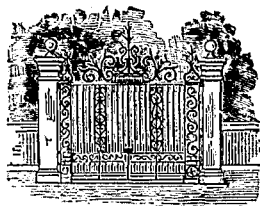


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



THE Nineteenth National Council of the British Women's Temperance Association which will take place at the City Temple on Monday and Tuesday, 17th and 18th inst., will be attended by nearly 800 delegates, the largest delegation on record. The meetings of the Council will be open to the public, and Lady Henry Somerset will preside each day.

The special Sunday Services on June 16th to be held under the auspices of the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the National British Woman's Temperance Association, have been organised by Miss Mary Gorham, Superintendent of the Evangelistic department, British Women's Temperance Association. Among those who have given permission for services to be held either in mission halls, or places of worship are the following:—Canon Wilberforce, Archdeacon Farrar, the Hon. and Rev. Carr-Glyn, Rev. F. B. Meyer, Rev. Fleming Williams, Rev. Lawson Forster, Rev. R. F. Horton, M.A., Rev. J. Clifford, D.D. and Rev. Canon Barker. Services have been arranged in about 200 places of worship. Leading White Ribbon women from America and other places will give addresses. Lady Henry Somerset and Miss Willard will speak at the City Temple in the afternoon at three, and Madame Antoinette Stirling will sing.

Temperance women throughout the country, who are enthusiastic supporters of the Government Liquor Traffic Local Control Bill, are watching the political situation with much interest. Mrs. Bamford Slack, who superintends the political department for the National British Women's Temperance Association, has recently issued a manifesto to local secretaries and members, urging them to make special efforts at the present time to stir up interest in Sir William Harcourt's Bill.

POLICE MATRONS.

Miss Balgarnie and Miss Twining have been for some years agitating on the subject of Police Matrons and have roused much public sympathy and interest in the subject. So far very few Police Matrons have been appointed, but the Home Secretary has promised to do as much as possible in the future to extend the number of women appointed to such posts.

They "manage these things better" in Scotland, where Matrons have for years been on duty in the larger, and to some extent in the smaller towns. These Matrons are of the same class as the constables and in Edinburgh and Glasgow are borne on the police staff. But there is no Government contribution to their pay and they have no title to pension.

Miss Balgarnie says:—"The Edinburgh Matrons are middle-aged, motherly-looking women, dressed in

neat brown uniforms, each with a bunch of keys hanging by her side. They are indeed absolutely indispensable, and are under as stringent orders as the policemen. A nice little sitting-room, with kitchen range and comfortable sofa, is provided for the Matrons, where they take their meals and rest during their scanty leisure moments. "Women are so handy," said Mr. Henderson, the chief constable in Edinburgh, and indeed they seemed to be 'universal providers,' and now and again acted nurse to some man prisoner, whose illness was not acute enough to justify the calling in of the doctor, but to whom a cup of tea and a little kindly attention might be a priceless boon. Mr. Henderson laid great stress on the age of his Matrons. 'No flighty young things' will he have, but sedate, elderly women between forty and fifty years of age. They are supposed to work in eight hour shifts; but as one must always be on duty when the Court sits, their hours overlap into nine or ten. The waiting-rooms are excellent: arranged with high-backed, high-sided seats like the stalls of a cathedral choir, and each prisoner may thus hide her own shame and identity from her neighbour, while the Matron sitting near the door is ready to usher each in her turn into Court. There are 'out stations' in various parts of the city; but all women under arrest are brought as speedily as possible to the Central Station that they may be placed under the care of women."

A fourth Matron has a little post of her own at another station. She superintends the Receiving-Home for lost children, and from her Police Nursery anxious parents are communicated with by telephone as speedily as possible, while the little ones remain in perfect content. And all these blessings to poor women and children, to say nothing of ailing men, are provided at the modest salary of from fifteen to eighteen shillings a week for each Matron. The salaries are unquestionably too low, and should be the same as those given to policemen for similar work.

Miss Balgarnie made a tour of the United States in order to thoroughly acquaint herself with the American system of Police Matrons and she heroically spent several nights in various police stations amid horrors of crime and drunkenness. But to her, these horrors were much mitigated by the presence of these kindly Police Matrons, who sympathetically do what they can to help the first offenders and to reach the hearts even of the most hardened criminals. She says:—"I was much struck with the type of Matrons at the various Philadelphia stations. They are invariably women of superior parts, some of whom have been trained in rescue homes. One and all seemed to have won the confidence of the officers and men, and they received a respectful salute from each man in the force wherever and whenever they might meet them.

There are eleven Matrons at eleven different stations. They live on the premises, and have nice little suites of two or three rooms. They are well paid, and, indeed, they deserve to be, for their work is never done, and they are practically on duty for twenty-four hours every day, as they are liable to be called out of bed at any hour of the night whenever a woman may be brought in. But they seem well content with their posts, and one and all cherish a real enthusiasm for their work. Hours have I spent with Police Matrons listening to the stories of many girls they have been

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)