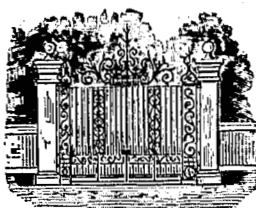


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



THE Queen has sent a message to the people of Kimberley, expressing her deep sympathy with them in the trials of the siege and her appreciation of the valuable services they rendered to the Empire.

The Liberal Union at Amsterdam has adopted a resolution in favour of electoral reforms, which will pave the way to universal suffrage for women as for men.

French women have sent out invitations for an International Congress of Women from June the 18th to 23rd, which, no doubt, will be a very delightful gathering. The International Council of Women will hold its Annual Executive Meeting during the same time. It has several items of great interest to discuss. It seems almost impossible that a year has flown by since the delightful gathering of women of all nations in London last year.

Woman is coming to the front no less triumphantly in German fiction than in that of England or of the United States. The proprietors of a popular German illustrated weekly, offered three prizes for the best three "novelettes." The prize-jury, which included such eminent literary experts as Dr. Fulda, Richard Voss, and Baron Von Ompteda, laboriously examined the merits of no fewer than 990 competitive stories. All the three first prizes were unanimously allotted to women.

We record with the deepest regret the death of Miss Mary Kingsley, which has been notified by cable from South Africa. The warm interest taken by Miss Kingsley in nursing matters, more especially in nursing on the West Coast of Africa, has brought her into touch with many nurses who will hear of her unexpected death with a sense of personal loss. Few women have been endowed with greater physical bravery than was Miss Kingsley, still fewer, perhaps, have the keen sense of humour which she possessed. The world is the poorer for her loss, and, indeed, we can ill afford to spare her. It is lamentable how inexorably Africa has ever demanded a tribute of our bravest and best whom she grips with unerring instinct. It has been widely said that Miss Kingsley went to South Africa as a nurse, but she possessed far too much common sense, and was much too real, to pose as what she was not. Shortly before she left for the Cape we had the pleasure of entertaining her to tea, and she then spoke in strong terms of the annoyance this rumour had caused her, and asked us to contradict it. It was so difficult, she said, to catch up with a lie when once it had got the start of you. What she did hope to do was some organizing work in connection with the distribution of stores, a work which she had reason to believe was needed. It seems the irony of fate that having safely traversed cannibal countries on foot, and having come out of the terrors of the West Coast without a touch of African fever, she should succumb in the comparatively healthy climate of the South.

A Book of the Week.

THE STORY OF BADEN-POWELL: "THE WOLF THAT NEVER SLEEPS."*

In view of the ecstasy of relief that has been surging through our hearts for the last week or two, let us turn away from fiction for the moment to read this little monograph.

Mr. Harold Begbie apologizes very charmingly in his preface for his error of taste in writing a laudatory sketch of one yet living. Mr. Begbie is right: the taste of such a proceeding is more than questionable, and it needs apology. Briefly, his apology consists in the contention that the story he has to tell will do good to the reader which will far outweigh any offence the subject of it may feel at hearing himself so appraised.

We are inclined to think that the author justifies his contention. The man's life has been a wonderful one. So much accomplished, so much wrought, so quietly, so merrily going about his country's work or his own with the same good-humoured industry, the same far-reaching grasp of detail,—B.P., soldier, sailor, hunter, scout, artist, musician, actor, lecturer, goal-keeper—is a hero on whom the mother nation may well fix eyes of tender pride. In reading this book, but conspicuously in reading the latter part, which treats of the siege of Mafeking, one is irresistibly reminded of some lines of Browning:—

A people is but the effort of the many
To rise to the completer life of one;
And they who live as models for the mass
Are, singly, of more value than they all.

In his beleaguered village—for Mafeking is hardly more—Baden-Powell indomitably through the weary days lived as a model to the helpless masses who trusted him. To his knightly and most perfect rendering of his duty the whole Empire has borne enthusiastic witness. What was the training that enabled this leader of men to bear the strain put upon him?

This is the question that Mr. Begbie asks and answers. It should be mentioned that the book is primarily intended for the schoolboy, and in a charmingly whimsical preface, is dedicated to "Smith Major." But there are others besides schoolboys who will read with the keenest interest all that concerns the making of their hero.

Mr. Begbie is so charming, when opening his case, that he must be allowed to speak for himself:—

"You will be the first to grant me, honoured sir, that, after earnest purpose, that is to say, "keenness," there is no quality of the mind so essential to the even-balance as humour. The schoolmaster without this humanizing virtue never yet won your love and admiration, and to miss your affection and loyalty is to lose one of life's chiefest delights. . . . This erudite reflection is to prepare you for the introduction of my hero, Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell. I introduce him to you as a hero and as a humorist. To me he appears the ideal English schoolboy and the ideal British officer, but if I had blurted this out at the beginning of my story you might perhaps have flung the book into an ink-stained corner, thinking you were in for a dull lecture. It is the misfortune of goodness to be generally treated with superstitious awe. . . . So I begin by assuring you that if there ever was

* By Harold Begbie. Grant Richards.

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