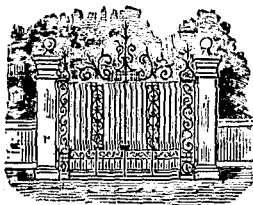


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



The annual general meeting of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies will be held on May 22nd. The report of the committee states that it "can point to unmistakable signs of vitality in the country, whenever occasion arises to draw them forth in any practical manner."

The Provisional Committee for Rural Housing and Sanitation appointed by the meeting convened by the National Union of Women Workers at Sion College last October have come to the conclusion that the time has arrived for the formation of a definitely organised Association. They have, therefore, called a meeting of those who previously attended, to be held in the Portal Room, at Sion College, on Friday, June 6th, at 3 p.m., when they will give a full report of their proceedings, and, with the consent of the meeting, will proceed to the formation of a Council, the appointment of officers, and the formulation of a scheme for future work.

No movement is more necessary than this which aims at raising the standard of the homes of the poor. With the increased cost of living it becomes more and more difficult for them to obtain adequate accommodation, but if we are to have a decent and self-respecting nation, it must be decently housed. A foul nest makes a foul bird, and there is no more important question than this of the adequate housing of the poor.

The date of the Women Writer's Dinner is fixed for June 9th, with Mrs W. K. Clifford in the chair. The Duchess of Sutherland is a new member on the Dinner Committee.

A residential club, which is comfortably, and even sumptuously furnished has been opened on a business basis for women workers in Stanley Gardens under the name of the Twentieth Century Club. There are 48 bedrooms for which the members pay at the rate of half a guinea a week besides dining, reading, writing and drawing rooms.

The *Daily Mail's* special correspondent at Het Loo says that among the journalists who await the bulletins as to Queen Wilhelmina's condition at the Palace lodge is a pretty little Dutch girl of thirteen, who is acting for a Rotterdam paper. The damsel outstrips every other journalistic messenger in the rush to the telegraph office, and she is always given the place of honour at the sending-off desk.

In the peasant rising in Poltava a most determined resistance has been offered by the rioters among whom are many women armed with reaping hooks, hay forks, and sharpened staves. When the battalion of infantry summoned to disperse the peasants were ordered to fire they refused saying they could not shoot women and girls.

A Book of the Week.

THE STORY OF A MOTHER.*

This is a book which gives, and leaves with, the reader a curious sense of injury, or of being defrauded by the very person of all others from whom such treachery was not expected.

We expect much from the hand which penned "The Green Graves of Balgowrie," and in this book, there are all the concomitants which should go to the making of such a dish as those pathos-moving fingers love to concoct. But, after showing us the materials, it is as though the author had grown weary. Good people, here is the situation, make of it what you can, I will merely suggest it, and so bid you farewell.

In the manse of Carradale, in the remote north-east of Scotland, lives John Hoseason, minister, nicknamed the Archbishop. He is a Calvinist of the most rigid type, no gleam of humour, no display of feeling, is ever suffered to brighten the monotony of an existence which is, as the present reviewer lately heard a famous preacher say "nothing but a series of extirpations."

This man has married, in her extreme youth, a woman whose brilliant beauty is so great as to be a factor of no small importance in her life. Married before she had ever had anyone to tell her so, Helen Hoseason lives unconscious of any great want in her prosperous, dull, decorous existence, until her darling son Zachary, is sixteen years old. Then, one fine day, there arrives on the scene to pay his respects, Lord Ruxton, the boy's Godfather, a handsome, dilettante bachelor peer, about forty years old. To him, world-weary and sad, there appears the vision of the radiant mother and her lovely children, in a group of such beauty as fairly dazzles the eye and catches the heart of the man of the world.

This is the beginning of the open rebellion of Zach. His father and he have always been at war; now he fairly takes the bit between his teeth, and bolts—to Lord Ruxton.

Two years later, a paralytic stroke has bereft the "Archbishop" of all power to rule further the lives of any. Zach takes to grinding a mill, to support his mother and sisters. Then, one night, he goes out fishing. A sudden squall comes on. The boat is capsized, and Zach disappears from the pages of the story.

Long after the marriage of his mother with Lord Ruxton—indeed, his step-brother, Geordie, is in his teens—Zach turns up again, having been picked up by a slaver, taken to Spanish America, and sold as a slave.

Now should come the situation of the book. But Miss Findlater has grown tired of the story, and poor Zach's adventures are slurred in a way which makes one wonder why he was ever brought back at all, if the writer had so little use for him.

Here and there, through the book, are glimpses of the old power; as in the chapter wherein Helen hears that Zach has been hurt by the stag, and rides off, against her husband's orders, the whole forty miles, to reach him. But the change of style is, on the whole, painfully marked. The people and the scenes are merely indicated, not described; the grip of subject seems to be gone.

May we be allowed to express a hope that this is an early effort, brought out to meet the eagerness of

* By Jane Helen Findlater. (Nisbet.)

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