

## Outside the Gates.



## WOMEN.

THE Queen's Speech to the House of Commons at the prorogation of Parliament contained the following reference to the London Government Bill:—"I have had great satisfaction in giving my assent to a Bill for completing the organization of Municipal Government in London. I do not doubt that the inhabitants of the various portions of this Metropolis will derive from it the benefits which similar institutions have conferred upon other cities and towns in this country."

In view of the action of the House of Lords in excluding women from the positions of Councillors and Aldermen, and the strong feelings entertained, and expressed, by many women as to this exclusion, we must wish that the words "great satisfaction" had not found place in the Queen's speech. It is a sorrowful fact, that in a reign in which so much has been accomplished—the reign of a great and good woman—there is every likelihood that women, who are so powerful an influence for good in her kingdom and empire, and who were at the beginning of her Majesty's reign in the position of slaves, will be found at its close in the same condition. It must never be forgotten that the disfranchised classes in this country are incarcerated criminals, lunatics, paupers, and women.

At the recent Congress of the British Medical Association, a statistical paper was read showing the detriment to women's health caused by standing long hours in shops. Indeed, the cruelty of this custom is apparent, but the callous indifference of the women who buy is even more astonishing than the greed of the shopkeeper. When one sees the injured expression of members of our sex, when they are unable to find a chair on which to flop for the short time necessary in which to make purchases, we are not surprised at the accusation of selfishness levelled against them, where other women are concerned. Their long suffering and slavish devotion to the exactions of men cannot under these circumstances spring from the noble source—*forgetfulness of self*—which women so often advance as an excuse for time-serving adulation of the sex which holds the purse-strings.

The difficulty of procuring really efficient secretarial and business women is widely acknowledged, so that the new departure on the part of the Yorkshire Ladies Council of Education is timely. Its recent scheme for preparing ladies for secretarial and business appointments is, perhaps, on the whole, the most practical. Situated in a county teeming with busy commercial houses, the school should have good prospects, as the openings for women in business are continually increasing. Women's qualifications for careful, accurate routine work, either in or out of a business office, have been abundantly proved. The new training school will provide practical and systematic training for girls and women who wish to be educated for such positions as secretaries, amanuenses, librarians, bookkeepers, cashiers, commercial or Government clerks, shorthand writers, typists, etc.

## A Book of the Week.

## IONE MARCH.\*

THE reading of all Mr. Crockett's later work is a sad experience for the reviewer, who once hoped that he would do great things; but it was not to be. Mr. Crockett is not a strong man; not strong enough to be proof against the demoralizing and immediate recognition which we now accord to all our promising beginners. He thought he had achieved his reputation when it was but in embryo; he spoke to us as one who has arrived, before most of us knew that he was knocking at the door; and his too early blossoming has been followed by a premature falling of the fruit. One feels that the only hope for him now is to write no more for the next three years; by which time he may have amassed something of more vital interest to tell us than the superficial results of a visit to Switzerland, and the acquaintance of a few Americans, who, if we may trust his report of their diction, were by no means the cultivated and charming people one is accustomed to meet and delight in.

Of course, the book is written with spirit, and there is plenty of go about it; the author of "The Raiders" will give us movement; but he no longer gives us life. His puppets are all galvanized into action; their motives are not convincing.

Ione March, the loving and only child of a devoted and widowed father, elects, for no reason whatever, to live by herself in London and earn her own living by any means that occur to her, while the father, who has nobody else in the world to love him, or to be a companion to him, resides by himself in America. To be asked to believe in such conduct on the part of a girl with whom one is expected to sympathise, is a little too much. One feels that the sole reason for Ione's remaining in London, is that Mr. Crockett's knowledge of New York is too limited for him to be able to guide her movements there. Her burst of grief, therefore, when she learns that the father from whom she had withheld her very address, is ruined, and has died disgraced and alone, is felt to be entirely unreal, and enlists no sympathy.

Much of the account of Ione's London experiences is very nearly very good. We have had a good many "bachelor girl" heroines lately, however; and the lovely typist, who is either bullied or made love to by her employer, as the fancy takes him, is by no means a novelty in the menu of fiction.

The skit upon the the "Christian Scientists" might be made very good, but is much too hastily introduced, and has been far too little studied by the author. It is a tantalizing thing to read a book when one feels all the time that it might be so much better done. The Adairs, for instance, the Scotch family with whom Ione lodges, how much might be made of them, if only their creator had warmed to the task! But hear the first speech of Mrs. Adair, when Ione is introduced as a lodger:—

"'Ye are welcome, Missie,' said Mrs. Adair; 'I wish it had been the bonnie Clydeside that ye were comin' to bide in, awa' doon yonder by Inverkip—wi' the laverocks singin' blythely in the lift, the linties jinkin' in the whin bushes, and the bonny steamboats on the Clyde gangin' and comin' like the angels ascendin' and descendin' Jacob's ladder.'"

\* By S. R. Crockett. Hodder and Stoughton.

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