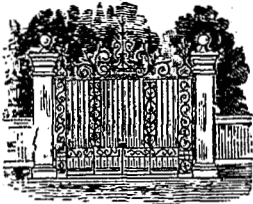


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



ON "ladies' night," at the Hardwicke Society's meeting at the Inner Temple Hall, a debate was held on Woman's Suffrage. Mr. T. T. Bucknill, Q.C., M.P., moved the following resolution:—"That this House is of opinion that the privilege of recording votes at a party election should not be denied to women." The motion was opposed by Mr. Candy, Q.C., Mr. M. J. Farrelly, and Mr. John O'Connor. On a division being taken there were seventy votes for and seventy votes against the resolution. It has always been noticeable that barristers and the Bar generally are very lukewarm on suffrage and women's progress. An explanation of this is said to consist in the assumption on the part of the law that woman as a sex are distinctly inferior, and that the constant object lesson thus brought before legal luminaries in their studies of the statute cause them to offer strong opposition to women's "emancipation."

Sir Henry Irving, chairman of the Siddons' Memorial Committee, has arranged to unveil in the autumn the new statue of Mrs. Siddons on Paddington Green. The model of the statue was approved by the late Lord Leighton, P.R.A., shortly before his death, and the statue, the work of M. Chavalliaud, a well-known French sculptor, is approaching completion. The portrait of the actress has been obtained, after a careful study of all existing pictures; from Reynolds's famous picture of Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse.

Mrs. Nansen, the wife of the famous Arctic explorer, from whom it is hoped good news will soon be forthcoming, is a remarkable woman. In her maiden days she was a professional singer of some note in Norway. She and her husband, though married some seven years, remain romantic lovers, and she is, despite the difficulty there must be of a man remaining a hero to his wife, one of his most enthusiastic admirers. When asked if it was not a terrible thing to part from her husband when he was bent on so dangerous a mission, she replied: "Civilisation has brought with it great self-control, and now the mind, and not the inclination, rules."

In nearly every prison there is a "prison-baby"—sometimes a great many little creatures open their eyes in a world of criminals and misdemeanants. But like that wonderful baby of Bret Hartie's, the "Luck of Roaring Camp," the "prison-baby" seems to exercise a soothing and softening effect upon some of the most hardened women criminals. To carry the "prison-baby" during exercise in the yards is a privilege dearly coveted and only bestowed on women who behave well. And to attain to this height of bliss, many women convicts put a marvellous self-control on their tempers and behaviour; so that the misfortune of the prison-baby in being a prison-baby is the woman-convict's opportunity of creating some little ideal and standard of conduct to which she may work up.

A Book of the Week.

"MEMOIRS OF CONSTANT."*

CONSTANT, Napoleon's *valet de chambre*, was in his personal attendance for fifteen years, during which time he saw "all the notable men and the notable things of which he alone was the rallying point and the centre." Constant vigorously disputes the maxim that no man is a hero to his *valet de chambre* and proves over and over again that his devotion to his master was sincere. Yet, in spite of this devotion, he claims to have told his story impartially, and has not attempted to hide the fact that even Napoleon was fallible.

Vols. I. and II. lie before me on the table, and Vols. III. and IV. are in course of publication, and will be issued shortly. In reviewing these entertaining Memoirs, it is perhaps only fair to state that their authenticity has been questioned by various critics, who point out that the ex-valet displayed an amount of education and discrimination that alone makes for suspicion. Setting aside the vexed question whether these pages are fact, or fiction, we will assume for the nonce that they are fact, and accept them as such. Constant sprinkles his pages liberally with many entertaining anecdotes. Amongst other amusing domestic gossip he relates that on one occasion the Emperor asked for some tea. M. Sennéchal was in attendance, so he made some, and brought it to His Majesty, who declared it was detestable, and complained that they wanted to poison him (whenever he did not like anything, that is what he always said). Going back to the kitchen for a few minutes Constant poured out another cup of tea from *the same teapot*, and placed it on another salver, and took it to the Emperor, who said it was excellent, and on handing back the cup pulled his ear and said "For Heaven's sake teach them how to make tea; they know absolutely nothing about it here." A similar story is also related of the Emperor's bedding, which he declared had a disagreeable smell. Constant records that Napoleon often slapped his servants' faces when he was in a good humour, and even pinched their ears; indeed his favours and caresses were always of a robust character.

Napoleon must have been an exacting master; before Constant became his valet the first Consul terrified one of his servants out of his wits by ordering him to shave him, and then calmly opening a pen-knife and saying that at the first cut he should plunge the knife into the valet's stomach. Small wonder that the terrified youth trembled so violently that he had to abandon his task. Thereupon Constant was sent for, and set to work, Napoleon fixed his eye with an eagle glance, but seeing that he was not disconcerted he was so satisfied that he gave orders that in future Constant should always shave him. The valet's duties were henceforth not slight, for it must have been no easy task to shave Bonaparte, for it is recorded that all the time, he used to talk, twist about in his chair, and turn round suddenly, so that it was very difficult to avoid cutting him. Later, Constant persuaded the Emperor to learn to shave himself, fearing that in case of accident some assassin might attempt his life instead of

*"Memoirs of Constant, the Emperor Napoleon's Head Valet," containing details of the Private Life of Napoleon, his Family, and his Court, translated by Peroy Pinkerton. (H. S. Nichols. 1896.)

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