

## TAXED WITHOUT REPRESENTATION,

subject to laws in the working and administering which they had no effective voice, deprived at one and the same time of the two alternate remedies, votes and arms.

There had grown up a network of vested interests, including an ambitious and intelligent official caste, imported from abroad. It was all important in that part of the world that the two white races upon which the future of South Africa depended should live on peaceful and friendly terms, and that was a state of things which could only be permanently brought about by the giving and receiving of equal rights and by reciprocal self-respect. Referring to

## A CONVERSATION WITH MR. GLADSTONE,

which he once had, as to the iniquities of the Austrian rule in Italy, and as to the conditions under which the right of rebellion arose, he said Mr. Gladstone remarked: "Theologians and moralists forget that when St. Paul counsels subjection to the powers that be, he is speaking to the individual as an individual, and had not the case of communities in his view," and he went on to say, "I am persuaded that there is nothing more permanently demoralising to a community than passive acquiescence in unmerited oppression." That was Mr. Gladstone's doctrine, and if it be a sound and true one, as he (Mr. Asquith) thought it was, it did not appear to him that it ceased to apply when

## THE VICTIMS OF UNEQUAL LAWS

were not foreigners, but our own fellow subjects.

What noble and inspiring sentiments! But, hark ye! oh women! "tax-payers without representation," and "victims of unequal laws," "fellow subjects" who are not foreigners, how do these words strike you when you realise that they were uttered by a member of "the great Liberal Party" who is one of the most determined opposers of *Women's Suffrage*? Do they ring true? Surely not in the acute hearing of women. Any way, they will be useful for "Women Utlanders" at the next general election, when we hope a well organised band of women suffragists will work heart and soul against the return of every candidate who denies to women tax-payers their right to direct representation through the Parliamentary vote, and classes them with criminals, lunatics, and paupers, the only disfranchised "fellow-subjects who are not foreigners."

## A Book of the Week.

## MIRANDA OF THE BALCONY.\*

It was not possible to read "The Courtship of Morrice Buckler," without feeling that the author of it had a future before him. This promise is amply fulfilled in "Miranda of the Balcony."

The distinguishing charm of the first book was the original and ingenious nature of the plot, the real nature of which came on the reader with a glow of genuine surprise, coupled, as it should always be, with the reflection, "I ought to have guessed that before;" the author was leading up to it, but I could not see,

To this ingenuity, Mr. Mason is now in process of adding another and far more valuable quality; he is acquiring style. He is not content with such a public as satisfies Mr. Guy Boothby—a public to whom even grammar is as naught, and which has never so much as heard of *le mot juste*, much less longed for it.

Mr. Mason means to give us a good story well constructed, than which no greater benefit can be conferred upon us in this age of nerve worry and brain fag.

His title is the least satisfactory part of his book. To the present reviewer it conveyed an idea of Turkish harems and lovely maidens of the Byronic type, all lips and emotions and sighs. But Miranda is as modern as the automobile, was born in Suffolk; and the balcony upon which she and the hero become acquainted overlooks St. James's Park. To be sure, she does live as a rule in Africa, which to some of us who have never visited that interesting continent, takes a part of her story rather out of the region of practical politics. But, when you want tortures and vendettas and kidnappings, you must cross the Straits of Gibraltar now-a-days, fortunately, or unfortunately for us.

There is no ultra-sensationalism about the book; the horrors are real, but they are not piled up; and Miranda and Charnock are both refreshingly real and vivid.

Miranda is the supposed widow of a rascally officer who sells the plans of a new gun to France, and thinks it better to disappear from the port of Gibraltar by night, and to be wrecked upon the coast of Scilly. The manner in which his being really alive is discovered, the manoeuvres of the scoundrel who blackmails his wife, the unexpected turning of the tables upon him by Charnock, and the subsequent search through Morocco for the wretched man who has been spirited away by his enemy, are all of keen interest. Here and there the book reminds one of Mr. Seton Merriman at the period in which he produced the "Sowers." But Mr. Mason is superior to Mr. Merriman in one most important faculty,—the power to draw a good woman and make her interesting. Miranda is altogether delightful.

It is so natural too. The woman's feeling that, bad as he is, she cannot leave the father of her child to languish in the horrors of slavery; her sending her lover to find him; her inevitable reaction of feeling when they return together, and she beholds in the flesh the wretch for whom a good man has wasted two years of a valuable life.

The utter worthlessness of Ralph Warriner is perhaps a trifle overdone. Had he been so entirely detestable as he is represented, Miranda would never have married him, however young and raw she was at the time; and Fournier would not have risked so much so willingly to save him. The author will argue that Warriner, after his rescue, is supposed not to be in his right mind; but this does not entirely account for his utterly loathsome behaviour and total want of human feeling towards the man who has rescued him.

With this exception there is hardly a fault to find with the book, which of its kind is extremely good. We hope Mr. Mason will soon give us some more. He need not exert himself to provide sensation; with so much power of character drawing and dialogue, he can charm us with a good deal less plot than he has hitherto considered necessary.

\* By A. E. W. Mason. Macmillan.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)