**Every-Day Philosophy.**

When weariness with life my spirit fills,
  When deep disgust consumes me with my lot,
I draw some store of comfort from the ills
  I haven't got.

To find that fortune at your coming flies,
  To be bankrupt in health, in fame, in purse,
Is bad enough; but, I philosophize,
  It might be worse.

Incessantly we make a great ado,
  The mouth of Misery is wide agape;
But happier we, I fancy, if we knew
  What we escape.

The common woes of life are bad enough,
  Misfortunes fall as easy as the dew,
And still for every morning steak that's tough,
  There might be two.

This one is sick; his wayward fate cries out
  Against the leech, the calomel, the bed,
O inconsiderate person, cease to pout—
  You might be dead!

And this one hath the mitten; he has wooed;
  Vainly, alack, his wooing it has sped,
Well—even in this there's comfort, rightly viewed—
  He might be wed!

And here is one who whines; his all is swept
  Away in panic; he has had to "fail."
He should, I think, be cheerful, that he's kept
  Safe out of jail.

But late I lost a twenty-dollar bill—
  And did I wring my hands that I had blundered?
Not I, indeed!—I'm very thankful still
  'Twas not a hundred.

Sooth, should I e'er capsize when walks are bad,
  And my good clavicle involve in wreck,
Serenely, I should say—how very glad
  It's not my neck.

O trust me—better not to make ado
  At the few miseries of our common lot,
There's millions of 'em—if we only knew!"—
  We haven't got.

# PHYLLIS.

BY THE DUCHESS.

Author of "Molly Bawn," "The Baby," "Airy Fairy Lilian," etc., etc.

"A veritable little goose. No, no!—perfection, I mean," seeing me pout. Then suddenly putting his arms round me and drawing me down to him, he whispers, with deep feeling, "Phyllis, my darling, darling girl, don't you know it? Must I tell it to you over and over again? Cannot you see every hour of your life how fondly I love you, just for what you are? And *you*, Phyllis, tell me—do *you*——" He stops abruptly and regards me with a curious earnestness for a minute, then laughing rather constrainedly, puts me gently back from him and goes on; "What other guests shall we name? Mark Gore; would you care for him?"

"Yes; I liked what I saw of him. And Dora, Marmaduke."

"Dora, of course. And some one to meet her, I suppose? Whom shall we say? I think George Ashurst is an eligible who would just suit her. He is not exactly brilliant, but he is thoroughly good-hearted, and a baronet, with unlimited coin."

"I don't think Dora would like him if he is stupid," I say, doubtfully.

"Oh, he is not a fool if you mean that; and he has as many golden charms as would make a duller man clever."

"And who is mercenary now?" I say, lifting a finger of conviction.

"Am I? You see what comes of marrying a *man* of the world. Now, had you seen as much life as I have you might be equally unpleasant."

"But *I* don't think you unpleasant, 'Duke."

"Don't you? There is consolation to be found in that. And now whom would you like to invite, darling?"

"I would like Billy," I say, disconsolately; "but he is never in the way when wanted, like other boys. And Roly is in Ireland, by special desire, of course. And I would like mother, only——"

"Perhaps you would like the whole family?" says my husband, mildly.

"Yes, I would," I return with alacrity; "every"—I was going to say "man jack of them," but thinking this—though purest English to Billy's ears—may be considered vulgar by mere outsiders, check myself in time, and substitute the words "every one of them," rather tamely. "All, that is, except papa; I doubt if he could be amiable for two hours together. But where is the use in wishing for what I cannot have?"

"We could get Billy for a week, I dare say, later on," says Marmaduke, kindly, "while the rest are here, if only to keep you from despair. Is there any one else?"

"No; papa looked upon friends as nightmares, so we have none. Besides, I shall have quite enough to do making myself agreeable to those you have named. I only hope they will not worry me into an early grave."

"Well, then, I suppose, with two or three spare men, this list will do?"

"Don't you think you are asking a great many?"

"No; very few, it seems to me; at least barely enough to make the house warm. Here is a tip for you, Phyllis; when making up your mind to invite people to stay with you, always ask a good many together, as the more there are the easier it will be to amuse them, and much trouble is taken off the shoulders of the poor little hostess. Bebe you will like, she is so gay and bright; every one is fond of her."

"How old is she?"

"Very young—not more than nineteen or twenty, and she looks almost as young you. She will suit you, and help you to do the honors. The only thing that can be said against Bebe is, she is such an incorrigible little flirt. Do not learn that accomplishment from her."

"How shall I be able to help it, if you throw me in the way of it? I think you are acting foolishly," with a wise shake of my head. "What if one of those 'spare men' should chance to fall in love with me?"

"That would be a mere bagatelle to *your* falling in love with one of the 'spare men.'"

"I see nothing to prevent that either."

"Don't you?" Then, half earnestly, taking my face between his hands, "You would not do that, Phyllis, would you?"

"No, I think not," I say, lightly, letting him have his kiss without rebuke; "I feel no desire to be a flirt. It must be an awful thing, as it seems to me, to have two or three men in love with you at the same time. *I* find *one* bad enough"—maliciously—"and that is what it comes to, is it not?"

"I suppose so, if one is a successful coquette."

"Well," I say springing to my feet, "I only hope Dora will get a good husband out of all this turmoil, if only to recompense me for the misery I am going to endure."

CHAPTER XIX.

During the morning of the day on which Lady Handcock is expected to arrive, I feel strangely nervous and unsettled. Probably she will be cold and haughty and indifferent, like the generality of grand dames, or, worse still, supercillious and filled with a well-bred mockery only half concealed, like Lady Blanche Going.

As she has written to say they will not arrive until five o'clock, I put on my outdoor things after luncheon and wander forth alone in search of good spirits and a frame of mind so altogether radiant as shall help me to conquer fate towards evening. As at 4 o'clock, however, I retrace my steps, I am by no means certain that I have found anything beyond a brilliant color.

I cross the threshold and move towards the staircase with the laudable intention of robing myself for conquest before their coming, when to my consternation I am met by Tynon, the butler, with the pleasing intelligence that "Sir James and Lady Handcock and Miss Beatoun" have already arrived.

Have entered my doors with no hostess to receive them or bid them welcome! What *will* they think? How awkward it has proved, my going for that stupid walk!

I smother a groan, fling my hat at Tynon, and, just as I am, with my hair slightly disarranged, enter the drawing-room.

At the upper end stands Marmaduke, laughing and talking gayly to a fair-haired, prettily-dressed woman, who in a lower class of existence, might be termed "buxom." To say she is inclining towards *embonpoint* will, however, sound less shocking to ears polite. I have heard from my husband that she is about thirty years of age, but in the quick glance I take at her I decide she might be any age under that, she is so white and soft and gay.

"Oh! here she is," says 'Duke, gladly, as I enter.

"I am so sorry!" I murmur, with a rising color, coming quickly forward; "but we did not expect you until 5 o'clock."

As I advance, so does she, and when we meet she lays two small plump, jewelled hands upon my shoulders.

"It was all my fault," she says smiling. "When you know me better you will understand that I cannot *help* being in a hurry. However, you must forgive me this time, as my appearing at this hour is in itself a flattery, proving how impatient I was to see you." Then, regarding me attentively. "Why, what a child!" she cries; "what a baby! and what delicious eyes! Really, Marmaduke, I hardly know whether most to congratulate or—pity you."

She speaks with a curiously pretty accent, putting an emphasis on every third or fourth word that fascinates and pleases the listener.

"*Pity!*" return I, amazedly, making an unsuccessful effort to elude her firm grasp, while the indignant color flames into my cheeks. "You speak as if—*why* should you *pity* him?"

"Because, cannot you fancy what a life you are going to lead him," says her ladyship, with a little arch laugh that wrinkles up her Grecian nose. "Child, I too have eyes and I can see mischief written in every line of your—*ugly* little face."

I try to feel angry, but cannot. It is in her power to make every word she utters an undeveloped compliment. I succumb at once and forever, and give myself up to her merry true-hearted influence. Putting my frowns in my pocket, I laugh.

"If you keep on saying these things before 'Duke," I say, "he will find me out, and perhaps in time repent his bargain."

Here I make a little *moue* at my husband, who is standing rather behind his sister, which he returns with interest.

"How do you know I have not found you out long ago? It is my belief I married you for my sins. Harriet, I leave her now in your hands; reform her—if you can."

"Go and look after James," says Lady Handcock. "He always gets into mischief when left by himself. I want to make friends with Phyllis."

By and by Miss Beatoun comes in, and I get through another introduction.

She is hardly as tall as I am, and wonderfully pretty. No need to disbelieve the report that last season all men raved of her. Her eyes are large and dark and soft, her hair a very, very light brown, though hardly golden, and guiltless of dye. A tiny black mole, somewhat like a Queen Anne's patch, grows close to her left ear.

As I look at her, I decide hastily she is *more* than pretty—she is attractive. Her whole face is full of light; the very corners of her mouth express unuttered laughter; it is altogether the most *riante*, kissable, loveable face conceivable. Her hands and feet are fairy-like in their proportions.

Nevertheless, her eyes, though usually soft, betray the coquette; they cannot entirely conceal the mischievous longing for mastery that lurks in their velvet depths.

"Is she not young, Bebe?" asks Lady Handcock, indicating me.

"*Very.* Much younger than I dared to hope. Of course"—to me—"we all heard you were *quite* a girl; yet that did not reassure me, as it can be said of most brides, and as a rule they are a disagreeable lot. But you have forgotten to give yourself airs, and that is *so* novel and delightful—so many young women *will* go in for that sort of thing. I feel," says Miss Beatoun, gayly, "I am going to have a delicious autumn, and to be very happy."

"I hope so," I answer, earnestly. "Do you know, Lady Handcock, I quite dreaded your coming?—it kept me awake several nights, thinking perhaps you would be cold and difficult, and would not like me; and now I am *so* relieved—you cannot fancy what a weight is off my mind."

I say this with such evident feeling that they both laugh heartily, and Bebe gives it as her opinion that I am a "regular darling."

"But you must not call me Lady Handcock," corrects my sister-in-law. "My name is Harriet—or Harry, for the most part. I do not want to be made an old woman just yet, though Bebe *will* tell every one I am her aunt, instead of saying James is her uncle."

"It is the only hold I have over her you see," exclaims Bebe, "and I keep it as a threat. But for knowing I have it in my power to say that, she would be under no control. And with mamma so given to itinerant habits, and Harry being my natural *chaperon*, I have to protect myself as best I may."

By dinner hour our party is still further enlarged by Dora, Mark Gore, and Sir George Ashurst, a very fair young man, with an aquiline nose, plump face, and a long white moustache. He at once impresses me with the belief that he is thoroughly good-natured, and altogether incapable of ill-temper of any kind. Perhaps, indeed, if he were to smile a little less frequently, and show some symptoms of having an opinion of his own, it would be an improvement. But what will you? One cannot have everything. And he is chatty and agreeable, and I manage to spend my evenings very comfortably in his society.

The next day Captain Jenkins and Mr. Powell, from the Barracks at Chillington, put in an appearance; and a very youthful gentleman, with a calm and cherubic countenance, arrives from London. This latter is in the Hussars, and is full of a modest self-appreciation very much to be admired.

"Well, Chips, so you have come, in spite of all your engagements," says Marmaduke, slapping this fair-haired warrior affectionately upon the shoulder. (His correct name is John Chippinghall Thornton; but his friends and brother officers having elected to call him "Chips" or "Chip," he usually goes by that appellation. Though *why* I have never been able to fathom, as it would be a too palpable flattery to regard this very erratic young man as a "chip of the old block," his father being a peculiarly mild and inoffensive clergyman, residing in a northern village).

"What did Lady Emily say to your defection, and Maudie Green, and Carrie, and all the rest of your friends?"

"Oh, I say, now," says Master Chips, with an ingenuous blush, "it isn't fair to show me up in this light—is it?—and before Mrs Carrington, too. She will have no opinion of me if she listens to all *you* say."

"I am only anxious to hear how you tore yourself away from their fascinations."

"Yes, do tell us, Mr. Thornton," says I. "We are so afraid that you have sacrificed yourself to oblige us."

"Don't you believe a word Marmaduke says, Mrs. Carrington: he is always representing me falsely. I shall be unhappy forever if you won't understand how proud and charmed I was to receive your invitation. Just to show you how he exaggerates, the Carry and Maud he spoke of are my cousins, and that's the same as sisters, you know."

"Only far more dangerous," I return, laughing.

"Well, at all events, they have every one gone off to Germany or country-houses, so they must do without me. I couldn't go trotting after 'em everywhere, you know; do enough of that in the spring to last the year. And, besides, I don't much care for any of that lot now."

"No? Tired of them already? What a desperate Don Juan! Really, Chips, I shudder to think where you will end. And who is the idol at the present hour?—something more exquisite still?"

"Not to be named in the same day," says Mr. Thornton, confidingly. "Fact is, she is a sort of connection of your own. Met her last season in town, you know, and—er——"—an eloquent sigh—"I mean Miss Beatoun."

Marmaduke burst out laughing, and so do I.

"Then, you are all right," says 'Duke. "With your usual luck you have fallen upon your feet. At this instant the same roof covers you and your *inamorata*."

"No!" cries Chips, eagerly. "You don't mean it? Of course you are only joking. You're not in earnest, now, Marmaduke—are you?"

"Seeing is believing," returns 'Duke. "But if you don't go and dress yourself this very minute you will get no dinner, and lose a good chance of exercising your fascinations upon Miss Beatoun."

Later on he takes her in to dinner and is supremely happy; while Messieurs Jenkins and Powell, who have reached their thirty-third year, look on aghast at the young one's "cheek." They are estimable men, and useful in their own way, but refuse to shine in conversation.

At my right hand sits Sir James, a tall, distinguished-looking man, with hair of iron-gray and deep-set eyes. He is grave and remarkably silent—such an utter contrast to his laughter-loving wife, of whom he never appears to take the smallest notice. But for Marmaduke's assertion that they adore each other I would be inclined to think them at daggers drawn, or at least indifferent.

Not to his wife alone, however, is he reserved; all the rest of the world he treats in a similar manner, and I come to the conclusion he abhors talking, and is a man with no settled taste or pursuits. Hearing, indeed, that his one passion is hunting, I broach the subject cautiously, and, feeling certain of making a score, express myself desirous of being informed as to the express nature of the "bullfinch."

"Explanations always fall short," is his reply. "Some day when we are out I will *show* you one. That will be best."

So my ignorance remains unenlightened

Dora is doing the amiable to Sir George Ashurst. Anything so simple or innocent as Dora in her white dress and coral ribbons could hardly be conceived. I am admiring her myself with all my heart, and wondering how it is she does it; and I fancy Sir Mark Gore is doing the same. Once, as she raises the childish questioning blue eyes to her companion's face, and murmurs some pretty speech in her soft treble, I see Sir Mark smile openly. It is only a momentary merriment, however, as directly afterwards he turns to me, suave and charming as ever.

"How becoming white is to your sister!" he says. "It suits her expression so wonderfully. I don't know how it is, but the word *ingenue* always comes to me when I look at her."

"She is very pretty," I return, coldly. I have not yet quite decided on the nature of that smile.

"You do her an injustice. Surely she is more than 'pretty'—a word that means so little in these degenerate days. If I were an artist I should like to paint her as 'Moonlight,' with a bunch of lilies in her hands, and just that dress she is now wearing-*without* the ribbons—and a little stream running at her feet. I have seldom seen so sweet an expression. One could hardly fancy an unkind word coming from those lips, or a hidden motive in her heart."

I think of our "Moonlight's" designs upon Marmaduke and the man who is now so loud in her praise. I think of the many and energetic *fracas* between her and Billy, and am silent. I don't know why, but I am positive Sir Mark is amused. I color and look up.

"What ages ago it seems since last we met!" says he, promptly.

"Ages? No, months. It was last in June we met, I think—and here."

"Oh, that was the barest glimpse; one could hardly call it a meeting. I was referring to my visit to the Lesslies two years ago. You remember that little scene in the High street, at Carston?"

I laughed merrily.

"I do indeed. But for you the *finale* would have been too ignominious. And then we met again, and—— Shall I peel one of these for you?"

"Please."

"And I flattered myself you treated me with some degree of graciousness; flattered myself so far that I presumed to send you a little volume of poems I had heard you wish for, and which you returned, that was rather cruel, was it not?"

"I have always *felt* how rude you must have thought me on that occasion." I reply, blushing hotly. "I did so long to tell you all about it, but could not. It was not my fault, however; I confess I would have kept it if possible; it was papa. He said you should not have sent it, and insisted on its being returned."

"Well, perhaps he was right. Yet it was a very harmless and innocent little volume, after all, containing only the mildest sentiments. (Is that a good one?)"

"(Very good, thank you). It was Tennyson's 'Idyls'—I remember perfectly; and it was filled with the prettiest illustrations. Oh, I was so sorry to part with that neat little book! Do you know I was silly enough to cry the day I posted it back to you?"

Sir Mark regarded me earnestly, almost curiously. I am laughing at my own past folly, but he does not even smile in sympathy.

"I am sorry any act of mine should have cost you a tear," he says, slowly, "but why did you not write a line to explain all this to me when sending it?"

"*Fancy* the iniquity of such a thing! the very suggestion would have brought down untold wrath upon my poor head. To ask permission to write a letter to a gentleman Oh, horror!"

"And you would not—but no, of course you would not," says Sir Mark rather unintelligibly.

And then I glance at Lady Handcock, and she glances at me. Sir Mark rises to open the door, and I smile and nod gayly at him as I cross the threshold and pass into the lighted hall.

We are all beginning to know each other well, and to be mutually pleased with each other, when, towards the close of the week, Lady Blanche Going joins our party. She is looking considerably handsomer than when I last saw her in town, and is apparently in good humor with herself and all the rest of the world. How long this comfortable state of affairs may last, however, remains a mystery. She brings with her a horse, a pet-poodle, and a *very* French maid, who makes herself extremely troublesome, and causes much dissension in the servants' hall.

Sir Mark Gore and her ladyship are evidently old friends, and express a well-bred amount of pleasure on again meeting. Perhaps her ladyship's expressions are by a shade the warmest.

"I had no idea I should meet you here," she winds up, sweetly, when the subject of her satisfaction is exhausted. "Mrs. Carrington, when alluding to her other guests, never mentioned your name."

"No? Mrs. Carrington, how unkind of you to dismiss me so completely from your thoughts! 'Never to mention my name!' It is horrible to picture oneself so totally forgotten."

"You could not surely hope to be *always* in my thoughts?" I answer lightly.

Her ladyship flashes a sharp glance at us from her long dark eyes.

"I might not *expect* it, certainly; but I am not to be blamed if I cannot help hoping for anything so desirable."

"Vain hope!" return I saucily, "and a foolish one besides. Have you never heard that 'familiarity breeds contempt?' and that 'too much of anything is good for nothing?' Were I to keep you perpetually in my mind I might perhaps end by hating you."

"What an appalling idea!" murmurs Lady Blanche, softly, speaking in that peculiar tone of half-suppressed irony I so greatly detest." Should anything so dreadful ever occur I doubt if Sir Mark would recover it."

"I don't suppose I should," replies Sir Mark, rather bluntly, as it seems to me, without turning his head in her direction.

There is a moment's rather awkward pause, and then her ladyship laughs lightly, and, crossing the room, sits down by Bebe Beatoun.

Her laugh is an unpleasant one, and jars upon me painfully. Her very manner of rising and leaving me alone with Sir Mark has something in it so full of insolent meaning that for the instant I hate her. She makes me feel I have said something foolish—something better left unsaid, though thoroughly unmeant. I color, bite my lip, and, without another word to my companion, who is looking black as night, I go out through the open window.

So for the second time the little thorn enters into my heart and pricks me gently. A seed is sown that bears me bitter fruit.

CHAPTER XX.

Nobody seems to mind me in the least (as a hindrance to their rather open flirtations), though, with the exception of Lady Blanche, all my guests appear prepossessed in my favor.

I am no good at all as a *chaperon*—looking at the necessary evil in the light of a guardian of morals—as no one, I feel utterly positive, would listen to a word of advice given by me, even had I the courage to speak that word, which I feel sure I have not

"Tell you why I like you so much," says Bebe to me, one day, with charming candor (we have become great friends by this time); "you have so little of the married woman about you. You don't look the thing at all. Nobody would feel in the least put out if *you* caught them doing anything, even a little bit *fi fi*. You'd be afraid to scold, and you are too good-natured to 'peach.' Now there's mamma, *her* eyes strike terror to the hearts of the girls she *chaperons*. Only let her catch you with your hand in the possession of any Detrimental, however delightful, and it is all up with you half an hour later."

"But I suppose your mother is right. I shall remember what you say, and take her as a model from this day forth."

"It isn't *in* you. You would make a horrible mess of it; and you are infinitely nicer as you are. A strong stare is a necessary ingredient, and you don't possess that. You should be able to wither with a stare."

"You don't seem any the better for all the indignation."

"No, that is just it That shows the folly of wasting so much valuable breath. I am a born flirt, and as such I hope I'll die. There! that is extra naughty, is it not? So, out of respect for you, I will unsay it, and hope instead I may depart this life a calm and decorous matron."

"Do you know I never had a flirtation in my life?" I say almost regretfully.

"No? really! How absurd!" says Bebe, bursting into a much-amused laugh. "That is just what makes you the curious, dear, darling, little child you are. But you need not be so poverty-stricken any longer unless you please, as any one can see how *epris* with you is Sir Mark Gore."

"Nonsense!" cry I, blushing furiously. "How can you say anything so untrue? I have known him this ever so long; he is quite an old friend."

"And a *fast* friend," say Bebe, laughing again at her own wit. "Having waited so long you do right to begin your campaign with a seasoned veteran."

"You must not say such things; if you do I shall rouse myself and assert my authority as a very dragon among *chaperons;* and then where will you and Captain Jenkins and Master Chips be?"

"No, don't" entreats Bebe, pretending to be frightened. "As you now are you are perfection; were you to change you would not be Phyllis Carrington at all. When I marry I intend taking you as an example, and so make myself dear to the hearts of all my spinster friends."

"And when will that be, Bebe?"

A shade crosses and darkens her face. For a moment she looks sad; then it disappears, and she laughs gayly.

"Never, probably. I don't get the chance. Generally, when I pay my autumn visits, I live in a state of constant dread of being pounced upon by officious matrons, just as I am going in for an hour of *thorough* enjoyment with a man who has not a penny on earth besides his pay. But here it is different. *You* would never pounce, my Phyllis, would you? You would make a delightful clitter-clatter, with those little high-heeled shoes of yours, long before you turned the corner; there is nothing mean or prowling about you. Phyllis, is all that hair really your own? I won't believe it till I see it. Let me pull it down, and do it up again for you in a new style, will you? I am tremendously good at hair-dressing, really. Harry says I am better than her French maid. When all trades fail, and I am a lonely old maid, I shall bind myself to a barber."

With this she pulls my hair all about my shoulders, and makes me endure untold tortures for at least three quarters of an hour.

Meantime Dora is improving the shining hours with Sir George Ashurst. She is making very fast and likely running, that looks as if it meant to make the altar-rails its goal.

As for her victim, he has neither eyes nor tongue nor ears for any but Dora, and success lends enchantment to my sister's face and form. Always pretty, she has gained from the excitement of the contest an animation hitherto unknown, and that adds considerably to her charms.

I experience little throbs of satisfaction and delight as I contemplate this promising flirtation; though as yet I do not dare to think of marriage as its probable termination. I long intensely to discuss the subject with Dora, to learn how far I may beguile myself with hope; but one day, having touched upon it very delicately, I am met with such an amount of innocent blankness as effectually deters me from making any further attempt.

Nevertheless, speak it I must, or die; and, coming upon Marmaduke suddenly, directly after receiving Dora's rebuff, I proceed with much caution to sound him about the matter.

As I enter he is bending over some new favorite among the guns, and is endeavoring with the assistance of the largest pin I ever saw, to pick dust from some intricate crevice. He is crimson either from stooping or anxiety—I don't know which, though I incline towards the latter opinion—as on seeing me he says, irritably—

"Phyllis, have you a small pin? I cannot think," flinging the large one angrily from him, "why they choose to make them this size; they are not of the smallest use to any fellow who wants to clean a gun."

"They may have been designed for some other purpose," I suggest, meekly, producing a more reasonably-sized pin, which he seizes with avidity and returns to his task.

I seat myself near him, and for a few minutes content myself with watching the loving care he bestows upon his work. No careless servant's hands should touch those new and shining barrels.

"Marmaduke," I say at length, "I don't think Sir George so very stupid."

"Don't you, darling?" absently.

"No. Why did you say he was?"

"*Did* I say it?" Evidently every idea he possesses is centered in that absurd gun.

"Dear me, 'Duke, of course you did," I cry, impatiently. "You told me he was not 'brilliant,' and that means the same thing. Don't you remember?"

"Well, *is* he brilliant?"

"No, but he converses very nicely, and is quite as agreeable as any of the other men, in a general sort of way."

"I am very glad you think so. He is a great friend of mine; and, after all, I don't suppose it matters in the least a man's not being able to master his Greek and Latin, or failing to take his degree."

"Of course not. I dare say he did not put his mind to it. I am convinced had he done so he would have distinguished himself as—as much as anybody."

"Just so."

"I think"—with hesitation—"he would suit Dora very well."

"I agree with you there; more particularly as Dora is not clever either."

"Yes, she is," I cry hotly; "she is exceedingly clever. She can do a great deal more than most girls; she can do lots of things that I can't do."

(To be continued

Good nature is the very air of a good mind; the sign of a large and generous soul, and the peculiar soil in which virtue prospers