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College Hall,

29. Nov. 1885.

Dear Mother,

The elections of course interest us a great deal, - but the results are astonishing. Apart from the surprise that the Liberals are not far ahead, there is the curious fact of how close the two parties keep day by day, - only a difference of one or two. There are very few violently "party" people here, & the general sentiment is one of curiosity to see the result, <sup>mingles</sup>



with regret that the best men seem to be left out, - Samuel Smith, Shaw Lefevre &c.

One of the most sensible students is rejoicing in the hope that the Irish will be successful in their tactics & will practically be the masters of the House of Commons, if the elections go on as they are doing. She thinks they will get complete Home Rule very soon, & that it will be a good thing. And really I fail to see any reason why they should have as much Self-government as a Crown Colony.

There is another girl here whose father is a candidate. He is a Colonel Folliott, standing as a Conservative against a Home Ruler

for Sligo. This girl is a very strong Conservative & thinks Liberal & Tories ought to combine against Radicals & Home Rulers. I suggested that Lord Raudolph Churchill differed at least as much from the old Conservatives as Mr Chamberlain does from the old Liberals. She admitted it, & said he was an odious person, - but she does not seem to see how entirely he is becoming the leader & guide of the Tories & Whigs.

Aunt Gertrude came to see me on Friday but I was out. I went for her that evening, next morning, but on each occasion saw only Aunt Rebekah. She is disgusted with the elections because so many horrid people are getting in, & so many good ones



are left out.

The Election in this division was on Wednesday, & it was pretty exciting. A four-in hand was driving about with some ladies on the top, & gorgeous grooms: the carriage was placarded with "Blundell Maple." The same name was displayed on a mock Fire-engine with two firemen on it, which rushed to & fro. As for the carriages they were legion, & it was amusing to see a very swell carriage with gorgeous coats and footman & coachman & traunted by such seedy looking characters.

There is a stationer's & artists' shop in ~~Gower~~ Gower Street, owned & managed by the limpest, most depressed looking man I know, - so we were a good deal astonished to see this come out brilliant with hosts of Liberator bills. One said "A Xmas present to Auld Willie - Sir Julian Goldsmid," while another called attention to

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the fact that Sir Julian was Treasurer of University College, & one of the Executive Committee of the Hospital, - which seems to me a queer argument for his election.

To turn from this thrilling subject, I must tell you that the Debate on Free Education was a great failure. Only six people spoke, - & the ~~good~~<sup>serious</sup> speeches were dull, while the lively ones had nothing in them. The vote was 22 to 7 against the motion, - & really I did not wonder, so little had been said at all on our side, & so much <sup>clever</sup> clap-trap had been talked on the other. May I keep the books you sent a little longer? I want to have a Debate on the same subject at Bedford College.



We are all in trouble to day at the death of Miss Prideaux. She was quite the most promising of all the women doctors. A year ago she got her M.B. Last month she got an appointment as House Physician to a children's hospital at Paddington, & we were all rejoicing in the expectation that in a few weeks she would be the first woman M.D. Last Sunday she was brought from the Hospital to her father's house near here, with a bad throat, & on Thursday it was pronounced diphtheria, & yesterday we heard that there was no hope. She died this morning.

It is a terrible loss: she had everything to make her as the phrase is, "an ornament to the profession".

It was not only her brilliant Examinations, but she was really such a good doctor, & most charming in person & manner. We all knew her for she was the Students' Representative on the committee of this hall, & besides she has attended several of the students during this year. She was splendid in a sick-room, - inspiring such confidence & calmness.

Mrs Garrett-Anderson went to see Mrs. Prideaux to day, & said "I daren't put my grief beside yours, but I would have given my life to save hers. We all looked on her as the coming woman. My time will soon be passed". If you have ever seen Mrs. Garrett Anderson, you will know that she is not a woman who uses



metaphor, or says more than she means. Miss Grove told us this incident: she has known Miss Pridemore since she was a little girl, & was very fond of her; <sup>she has been to see Mrs Pridemore this afternoon.</sup> I think this is about the saddest thing I can remember. There is not one of the students now who will ever take Miss Pridemore's place: she was just the sort of woman that we wanted to make ~~there~~ lead the way.

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Please give my love to Father & the brothers & Gertie. I suppose Alick is back in Hall now.

Your loving daughter

Helen

Did I ever acknowledge the Poetry-book. I'm sorry if I didn't.