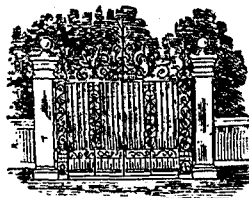


Outside the Gates.



WOMEN.

The following Memorial has been forwarded by the National Union of Women Workers to the Prime Minister:—

“DEAR SIR,—We, the members of the National Union of Women Workers, venture to approach you

in respect to the composition of the Royal Commission about to be appointed for Inquiry into the Working of the Poor Laws,

“We are convinced that that body would be greatly strengthened by the inclusion of women among its members; and we hope that the services rendered to the community by the Women Guardians of Great Britain will make you willing to consider our suggestion.

“It is, we believe, generally acknowledged that it is greatly owing to the work of women on Boards of Guardians:—(1) That improvement in the care of the children, the aged, the sick, and the imbeciles has been effected in the majority of our Poor Law Unions; (2) that trained nurses have been substituted for untrained (and in some cases, pauper) nurses in our workhouse infirmaries, lock wards, and maternity wards; (3) that motherly oversight has been extended to the babies farmed out under the Infant Life Protection Act, to boarded-out children, and to young boys and girls placed in situations; and (4) that greater economy and efficiency prevail in the domestic management of workhouses and institutions under the Poor Law. We believe that the practical experience of ladies, who have special knowledge of some of the causes of pauperism, or who have served on Rural and Urban Boards of Guardians would contribute valuable knowledge and would suggest pertinent points for inquiry were they included among the members of the Commission.”

We beg respectfully to remain,
yours truly,

HENRIETTA WHITWELL,
ELIZABETH J. GOODEVE.

Speaking to the Women's Diocesan Association at the Church House on Saturday, the Bishop of London, responding to a vote of thanks, said there might be some ladies present who thought they had gifts of healing, but he entreated them never to exercise those gifts apart from medical men. The doctor's visits to the sick room were as sacred as those of the clergyman, and care should be taken that the latter were not prevented from doing their work. This is sound advice.

We learn that an “Institute of Visiting Maids” has been organised to temporarily supply ladies with ladies' maids. The charge is to be half a guinea a day—with the guarantee that they will turn out their clients in most approved style. It will thus be seen that these skilled workers value their services at

three and a half guineas a week, or nearly double the cost of a thoroughly trained nurse. The time-honoured vanity of human nature is, we presume, responsible for these high charges, but to “turn out” a lady up-to-date is no small matter, as the maid of to-day has to include the skill of a beauty doctor among her accomplishments, and to present a woman armed *cap-à-pie* as a rival to her youngest granddaughter, is an art worth paying for in these days of perpetual youth. The Society woman can only commit one crime, that of being old and ugly.

Book of the Week.

THE BREATH OF THE GODS.*

It is not too much to call this book an achievement; it would not be too much to call it a unique achievement. It stands out among the collection of autumn novels, as a tree may stand out in a field of wheat. It teaches us something that we had no idea of before. It unlocks for us the heart of a mysterious force that we could never of ourselves grasp. It allows us, as far as the occidental mind can be allowed, to understand the mysterious secret of oriental springs of action, the mysterious secret of oriental religion, oriental patriotism, oriental love and tragedy, morality, and ideals.

The story opens in America, and introduces us to the family of the Todds, and to Yuki, a young Japanese girl, whose parents have sent her over to the States for educational purposes. The Todds are rather trying—one would hope that they are exceptionally vulgar and impossible, even for American politicians. In their set is Pierre Lebeau, a young French diplomatist, who has fallen in love with Yuki. At a reception at the Todds we are introduced to Prince Hagané, the mighty Japanese War Lord, the moving spirit throughout the book.

“The man bore no marks of age. On the other hand, no one could have thought him young. The massive features, bronze in tone, and set in a sort of aquiline rigidity, the conscious, kingly poise of head and throat rising from deep brawny shoulders, the stiff black hair, touched evenly throughout with gray, had none of them the colour of youth. Yet beside him, youth looked tame, and old age withered. The man was on the very summit of life.”

Yuki, during her residence in America, has been converted to the Christian faith, as it is there understood; a skin-deep conversion of a most unconvincing sort, unnecessary for the purposes of the story, and better omitted altogether. Her parents are of the older Japan, the Japan whose ideas are feudal and conservative to a degree that we cannot possibly enter into. It seems a little inconsistent that Tetsujo, Yuki's old father, should have allowed his daughter to go to America at all, far less to embrace an alien, and as it seems to him, mushroom creed. But, putting aside these slight inconsistencies, the rest of the book—dating from the moment of Yuki's return to her native land, is simply wonderful. She finds that it is one thing to hope for parental consent to her marriage with Pierre Lebeau when

* By Sidney Maccall. (Hutchinson.)

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