

themselves of their opportunities to play with venomous serpents and such like, and during the middle of the day pick up sunstroke, during mornings and evenings and all night long get tormented by mosquitoes, well, the anxiety is trebled. I was, every Sunday while at a mission station on the Ojowl, entrusted with two children, so that their mother might have the great pleasure of going and hearing her husband preach at the little church at the foot of the hill, and those children taught me to be sympathetic with missionary mothers. Of course they treated me worse than they would their mother, and refused to behave unless I crawled round the room in the character of a leopard, or did some such unsuitable and warm thing during the whole of church time, but they were good teachers for all that.

Then take the servant question; of course I am speaking of mission stations in a very wild and dangerous bit of country, because I know those sort of mission stations best, and of course, wild animals are highly interesting to me as an ethnologist, but from the housewife point of view they are unsatisfactory, though all well intentioned, as a rule. I well remember dozens of incidents connected with the housekeeping of a very great friend of mine, an American lady, living in the Beneto region, that I will not detain you with, but in the face of all catastrophies she used to calmly say, "Oh! those aboriginal ones;" she only used to say it with varying tones of expression that ran from resignation to resentment.

Now all the time, through all her personal worries, the missionary's wife works hard, and does good sound mission work among the women and children of the people she lives among; the value of this class of work is great. You are often told that women do all the hard work and are the slaves in Africa; this I do not regard as the true statement of affairs at all; they are in the African life, more an equivalent body to the working classes in our own, and I need not say, therefore, the class most worthy of assistance and good work, and helpful sympathy; this they have, thanks to the missionary's wife. I will detain you no longer. I need not say a word on the merits of the Society under whose auspices this meeting is, nor of the Nurses Missionary Association. If any of you want to say anything against me I recommend you to say that even I could find nothing to criticise in them.

[We are indebted to the courtesy of the Editor of *Woman* for the portrait of Miss Kingsley].

#### "NOBODY AXED YOU."

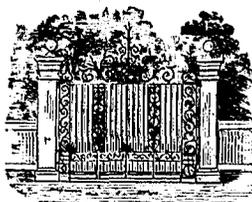
MR. SPENCER, of New Oxford Street, has in his possession an amusing letter of R. L. Stevenson's to a friend, in which the following passage occurs:—"You will probably know how nicely women's rights were received by some of my fellow-students the other day. The female medicals were hooted, hissed, and jostled till the police interfered. My views are very neutral. I quite believe that Miss——and the rest of our fellow studentesses are the first of a noble army, pioneers and Columbases, and all that sort of thing. But at the same time Miss——is playing for the esteem of posterity. But I won't marry either her or her fellows; let posterity marry them. If posterity gets hold of this letter I shall probably get burnt in effigy by some Royal Female College of Surgeons of the future."

"Nobody axed you, Sir, she said."

## Outside the Gates.

### SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

#### A BEAUTY SPECIALIST.



AN old pupil lately came to me, making a most tempting offer.

"Matron," she said, "I have taken up massage" (I raised one eyebrow). "Oh! not Piccadilly massage—or anything of that sort—but

I am now a 'Beauty Specialist,' a youth restorer; a sort of balm of Gilead in the tents of Mayfair. I assure you I am a most accomplished practitioner, if you will only let me try my skill on your forehead, you won't know yourself."

"Ah! you will be a magician indeed if you can obliterate those lines," I replied, looking past her into a mirror beyond; "its very bad taste no doubt, but I like those lines; they keep my memory green, they stand for much that is precious; each line tells its own little history, what emotion joy, or grief stamped it there? I detest a seamless middle-aged face; it reminds me of Madame Tussauds, and a wax image makes me sick."

"What a comfortable frame of mind," my old pupil laughed, "but surely Matron you have some vanity?"

"Vanity is ubiquitous, only mine does not take the form of eradicating wrinkles," I answered. "Well, I assure you," she continued, "my treatment is quite harmless, and most effectual; and I also apply electrolysis. If you only knew, my clientèle is largely—of course, not quite—composed of really good women, philanthropists, and all that sort of person, and one Bishop's lady told me the other day I was quite a God-send. She is middle-aged; a horrid little moustache began to sprout, and the Bishop—well, he didn't think it *womanly*—so directed her to get rid of it at once, and, poor woman, she suffered self-inflicted tortures with the tweezers. But since I have treated her, she's a new woman.

"The Bishop won't approve of that, surely," I interposed, laughing.

"Ah, well, you may laugh, but wrinkles and grey hair and long teeth, and double chins, are very tragic, in the smart world, and I've seen real heroism amongst women—fighting the grim death of their charms. People accuse women of fashion of self-indulgence. It is not true; there is no physical discomfort they will not endure, *pour être belle*, and the horror of physical decay, is a veritable martyrdom, and yet they grin and bear it.

"Yes," said I, "I like that grin, it means pluck; it inspires one with the hope that in the future the force which generates it may be diverted from its ignoble course, and sweep women on the crest of

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)