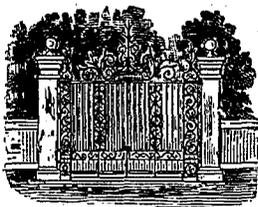


of pain was practically unknown are read, the reader will not wonder at the statement that the most treasured day in my life is the day when I witnessed for the first time the physical miracle of the abolition of pain during a surgical operation, the grand transformation of the phenomenon of agony into the phenomenon of sleep."

Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



An important meeting was held on Saturday last at the Society of Arts, under the presidency of Mr. James Bryce, M.P., to discuss the question whether the Governors of Holloway College should obey the wishes of the founder and seek for power to confer degrees on students. The unanimous opinion amongst those best competent to judge appears to be that such a course would be a mistake. Mrs. Fawcett, whose opinion on such a matter must have great weight, declared herself "uncompromisingly hostile" to such a scheme. She held that at Cambridge women had valuable privileges, privileges far greater than those which had been withheld, and that for Holloway to confer its own degrees would almost amount to "educational suicide."

The general opinion expressed in the course of a discussion which lasted for four hours was that the establishment of a separate university for women would be a mistake, and mean a lower standard of learning in literature and general scholarship. The chairman held that the really important thing was now being done by the universities; it was not the degree but the education that was of primary importance. No doubt this is a truism, but we doubt if men would be content with education, for its own sake, minus the outward and visible stamp of it in the form of a degree, and it is not reasonable to suppose that women should be satisfied with less.

We are sorry to see that a large number of ladies were present when Her Majesty's staghounds met recently at Brick Bridge, near Maidenhead, for a run over the Berkshire country. There can be nothing sportsmanlike in hunting to its destruction a poor beast let loose for that purpose, and the fact that in this nineteenth century of civilization, women—externally, at least, refined—can be found to enjoy so degrading and disgusting a spectacle is a proof that the savage, even in womankind, dies hard; we were about to say the brutal nature, but we reject the phrase as an insult to the brute. We think it is quite time that the popular voice demanded that this degrading amusement should cease, and should it be necessary to provide an appointment for an impecunious nobleman, a less revolting one than Master of the Buckhounds could surely be found. On the occasion to which we have alluded the deer staked itself shortly after it was uncartered, and was killed, so that the "sport" was cut short.

The Grocers' Company has made a grant of £50 to the purchase fund of the new Young Women's Christian Association headquarters, George Street, Hanover Square.

A Book of the Week.

"IN THE PERMANENT WAY."*

MRS. STEEL, in her present volume, goes back to the land she knows and understands, better even than she does the northern parts of Scotland. It is a collection of Indian stories, various both in subject and in degree of interest, but, on the whole, very good. They are nearly all of them tragedies—Mrs. Steel's frame of mind is too pre-eminently that of her day to allow her to take a cheerful view of life, either in the east or west—but they are exquisitely constructed and thought out, conveying a most vivid idea of Hindû surroundings and ways of thought.

It is, perhaps, hypercritical to say that many of them are strongly reminiscent of Rudyard Kipling. It is, probably, unavoidable that two English people, trying to reproduce in English the Hindû methods of speech, should turn out a jargon of much the same description. We begin to understand that "Ari!" and "Lo, thou!" and "Wah!" are as necessary to the conversation of the bazaars as "Hech, mon!" used to be considered to the Scotch. But it is, to say the least, very doubtful whether the tale called "On the Second Story" would ever have been written, were it not for a tale by the first and greater exponent of Anglo-Indian Empire, about little Biseta.

However, even if they are of a kind that has been done, and admirably done, before, Mrs. Steel's stories are by no means wanting in originality, and seem to show a marvellous knowledge of native habits of life and thought.

The character of Craddock, the Englishman who drives the engine on the desert line, is particularly good. We are first introduced to him in the story from which the book takes its name—"In the Permanent Way."

The Royal Engineers are marking out a track for the line over the desert, and their marking out brings them right across the spot on which a *Baragi*, or devotee, has elected to sit immovable until his death. Every day, while the railway is in course of construction, they move him out of the way: every night he replaces himself, and sits there, a bronze image, unwinking, seeming neither to hear nor see. For him the men at work conceive a reverential sort of affection. "Old Meditations" has pluck which appeals straight to their hearts. The first time the locomotive comes rushing along, this child of the desert, who has probably never seen or heard of anything of the kind before, simply sits on, motionless, utterly quiescent, right in the centre of the permanent way facing death without the flicker of an eyelid. But always Craddock stops the train and gently shunts the obstruction out of harm's way, always with the same formula—"Now, sonny, you're in the way—the permanent way."

How, at last, Craddock, one dark night, failed in his trust, is what the story tells.

Craddock is also the hero of one of the best of the other tales called the "King's Well."

It is in the King's Well that he hides in the terrible days of the Mutiny. The well is supposed to be haunted by the King's ghost, for whom, most fortunately, he is taken by all except the one girl to whom he reveals himself—"She was a tall girl—but

* "In the Permanent Way." By Mrs. Steel. (Heinemann.)

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