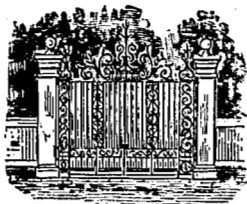


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



Miss Flora Stevenson, who was invited by Sir Lewis M'Yer to dine with the Prime Minister at St. Stephen's on his recent visit to Edinburgh, is one of the best known and keenest educationists in Scotland. For many years she has been a member of the Edinburgh School Board, and is now its Chairman, where she is regarded as one of the few persons who really know the Scottish Code in all its workings.

We are glad to note that Mr. Justice Grantham, in charging the grand jury at Lewes Assizes, in referring to a charge against a girl for stealing letters containing postal orders, and to the frequency of this class of offence, spoke of the responsibility of the Post Office with regard to its employees.

The Post Office authorities might not approve of what he was going to say, but he thought a little more supervision was necessary in regard to post-offices which were now so often left in charge of young women. The wages paid were not high, and they had very great responsibilities and temptations. They asked day by day not to be led into temptation, and they ought not to put others in the way of temptation, particularly those who were badly off. This is a point of view which needs emphasis. The remedy is higher wages for women in the service of the Post Office.

Mlle. Mackenroth has pleaded and won her first case in the packed Assize Court at Zurich. This is the first time that a woman has appeared in a Swiss law court. The case was a delicate one, in which the honour of a young married woman was involved.

Seated among a row of her *confères*, Mlle. Mackenroth carefully followed the evidence, taking notes, but refrained from cross-examination.

Her eloquent defence on behalf of her client delivered in a hushed court, surprised even the judge. The jury, without leaving the court, found for the defendant.

Mlle. Mackenroth was warmly congratulated by her fellow-counsel on leaving the court.

A lady who has lately set up a boarding-house in Cape Town writes home that whilst cabbages cost 9d. each, she lately purchased for the adornment of her drawing-room two pretty water-colour drawings for 15s. ! Clearly market-gardeners have a better chance in the colony than artists, but it is pleasant to find that the beautiful is appreciated. This correspondent adds that coals cost £3 15s. per ton, and for her moderately-sized house the rent is £7 per month. The town, she further states, swarms with Englishwomen, more or less educated, vainly seeking employment.

Lady Henry Somerset has an eloquent article in the *North American Review* on the working of her Inebriate Home at Duxhurst, and contrasts this retreat amongst the Surrey Hills with a scene in the East of London. The Homes take the form of "a quadrangle of small thatched cottages" :—

Against the white walls the white roses are climbing with a profusion of sunny blossom; dainty white curtains wave in the summer breeze as the windows stand ajar, and under the porches beneath the clematis and creepers groups of women are sitting, some knitting, some talking, while others are leaning against the white gate, and the sound of children's voices are heard over the distant fields. Across the road there stands the little church, and more cottages surround it; and again beyond, another group nestling on the border of the wood.

Presently children clad in scarlet come dancing across the fields in a long line, shouting as they advance, and "as the women look they laugh, and the lines of care are smoothed from weary brows, and on older faces wrinkles are lost in smiles."

Here is the other scene :—

At the corner of the street there is a public-house.

Between the hours of one and three o'clock you will see in this squalid district from 100 to 200 women enter the drink-shop with little babies in their arms; and, as those women crowd into that public-house and stand to drink, they will often give the baby a share of the liquor, and the little mouth will greedily suck the spoon or the glass that has in it the taste of gin. Between those hours, too, you will see 150 or 200 girls, with tattered clothes, torn pinafores, some almost shoeless, all ragged, all dirty, all dishevelled, entering with jugs to carry away the drink to their miserable homes. As many boys under the age of 14 or 15 will be there too, making perhaps a total in one afternoon of 500 children.

"Those who know anything of the social life of the people in England," Lady Henry adds, "have long realised that children are drunk for the first time in their mother's arms or cursed with the appetite before they are born." And she lays stress on the fact that it is the individual that has to be reached; "none can be saved in masses."

Requiescat in Pace.

Women who are working to obtain justice for their sex have sustained a deep loss by the death of Sir William Roberts-Austen, K.C.B., F.R.S. Possessed of extraordinary genius and ability he was free from any suspicion of the jealousy which the progress of women inspires in men of less noble minds. Not only was his attitude towards women's movements most generous, but on more than one occasion he took active steps to secure their admission to societies of which he was a member.

Witty, brilliant, and charming, he will not soon be forgotten by those to whom he extended his friendship, and the world is the poorer for the loss of one whose high sense of honour and personal integrity were stimulating and refreshing in an age which bows down unblushingly before the golden image.

Nor is it possible to give an adequate presentment of Sir William Roberts-Austen without emphasising the deeply religious side of his character, with which no one who knew him could fail to be impressed. In spite of absorbing and exacting scientific work he yet found time to act as a lay reader in the diocese of Rochester, and brought to bear upon his duties in this connection the keenness and ability which characterised all his work.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)