

latch-key, for "Polly," as they called her, was only too glad of a real excuse to sit up late and let them in. "Many a time," says her nephew, "has she let me in, after the play or a party, waiting to hear whom I had seen and what I had enjoyed, and anxious to provide me with a midnight repast."

Her sense of justice was supreme; not four days before her death, when grief and weakness might well have excused her, she summoned her failing energies, to point out the unjust manner in which one servant was criticising another. Her disposition was remarkably even. Never for a moment did she drop the reins of her spirit. If she condemned, it was without impatience. Her liberality and hospitality were unlimited; the number of poor people whom she befriended through many years, with a limited income, was amazing; but this trait she shared in common with others of the family.

Had she been born in affluence, untrammelled by the constant demand of routine, her taste and ability could not have failed to distinguish her.

How did these sisters come to be the superior women that they were? Their mother died when Mary was only eleven, and Mr. Otis married a second time when she was fourteen. The second wife had her admirable traits, but there was little in her which could have contributed to the development of such characters. Many of us knew her well, for she lived until 1880 in the cloistered peace of No. 34. Perhaps it was due to the Thaxter and Otis families in Scituate that the whole family were trained so wisely. The girls must have come much under the influence of Mary Thaxter, their father's mother, who did not die till 1840, when she was ninety