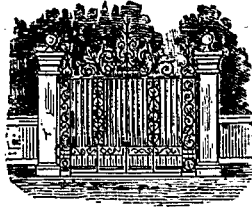


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



Does the reformer exist who has not felt the force of *vis inertia*? However desirable, however necessary a given reform may be, there will always be a large number of persons who, actively or passively, oppose it simply because they want to be let alone—they do not wish to move. The American Declaration of Independence asserts, "Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed," and a contemporary, recognising this fact, asserts with truth that "one of the greatest obstacles to the exercise of the suffrage by women is *vis inertia*, the force of habit, reluctance to change an established routine."

In this connection an amusing story is told of an enterprising reporter who took for a drive a poor old woman who had lived for twenty-nine years in a tenement-room in a New York slum. This is how the reporter intended to end her account of the drive and of Hannah Risser's gratitude:—

"Good bye," she said. "Thank you and God bless you. You have shown me to-day a glimpse of what I hope awaits me after I take my next—and last—long drive!"

But what really happened was this:—

"Where are we going?" she whimpered. "We have went so far. Are we in another city? I don't feel well, I think I catch cold. I got some good medicine in my house wot the Salvation girls give me. It always makes me well. It cures everything wot I got. Take me back."

In due course they arrived at the tenement once more, and "a long gasp of delight fell on Miss Underwood's ear. It came from the lips of Hannah Risser. Her face was transfigured. The listless, sick little old woman had become an ecstatic creature, hysterical with joy. 'Ach Gott!' she shrieked, 'Ach Gott!—there's my little home. I'm back again!' She closed her eyes and struggled for breath: 'Ach Gott!' she gasped, 'Gott sei dank!'"

The moral of this story is that people, as a rule, want not what is good for them, but simply to be let alone. Let reformers ponder the fact, and decide if they have the courage to face the dogged obstruction they will assuredly encounter before they take up work for the benefit of humanity.

The Queens Consort who have been crowned since 1600 have been Anne of Denmark (James I.), July 25, 1603; Mary of Modena (James II.), April 23, 1685; Caroline of Anspach (George II.), October 11, 1727; Queen Charlotte (George III.), September 22, 1761; and Queen Adelaide (William IV.), September 8, 1831. Henrietta Maria (Charles I.), as a Roman Catholic, refused to be crowned. Sophia of Zell (George I.) was in prison in Germany, and Queen Caroline (George IV.) was refused admittance to the Abbey. A Queen Consort is not crowned as of right.

The sisters of the Congregations of the Holy Spirit who were expelled recently from their schools at Landeneau have returned unexpectedly to it. They state that they are acting under the orders of their Superior, and that they consider they have complied with the law. The matter was reported to the Prefect, and by him to the Government. It is further reported that nearly all the religious associations possessing premises in Brittany which have been used as schools have decided to recall the sisters and re-open the schools on September 15th.

A Book of the Week.

"THE SEA LADY."*

Amid all his variety—and Mr. Wells as an author is various—there is one underlying idea, which has taken hold of him, and which recurs to his mind again and again in different forms. It is that of a being, a member of an alien system, precipitated into a scheme of things which he cannot understand; an angel on earth—a man on the moon—the inhabitants of Mars in London—the twentieth century man in the ten thousandth century; to each and all of these he has succeeded in imparting a weird degree of conviction; and now he gives us another variant on this dominant theme, the mermaid on land—the soul-less being among those who own a moral code.

The account of the appearance of the Sea Lady at Folkestone, and her precipitating herself into the Bunting family, is quite inimitable. She feigns to be drowning, and is brought ashore by two gentlemen; only it is she who brings them to shore after all. How her mastery of the English language was acquired is left to our imagination, but our imagination, roused by the stimulant of Mr. Wells's style, responds with a readiness which surprises ourselves. There is no part of the story much better than the first attempts of Mrs. Bunting and Adeline to establish some kind of a *rapport* between their wondrous guest and themselves. "She has come, so she tells Mrs. Bunting, in search of a soul; and Mrs. Bunting, good lady, is strongly disposed to think that she will obtain one. With Undine floating in the background of her mind, she takes it for granted that it is a soul to fill her own body withal of which the Sea Lady is in search; but this is not so. It is the soul of a man which the beautiful horror desires; and which, in the end, she obtains.

Harry Chatteris is a good-looking, rising young man, engaged to Adeline Glendower, an earnest young lady, who goes in for politics, and thinks herself like "Marcella." Incidentally, we may perhaps be allowed to deplore the writer's embittered onslaught upon Mrs. Humphry Ward. This great novelist lacks only a sense of humour to place her in the foremost rank of all; and as she is, she is well above Mr. Wells's sneers.

The mermaid has seen and loved Harry Chatteris; it is for him that she has come; and the finest thing of all is the study of Adeline, the artificial *poseur* of her time, face to face with elemental passion, its problem and its power. One who has ably reviewed this curious sketch, deplores the fact that it begins in the lightest comedy, to end in tragedy, complete though veiled. One fails to see what other end were

* By H. G. Wells. Methuen.

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