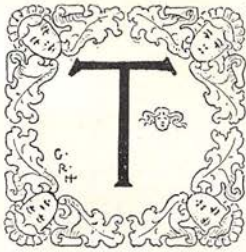




CLOUGH HALL.

WOMEN AT AN ENGLISH UNIVERSITY.

NEWNHAM COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.



THE great educational movement for women which was seriously begun some twenty-five to thirty years ago was not the outcome of a moment's impulse; it was rather the result of opinions, which had been

slowly working their way through society since the beginning of the century. But it was not until 1848 that Professor Maurice, with the help of Charles Kingsley and others, succeeded in obtaining a royal charter for the foundation known as Queen's College, London. This and Bedford College, opened a year later, were the first two institutions where advanced lectures were delivered to women. After this, however, and for some twenty years or so later, little progress seemed to be made; but, in reality, much good work was quietly being done; and all who were interested in the higher education of women were encouraged to persevere by the support and sympathy of John Stuart Mill, Mrs. Browning, Mary

Somerville, and Harriet Martineau, and others whose writings gradually prepared the public for what was to follow.

The year 1867 is a memorable one for women. During the previous years Miss Emily Davies had worked hard to induce the university of Cambridge to open its local examinations for boys between the ages of twelve and eighteen, to girls of the same ages, and the school-mistresses had formed themselves into an association to improve the system of school-teaching. Advanced lectures to women had been delivered experimentally, and had proved successful. All was now ripe for a further advance. In that year, 1867, the North of England Council was formed, which undertook to provide for women advanced lectures given by university men, in all the chief towns of England. In that year, too, the university of Cambridge first admitted girls formally to its local examinations; and it is interesting to note that it was in that year that John Stuart Mill presented to Parliament a petition for the political enfranchisement of duly qualified women, signed by 1499 women.

The North of England Council, besides pro-



MISS J. A. CLOUGH. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY H. BELL, AMBLESIDE.)

viding the advanced lectures spoken of, was the agency through which the university of Cambridge was induced to provide in 1868 a "higher local examination" for women over eighteen years of age; and this led later on in the same year to the establishment of a college for women at Hitchin, under Miss Emily Davies, the lecturers attending from Cambridge and London. This was the beginning of university life for women, for in the following year—twenty-one years ago—an organized committee of university men provided lectures in Cambridge especially for women; and they were so successful that applications from women came from all parts of England, asking if arrangements could not be made to enable them to enjoy the same advantages. As an outcome of this a house was taken by Professor Sidgwick, and opened for the reception of women students. It was placed under the management of Miss Clough, who had been most energetic in promoting the higher education of women. This was the origin of Newnham College. About the same time the college

at Hitchin, which had grown rapidly, was moved to Girton, near Cambridge, and became known as Girton College.¹

Thus there are two colleges for women students at Cambridge. Girton College which is a fine, handsome building with extensive grounds lying about three miles out of the town and Newnham College, which, together with the principal colleges of the university, lies within the precincts of the town, only a few minutes' walk from the lecture rooms and laboratories.

Students multiplied so rapidly at Newnham that, in four years' time (1875) Newnham Hall was built. This is the present Old Hall; it is a red brick building in the Queen Anne style. It was long presided over by Miss Clough, now the principal of Newnham College. This hall was soon found to be too small to accommodate all the students, and in 1880 Sidgwick Hall was built (then known as North Hall). This hall was presided over by Mrs. Henry Sidgwick for a couple of years, when she was succeeded, in 1882, by Miss Helen Gladstone, daughter of the statesman, who is still there as vice-principal of Newnham College. In 1888 a third structure was added—Clough Hall—named after the principal, who now resides there.

Clough and Sidgwick halls adjoin each other, and there is a covered passage between the two. Old Hall lies opposite them. Each building contains a dining-hall, that of Clough Hall being the largest. It is very lofty, and is beautifully decorated; it has a gallery at the end, and along one side of it, which is used by strangers who come to the college meetings. It is not used as a common dining-hall, for, except on special occasions, the students prefer to dine in their respective halls. Each hall possesses a newspaper room and a music room. In Old Hall is the college library, duplicate books only being placed in the other halls; in the grounds of Old Hall, also, are the gymnasium and the chemical laboratory.

The college has ample grounds; those of Old Hall are specially delightful, and are much favored by the students, who on a fine summer's day may be seen basking full length

¹ In 1879 two halls—"Somerville" and "Lady Margaret"—for the reception of women students were opened at Oxford. And before this date the London University had thrown open its degree examinations to women. At Oxford, however, the women are only examined "by courtesy," whereas, at London, they

are entitled to receive both the degrees and the honors of the university. At the University of Cambridge women are entitled to take the university examinations, and the class obtained is duly stated, but a certificate is granted instead of a degree.—E. F.

on the lawn watching the tennis players, or curled up under the trees with a book, wandering arm in arm up and down a shady avenue, or forming cozy little tea parties in sheltered nooks.

There are about a hundred and forty students in residence.¹ All students must reside in college unless they are living with their parents, or are over the age of thirty, when special permission may be granted for their becoming out-students. The average age of the students is from about twenty to twenty-two; some are much older than this, some younger. No student is allowed to enter under the age of eighteen, unless her case is exceptional, and has had special consideration.

dents are allowed a great deal of liberty, but there are rules which have to be observed.

The following are the few restrictions imposed upon them: In the summer terms the doors are closed at 8 P. M.; in the winter terms at 6 P. M.; if students wish to go out after this hour they have to give in their names, and they are then expected to be in by 11 P. M., unless under very special circumstances, when they may perhaps receive permission to stay till later. Students are expected not to absent themselves from lecture.

Out of lecture hours the students are free to go where they will, but if they boat or ride they must provide themselves with a chaperon. In the spring and summer terms the students en-



Clough Hall — Dining and Assembly Hall.

It appears difficult for an outsider to realize the conditions of student life at Newnham or Girton College; some seem to imagine that the student has absolute freedom; others, on the contrary, that college life is a second edition of school life—that a student must not go out without leave, that she has certain tasks to prepare, and that there is some one to see that she prepares them. The reality is neither the one thing nor the other. Certainly the stu-

joy a good deal of boating. It is not unusual for them to make up a party and row down the river to some little inn or cottage where they have tea before returning.

At first women students used to work for the Cambridge higher local examinations, and sometimes to enter, informally, for the final examinations of the university; but, in 1881, the Senate of the University of Cambridge agreed to admit women, formally, to their honor examinations, so that now the majority read for an honor or tripos examination—that is for the same examination as the men. They attend the same lectures, and work

¹ The year 1890. In 1886 there were seven American students and two from South Africa in residence. In 1882-84 the two daughters of the poet Longfellow were in residence.— E. F.

under exactly the same conditions; the only difference being that whereas the men have a degree conferred on them, which entitles them to use the letters B. A., the women have to content themselves with a certificate which states the class obtained, but does not confer any title on the owner. The woman graduate has no hood, nor does she wear any distinctive dress as an undergraduate. It is not compulsory to work for the tripos examinations; some



MISS GLADSTONE. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY N. BRIGGS, PORTMAN SQUARE, LONDON.)

still work for the higher local examinations, though they are then supposed to stay at college for a couple of years only. Students are permitted to work with no examinations in view, but in this case they are only allowed to be in residence so long as the authorities are satisfied that they are doing good work.

Three years is the usual time allotted for preparing for a tripos examination, though some may be taken after a residence of two years. If a student fail to keep the stated number of terms the examinations cannot be taken.

That women are able to make good use of these privileges is amply proved by the results of the examinations. Even in classics and mathematics, subjects in which they are usually handicapped by not having enjoyed the same training as the men before going up to college, they have taken extremely good places from time to time; and in those subjects in which they start fair, they have always come well to the fore. Among the women who have done remarkably well are Miss Scott, of Girton, who was eighth wrangler, and who is now Professor of Mathematics at Bryn-Mawr

College, near Philadelphia; Miss Chamberlain (Newnham), who was senior of the modern languages tripos, 1886, and is now also teaching at Bryn-Mawr College; Miss Moberly and Miss Hughes (Newnham), who were seniors of the moral sciences tripos in the years 1881 and 1884 respectively; Miss Rolleston (Newnham), history tripos, bracketed senior, 1886; Miss Ramsay (Girton), senior of the classical tripos, 1887, and lastly Miss Philippa Fawcett (Newnham), who in 1890 held the anomalous position of being "above the senior wrangler."¹

Each student has her own room or rooms. The college supplies these with all necessary furniture; the decorations are left to the taste and ingenuity of the student; and in most cases they are made to look very charming. If the student has only one room her bed is made in the daytime to resemble an ordinary couch.

One very characteristic article of furniture in every Newnham room is the oak bureau — "burry" — which besides serving as a writing table possesses the most astonishing capacity for receiving anything and everything.

It is not all work and no play at Newnham; and the hours are admirably arranged to afford plenty of opportunity for both. A gong sounds at 8 A. M. for prayers; as a rule the majority of the students appear, though attendance is not compulsory. At about twenty minutes past eight breakfast is served, and at this time any one peeping in would look upon a very animated scene. Every one seems bright in the morning, and the gayest laughs are heard every minute from one or other of the merry parties which are congregated at the various little tables studded over the dining-hall. At 9 A. M. breakfast is cleared away, and, as a rule, there is a grand rush made by the late comers just at the last. If students are tired or unwell they may have the meal taken to their own rooms.

From 9 A. M. to 12.30 P. M., from 3.30 to 6.30 P. M., and from 8 to 10 P. M. are work hours, during which students are expected to be as quiet as possible, and there are justices of the peace (students nominated by their colleagues) to maintain order. Luncheon is an informal meal; it is ready at half-past twelve and students drop in as they like up to about two o'clock. In the interval between 12.30 and 3.30 P. M. the students set off for long walks, or they crowd to the tennis and fives courts; wet or fine, every one tries to go out somewhere.

¹ Twenty years ago, when Miss Fawcett was only a year and a half old, one of the first meetings held to discuss the establishment of Newnham College met in Mrs. Fawcett's drawing-room, in Cambridge, and was presided over by Professor H. Sidgwick. — E. F.

On wet days the gymnasium is a great resort. There are numbers of tennis courts, both of grass and cinder. The latter dry so quickly that students are able to play all the year round.

Afternoon tea is laid in the dining-halls and is obtainable from 3 to 4.30 or 5 P. M. Some prefer to have it in their own rooms; they then provide it themselves, and often ask friends from the town to join them.

The hours from 3.30 to 6.30 P. M. are considered the best time for work. During the morning a great deal of time is taken up with lectures; these generally cease at 1 to 2 P. M.; few are given in the afternoon.

Of course it is quite optional whether students work during "work hours" or not—they suit their own convenience; many prefer, especially during the summer months, to take the whole afternoon to themselves, and work only morning and evening. It depends a good deal on the subject the student is reading. Some subjects require more hours than others. As a rule mathematical students are able to read a much shorter time than those who are taking natural science or history, and they have consequently more time at their disposal. As a general rule the average number of hours devoted to reading is about six; many students work eight hours a day, particularly those who have to spend much time in the laboratories; others only four or five.

Dinner, the formal meal of the day, is served at 6.30 P. M., and the students are all expected to assemble at once. Though evening dress is not *de rigueur*, most of the students endeavor to appear in a change of dress. The students have no special places allotted to them; they may sit where they like; but in each hall there is "the high table," where the principal or vice-principal sits, and to which it is considered an honor to be invited.

The other larger dining-tables are, as a rule, presided over by resident lecturers; this is a capital arrangement, for it gives the students an opportunity of becoming intimate with them.

Immediately after dinner, especially in the winter terms, most of the societies hold their meetings. These are numerous and various; some are small, and include a few students from one hall, such as the Browning Society; some are larger, and include all the students from one hall, such as the Musical Society of Old Hall; others include all the students belonging to the college. Of these last the most conspicuous are the Debating Society and the Political Club. Debates are held usually twice a term, and, as a rule, the whole evening is devoted to them. The subject to be discussed is known to the students some days

before the debate takes place. As a rule abstract questions are the favorites; but now and then a very practical subject is brought before the house—such, for instance, as on the bringing up of children. The following are a few of the subjects of debate during the past year, together with the majorities by which the proposals were carried:

1. That the influence of fashion is morally, intellectually, aesthetically, and socially wrong. Carried by 4.

2. That it is well for most people to cultivate a good opinion of themselves. Carried by 39.

3. That people with one-sided views only are necessary to the accomplishment of any great reform. Lost by 46.

4. That in order to think more we should read less. Lost by 54.

About once a year an intercollegiate debate is held between Girton and Newnham, and there is generally great excitement on the occasion.

The Political Club meets once a week during the winter terms; it is the most flourishing of all the societies. At present, I believe, there is a very strong Conservative element in the House; but in my time the Liberals were in an overwhelming majority. The House is supposed to sit only from 7 to 8 P. M., but often the excitement becomes so great that it does not break up till later. Visitors may obtain an

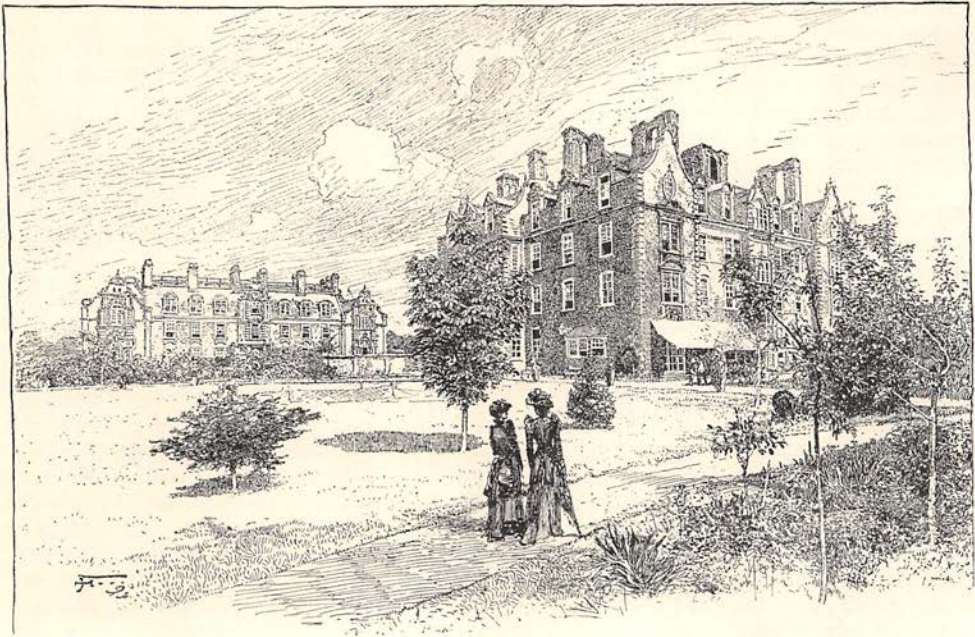


KING'S COLLEGE BRIDGE, OVER THE CAM.

entrance by procuring a card of admission from a member of the Cabinet. While I was at Newnham arrangements were made for any special news to be telegraphed direct to the college, so that the students might not have to wait until the morning papers came in. This was often the cause of a good deal of excitement. One evening during one of the meetings of the Political Club, news arrived of the fall of Kartoum. The confusion and dismay which followed are not to be described.

To become a cabinet minister is a very serious undertaking, as it often means devoting evening after evening to the consideration of some important measure. Once a week the interval between dinner and tea, 7 to 8 P.M., is devoted to dancing. The largest hall is

laughing and talking. This is the great time for social gatherings—"cocoas," as they are called. The hostess provides cocoa and cakes, and the guests amuse themselves according to taste. As a rule serious discussions are tabooed, and games and songs are the order of the day.



SIDGWICK HALL.

OLD HALL.

cleared, and is nearly always well filled. The dance is looked forward to with great pleasure, and the students seem to enjoy it most thoroughly. A large room, perfect floor, good music, and a partner whose step suits one's own exactly—surely these afford scope for real enjoyment, even though the said partner does not wear a black coat.

The Newnham College Choral Society sets apart one evening in the week for a practice which is conducted by Dr. Mann, organist of King's College, Cambridge. The society generally entertains the students with a small concert once or twice a year, and in the Lent term a larger one is given, to which friends of both sexes are invited.

From 8.30 to 10 P. M. silence reigns. At about ten minutes to ten bells ring out from the neighboring colleges, Selwyn and Ridley, and this is usually the signal for a general closing of books. At ten o'clock precisely, the lights in the corridors are turned out; there is a general opening and shutting of doors, and most of the students are seen hurrying along in their dressing-gowns (which are usually elaborate and more like tea-gowns) towards some room from whence proceed lively sounds of

Sometimes, in the midst of one of these lively gatherings the guests are suddenly dispersed in all directions by the sound of the fire-alarm. Some belong to the fire-brigade, and have to be at their posts in an instant; the rest have to fly to their rooms to shut the windows and doors. The fire-brigade practises two or three times a term, but it is only very occasionally that an "alarm practice" is held, and then, fortunately, it occurs during the evening, and not in the early morning.

At 11 P. M. all is quiet again. Students are now supposed to retire to their rooms; or, if they do remain with their friends, they are expected to talk very quietly. Of course it frequently happens during the course of the day that a student wishes to remain undisturbed in her room; in this case she pulls out a little card with "Engaged" on it, which is fitted in her door. No one attempts to go near so long as this is out.

A tennis tournament is held between Newnham and Girton once or twice a year; and in the long vacation Girton and Newnham play against Lady Margaret and Somerville of Oxford. As a rule this university match is held in the vicinity of London; one year,

I know, it was held at Croydon, and another at Harrow.

Such, then, is the general every-day life of Newnham College; but it is rare for a week to pass without bringing some fresh interest in its train. If nothing particular takes place outside the college walls (there are generally lectures, political meetings, or concerts to go to in the town), the students are not slow to make amusements for themselves. For instance, let them come down some Friday morning feeling that things have been rather dull for the last few days, and on looking at the notice-board on their way to breakfast they will find that for the next few hours their ingenuity will be taxed to the utmost in preparing a costume for "A fancy dress ball, to be held on Saturday evening at ten o'clock"—short notice! But it is purposely arranged that the students should not devote too much time, thought, or money to the affair. When the night itself arrives, it is quite astonishing how wonderfully well every one looks.

If students feel they want a change at any time, they are quite at liberty to visit their friends in the town. They are also allowed to invite a friend to stay with them in college for a few days, at a small nominal charge; or they may invite one to dinner under the same conditions. A great feature in Cambridge social life is, of course, the "kettledrum." The "dons" of the various colleges are quite adepts in the art of holding these afternoon teas; it seems natural to see them put out their cakes, brew their tea, and then preside over the table. They frequently invite the Newnham and Girton students to join their parties, and such invitations (which may be accepted if there is a duly qualified chaperon present) usually mean a very pleasant afternoon, for, if in the summer time, the hour or so after tea is usually spent in wandering through the college grounds, which are for the most part really delightful—with their long, shady avenues and beautifully kept lawns sloping gradually down to the river.

Once a year, February 24, the students assemble to commemorate the day on which "the graces" were granted to the college—the day on which women were formally admitted to the university examinations. This is a grand occasion; after dinner the students rise *en masse* to cheer the names of the founders of the college, and of those most active in promoting its interests. There is generally a concert or dance during the evening, and the festivities close with a verse of "Auld Lang Syne" sung with a will.

There are no special rules as to the way Sunday should be kept, though the principal prefers to know whether students attend any

place of worship, and if so, which one they go to. On Sunday morning the majority attend King's College Chapel, which is kindly thrown open to the women students. A great many also go to the afternoon services held in the same chapel. At one time there was a current opinion that the women students of Cambridge possessed few, if any, religious beliefs. That is certainly not the case now, nor was it so when I first went there six or seven years ago. Certainly, students are thrown greatly upon their own resources; which is one reason why very young girls should not be sent to college. Questions are raised, and points discussed, which, if one is not sufficiently experienced to deal skilfully with, are apt to puzzle and overwhelm. Still, in the majority of cases I fancy the student feels all the stronger for being obliged to think matters out for herself; and we must all agree that we cannot go through life without, sooner or later, being brought face to face with vital problems, which, whether at college or at home, have to be dealt with alone. To those who fancy that at college questions such as I have referred to are dealt with roughly, I simply say that such is not the case; they are treated as reverently as elsewhere.

What strikes one as most characteristic of Newnham is the ease with which the students turn from work to play, from play to work, and the energy they throw into both. At one moment the halls are alive with sounds of music and laughter; the next moment a dead silence reigns.

One is frequently met with the question: "Well—but what is the good of all this advanced education—to what does it all tend—what do the students do after they have left college?"

Is not this question a short-sighted one? Is it not through the exertions of those who have the higher education of women most at heart, that the entire school system of Great Britain and Ireland has been improved? Is it not from the chief centers of the advanced education movement that well-trained women are drawn to fill the schools, not only at home, but abroad, in India, Australia, the United States, South Africa, and Japan—whose teaching influences not only the children themselves, but, indirectly, society at large?

Besides taking up the profession of teaching, women are entering the fields of medicine, of art, and literature. The peculiar fitness of women for certain medical work is being gradually acknowledged; only recently two women doctors have been appointed medical officers to the female post-office clerks of London and Liverpool. Some of the women graduates have devoted themselves to research, and the Royal Society has accepted and printed papers writ-

ten by them. A year or two ago a number of university women formed a settlement at Southwark, in the southeast of London. Here they endeavor to provide teaching and amusement for the poor children of the district. But it is not necessary that a woman graduate should enter upon public duties in order to make the most of the advantages she has enjoyed. There is a wide field for quiet, unobtrusive work at home; a capable woman, trained to habits of self-control and self-reliance, must always be a useful member of society.

A great deal is said about the overstrain of college life, and about the ill-health which the higher education of women engenders. During a residence of four years at Newnham College

I was particularly struck with the average good health enjoyed by the students. Since then a most careful census has been taken of students past and present, which goes far to prove that the higher education is not detrimental to health; and, indeed, the arrangements at the large colleges provide such opportunities for recreation that it is only very exceptional students who are likely to overwork. And surely, all will agree that a regular life, with plenty of occupation and good healthy pursuits, must be an enviable one; and that it must be more beneficial than otherwise for once in a lifetime to have to work steadily on towards one goal, to reach which all the best energies must be concentrated in one honest effort.

Eleanor Field.

NOTE ON THE HEALTH OF WOMEN STUDENTS.

THE Sixteenth Report of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor contained some interesting data, furnished by the Association of Collegiate Alumnae, in regard to the health of American female college graduates. Mr. Carroll D. Wright, the Superintendent of the Bureau, summed up the statistics in these conservative words: "It is sufficient to say that the female graduates of our colleges and universities do not seem to show as the result of their college studies and duties any marked difference in general health from the average health likely to be reported by an equal number of women engaged in other kinds of work." At that time the only data relating to the health of a distinct class of women, that were available for purposes of comparison, were a report on the working women of Boston. Five years have passed since this report appeared, and we are now presented with some English statistics on the same subject, which in some respects are more valuable than the American report which suggested them.

"Health Statistics of Women Students of Cambridge and Oxford, and their Sisters," is the title of a pamphlet issued by the University Press, Cambridge, 1890, and edited by Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, the secretary of a special committee which undertook to secure scientific data as to the "effect of a university course of study on the health of women." For good reasons, not in any way detracting from the results, the inquiries were confined to students of Newnham and Girton Colleges at Cambridge, and of Lady Margaret and Somerville Halls at Oxford. These students fall into four classes: first, and most important those who have resided in college three or more years, and have read for Tripos Examinations at Cambridge, and for Final Examination Schools at Oxford; these "*honor students*" may fairly be compared to those who were put down in the American report as having "*studied severely*"; second, students who resided for three years or more, but did not try for honors; third, students who resided for two years; fourth, students who resided for one year. There are three terms in a year at the English universities, and students who took less than three terms were omitted altogether.

To these picked women, the majority of them devoted both before and after college life to intellectual work of a more or less laborious nature, schedules were sent containing, besides the direct query, "Has your health been *a* excellent, *b* good, *c* fair, *d* poor, *e* bad, between the ages of three and eight years, eight and fourteen years, fourteen and eighteen years, at the time of entering college, during college life, and since leaving college," tabulated queries as to family health, as to individual history before going to college, as to conditions of college life, and as to history after leaving college. The object of these questions was mainly to throw light on all causes other than study that might have affected health.

An identical schedule of questions (omitting those about college life) was also sent to each student to be filled up by, or for, the *sister* (or lacking a sister, a first cousin) *nearest her in age*, who had attained the age of twenty-one and had not been to college. In this way was obtained "a parallel series of statistics, with which to compare those about the students—a feature in our inquiry which we think greatly adds to its value."

Elaborate and detailed tables (41 in number) have been carefully made up from the 562 answers received to the 663 schedules sent out. The answers received in the United States amounted to a little over half of those solicited, so that our English sisters have shown a commendable willingness to have the question looked into as thoroughly as possible. Indeed, of the 136 women honor students from Newnham, 130 answered; furthermore, in order to show that the percentage of answers withheld would not have materially affected the average, the Secretary was able, from her personal knowledge of the six women who made no answer, to give the missing health facts in their special cases.

The following condensed and representative table, showing the percentage who have enjoyed different degrees of health at different periods, will, we believe, sufficiently indicate the character of the investigation, and illustrate the comparative position which college training may be claimed to hold among influences that affect the health of women: