pepys writes when speaking of Dryden's play called *The Maiden Queen*: "There is a comical part done by Fell, which is Florimel, that I never can hope ever to see the like done again by man or woman. The king and the Duke of York were at play. But so great a performance of a comical part was never, I believe, in the world before as Nell did this, both as a mad girl, then most and best of all when she comes like a young gallant, and bath the motions and carriage of a spark the most that ever I saw any man have. It makes me, I confess, admire her. . . . I kissed her, and so did my wife; and a mighty pretty soul she is."

Talent so decided and personal attraction so marked would win the admiration of any audience, ancient or modern, and Nelly was always devising some new grotesqueness in costume to add to the fun. In one of her parts she came on the stage unexpectedly, wearing a hat as large round as a cart-wheel, and which almost entirely hid her. This was done as a "take-off" on some pastoral play which was being performed at the rival theatre, exactly as in our theatres to-day Lotta burlesques *Modeska Fatal* or fortunate, as one looks at it, from the moral or the worldly point of view, was Nelly a famous hat assumption. Her success that night with her enraptured audience exceeded any she had hitherto achieved, yet this was her last appearance upon the stage. When the curtain fell, the king went behind the scenes and asked for Nelly. Her stage thereafter was at Windsor Castle, her auditors the court.

London to-day is dotted with monuments, in the shape of hospitals, relief rooms, and other places of succor for the poor, which were founded by the munificence of Nell Gwynne. Naturally the poor people were fond of her, and from all the scorn and rage which were lavished on the licentious court of Charles the Second, little Nelly was ever exempt.—OLIVE LOGAN, in *Harper's Magazine* for June.

## According to your Ability.

"Every man according to his ability," is the Christian rule of giving and of working. It is not very faithfully obeyed. There are many persons who have great ability, yet do but little work; who have ample leisure yet give but little time; who have large possessions yet make small contributions. This is an evil that we have all seen under the sun.

And there is another that is like unto it. There are a great many people who have some ability but who do nothing, who have not much leisure but who give no time to the Lord's work; who have a little money but who put none at all into his treasury. Those who have a little and give nothing violate the Christian law just as truly as do those who have much and give little. There are a great many persons, young and old, in all churches, whose means and opportunities are limited: from whom not much ought to be expected: but they are able to do something and they do nothing. They are transgressors of the Christian law. They ought to repent, and do works meet for repentance.—*Sunday Afternoon.*

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