

**IN OUR
CONVENT DAYS**

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In our convent days by Agnes Repplier

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BY

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To "Elizabeth" Robins Pennell

"Thou know'st that we two went to school
together."

JULIUS CÆSAR

Introduction

IT has been many years since I went to school. Everything has changed in the Convent that I loved, and I am asked to believe that every change is for the better. I do not believe this at all. I am unmoved by the sight of steam registers and electric lights. I look with disfavour upon luxuries which would have seemed to us like the opulence of Aladdin's palace. I cannot wax enthusiastic over the intrusion of Mr. Matthew Arnold and Mr. Pater upon the library shelves, where Chambers' Miscellany used to be *our* nearest approach to the intellectual. The old order changes, and that unlovely word, modernity, is heard within the tranquil convent walls. Even the iron hand of discipline has been relaxed;

Introduction

for the long line of girls whom I now watch filing sedately in and out of the chapel have been taught to rule themselves, to use their wider liberty with discretion. I wonder how they like it. I wonder if liberty, coupled with discretion, is worth having when one is eleven years old. I wonder if it be the part of wisdom to be wise so soon.

The friends whom I loved are scattered far and wide. When Tony died, she took with her the sound of laughter into the silent land, and all things have seemed more sober since she left. To those who live, these pages will, I hope, bring back the sentiment of our early days. We made one another's world then, — a world full of adventures, and imaginings, and sweet absurdities that no one of us would now wish less absurd. Our successors to-day know more than we knew (they could not well know less), they