

Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



Mrs. Stanbury, the Secretary of the Women's Local Government Society, 17, Tothill Street, S.W., will compile a list of ladies returned at the approaching vestry, guardian, and district council elections, and of all ladies elected parish councillors, and she would be obliged if they will send their names to her, in order that the list compiled by the Society may be as complete as possible.

At the annual meeting of the National Union of Women Workers (Manchester and Salford District Branch) held in Manchester last week, the subject of seats in shops was considered. A statement on behalf of the National Union was circulated at the meeting, and Professor W. J. Sinclair moved:—"That considering the evils arising from the long and continuous hours during which women shop assistants are compelled to stand, this meeting strongly supports the Bill to amend the law relating to shops, and especially Clause 9, which is before the House of Commons this year, and trusts that it may become law." The resolution was adopted.

The Gamble Prize, 1897, open to certificated students of Girton College, has been awarded to Miss Frances Hardcastle, for an essay entitled "Some observations on the theory of point-groups."

Mr. B. Nagarkar, in an address at South Place Chapel, Finsbury, on Sunday, on "The Position of Hindu Women in Ancient and Modern Times," said that in ancient India, as literary records attested, the position occupied by Hindu women was one of complete independence and perfect liberty. Woman was respected—almost venerated—was encouraged to pursue her life in the way she deemed best, and was under no compulsion to marry. There was evidence that ladies cultivated literature and physiology, while in the humbler walks of life females worked side by side with their husbands and male relatives in agricultural pursuits. And to this day the women agriculturalists of India enjoyed greater freedom than their sex in urban centres. Polygamy was confined almost exclusively to kings and wealthy people. Altogether in the ancient times to which he referred the position of woman in India was superior to that of her sex in probably any other part of the world. The Mohammedan invasion in the tenth and eleventh centuries initiated the extinction of the independence and freedom of Hindu women, and led to their seclusion in zenanas and to child marriage, as a protection against the lust and savagery of the invaders. Mr. Nagarkar characterized the introduction of suttee as a pious fraud of Brahmin pharisees, and as without warrant in the Sanscrit scripture. If the light of knowledge and of truth shone in every home, very large reforms could be effected in the moral and social condition of the Hindus. To this end the friends of female education were now working.

American women are aggressively patriotic (and we like them the better for it), and the probability of war with Spain has, as might have been expected, aroused the patriotism of the equal rights women in the United States. There are several military companies in various States composed of women, from the drummer to the colonel. One of the most noted of these companies belongs to Reading, Pennsylvania. It musters upwards of sixty girls, all of whom, with the exception of the commander, Mrs. Howard M. Shilling, are unmarried. The uniform consists of russet leggings, short red skirt, white waist, and blue jacket. For two years they have drilled with regulation rifles, and are well up in military tactics. They possess a cannon of their very own. Should there be war with Spain they will go to the front, but probably as nurses. Captain Shilling says, "We are willing to do any service in our power, wherever duty calls us. Whether Uncle Sam calls on us to nurse his wounded or to shoulder our rifles and help to protect the stars and stripes, we are ready."

A Book of the Week.

"POOR MAX."*

IT may be said, *sans façon*, that the book before us is a very distinct advance upon the "Yellow Aster."

In her first book Mrs. Caffyn seized upon a telling idea with the rude hand of a novice: and rushed in blithely and without misgiving, where angels fear to tread.

In "Poor Max" she has come very near to achieving a success: and the feeling of the reader is:—

"O the little more, and how much it is
And the little less, and what worlds away!"

The incidental faults—those of style—may be pardoned. Iota's grasp of the English language was always hesitating: and, for the sake of some of the détours in Max's character, much of his jarring slang may be overlooked.

But what can be said of the finish? Before its sheer banality one stands bereft of words. Surely our author has yielded to the modern craving for Caviare: the conclusion must be something entirely unexpected. To allow the lovers, Sandy Muir and Judith, to come together, would be obvious: therefore—manifestly—it is impossible. Some reason must be invented why Sandy or Judith should decline to be happy: and the reason that has occurred to the enterprising Iota is one which could never occur to any of her readers.

Here is the situation.

Judith has married the charming, wayward, invertebrate Max. He is a genius; he is also a liar. This troubles Judith extremely. She did not know that she was marrying a weak man, and she resents the discovery. Her husband's friend, Sandy Muir, has all the husband lacks; in fact, the two remind one a good deal of Philip Tredennis and Richard Amory in "Through one Administration."

Max dies, heroically, having sucked the tracheotomy tube of a friend who is dying of diphtheria.

Judith now has to choose between poverty and Sandy Muir, and wealth in the person of Churton Graves, a libertine who financed her husband because he admired her, and made immoral proposals to her during poor Max's lifetime.

*"Poor Max." By Iota. (Hutchinson & Co.)

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