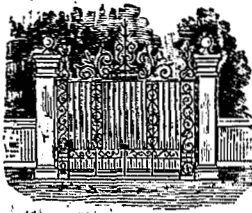


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



The Education Bill, which is so terribly unjust to women, and therefore to the nation at large, is now being considered clause by clause by Parliament. Inside the House the treatment of women will receive but scant courtesy, but outside we are glad to note that several just men have during the past week spoken up for us.

The Archbishop of Canterbury said at Maidstone: "One defect ran through the Bill, and that was that there was not sufficient recognition of the part which women play in any educational system if it is to be complete."

Mr. Augustine Birrell, speaking in North Bristol, remarked: "The Bill would injure the cause of education, leaving out all other considerations. It was mockery to exclude women from the work, and should excite the vehement indignation of women and of all right-thinking men."

Dr. Clifford, speaking to a resolution which stated that, "educationally and politically, the Bill is a retrograde, pernicious, and, as regards women, a disfranchising measure," said "the women of England were up in arms against it."

And at an enthusiastic meeting called by the Women's Liberal Federation, held in St. James's Hall, to demonstrate against the Bill, the following resolution, proposed by Dr. Spence Watson, was unanimously passed:—

"This meeting of the Women's Liberal Federation condemns the Government Education Bill, because it destroys the direct election of elementary education authorities; it deprives women of their present right to share in the administration of education; it denies to the electors the direct control of schools maintained by public funds; it enlarges the field of sectarian strife. This meeting, therefore, declares that the Government have no right to force the Bill through Parliament, and calls upon them to submit it to the verdict of the nation."

The following resolution has been forwarded from the Executive Committee of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies to Miss Rose Scott, Secretary of the New South Wales Womanhood Suffrage League, on receipt of the news that full suffrage has been granted to the women of New South Wales:—

"The Executive Committee of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies send their most hearty congratulations to Miss Rose Scott and the New South Wales Womanhood Suffrage League on the victory which has crowned their efforts in the cause of the Parliamentary enfranchisement of women in New South Wales."

A Book of the Week.

OLIVIA'S SUMMER.*

This curious book is written with that special quality of its writer for which it is hard to find a better term than poignancy. The leading motive, except in the hands of a mistress of her craft, would be simply preposterous. But we know that preposterous things happen every day around us; and one of these incidents has come before Mrs. Mann, and made her determined not only to write about it, but to make her readers believe in it.

Let us say at once that she succeeds; succeeds in making the love story of Olivia Lascelles Grieg, parson's daughter, and Robert Sturt, choir-boy, ten years her junior, convincing; not only makes us believe that this really happened, but obliges us to sympathise with poor Olivia, lonely, misunderstood, craving for love, with no outside interests to break the chain of influence which flows to her from the unwavering determination of the masterful Robert.

That she should so far succeed gives Mrs. Mann rank as a novelist of the highest order. She handles her reader as she would a musical instrument, fashioning what thoughts she will. And she spares no detail that may make the solecism less audacious; she makes Robert an illegitimate son, she makes his mother a pork butcher in the same village in which he and poor Olivia settle down to their wedded bliss. She makes you see how utterly unfit Olivia was to cope with so impossible a situation. The self-confidence that could have lived it down—for in ten years Olivia would have been the wife of a very rich man, and wealth covers a multitude of social distinctions—is wholly wanting in the lonely, hard, matter-of-fact woman, who can be tender only to the man whose daily inspiration she has been from his early boyhood.

The way in which the first rifts appear in her lute, when a few months' matrimony have rolled over her head, is masterly.

It comes first in the form of insult from the vicar's wife, who comes to complain of an error of three-half-pence in her account for flour and bran—Robert is a miller, as well as a stock-raiser. Then comes the sting of jealousy, jealousy of Mattie, the late miller's daughter, whom Robert employs as clerk in his counting-house.

It is Robert's mother who cheerfully makes the suggestion. She always thought Robert would marry Mattie.

"'There's money,' she said, dispassionately, 'and a fine-lookin' gal. I reckon there ain't in all Shenfield a finer-lookin' gal than Mattie, nor yet a genteeler. And a sight of nonsense allust a-goin' on between her and Bob afore Bob went away.'

"'She was a little girl,' said Olivia, feeling physically sick.

"'She were seventeen and looked a full twenty,' said Martha, stirring her fat. 'He were only a larruppin' boy too; but that's just the age,' said Martha, the sadly wise. 'Once I took upon myself to give Mattie a word of caution.'

"'Olivia's eyes flashed upon her mother-in-law's face. Olivia, daughter of Lascelles Grieg! She was wading through the bitterness of humiliation now.

"'She'd called a saucy word to him, one evenin', him a lolluppin' idle agin the gate, and he, he set a runnin'

* By Mary E. Mann. Methuen.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)