

Outside the Gates.

A Book of the Week.

WOMEN.



OUR Princess of Wales has sustained a severe loss by the death of her dearly loved mother the Queen of Denmark, and Englishwomen deeply sympathise with her. The late Queen was devotedly attended in her last illness by her three daughters, the Princess of Wales, the Dowager Czarina of Russia, and the Duchess of Cumberland, although trained nurses were in attendance.

The Annual Conference of the National Union of Women Workers to be held at Norwich, from the 25th to the 29th inst., promises to be as great a success as usual. The National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland (the Council of this Union of Women Workers) hold their Annual Meeting, opening at 10.30 a.m., in the Princes Street Rooms, Norwich, on Thursday the 27th inst. Much important business, in connection with the forthcoming Meeting of the International Council of Women to be held in London next year, will be discussed, and it is hoped wide interest will be aroused in the Great Congress of 1899.

The Committee of Arrangements of the Congress is already hard at work, and the united secretarial efforts of Miss Teresa Wilson and Miss Janes will doubtless soon perfect the business details.

We shall rely upon the readers of the **NURSING RECORD** to do all in their power to make the International Nursing Conference a great success and of resulting benefit to the great profession to which we belong and hold in such high esteem.

The history of the Woman's Suffrage movement, written by that great pioneer (the woman of 48) Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, will be warmly welcomed. It is entitled "Eighty Years and more," and should be placed in the hands of every adult woman.

Mrs. Cady Stanton is a lovely old woman of the Quaker type. She was one of the "delights" of the World's Fair, and has counted amongst her friends the most highly cultivated men and women of her century on both sides of the Atlantic.

Dr. Anita McGee, who has come so prominently forward during the late Hispano-American war, and who is the first woman to be granted officer's rank in the United States Army, is the wife of Prof. W. J. McGee, head of the Bureau of Ethnology, in Washington, and daughter of Prof. Simon Newcomb. She is the mother of several children. Born in Washington, she was early sent abroad to be educated at Geneva and one of the universities for women in England. She served two years on the staff of John Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, and is well known in her profession in Washington.

"THE SEEKER."*

I do like, I must say, to catch my author fresh, when I can. That is to say, I like to light upon a book by one who is quite fresh to the work, who has neither the invariable faults, nor the more problematical excellencies, of the old hand;—and in these days, when, be your inspiration of what length it please, you are sure to find a publisher for it—when you are not extended on the Procrustean couch of the three volume novel, and therefore under no obligation to pad—one really has a fair chance of now and then lighting upon a book which has been written simply and solely because the writer felt the impulse to record an impression or an experience.

Such is the little book before me. It has the faults of the beginner; it has also that freshness, that dew that lingers upon the dawn of the soul's powers, so soon to be dried up and withered in the arid noon of competition and criticism.

The author, (of which sex?) has evidently either lived in China or known intimately those who have lived there; and this local colouring alone would suffice to make her work interesting, at this juncture, when civilization is holding its affrighted breath at the assassination of an emperor in his own palace, without even the knowledge of his subjects.

That which has most struck the author of "The Seeker," in her Chinese experiences, is the curious absence of the element of love in the national character. That mighty power, the lever that moves the world, that which in the West makes the most sordid life bearable, and casts a halo over the darkest lot, is simply no part of the life of the Celestial. I am so entirely ignorant myself as to the national customs, that I am in no position to say whether the sketches here given of the life and motives of the Chinese villager be true to life or no; but I have still in my mind the memory of Mrs. Bishop's wonderful book on Korea, and I feel as if the author of "The Seeker," is speaking words of truth.

Poor little Maia is a seeker after this great spirit of love.

She is not a pure-bred Chinese, but the child of a Chinese woman who married an English sailor; and so there is a hunger in her poor little heart which nobody around her can understand, least of all, she herself. The very first whisper of the word love—it comes through the words of a little group of missionaries, travelling through the country—drives her to action; and at the risk of her life she escapes from the house of her future father-in-law and goes off to follow those who have looked kindly upon her, and spoken gently to her, for the first time in her life.

The story next opens upon Maia, grown to be a lovely girl in the care of one of the ladies of the Mission. Her broken English, and her delightful drollery, are really admirable; one wishes that the writer had devoted more time to the elaboration of such a very original and striking character. The scene between her and her fat old Chinese admirer, gave me a very hearty laugh; and some of her attempts at English slang, such as: "Ah! Eric, I have got toast on you!" are extremely amusing.

The end is very sensational, but no doubt such things are quite possible in the surroundings chosen by the

* By M. Bird. Ward, Lock and Co.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)