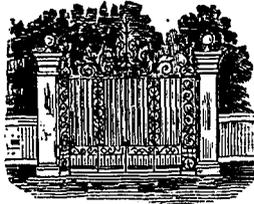


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



Owing to the lamented death of Mr. John Hay, the Secretary of State U.S.A., the new American Ambassador and Mrs. Whitelaw Reid were unable to attend the luncheon at the Hotel Cecil on Monday, given in their honour by the Society of American Women in London, a Society which comprises all that is best of American womanhood resident in this country, even if the new titled anomaly, the American peeress, stands aloof from its good work—much to her own discredit.

In spite of the sincere regret for America's national loss of all present at Monday's charming function, it was a very great success, and amongst the English guests were Mrs. Henry Fawcett, LL.D., and Miss Dothoëa Beale in their academic robes, Miss E. P. Hughes in the garb of a Welsh Bard, Mrs. Archibald Little, and a number of well-known women. The gowns worn were wonderfully tasteful, and the whole scene most brilliant.

Mrs. Webster Glynes, President of the Society, graced the chair with a gentle directness of manner all her own, and many of the speeches were admirable, and not devoid of fun. Mrs. Fawcett told us that she had been asked to come in her robes, and was assured that Miss Hughes was to appear in the garb of an ancient Briton, and she excited laughter when she remarked that she was distinctly disappointed to find that Miss Hughes was as much encumbered with garments as the rest of the company.

Mrs. Glynes outlined an admirable scheme for founding American Scholarships for women, on the lines which the late Mr. Rhodes had made possible for men. In America, she said, there was a General Federation of Club-Women, and it was hoped, at the conference called for next spring, to induce that body to adopt a scheme whereby in each of the forty-six States of America two women, making ninety-two in all, might be awarded scholarships in one or other of the English universities where they may absorb the learning and the culture England had to give. This is a great scheme. Why not reciprocity? The English woman would reap a rich intellectual harvest by a term of residence at the American Universities. To quote from the ode of welcome to the new Ambassador prepared in Welsh, of which Miss E. P. Hughes gave the translation of one verse—

“The names of America and Great Britain
When sounded together make harmonious music
That can be heard through the wide world.”

The Women's Union of all Russia, which is concerned in securing the reorganisation of the system of government and equal rights for women as for men, have issued a resolution, in which they say:—“We women have been stirred to the depths of our souls with horror at the events which happened at Ivanovo-Voznesensk. When shall we see an end of these brutalities? When will the blood of the Russian

people cease to flow here and in the Far East?” After expressing their distrust in the Bureaucracy and appealing to Russian society at large to take the defence of Russian citizens into their own hands, the resolution continues:—“We can never be sure from one day to another that these massacres will not be repeated. We are afraid to let our children out of the house; we are afraid to leave the house ourselves. Our lives are now a continuous agony of fear for ourselves, for our children, for all those dear to us, for the whole people of Russia. It is as if we lived, not at home in our own country, but in the midst of our bitterest enemies, for they are no better, these cossacks, gendarmes, police, hooligans, and agents provocateurs.”

A deputation of the Miners' Association at Johannesburg recently waited upon the Earl of Selborne to ask for increased protection for the whites working with Chinese in the mines. The cause of the trouble between the two is said to be the bad language of the Chinese reflecting on white women. British men, however, have themselves to thank for the contempt in which white women are held. If they extend the franchise to males of the inferior races while denying it to white women they cannot wonder if the attitude of the coloured races to our women is contemptuous.

A Book of the Week.

THE FLUTE OF PAN.*

Mrs. Craigie gives us, in novel form, the story that she made into a play last year.

One of the most inscrutable things about authors is the way in which a certain story which to the public seems to possess no special merit gets a hold upon them, and exalts itself in their eyes, to the disturbing of their judgment. This is what seems to have happened to Mrs. Craigie with regard to the “Flute of Pan.” It is what may be fairly described as a Zenda story—that is, the account of a love affair between a most exceptional Englishman and a mythical foreign Princess, regnant sovereign of a small European principality. Of late years there has been something stereotyped about this kind of thing. It would need a very special touch to make a Zenda story convincing. We cannot in truth say that Mrs. Craigie has succeeded in a task which hardly seemed worth her while to set herself.

We have all her own special kind of charm—that charm which sets in a clear, limpid light the small emotions and large propensities of modern society. But all the while she seems hampered by the knowledge that she is not writing about real men and women. The portion of the story in which she comes nearest to achieving naturalness is in the marriage scene, where the fashionable English women scramble for places to witness the ceremony, and shock the better-bred natives.

“Can you tell me why Mrs. Bislev is stuck up there in such a splendid place? Who is Mrs. Bislev? Why this fuss about Mrs. Bislev? She must be told to come down. It is disgracefully managed. And where did she get those ropes of pearls?”

“I am stone deaf,” said Lady Wimborough, who had excited perhaps the liveliest interest in the foreign countesses by being dressed in what is

* By John Oliver Hobbes. (Fisher Unwin.)

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)