

# First Aid to Kittie James

BY ELIZABETH JORDAN

SPRING was approaching St. Catharine's with flowery footsteps. The overarching sky was blue, and daisies sprinkled the surrounding meadows,—or, anyhow, if they didn't, we knew they would soon, so I'll just say they did, because it sounds so well. Literary artists are allowed a great deal of poetic license in writing descriptions—even Sister Irmingarde admits that. Therefore when I am writing about facts I keep to them, but when I am writing about Nature I improve on it all I can.

The great convent school hummed with our glad young voices, and any one who came there to visit would have thought we were happy. But, alas! alas! we were not! We had a care—we girls—the carking kind of a care you read about in real stories. Students of life would have observed this, but not the thoughtless visiting parent, who never sees anything but her own child, anyhow, and just comes to St. Catharine's to hear Sister Irmingarde or Reverend Mother tell her how bright and studious her daughter is. We have all too many such guests, and Mabel Blossom and Maudie Joyce and Mabel Muriel Murphy and I are tired of them. We never allow *our* parents to come. It is not good for them, and it is not good for us, for they make us forget all we know, besides dropping things about how difficult it is to manage us at home. So they have to get along with letters and monthly reports, which are indeed all any reasonable parent should demand. And if they want to know how bright we are, we can tell them about it ourselves. Of course we try to be affectionate and dutiful and considerate, and sometimes we write to each other's parents when one of us does anything special. Maudie wrote a beautiful letter to mamma the first time Sister Irmingarde read one of my stories aloud to the class, and Mabel Blossom wrote to Mabel Muriel Murphy's father once

after Mabel Muriel had improved so much. Mr. Murphy wrote back. He said:

"DEAR MADAM,—Yours of the 16th inst. received and contents noted. My wife and I hope our daughter ain't improved too much. We think she was about right as she was.

Your obt. servant,

JOHN J. MURPHY."

Mabel was quite discouraged, for Mabel Muriel did not appreciate her noble act, either, and said something about people who rushed in where she had feared to tread. I will now explain that all these facts, interesting and vital though they are, have nothing to do with this story. I am not writing about parents who visit their children at school, though I could write some things that would surprise them if Sister Irmingarde would let me, for I have studied them all with keen, observant eyes when they little knew it. But I wished to utter a few thoughtful words concerning what happens when they come, and how the teachers have to ask girls all the easiest questions when their mothers are in the class-room, and this seemed the best place to do it. One of my literary mottoes is as follows: Whenever you think of a good thing put it right down, no matter where it comes. I will now take up the thread of this narrative.

We were unhappy. Under the smiles that curved our young lips lay heavy hearts. Spring was glad, but we were not. I will tell why:

*Examinations were coming.*

It is very queer about examinations. I suppose after one has graduated, and gone out into the big world, and listened to the trumpet-calls of fame, and sat on its pinnacle a while, one forgets about examinations. We know from our physiology that the sensibilities are dulled in age, anyhow. But when you are only

fourteen or so, as we girls are, it is different. Examinations are the most important things in the whole wide world, and we lie awake at night and think about them, and we know we are not going to pass, and a cold perspiration breaks out all over us. In the daytime we have headaches and our hearts act queer, and we forget all the things we thought we knew, and we make up our minds that if we do fail we will never, never, never go home to bring disgrace on our dear mothers and bow our fathers' white hairs with sorrow to the grave. Instead of going home we decide that we will stop eating and pine away and die, and then they'll grieve for us all their lives instead of sitting and looking at us with sorrowful reproach.

Some girls have all these symptoms every time, and others just have some of them. I had a few during this glad spring of which I write, but I did not feel entirely hopeless, for I was pretty sure of several things, rhetoric especially, and I thought perhaps I could cram on the others and get through. I had been devoting a great deal of time to literature and the study of life and human nature, and I suppose in one way Mabel and Maudie and Mabel Muriel and I had wasted many golden hours of our youth in our long talks about life and love and other vital subjects. Still, we all stood well in our classes, so we had moments of hope. But Kittie James had every symptom I have so graphically described. You remember Kittie James. It was her sister Josephine who married Mr. Morgan after Kittie arranged matters for them.

Well, as I said, Kittie had all the worst symptoms I have mentioned, and a lot more. She got so she could not eat, and she had to go to the Infirmary every morning for tonics, and they gave her raw eggs and things; but, alas! naught did any good. The beautiful girl was pining away before our anxious, loving eyes.

What I am going to say now may hurt Kittie's feelings if Sister Irmingarde reads this story aloud to the class, but the *Literary Artist* must write of *Life* as it is, when it isn't scenery, so I will say kindly but truthfully that Kittie was not a child of what Sister Edna would

call "exceptional mental powers." She was a dear thing, and blond and pretty and cunning, and you could cuddle her just like a little kitten if you wanted to, and you 'most always did,—but she was not bright. Mabel Blossom used to say, "Let's go to Kittie's room to-night and rest our intellects after the arduous strain of the day." And we would, and it always did rest them. You can see from this what kind of a girl Kittie was. When we talked about *Life* she went to sleep, and woke up in time for the "spread" we had before we went to bed. For growing girls need nourishment, and Kittie almost always had jam and pickles and things in her room. Sometimes Kittie would be studying when we got there, but she always looked so glad and relieved to see us that it was really touching. Then we would settle down cozily, and do our hair new ways, and talk and reveal the innermost recesses of our natures to each other the way we usually did when we were together. Sometimes Kittie would let us try on her new clothes. She always had lots, and of course that was interesting too, though we try to keep our mental plane above such worldly follies. When the bell rang and we had to leave, we used to feel sorry sometimes that we had taken up so much of Kittie's time, but she said it didn't matter, and I guess it didn't. She said she hardly ever knew what was in the book, anyhow, and that all the time she was trying to read she was thinking of Josephine and her mother and father and of George, and the fun at the Country Club, and wishing she was home. She got dreadfully homesick every little while, and especially before examinations. She said all she knew at school she learned in class, and that she could remember things when people talked about them and recited them, but not when she got them from printed pages. This was indeed strange, and most different from me, for books are my delight, and I can recite whole paragraphs where the hero crushes her to his breast—the heroine, I mean; not Kittie James. It isn't that I commit it to memory, either. It is just that it lingers in my mind. But poor Kittie could not remember anything, so she was worrying dreadfully about the ex-

aminations, and eating raw eggs, and writing to her mother that her constitution was wrecked and she'd better send for her to come home while there was yet hope. Mrs. James wasn't frightened, though, because Kittie always did that when examinations came round.

When Mabel Blossom and Maudie Joyce and Mabel Muriel and I saw how Kittie felt, we were very sorry we had taken up so much of her time, and we wanted to do something; but we couldn't think of anything that would help her much. Besides, we were beginning to "cram" ourselves, and that took most of our time—though this, as I pointed out to the others, was no excuse for deserting a dear companion in distress. Finally Mabel Blossom said we might do something, and couldn't we divide up the labor, and this gave me an idea, and I told Mabel to stop right off so I could express it. It is surprising how the ear rebels from frivolous chatter when the intellect is at work on a problem. That's what my brother Jack always tells me when he is thinking about the girl he is going to marry and I want to talk about things that are important. I asked Kittie which examinations she was most afraid of, and Kittie said she guessed algebra, history, rhetoric, physiology, Latin, and constitution would be the worst. Mabel Blossom giggled, because those were all there were; but I checked the frivolous girl with a reproving glance. Kittie was hurt, poor child. Then I lifted my voice and told them in measured tones what we would do.

I said we four—Mabel, Maudie, Mabel Muriel, and I—would each give Kittie private lessons in those branches. I said I would teach her rhetoric and Latin, and Mabel Muriel spoke right up and said she would take history (of course, because Sister Edna teaches that!), and Maudie said she would teach Kittie physiology and algebra, and Mabel Blossom said she would take constitution, and "it would have no secrets from Kittie by the time she got through." Mabel is always so sure of everything. Kittie was so grateful she cried, because she said it would be such fun and cheer her up so. Then we went into executive session and planned just how we would

do it. The gentle reader will forgive me if I say modestly that here again it was my brain, so artistic yet so strangely practical, that worked out all the details. The others agreed, of course, wisely knowing what was best for them; and then Kittie got out biscuits and jars of jam and chocolate and pickles and canned salmon and cheese and a chafing-dish, and we celebrated the rest of the evening, for of course it was not worth while to begin that night.

We had arranged that each of us should give Kittie one hour a day. That would make four hours a day for Kittie, besides her class work, and she began to look scared right off. But we encouraged her by telling her she was so far behind she couldn't succeed with any less, and we said if we were willing she ought to be. So Kittie sighed and looked grateful again.

Before I left I told Kittie I would give her rhetoric and Latin every morning from half after five to half after six, because I hadn't any other hour to spare, and it wouldn't hurt either of us to get up an hour earlier than usual. Mabel Blossom said she would give her the recreation hour immediately after the noon meal, and Maudie Joyce said she would come to her from eight to nine in the evening, and Mabel Muriel said she would coach her every night from nine to ten. And we all said we'd begin the next day, because there was only a month left before the examinations began and much must be accomplished. Kittie looked dreadfully worried, and not very grateful, but of course she couldn't say anything, and after she had eaten some of Maudie's Welsh rarebit she cheered up.

There is no bell at half after five in the morning, and I had no alarm-clock, so I had to set my mind on the hour, the way they do in books, but it didn't work very well. I woke at twelve and at a quarter of one and at half after two and at three and at four. Then I didn't dare to go to sleep again, for when we parted I had given my promise to Kittie to be there promptly at half after five, and she was quite grateful about it, because then she had just eaten the rarebit. I got up at five and took my bath and slipped on my kimono—the one that's so becom-

ing, Maudie says—and I stole along the halls to Kittie's room. If you have ever stolen along the wide halls of a great convent at half after five on a March morning, you will remember that it is not much fun. They are icy cold, and very dark, with little blinks of light very far apart; and they are so horribly, horribly still! I felt very noble, but kind of sorry I had promised to do it *every* morning.

When I got to Kittie's room she was awake, and quite cross. She said she had been awake all night waiting for me and that she didn't feel well. I thought the best thing to do was to divert her mind, so I opened the rhetoric right off and started in. I love rhetoric, so when I had really begun I enjoyed it, but, alas! it was different with Kittie. You can believe she learned her lesson, just the same. I told her the whole of the first three chapters, and then I made her tell it to me, and I asked questions, and kept at her till she knew it as well as I did, for I was very stern. And I did the same with the Latin. When the hour was up we were both tired out, but, as I remarked to Kittie, it was a worthy cause, and there was no doubt she knew more about rhetoric and Latin than she had ever known before. Kittie said that was true, and she added eagerly that she thought she knew 'most all there was now, and could learn the few remaining items by herself, but I checked her with a glance. A General's daughter never takes her hand from the plough after she has got it there. I said that to Mabel Blossom later in the day, and she said she guessed Kittie was going to be the plough, all right.

I could see that my example had inspired Mabel, for she hardly gave Kittie time to eat her lunch before she started her on the constitution. It was right after this, I think, that Kittie changed her mind about its being fun. When Mabel Muriel and Maudie saw how noble we had been, a look of grim determination settled on their brows, and they went at Kittie that night and fed her with history and algebra the way folks feed Strasburg geese to fatten their livers. I read about that once, and it is very interesting. You take very rich and fattening food, and a great deal of it—but

perhaps I'd better not tell that here, because it is not really part of the story, and I might get it mixed up with Kittie. I will only add that the people who feed the geese keep on feeding and feeding them, and that was indeed the way Maudie and Mabel Muriel and Mabel Blossom and I fed Kittie James with knowledge. We are all very conscientious girls, and we did it thoroughly. I went right to bed at eight o'clock every night, I was so tired, and I did not sleep very well, for of course I remembered I would have to be up by five the next morning. It was a troubled slumber, and I kept thinking it was five long before it was. When I got to Kittie's room the second morning at half after five, she gave me one look and turned her face to the wall and sobbed. She said it was so sweet of me to come, and she had kind of thought perhaps I wouldn't. She little knew about me and the plough.

Kittie was not a heroine. Mabel Blossom says she was the innocent victim, but I thought it sounded better to call her *The Worthy Cause*, so we did. The *Worthy Cause* made it pretty hard for us sometimes. She acted queer and almost ungrateful, and she telegraphed for her family to send for her, but they didn't; and she even got sick and went to the Infirmary for two days. But as soon as she came out we each gave her an extra half-hour—I went to her at five in the morning, and the others stayed later at night—till the lost time was made up. Kittie didn't go to the Infirmary again after that, for she saw clearly that she had no time to be ill, as we pointed out to her. She really did get thin and pale, though, and we were quite worried over her; but of course we remembered it was all for her good, which she kept forgetting, so we remained firm. Once she locked her door when Maudie and Mabel Muriel came, but they stayed till twelve the next night and made that up, too—the brave, dauntless souls!

The Sisters did not know anything about all this, and they kept wondering what was the matter with Kittie. They thought, I guess, that her disposition was being warped some way, but it was only that she was imbibing knowledge. Finally Kittie telegraphed to her sister Josephine, and Josephine came right off



Half-tone plate engraved by G. F. Smith

WE FED KITTIE JAMES WITH KNOWLEDGE



with her husband, Mr. Morgan, to see what was the matter. Kittie told them all about it, and afterwards Maudie Joyce and Mabel Blossom told them all about it, too, and for some strange reason they thought it was funny, and George Morgan laughed till his sides ached. Josephine did too, but not so much, and she kept saying, "The poor child!" But George advised Kittie very earnestly to drink all she could at the fountain of learning, and take it up as fast as it came out, because if she didn't it might overflow and drown her. Kittie did not know what he meant, and neither did we—grown men and women say such silly things sometimes,—but it seemed to mean that she was to go right on with our lessons, because they didn't take her home and nothing happened. They did send her a lovely box, though, with a new silk waist in it and a whole cold turkey and a big cake, and lots of pickles and things; but it was not very comforting to Kittie, because she didn't have time to eat it. So we ate most of it for her, and the things were very good. Mabel Blossom wrote to George and told him they were and how we had enjoyed them, and she told him also of the gratifying progress Kittie was making in her studies. She knew that would please him.

It was true, too. I never saw any one improve the way Kittie James did. Of course we must remember that she had the benefit of special and kind of expert instruction, because each of us was teaching her the thing we liked best, and we all enjoyed doing it. We had watched the methods of our teachers, and we improved them wherever we could. Sister Irmingarde used to let us talk about other things in the rhetoric class, but I kept Kittie strictly to the book, for I was determined she should pass that examination. You see, it had got to be a vital matter with us. Each girl wanted Kittie to pass in *her* branch, anyhow—the one she was teaching her,—and I, for one, felt it would be a disgrace to me if Kittie failed in rhetoric and Latin. So Kittie was kept right at the kind of life President Roosevelt says so much about, the strenuous one, and when she complained we reminded her how he praised such living. By and by Kittie got so she stopped crying and complain-

ing, and just took her knowledge the way you take medicine—because you have to. But long before that she had spoiled whole chapters of my rhetoric, and the cover too, by crying on them; so I understood what Mabel Blossom meant when she said one day that constitution used to be the dryest study at St. Catharine's, and had now become the wettest.

Thus the weary month passed by, and we hadn't a single good time in it. I was so tired every night that I continued to go to bed at eight o'clock, and Maudie and Mabel and Mabel Muriel slept as long as they dared in the morning because of the late hours they had to keep. Finally examination came.

It was a written examination, and the first subject was rhetoric. We had a morning on that, from nine to twelve, and we were given a list of ten questions to answer, and they covered the whole course we had taken. Kittie James sat just across from me, and, oh, how can I, young and inexperienced as I am, find words to tell the joy and pride that filled my heart when I saw the child writing away for dear life, with a smile of happiness on her sweet lips! I knew she knew every one of the answers, for I did myself, and we had gone over them again and again together. We both finished our papers at eleven o'clock, an hour before the others did, so we handed them in and were excused and went out in the hall and hugged each other hard, and Kittie was real grateful again—the first time she had been for weeks. Then we strolled about the grounds with our arms around each other, and we went all over the questions and our answers (you can, of course, after the papers have been handed in), and we saw that we were all right and sure to pass, so we sang and danced in our girlish joy. When the other girls came out they looked worried, and went right off to study history, which we were to have in the afternoon. They didn't say much to Kittie and me, but we did not mind. We were too happy.

At one o'clock we were in our seats again for the examination in history, and each of us got a slip with ten questions written out. I will admit at once, as I strive to be true to life, that those questions worried me dreadfully. They



THERE WERE THREE QUESTIONS I DIDN'T EVEN TRY TO ANSWER

sounded natural, and I knew I had known the answers once, but somehow I couldn't remember them now, and I felt all mixed up. So I chewed my penholder and thought and thought. Kittie James wrote as fast as she could, and every now and then she looked over at me and nodded and smiled the way she did in the morning, but I did not smile back. I was too busy. So at last she caught Mabel Muriel's eye, and Mabel Muriel smiled and nodded and wrote fast the way Kittie was doing; and at three they had both finished, and they handed in their papers and got excused and went out under the trees. I could see them through a window near me, and they were laughing and hugging each other. It made me feel almost bitter to realize how thoughtless some girls are when their dear companions are in trouble, but let us hope the careless children did not know.

The next morning we had constitution, and that was just as bad. I was not sure of a single answer, and I will admit right now that it did me good to see Mabel Muriel Murphy and Maudie Joyce chewing their penholders the way I was doing. They looked worried to death. But Kittie was writing away so hard you could have heard her pen if you were in the hall, and so was Mabel Blossom. Mabel's whole face shone, the way it does when she is interested, and all her teeth showed—both rows,—and she beamed on Kittie James, and their pens scratched away together like a duet. They finished at eleven, and were excused, and went out into the grounds and sat under a tree where we could all see them, and they told stories and laughed, and Kittie held Mabel's hand every minute. Somehow all I could think of was about how sharper than a serpent's tooth an ungrateful child is. I could not remember much of the constitution, but of course I did my best.

In the afternoon we had algebra, and I seemed to be rusty on that, too. You see, algebra is a thing you can't talk about in a general way in answer to questions, and that made it harder. I got bluer and bluer and bluer, and it was five o'clock when I handed in my paper and staggered from the room. Sister Irmingarde let me have the extra hour, and she let Mabel Blossom have it, and Mabel Muriel Murphy, too. Kittie

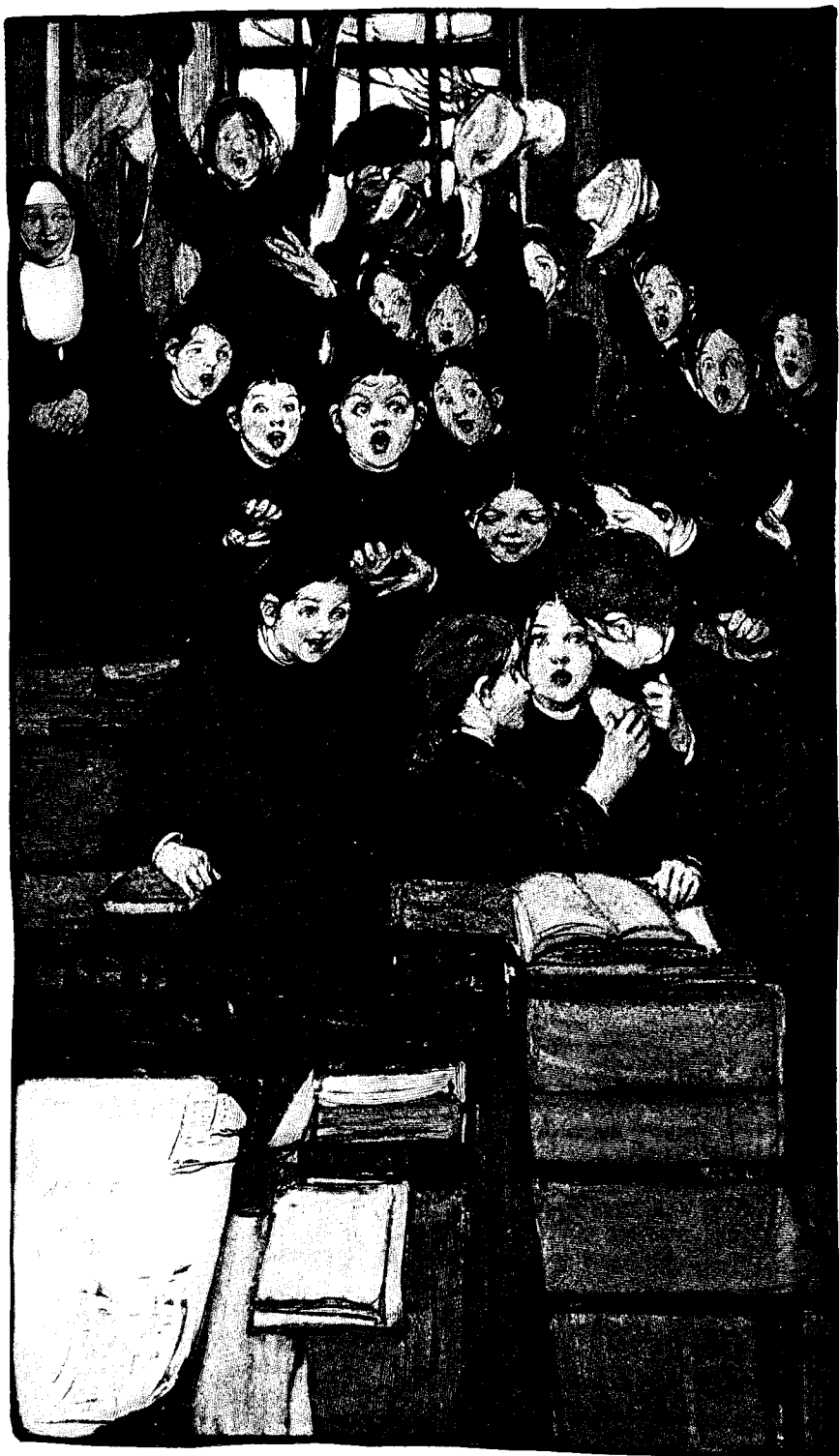
was through at four, and so was Maudie Joyce. They went off together, and Kittie patted my back and left three chocolate creams on my desk, but they did not help much. What are chocolate creams when the heart is breaking and disgrace stares one in the face!

That night I locked myself in my room and I studied and studied the subjects that were to come the next day. I was afraid the girls might come, but they did not. Kittie and Maudie Joyce were making a Welsh rabbit, and the other girls were studying just as I was. They told me so afterwards.

The next morning I cheered up a good deal, for the examination was in Latin, and as soon as I read the questions I saw I was all right. So then I remembered to sit properly in my seat and keep my features smoothed out, which I had forgotten about for two days, and by eleven my paper was finished. Kittie's was, too, so we went out together, and I realized that she was sweet and good at heart, though sometimes a thoughtless child. Just as I closed the door I looked back and saw all too plainly that despair had claimed for its very own my dear friends Mabel Blossom, Maudie Joyce, and Mabel Muriel Murphy. It was sad to see them suffer, so Kittie and I sat out on the rustic seat where they could see us and be cheered up by the sight of our happiness. And we laughed a great deal; for Kittie is very entertaining at times, and this was one of them.

In the afternoon we had physiology, and I got nervous again. It looked as if Sister Irmingarde had taken trouble to pick out questions we never heard of. I was pretty sure of two or three, and I guessed at several more, but there were three I didn't even try to answer. I chewed my penholder worse than ever, till there wasn't much left of it. By and by Sister Irmingarde came to my seat and handed me a fresh one. She smiled as she did it, in the sweetest way, and her eyes showed that she was sorry for me. A great big lump came into my throat, and at that very minute Maudie Joyce and Kittie James handed in their papers, and left the room, and sat on that old bench where we could see them. I took out my handkerchief and wiped my eyes. I couldn't help it. Then I remembered





THERE WAS AN UPROAR OF CHEERS AND APPLAUSE

that a General's daughter must be brave, and that moral courage is as commendable as physical, because papa says so, and I straightened up and wrote what I knew, which was not much, I can tell you. That ended the examination and I was glad, for however it was going to turn out, it was a comfort to have it over.

That evening Mabel Blossom and Mabel Muriel and Maudie all came to see me, but we didn't say much about the examination. Mabel's eyes showed that she had been crying, and Mabel Muriel looked pale as death. Maudie was very silent, but more queenly than ever. She said she had almost decided to go home at once, as she had a kind of feeling that her dear mother needed her. Mabel Muriel broke out suddenly and said she had disgraced Sister Edna, but she did not explain her enigmatic remark. Finally Mabel Blossom began to cry and ran from the room, and pretty soon the others went, too, and I was left alone with my sad, sad thoughts.

I will pass over the next few days. They haven't anything to do with this story. But the Monday after the examination Sister Irmingarde addressed the class. She said the examination had been one of surprises, and the results in some cases "were unprecedented in the history of St. Catharine's." She said the highest class average had been won by a student whose standing hitherto had been very low, and other students from whom much had been expected had failed ignominiously. She said she would read the standings first and add a few words of comment. Then she read them.

"The first and best," she said, "is Miss Katharine James, whose record, in view of her past work, is most remarkable and highly gratifying to us all. On a scale of 100, Miss James secured 98 in rhetoric, 97 in Latin, 97 in history, 96 in constitution, 96 in physiology, and 92 in algebra—giving her a general average, in the six studies, of 96 per cent. This average has never before been equalled at St. Catharine's."

Well, before I knew it I jumped to my feet and began to cheer, for I forgot all about my examination for a minute, and all I thought of was how well Kittie had done. At the same instant Maudie Joyce and Mabel Blossom and Mabel Muriel

jumped up, too, and all the other girls joined in, and every girl was on her feet, and there was an uproar of cheers and applause. For a minute Kittie looked scared to death. Then she put her head down on her desk and cried—hard. Sister Irmingarde let us yell for a moment, and she waited with that lovely smile of hers. Then she lifted her hand, and a hush fell right off and we sat down. I tell you we mind her!

"The rest," she said, "is not so pleasant, and I fear it will disappoint some of you."

Then, in a very matter-of-fact voice, just as if it was not a tragedy at all, she read out our standings—Maudie's, Mabel Blossom's, Mabel Muriel's, and mine; and this, alas! alas! alas! is what they were:

Miss Maude Joyce:

Rhetoric	52
History	51
Latin	56
Constitution	56
Algebra	98
Physiology	95
General average, 68 per cent.	

Miss May Iverson:

Rhetoric	98
Latin	94
History	52
Constitution	50
Algebra	58
Physiology	53
General average, 67½ per cent.	

Miss Mabel Blossom:

Constitution	99
History	62
Latin	63
Algebra	59
Physiology	61
Rhetoric	60
General average, 67 1-3 per cent.	

Miss Mabel Muriel Murphy:

History	98
Constitution	56
Latin	54
Algebra	65
Physiology	61
Rhetoric	60
General average, 65 2-3 per cent.	

The lowest general average, of course, on which you can pass the examination is 70 per cent. None of us had reached it. None of us had passed!

You could have heard a clothes-pin drop. I tried to keep my shoulders straight and my head up while I was listening to my standing, but it was hard

work, and I did not dare to look at my dear, dear friends. But I could hear Kittie James sobbing all the time. Sister Irmingarde waited a moment, and then she spoke again.

"These four students, among our best in the past, as you all know, have all failed—two in four and two in five studies out of six. However"—and she paused for a very, very long time, I thought,—“in view of circumstances which have been brought to our attention, we have decided to give these students another opportunity to pass in these branches, if the class approves.”

Then she went on to explain how we had helped Kittie James, and she said, with her dear little smile, “You will admit that they did it thoroughly”; and she added that “probably unconsciously” we had failed to prepare for our own examination. She pointed out that each of us had passed “triumphantly” in the study in which we had coached Kittie, and Maudie and I passed in two branches because we had coached her in two. She said if the class as a whole felt that it would be just to give us a supplementary examination, say in six weeks, this would

be done. Then the girls cheered more than ever, and the resolution was put and carried by a rising vote. I felt a big lump in my throat, worse than during the examination, and I guess the others did, too.

Kittie felt dreadfully, poor dear. She was still crying when she stood up with the rest. Sister Irmingarde told us afterward that Kittie had told her all about us the night before, when Sister congratulated her on her splendid record and wondered why we had failed.

Well, we all felt better right away. The girls were lovely to us, and so were the Sisters, though they seemed to be tremendously amused about something for days and days. We knew we could pass in six weeks if we studied, and I will mention right here that we did study, too, and we passed in the eighties, all of us.

That night we had a spread and a beautiful time to celebrate Kittie's triumph, but poor Kittie was not in it. She was in the Infirmary. The doctor said it was “nervous exhaustion, due to the unaccustomed and long-continued mental strain.”

## Snap-shot

BY AUSTIN DOBSON

A SWAN and cygnets, nothing more.  
Background of silver, reedy shore,  
Dim shapes of rounded trees, the high  
Effulgence of a summer sky.

Only a snap-shot. Just a flash,  
And it was fixed,—the mimic wash,  
The parent bird on-oaring slow,  
Her fussy little fleet in tow,  
The all-pervading sultry haze,  
The white lights on the waterways,—  
A scene that never was before,  
A scene that will be—nevermore!

Alas! for us. We look and wait,  
And labor but to imitate;  
In vain for new effects we seek . . .  
Earth's briefest moment is unique!