

OXFORD FASHION.

In a letter to one of THE HESPERIAN editors, Miss Mary Tremain, the well known instructor in history in the University for several years past, tells very entertainingly of the way they do at Oxford, where she is now pursuing her studies. The following, from her letter, while of special interest to her friends and former pupils will be scarcely less interesting to anyone who may be curious as to the nature of university life in merry England:

Even aside from all historical and literary associations Oxford is a dear old town, lying low in the valley of the Thames. University life is nearly all the life there is here—at least you would think so if you came in vacation, though of more than forty thousand inhabitants only three thousand are students. To an American it seems very strange that a whole city should appear to exist and do business for so small a number, who, moreover, spend only twenty-four weeks of the year here. But they do spend what a Nebraskan must regard as a disproportionate amount of money, and that accounts for the whole matter. Such a thing as taking a degree at Oxford without actually residing here is unknown—is not permitted, in fact, and the value of residence in comparison with actual work accomplished, I think is somewhat exaggerated. The terms are short, about eight weeks each, and there are only three in a year. The vacations are all long, in order, I am told, that the students may have some time to study; for there is so much to occupy them in terms that they have no chance for work. These things that do occupy them are what makes residence so very important. Everyone acknowledges that the work can be done somewhere else. So, in the main, the students are here to have a good time, and to get what culture can be absorbed while they are about it. Of course this undoubtedly does not apply to everyone, for I am told that nearly half the graduates each year have taken honors. I simply mean that the

thing that most forcibly impresses one is the apparent absence of serious work.

Very few students have lectures beginning before ten. The Camera, the reading-room of the library, opens at ten. From one to two p. m. is the lunch hour. After that the whole university turns out doors; the streets, the parks, the college fields and all the pleasant walks out of town are filled with students. This is the time for foot ball, tennis, boating, and other athletic clubs to do their practicing. Those not club men take bicycle rides, or walk, or row. The Thames forks near here, and its branches, the Isis and the Cherwell, nearly surround the city. Each of these streams branches two or three times, and though narrow and winding, are well cleared and have a good depth, so there is very excellent boating considering the seemingly small quantity of water. The lower course of the Isis is almost given up to the clubs in the afternoon, but there is an abundance of room elsewhere for those bent on this sort of pleasure. Boating has become popular here within the last fifty years, and Oxford glories considerably in her proficiency in what she now regards as an art.

Five o'clock generally closes recreation time, and from then till dinner most men get in two good hours of reading. Some lectures—very few—are given at that time. The evening is supposed to be the time for social enjoyment, the most common form in college being the "smoker," frequent theatres and concerts, an occasional small party—balls are not permitted—or a reception, furnish a sufficient variety of entertainments for the brief time when one must be bound by rules. You will see that five or six hours a day for work, including lectures, are provided by this program. The lecturers here tell me this is about the average time of students. Men studying for honors put part or all of the evening into work, especially if the examinations are approaching, for everything worth having here rests on the result of an examination. Even an