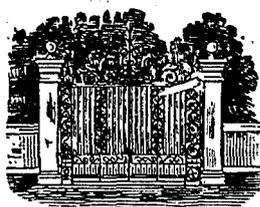


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



The Society of Women Journalists, who have just published their twelfth Annual Report, have every reason for satisfaction in presenting this record of work. There has been a marked increase in the roll of membership, their members now numbering just on three hundred. There have been few resignations, and these are mostly due to the retirement of members to the country on their marriage, or to the fact that they have given up journalism. By death the Society has alas lost, besides Mrs. Craigie, Mrs. Aylmer Gowing and Mrs. Alec Welsh, who had shown much practical interest in its work.

One way in which the utility of the Society is proved is in the introductions which it is able to afford its members; thus a newly-elected member paying her first visit to the United States received introductions through the corresponding Secretary in New York, which at once put her in touch with journalistic centres in Boston, Washington, and San Francisco, and, again, although the Society does not undertake the actual placing of authors' manuscripts, a large number of members have had personal introductions to Editor, which have facilitated their own placing of manuscripts.

The work of the Hon. Secretary, Mrs. H. T. Bulstrode, has now become so onerous that Miss Mary Fraser has now been appointed as her co-adjutor, an appointment which is extremely popular, and Mrs. Watt Smyth has been appointed Hon. Treasurer in the place of Miss E. M. Tait.

In the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, a notable personality, has, at the age of 92, passed away. Immensely wealthy, friend of crowned heads and peasants, she gave freely of her wealth to such objects as appealed to her. The first meeting of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was held at her house. She was devoted to animals and the white donkey presented to her by the London costers in recognition of her work for the betterment of the conditions of life of these useful beasts, was a great favourite with her. Unrecognised talent received generous treatment at her hands, and she was throughout her long life a great patron of the stage. At her house in Stratton Street, the illustrious remains of Sir Henry Irving were received after their cremation, until taken to their abiding resting-place in Westminster Abbey. The Baroness herself is now to be accorded the same honourable sepulture. The funeral takes place in the Abbey, on the morning of Saturday, January 5th, and at the same time there will be a service at Christ Church, Down Street, Piccadilly.

Book of the Week.

GROWTH.*

It is always an unmixed pleasure to read Miss Todd's thoughtful powerful work. One is sure that, from cover to cover, she will never say one word we could regret, sure that, whatever the subject treated, the treatment will be in exactly the right key.

"Growth" is a book which cannot be reviewed in one word. It is long, complex, full of thoughts that should give rise to much earnest cogitation in the mind of women: eminently a working-woman's book, pre-eminently a book for the woman whose line of work is medicine or nursing.

From various points of view it is a most interesting study. The writer knows well her Scotch kirk, and, averse as we usually are to novels which are religious propaganda in disguise, we think that nobody could fail to be struck with the aspect under which modern Dissent is here treated. Evidently the writer believes it to be an outworn form, after only four short centuries of existence. She shows how the modern dissenter has cast away all the things for which his ancestor fought and strove; she shows, intentionally, what Mrs. Felkin shows, as we must suppose, unintentionally—the process of disintegration at work slowly but surely. Where people have seceded upon certain questions which are largely questions of temperament and of detail, only temperament and an entire unity upon matters of detail can hold them together.

The old hostility to external show is dying; the old hostility to the pleasures of life is dying. The original dissenter, rejecting the fasts assigned to him by the Church, yet being a devout person, found his peace in renouncing much that Catholics held to be innocent, in anathematising material things in a manner perilously near Manicheism.

When these renunciations are swept away, when the rigid ascetic is asked to accept Sunday in lieu of Sabbath, to tolerate dancing, to allow organs and choirs and stained glass, and to believe that a woman may be on the stage and not be a lost creature, then the balance of his spiritual life is destroyed; all that remains is "go-as-you-please," and we know how impossible it is to work anything of a spiritual character on such lines.

The members of Mr. Atherley's congregation are drawn with the pen of a shrewd but a loving and kindly observer. The little clique of spiritual aristocrats, who turn sinners out of the Church which was founded for sinners—and yet are full of sincere and noble faith—yes, and capable of acts of exalted charity—these are given us to the life, and most interesting reading it makes. The hero of the book is Dr. Heriot, a splendid person, on the whole a little too good, we think, for the excessively modern Judith, a slave to self-will, courting eccentricity, and feeling in every fibre of her how piquant it is to annoy her relations, defy conventions, and Live her Own Life.

The greater part of the scene is laid in Edinburgh

*By Graham Travers. Margaret Todd, M.D.
(Constable).

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