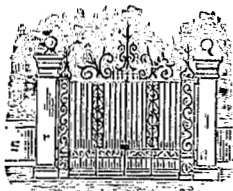


Outside the Gates.**A Book of the Week.****WOMEN.**

WOMAN's suffrage is very much to the fore in the Australian Colonies just now, and it is interesting to note that the two principle points in the speech delivered by Sir J. Madden, were Woman's Suffrage and Old Age Pensions, on the day Sir G. Turner moved a vote of want of confidence in the Government in the Victorian Parliament, which was carried by 51 to 42. It is also interesting to note that the new Victorian Ministry is again practically complete, they evidently do things more expeditiously in those go ahead lands than we do at home.

The Premier of New South Wales intends to proceed with the Woman's Suffrage Bill this week; he hopes to prorogue Parliament on the 29th, and we hope that the new electorate will include the women as well as the men of the Colony. The obsolete basis of representation in this country is not difficult to understand; our "governing classes" male, and especially female, are educationally half a century behind the times. But in an up-to-date country where the curse of feudalism has never taken root, it is difficult to imagine legislators supporting a system which unjustly disqualifies a woman who pays taxes from recording her vote. The whole thing is so futile.

On Tuesday last the French Senate proved itself worthy of the confidence of the great Republic. A spirited discussion took place as to whether women should be allowed to plead in the French Courts. M. Goujon vehemently opposed the bill, which he described as simply an attempt to make the Senate do what the English Parliament years ago recognised to be impossible. Women, he continued, were not fit for the struggles and disappointments of a barrister's profession. He also opined that by permitting women to undertake men's functions mankind would not attain that intended summum bonum, the equality of the sexes, but only a dull identity, and a subversion of nature by confounding woman's distinctions. He demanded that the Court of Appeal should be consulted, for without the opinion of that great body the Senate could not decide the law, which was *lèse-majesté* against womanhood. The House, however, was convinced, and the Special Pleading Bill was adopted by 172 votes against 34. This is a stupendous victory for Mlle. Jeanne Chauvin, who has fought most gallantly to effect this reform in France, and for whom we may now predict a most brilliant career at the French Bar.

Mrs. K. H. R. Stuart has been appointed by the Guild of Loyal Women in South Africa as a deputation to this country to enlist the sympathy and support of the British people towards the erection and maintenance of the graves of all the men who have fallen during the South African campaign.

"THE SOFT SIDE."*

Mr. Henry James is so thorough an artist that every bit of his work is worth careful study; I have never read a thing of his which sounded as though it had been written in a hurry. The only thing that mars his work is his inveterate habit of writing stories about American people and pretending that they are English. It is a very curious thing, the essential foreignness of Mr. James's clever studies. They are all so real, his people, and yet they are never, never English. What is the subtle line which is drawn between Mr. James and the English nation, so that, live among us, write of us, as he may, he can never get into our minds to the extent of taking our point of view? He is always showing us, brilliantly and elaborately, how the English look from his point of view; he is never for one moment English himself. There is one type of young man, who appears very often in different guises in his books,—in the "Spoils of Poynton," and in at least one of the tales in this collection,—a young man whom Mr. James evidently believes to be a type. I do not believe you could find a solitary English reader who would see that he was typical; he may be, as Mr. James sees him, but until we can denationalize ourselves, we shall not know it.

All the tales in the present volume are interesting, in the subdued esoteric way in which Mr. James never fails to interest; but the gem of the collection is the weird ghost story called "The real right thing."

Ashten Doyne, a celebrated author, has died. His marital relations have not been happy, his death fills his widow with a perfect passion of remorse. She will offer all the atonement she possibly can, by taking every care that his life shall be given to the world in such a way as to shield him from all blame, and to reveal to all the man as he was. She has a superstitious eagerness to do this forthwith, all that she can do now for the man she had never valued in life as he deserved. The duty of preparing the materials for this memorial is entrusted to a young author named George Withernmore, an enthusiastic admirer of the dead man; and the work is to be performed in Ashten Doyne's own study. From the very first day, the young man has a curiously strong sensation that Doyne is very much with him in spirit, and at first the idea is inspiring; he must be there to help. Only Mr. James could successfully show by almost impalpable hints, by the most delicate stages of progression, that the presence of the dead is with the object of hindering, not helping the work in hand. Gradually the influence spreads itself and deepens over the widow and over the young writer.

What they are doing is not to be permitted; and the thing is so strong that finally they are obliged to accept defeat. "It means," says the poor wife, "that he won't take anything from me." And they give up. No words can convey at all the sense of creeping, overmastering horror which the master hand has bestowed upon this curious theme.

"Paste" is a very clever but unpleasant story, showing the depths of meanness to which a perfectly respectable young man may descend.

"Maud Evelyn" is also very clever, and is hardly a parody upon much of the spiritualism of the day.

* By Henry James. (Methuen.)

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