

had recourse to the companionship of books; for in books only could she find thoughts and imaginations of a kindred character.

It is rarely that the female mind educates itself. The genius of the sex is rather fine than robust; it partakes rather of the delicacy of the myrtle than the strength of the oak; and care and culture seem essential to its full development. Who ever heard of a female Burns or Bloomfield? And yet there have been instances, though rare, of women working their way from the lower levels of intellect to well-nigh the highest, — not wholly unassisted, 'tis true; the age must be a cultivated one, and there must be opportunities of observation; but, if not wholly unassisted, with helps so slender, that the second order of masculine minds would find them wholly inefficient. There is a quickness of perception and facility of adaptation in the better class of female minds — an ability of catching the tone of whatever is good from the sounding of a single note, if I may so express myself — which we almost never meet with in the mind of man. Lillias was a favorable specimen of the better and more intellectual order of women; but she was yet very young, and the process of self-cultivation carrying on in her mind was still incomplete; and Thomson found that the charm of her society arose scarcely more from her partial knowledge than from her partial ignorance. The following night saw him seated by her side in the farm-house of Meikle Farness; and scarcely a week passed during the winter in which he did not spend at least one evening in her company.

Who is it that has not experienced the charm of female conversation, — that poetry of feeling which develops all of tenderness and all of imagination that lies hidden in our