

Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



Monthly Nurses, will be found in another column.

As we go to press, the Annual Conference of the National Union of Women Workers is in full swing at Norwich, of which we hope to give some details next week. The Paper read by Lady Laura Ridding, on the Work of Midwives and

The Meeting of the National Council of Women, of Great Britain and Ireland, which took up the greater part of Thursday, discussed many important matters, with which those interested in the International Congress of 1899, will do well to acquaint themselves.

The Countess of Aberdeen, President of the International Council of Women, will sail from Quebec on November 12th, and her presence in England will be warmly welcomed by numerous friends and fellow-workers, who are prepared to help her to make the great gathering of women the immense success it is sure to be under her able chairmanship.

The Governors of Holloway College for Girls have, we are glad to hear, decided to appoint a lady secretary to fill the position vacant by the death of Mr. Clifford Smith. The salary is £250 a year, and there are, of course, an immense number of applicants for this desirable post, in spite of the fact that the Governors are offering just half the salary to a woman which they paid to a man. It is to be hoped that the lady selected will have been efficiently trained for the post. As there is at present no standard of education for women secretaries, a good deal of jobbery and heart burning is usually the result of these appointments. We speak from our experience in the Royal British Nurses' Association, where on two occasions the Executive Committee appointed women completely ignorant of their official duties, and in the present instance the Hon. Officers refused all information concerning the antecedents of the Lady who "acts" as "Secretary to the Corporation."

The first qualified woman physician in Europe, so far as is known, was a young Athenian woman named Aynodice. In the year 300 B.C., she disguised herself as a man, and began to attend the medical school at Athens, which it was against the law for a woman to do. She afterwards practised among the women at Athens with extraordinary success. Her secret becoming known, she was prosecuted for studying and practising medicine illegally. The Athenian women, however, raised so furious an agitation in consequence, that the case was dropped and the law repealed. Coming to later times, we find several women who obtained the degree of doctor of medicine and practised in Europe before 1492, especially in the Moorish universities of Spain. Trotula, of Rugiero, in the eleventh century, had a European reputation and practised in Salerno. At the beginning of the fourteenth century Dorothea Bocchi not only received the degree of doctor, but was professor of medicine in the University of Bologna. Since then two other women

have been professors of medical subjects in the same university—Anna Mangolini (anatomy) and Maria delle Donne (obstetric medicine), the latter being appointed in 1799. In the year 1311 an edict was issued in France forbidding surgeons and female surgeons from practising until they had passed a satisfactory examination before the proper authorities. These female surgeons are again referred to in an edict in 1352.

A Book of the Week.

"ADVENTURES OF THE COMTE DE LA MUETTE DURING THE REIGN OF TERROR."*

MR. BERNARD CAPES bears a name that has only just risen above the literary horizon, and already gives so much light as to promise a brilliant future. Unfortunately I did not come across his first clever story, "The Lake of Wine," until it could no longer be called a book of the week. But, in noticing the new one, I should like to advise everybody to read the older one as well.

It is on the whole superior to the book at present under review, because it is such an extremely original idea and plot, but the author excels in the art of narration in such a degree that almost anything he wrote would be pleasant reading.

"The Adventures of the Comte de la Muette," labours under the disadvantage of treating of a period which has been so often selected as the hunting ground of a novelist, that to be original is difficult. Nevertheless, I think that Mr. Capes achieves it.

The herds of wild dogs which hunted the streets of Paris by night, rendered man-hunters by lapping up the blood that ran in the Place de la Guillotine, is a source of horror that I do not remember to have seen tapped in any other tale of the period.

The character of Carinne also is somewhat original, though the whimsical lady reminded me a little, I confess, of the heroine of "A gentleman of France." The fault of the book is that it has taken the author too long to settle down into his stride. It reads, in the beginning, like another of these modern books, for which local colour has been carefully sought and correctly applied, with the result of destroying the spontaneity of the story, and presenting instead, an annal or memoir of the times, illustrated by a thin line of narrative.

But suddenly "The Comte de la Muette" comes to life, and when once it does so, the interest never flags.

The hiding in the Catacombs is another original idea, and one that, so far as my reading goes, is new. The account of this is as grim and ghastly as anything I have read. One or two bits of pathos in the story are excellent, and inspire a hope that Mr. Capes will one day draw more liberally on that portion of his inspiration. It is the agonising little scene in the prison yard of La Force to which I refer. No mother could read it without tears.

The scene between the little count and his innamorata in the gloom of the Catacombs is admirable, all except the speech which he makes to the lady, in avowing his feelings, and which is worthy of Sir Charles Grandison at his worst.

The escape from the final danger, and the immovable calm of the Englishman, when suddenly called upon to play a part, is very good.

* "Adventures of the Comte de la Muette during the Reign of Terror." By Bernard Capes. Blackwood & Sons,

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