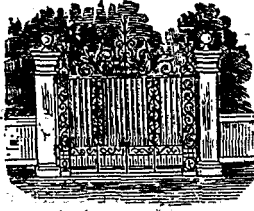


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



An official order has been issued that the ladies present at the Court to be held by the King and Queen in the Palace of Holyrood on May 12th are to wear bonnets. The term "bonnet," we are informed, may be taken to mean either bonnets or toques, but not hats.

Bonnets are out of fashion; we may presume, therefore, that toques will be worn. But what, may we ask, is the essential difference between a hat and a toque, and how is his Mightiness the Lord Chamberlain to discriminate between the two? It is so nice a point that nothing less than an expert Princes Street milliner should be permitted to pronounce judgment, and exclude from the Presence those venturesome women who appear in a hatty toque or a toquey hat. It would save trouble if a ukase were at once issued announcing that the time-honoured "coal-scuttle" should be the only wear.

The Victorian Legislative Assembly has accepted, after an all-night sitting, the resolutions formulated by the joint conference of the Assembly and the Council on the Constitutional Reform Bill, a measure dealing with the franchise and reducing the number of members of the Council and Assembly. The proposal for female franchise was dropped.

Our Colonial Secretary, Mr. Chamberlain, is a strong opponent of the enfranchisement of women. It is a pity that his obsolete opinions on this question should influence the self-governing colonies. Justice will have to be done to women taxpayers sooner or later, and why should Victoria lag behind the Federal Parliament?

The Home Secretary has recently sanctioned a new departure of some interest at Portsmouth Prison by permitting Miss C. Smith-Rossie, a lecturer to the Hampshire County Council, to give addresses to the female convicts on such subjects as hygiene, nursing, and the care of children. This is a step in the right direction. Reformatory and not punitive treatment in gaol is the only hope of rescuing criminals.

The question of the establishment of high schools for girls on the lines of the schools for German youths caused a very animated discussion recently in the Prussian Diet. Herr Irmer warned the Government that Latin grammar, Greek, and algebra would estrange maidens from their only natural vocation, that of becoming good wives and mothers. If high schools for girls were established, universities must also be opened for them, and without restrictions the female student would soon invade man's domain and become his competitor. Herr Dittrich considered the modern craving for knowledge as a sign of degeneration.

It is reported that the donor of £200,000 to Barnard College for Women, New York, is Mrs. Abram A. Anderson, daughter of the late Jeremiah Milbank, who left her a million sterling.

Europe will be left hopelessly in the rear if it does not realise that its women, especially its mothers, must keep pace with the educational standard of the United States; the modern craving for knowledge is our only salvation.

"The Watcher," in the *British Indian Recorder*, says:—I was once sitting at a dinner-table at a boarding-house, when an Anglo-Indian girl, rather dark in complexion, made use of the expression "at home." One of those ill-bred Scotchmen, which it is too often the privilege of Caledonia stern and wild to produce, thereupon remarked: "I suppose you mean Bow Bazar." The girl flushed slightly, and then quoted in a low voice Kipling's beautiful line: "We learnt from our wistful mothers to call Old England home." The Scot had not a word to say, there was something so unanswerable and yet so pathetic in the reply.

A Book of the Week.

THE LIGHT BEHIND.*

To those who remember the palmy days of "The Yellow Book" and its kind, the fact of such a novel as the one before us, issuing from the Bodley Head, would seem to point to a change of taste, and a kind of reaction from the decadence of last century. For "The Light Behind" is frankly a religious novel, and on the whole, a very good one.

Mrs. Wilfrid Ward belongs to the school which calls Papists Catholics, and all other branches of the Catholic Church, Protestants. This is inevitable, and does not much matter. The important thing is that a novel should be written, neither improbable nor namby-pamby, which really makes godliness a necessary ingredient of one's daily life; which strenuously works to renew the well-nigh lost standard of life which was incorporated in the old motto "*Vive ut vivas*."

There is a woman in this book who really and honestly believes that the question of her own personal happiness in this world is not the main issue; who is content to do what she believes to be right, and to leave the issue in the hands of God. It is, perhaps, only those who are obliged to read volume after volume of modern fiction who are in a position to realise how completely and how continually this attitude has died out; how generally obedience to the spiritual law has ceased to be a ruling motive.

Mrs. Ward gives us a beautiful and charming woman, married to a man whose moral vileness makes life together impossible. Lady Cheriton, however, steadfastly declares against an open rupture with her unworthy husband because she feels that her own social position gives her power—power to do good, to guide events, to use influence, to play the part which comes so naturally and delightfully to some women. She has passed through her ordeal. When quite young, and suffering all the pangs of finding herself married to a beast, she well-nigh made shipwreck of herself with James Maurice, a rising Parliamentarian. From this she was saved by the noble friendship of an elderly widower called Biddulph, also a politician. Now, when the story opens, Lady Cheriton takes in hand the fortunes of Henry Dacre, a young Roman Catholic, ambitious, handsome, and clever. She

* By Mrs. Wilfrid Ward. John Lane.

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