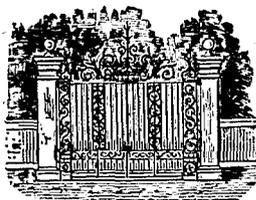


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



On Monday last Mr. Crooks, Member for Woolwich, presented a Bill in the House of Commons, which was formally read for the first time, to enable women to vote at all Parliamentary elections. Unfortunately, the close of the Session precludes the possibility of further advance for the present.

The Bill ran as follows:—"In all Acts relating to the qualifications and registration of voters or persons entitled or claiming to be registered and to vote in the election of Members of Parliament, wherever words occur which import the masculine gender, the same shall be held to include women for all purposes connected with and having reference to the right to be registered as voters and to vote in such election, any law or usage to the contrary notwithstanding." We hope Mr. Crooks may secure a good place in the ballot for the second reading of the Bill next Session.

A humanitarian league of ladies has been formed in Lisbon with the object of improving the conditions of life among Portuguese women. The first efforts of the league will be directed to secure a Government inquiry into the conditions under which women have to work in factories and workshops.

In the course of an able speech on "Educated Women in the Twentieth Century," delivered at the Seventh Biennial Meeting of the General Federation of Women's Clubs at St. Louis, U.S.A., Miss M. Carey Thomas, President of Bryn Mawr College, said:—

"The generation immediately preceding our own, our parents' generation, was worn to the bone by arguments on the subject of women's education. Our own generation is too deeply involved to be able to argue it out. The thing itself is upon us to love or to loathe. When a great social revolution takes place in human affairs it seems, as a rule, to be begun and carried forward in a passion of controversy and emotion, which, after the change has been accomplished, slowly subsides, to rise again to fever heat about some other commencing reform. At the beginning in every part of the world individuals are born caring desperately about doing the mooted thing, and whenever they come to the surface, as it were, to fulfil their desires, they find themselves surrounded by other individuals caring desperately to prevent them.

"We are living to-day in the midst of a great social revolution. Industrial and sociological changes over which we individually have no control have left married women free to interest themselves in matters outside their homes, and have compelled many women, both married and unmarried, to enter into industrial life. The bitter controversy that raged in our youth about women's education is now beating itself against the advanced host of women's industrial independence. Ever-increasing numbers of educated women are pressing forward to positions of influence and power;

organisations of women, like the clubs represented in this Federation, have come into existence everywhere.

"Women are learning to understand the power of organised effort, and already wield a great and in some respects an alarming influence in public affairs. It is the college-educated men of the community who are the leaders of thought and makers of public opinion in the United States and abroad. If men who get the wider training of affairs in the daily competition of business life need a college training to raise themselves above their fellows in efficiency, women of all classes, and, above all, of the leisured class, need it a thousand times more. Girls of the present generation who will be the women of the twentieth century must meet far heavier responsibilities than the women of our generation, and they must be able to hold their own with ever-increasing numbers of college-bred women.

"For women, as for men, there is no profounder happiness than the harmonious exercise of all our faculties, and no human joy so great as the social and intellectual service of our kind. For the first time in the history of the world the twentieth century will afford women as well as men the opportunities for this profoundest joy. It seems to be the duty of every woman to see to it that the girls of the next generation are able to live not only the life of the affections and the home, but also the wider life of public service of our race."

A Book of the Week.

THE DESCENT OF MAN.*

Mrs. Wharton is an author to whom one always listens with attention. She has given herself seriously to the consideration of those *nuances* of emotion or of mental process which are the outcome of a complicated civilisation. From this point of view, all American studies of manners and morals are profoundly interesting to the English reader. It is well known that in certain social questions America has moved faster than we have. Like hot jelly that has not yet been poured into a mould, their laws are more experiment than conviction. There is no point upon which this is shown with greater clearness than the question of divorce.

Here we have a crucial social problem, upon which there is in America no national law at all. Of one *divorcée* we are told: "Mrs. Varick's grievances were of a nature to bear the inspection of New York Courts. A New York divorce is in itself a diploma of virtue." Of another:—

"There had been no scandal connected with the divorce: neither side had accused the other of the offence euphemistically described as 'statutory.' The Arments had, indeed, been obliged to transfer their allegiance to a State which recognised desertion as a cause for divorce, and construed the term so liberally that the seeds of desertion were shown to exist in every union."

The wife who is tired of her husband reasons with herself thus:—

"A sense of having been decoyed by some old-world conspiracy into this bondage of body and soul filled her with despair. If marriage was the slow, life-long acquittal of a debt contracted in ignorance, then marriage was a crime against human nature."

* By Edith Wharton. (Macmillan.)

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