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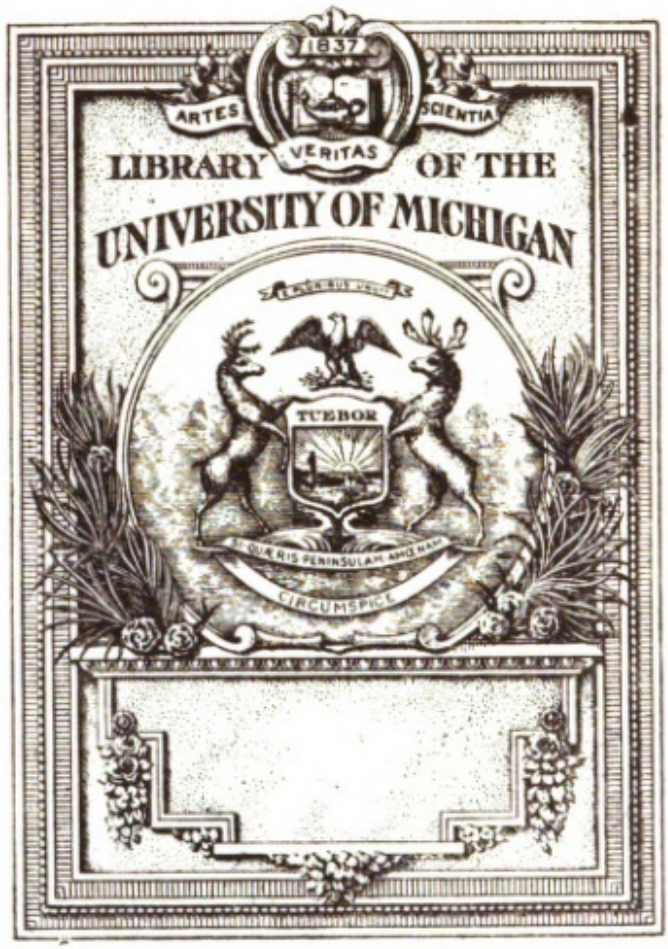

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view of him after forty odd years of partnership which, unfortunately, had not been blessed by the advent of offspring to lend it variety. As thin as he was fat, as quick-witted as he was slow, as brief and dry of speech as he was garrulous, Lady Gresham might have been exasperated by him if she had not long ago decided to take him as a joke, in which capacity he was doubtless adapted for the solace of such persons as do not mind having a joke all to themselves. By neighbouring ladies and their families the gaunt, grim-visaged old woman, who was to be seen, no matter what the weather was, tramping about in a short skirt and shooting-boots, with a thick stick in her hand, was considered somewhat awe-inspiring; yet of her also it was commonly said that she was not a bad old sort in her way.

Her niece Dorothy had always got on capitally with her; and this was lucky, because Miss Dorothy Rowe, who was an only child and a spoilt one, would never have consented to spend a whole winter at Saltwood if she had not been sure of getting on well with its inmates. Its inmates, for their part, were glad enough that the absence of her parents on the Nile—an expedition for which her sporting proclivities disinclined her—had enabled them to offer her a few months' hospitality. Spoilt she might be, but hers was an enlivening presence in a house where liveliness was something of a rarity, and she had the further merit—a merit to which the old are perhaps as alive as the young—of being exceedingly good to look upon. Her

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