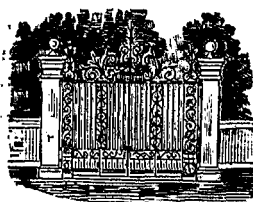


Outside the Gates.

Book of the Week.

WOMEN.



Miss Mary Proctor, the daughter of the well-known astronomer of that name, and who has arrived in London on a lecturing tour, believes that there is a new field open to women in astronomy. They are, she says, naturally more observant than men, and the few who have taken up this work have achieved remarkable results. She has herself been successful on several occasions in observing the sun's corona, and is probably the only lady with such a record.

We regret that there should be a woman amongst the seven Poplar Guardians and ex-Guardians and members of the management of the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum, who are remanded on bail on the charge "that they conspired, combined, and confederated and agreed together, unlawfully and fraudulently, to cheat and defraud the Board of Managers of the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum District of their money and valuable securities." We understand she denies the charge, and hope she may be able to prove her innocence.

The Labour Representation Association at Woolwich have adopted Miss S. Turnbull as their candidate for a seat on the Borough Council, to fill the vacancy which has occurred in the River Ward. Miss Turnbull was for several years a Guardian in the Borough, and proved herself possessed of excellent administrative qualities.

Mme. Alphen Salvador has recently been paying a visit to this country, as she was one of those appointed as a judge at the Franco-British Exhibition at Shepherd's Bush. The honourable task of weighing the merits of exhibits, and awarding prizes, in an exhibition of this kind must be onerous indeed, and has kept Mme. Salvador busily employed.

The advantage to women in the terrible position of Daisy Lord, who find themselves in the dock on trial for the murder of an illegitimate infant was strikingly evidenced at a recent trial in the Paris Assize Court of a young and deserted girl mother, who, penniless and starving, attempted to suffocate herself and her child by the fumes of a charcoal fire. The baby died, but the mother recovered, and was tried for murder. The Public Prosecutor made a moderate speech for a conviction, and then Mlle. Miropolsky, a lady barrister, who appeared in court in barrister's official robe and toque, made an eloquent speech for the defence, in which she spoke from the woman's point of view. The jury, after briefly deliberating, acquitted the prisoner.

THE SUSPICIONS OF ERMENGARDE.*

To no writer do we turn with more certainty of enjoying ourselves than to Maxwell Grey. Profound student of human nature as she proved herself in "The Silence of Dean Maitland," no less so is she in the volume now before us. But in this case we find her dealing with the small happenings of everyday life, and most subtly are the Suspicions of Ermengarde worked out. We are introduced to the young and charming married woman when "the little rift" between her and her husband has just begun. He, not unjustly, annoyed by her extravagance. She unhinged by a severe attack of "the demon 'flue,'" and not inclined to take his remarks in good part. There is nothing unnatural in the situation, simply the misunderstanding between two people who, though sincerely attached, are for the moment out of sympathy. "Fog the colour of pea-soup" may have had something to do with her unreasonable and dejected frame of mind, and one feels inclined to sympathise with her when she remarks: "I should like a little sun."

Having once made up her mind on that point, and being a determined young person, as her husband declares he cannot take her abroad, she decides to go without him to Mentone. And now we have a most entertaining account of the difficulties and annoyances to which this inexperienced young traveller is subjected. Her lively imagination leads her into all manner of suspicions, for she had evidently made up her mind that nothing is what it seems to be! The quiet man with the long beard and coloured glasses she decides must be an Anarchist: The lady with the sad face who often kindly helps her she calls "the woman of mystery," for no apparent reason except that she knows nothing about her.

The description of the journey in the train de luxe is amusingly, and vividly given, as is also the ascent to the Hotel Les Oliviers, which is perched high up on a ridge, the latter part of the road being only possible on foot, or, as Ermengarde remarks, "climbing a broken staircase on a wild ass."

All through the humorous descriptions we are given glimpses of the lovely country—word pictures painted by a master hand—we have left the land of fog, and are constantly bathed in sunshine; surrounded by gorgeously coloured land, sea, and sky.

The various people at the hotel are cleverly drawn, each with such individuality that we realise them all.

Again Ermengarde's imagination leads her astray in her constant suspicions that all the men are falling in love with her, which offends her innate nice feeling.

There is a pretty second plot connected with the "woman of mystery" running through the book. How Ermengarde gets into serious difficulties, and how the "woman of mystery" is nearly

* By Maxwell Grey. (John Long.)

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)