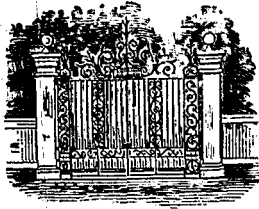


## Outside the Gates.

### WOMEN.



It is reported that the Queen was deeply interested in the wonderful youth Franz von Vecsey. She attended his concert, and she met him next day at the house of Lady de Grey to "say good-bye." It is probably the engaging simplicity of the child, his guileless manner, and his artless good humour which have proved as attractive to Her Majesty as his genius for the violin. When the instrument is not actually in his hands little Franz is nothing more than a lively, affectionate boy of the most natural disposition. All ladies who are kind to him he calls his "aunts," and he addressed Her Majesty as "Aunt Queen" with perfect simplicity.

The Archbishops, Bishops, and their clergy are still debating as to whether women shall be treated like human beings, and be given the initial franchise in the Representative Church Council, or be members of the Church of England on sufferance. In the meanwhile the women are consoling themselves with breaking the Sabbath by every means in their power, and living pagan lives throughout the week. There is nothing more demoralising than to be inspired with self-contempt.

The remarks of the Bishop of Worcester and Lord Hugh Cecil at the recent meeting at the Church House when this question was discussed are illuminating. Chancellor Vernon Smith moved:—

"That it is desirable that the initial franchise of lay electors should be extended so as not wholly to exclude women, and that the presidents be requested to appoint a committee to consider and report to the Council at their next sitting how this extension should be carried out."

The Bishop of Worcester seconded the motion, and the point the mover made as to the position of women in our Church as churchwardens, both before and after the Reformation, should remove the fears of the most conservative. To disallow women, therefore, any share in the initial franchise seemed contrary to Church principle and practice. He only asked that they should not go back on the past at the moment when women were doing so much work for the Church and could claim the franchise on their merits. He had often defended women from Lord Hugh Cecil's statement that others would say the House was elected by a pack of women.

Lord Hugh Cecil, M.P., thought that questions of franchise should not be discussed by assuming that there is a body of men or women who ought to be admitted to rights, a democratic view not to be allowed in the Church. They were a Theocracy bound to have regard to Vocation. It was not a question of what women did, but of Church order, for he recognised that women had a higher moral standard than men. But that was irrelevant. The whole teaching of St. Paul showed that men had a different vocation to women, and there was no instance in the Bible of

women taking part in the government of the Church. Women, he admitted, were good administrators. All agreed that women should keep the house and guide the children. But here their functions were deliberative. He should vote against it—and he did.

In spite of this most unchristian intolerance, we are glad to note that the resolution was carried by a majority of 153.

## A Book of the Week.

### THE QUEEN'S QUHAIR.\*

Gigadibs, the literary man, thought he saw two points in Hamlet's soul unseized by the Germans yet. Mr. Hewlett may be said to have equally good grounds for supposing that he can throw fresh light upon the mysterious life and loves of Mary Stuart.

The flood of literature which we have had upon the subject of late has become indeed a source of confusion rather than of light.

But certainly nobody before has dared to say what Mr. Hewlett now says. It is difficult to guess whether he is conscious or not of the terrible downfall of the ideals of the lovers of Mary the Queen—and they are many—which must result from the perusal of his lines.

His book leaves one murmuring—if one has cherished illusions up till now—

"A power is gone which nothing can restore,  
A deep distress hath humanised my soul!"

Here is his great revelation—the thing which, when he has penetrated as far and as deeply as man may into the history of the six years during which Mary ruled Scotland—he finds staring him in the face.

It is the fact that the Queen herself was, in her love affairs, the Huntress, not the Hunted. She is no more to us the Queen of charms and beauty, the lady of deadly sweetness, the alluring siren to whom men fall victims; she is the woman who will pursue her desire in face of law, of principle, of pity, of decency—the woman who, after her husband's murder, is ready to throw herself gladly into the arms of his murderer, the husband of another woman.

Few of the men who have written of Mary have been so candid. Yet all that the present writer has to say fits in, with a deadly fitness, to his idea of her character. There is no doubt that she hotly wooed the wretched Darnley, who never was worthy of an instant's thought. It seems horribly possible that her real cause of enmity against him was much more his failure to fulfil her desires—his neglect of her society—than his part in the murder of Rizzio, whom Mr. Hewlett relegates to his proper place of confidential servant. Had Darnley shown Mary clearly that his jealousy of the Italian proceeded from his own passion for herself, the author of this book thinks the young Queen would have condoned much stabbing in the dark.

Mr. Hewlett thinks there is absolutely no doubt whatever that Mary was privy to the murder of her husband, nor that she plotted with Bothwell her own abduction and dishonour. The book, from beginning to end, is a horrible commentary upon the misery of human life, if swayed only by the passions.

Mary was greedy of love, greedy of admiration,

\* By Maurice Hewlett. (Macmillan.)

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