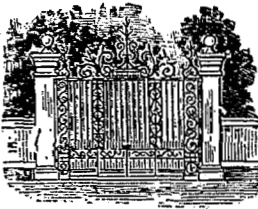


Outside the Gates.



THE meeting of Parliament is, of course, the event of the week. For several days past closed town-houses have been undergoing an unusually early spring-cleaning, and luggage and belongings of Members of Parliament—their wives and families—have been pouring into London. Full-dress Parliamentary dinners and receptions preceded the opening of the second Session of the 14th Parliament during the Queen's reign.

This Session marks for all practical purposes the beginning of Lord Salisbury's administration, as the Autumn meeting of Parliament, which lasted only a month, was devoted almost entirely to the election of a Speaker, the voting of Supply, &c. Very little work beyond the routine of Estimates and Supply can be got through till after Easter. The Conservative Party can count on a majority of 152.

The two most interesting points in the Queen's Speech are those relating to the Navy and to South African affairs.

Mr. Rhodes came and saw Mr. Chamberlain and—abruptly departed. It would be interesting to know what transpired at the meeting between the two politicians. Anyway, it was thought expedient that Mr. Rhodes should return to South Africa and devote his time "to the development of railroads." The shareholders of the South African Chartered Company are thus disappointed of the address on "the situation" it was hoped he would give them. But Mr. Rhodes has not deserted us finally. He will return to give evidence at the trial of Dr. Jameson and his friends, which is expected will take place in June next.

President Kruger, when he pays his projected visit to England, will be one of the "sensations of the season." He is expected to arrive before long, and is in such very vigorous health that, although he is seventy-one years old, the long journey has no terrors for him. His birthday is observed as an annual public holiday in the Transvaal. Kruger's character is not unlike that of Oliver Cromwell.

Most of the troops engaged in the Ashanti Expedition are already on their way home. Much relief is felt that the illnesses and deaths among them have been so few, considering the deadly nature of the climate and the endless varieties of fevers they were exposed to.

Complications continue to arise in the East, and new crises are threatened. The approaching reconciliation of Bulgaria and Russia is not considered a hopeful symptom towards the preservation of the peace of Europe.

The Prince and Princess of Wales will, it is believed, be present at the Coronation of the Czar in May next.

Sir John Millais will be unanimously voted President of the Royal Academy in place of the late Lord Leighton, at the forthcoming meeting of the R.A.'s. It is understood that he is not accepting the position for life. He wishes to hold it for a time only, as he thinks the strain on his health will probably make it necessary for him to resign at no very distant date.

WOMEN.

Energetic measures are being taken, both at Oxford and Cambridge, to secure the admission of women to the degrees of the Universities. The question is to be submitted to Congregation as to the advisability of allowing the ordinary B.A. to women. Resolutions are to be brought forward by several men suggesting that the women who pass their exams.—however brilliantly—shall not take the degree to which, were they men, they would be entitled, but shall be satisfied with a diploma only. Some other men disapprove even of the diploma, and say a "mere certificate" is good enough for women.

If the women of the Universities—in the event of their just right being denied—were to quit Oxford and Cambridge in a body and transfer themselves to the broad minded sister Universities which grant equal justice to men and women, the whole matter would soon be settled. A Varsity boycott would be an admirable move on the part of women, who are thus at the end of the nineteenth century, so illegally denied the fruit of their hard work. After all it is such a little right these men are so jealously fighting for—the right to put a small B.A. or M.A. after a name. For a body of educated men to band themselves so fiercely against the natural ambitions of a section of young girl students, seems to be an object-lesson of the small amount of civilisation we have attained to after nearly twenty centuries of enlightenment.

Miss Colenso's lecture on "Zululand," given lately at the South Place Institute, was particularly interesting at this juncture. She said Great Britain had done wrong in laying the responsibility of Government on a Chartered Company. Their first duty was not to govern well, but to put a good balance-sheet before the shareholders. They had given us the present situation at Johannesburg, and the blood-stained inheritance of Matabeleland.

Twelve ladies from the Church Missionary Society started for China in the middle of January despite protests from every foreign community in the celestial Empire, and nearly every European Consul there. These ladies were permitted to sail only on condition that they solemnly promise to remain within the safe bounds of the treaty port of Foochow until the committee judge it wise for them to proceed into the interior.

The Church Missionary Society's agent at Foochow, Archdeacon Wolfe, writes to headquarters in London, strongly urging his chiefs to disregard all warnings from the Government agents, or any one else, and to send out as many Missionaries, male and female, as can be induced to work in what he regards as a fruitful vineyard.

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