

On the ground of *expediency*, Lord Hugh Cecil did not further his cause, or the estimation in which he is held, by his assertion that "if women were admitted it would immensely detract from the authority and power of the Council," an assertion which he proceeded to support by the cheap sneer that if women were admitted "it would at once be said that they (the Council) represented the views of a lot of foolish women who would do anything their parsons told them."

In reply to the Bishop of Salisbury, who inquired whether his lordship really thought that municipal government had been weakened by the extension of the franchise to women, Lord Hugh Cecil admitted he "did not think it had made much difference," but added that "it was well known that women were supposed to be much more under clerical influence than men." He then formally moved the introduction of the words "of the male sex" into the resolution under consideration, and the male members of the United Convocation and Houses of Laymen supported his intolérant and unjust proposition by ninety votes to sixty.

The Bishop of Guildford (Bishop Sumner) did not, however, allow the occasion to pass without recording his protest against the exclusion of women, and said:—"The object they all had at heart was to obtain the best Council they could, and in order to do that they must have the best qualified electors. . . . Everywhere about the country it would be found that the ladies were some of the best Church workers. Ladies were being educated now as they themselves were when they were at the college and the university. They were not now ladies who spent all their time in worsted work or the like, but they went about the country, as he could personally testify, spending and being spent in the Master's service, and for such an assembly as this to say that no female should be an elector was, he thought, a scandal. He moved the omission of the words 'of the male sex.'"

This was seconded by Chancellor Espin.

Mr. Sydney Gedge explained why, having put the amendment originally on the paper, he voted against it now. He objected to including a few women if they did not include all. The original proposition was that the qualification should be given regardless of sex, and if they included a few women they had no right to exclude others, because that would be making a distinction between woman and woman, which did not obtain between man and man.

The amendment was lost.

Those in high places in the Church will do well to pause and weigh the consequences lest they alienate women who are "some of the best Church workers," as the Church in former days alienated the followers of Wesley, who now, a large consensus of opinion admits, might, if wiser counsels had prevailed, have remained in its fold. Already many thoughtful women are asserting that there is no place for them in a Church which accepts all their work but denies them any voice in its councils, and it must always be remembered that if the women of one generation are driven out of the Church they will be followed by the men of the next. The Church owes more to women than can ever be detailed, from the time when they were associated with its Divine Founder in His ministry on earth up to the present. The fact alone that women were last at the Cross and first at the

grave when all His male disciples forsook Him and fled, should suffice to silence the male sex on the subject of women's inferiority in Church matters.

A Book of the Week.

THE WINDING ROAD.*

If I were asked to name the novel of this season, I should give the palm to "The Winding Road." There are two novels with which it may be compared—both by women, both very much above the average. One is Miss Montrésor's "Into the Highways and Hedges," the other Violet Jacob's more recent "Sheep-stealers." All these three books are alike in the fact that they rely for their interest entirely upon the life of English country folk, and that they are written by women who thoroughly know what they are talking about. Elizabeth Godfrey's contempt for the lady who passes a few weeks in a picturesque district in order to take notes, and write about the people, is well shown in the portrait of Miss Potter, the lady journalist who attends the Blessing of the Boats.

The idea on which this tale is founded is as old as the hills, and yet, as here presented, wholly new. Most of us know Calverley's inimitable parody—

"The miller's daughter has ripe red cheeks,
Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese;
She gazed at the piper for thirteen weeks,
Then she followed him out o'er the misty leas."

Phenice is the granddaughter of Farmer Everard. Her imagination is wholly taken captive by Jasper Waring, the gentleman gipsy. He falls ill at the farm, and she tends him unwearingly, and when he is well he finds himself loth to leave her. Phenice supplies what this erratic being lacks. She is calm, equitable, silent, sympathetic. She has something of that excellent dumb quality for which a man loves his dog. It takes her more than thirteen weeks to make up her mind to break with all family ties and traditions and follow him out o'er the misty leas. But in the end she does so. She leaves home and goes to Jasper, and they tramp Europe together. Some of their adventures are recorded, and very charming reading they make.

But the scene changes when Phenice can no longer tramp her share of miles. "*Que vous avez de chance!*" says the wife of a travelling tinker to her, on hearing that she has no children; but after a while, little Ellen makes her appearance. It complicates matters, as Jasper, with truly masculine inconsequence, remarks. The babe is delicate. Gipsy babies ought not to be delicate. Jasper thinks exposure to all weathers will harden it; Phenice knows better. So at last they come to the inevitable Parting of the Ways. Phenice sees and knows that she must have a home for her child. Jasper knows only that he must wander, for the blood of his gipsy ancestress is in him. So by degrees comes the end—pathetic, true, not to be evaded. Nothing could make Jasper a husband and a father, excellent comrade though he was. There were times, says the author, when his wife felt as though she were married to a Kelpie, or a Will-o'-the-wisp. Lohengrin-like, he never told her, even of his parentage. Meek and silent she walked beside him, asking naught but to be with him, perishing when she believed him to have deserted her.

* By Elizabeth Godfrey. John Lane.

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