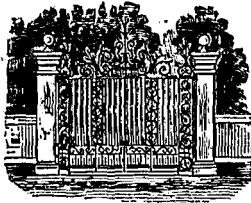


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



National Liberal Association, provided that the latter agrees with the objects and rules of the former.

Mrs. Eva MacLaren moved an amendment to the effect that reunion should be welcomed, providing it could be effected without fundamentally altering the constitution of the Women's Federation, and provided the present policy of the Federation with regard to Women's Suffrage and the State regulation of vice should be upheld. The amendment was carried by a majority of 199.

At the afternoon sitting the assembly discussed a resolution on Women's Suffrage, to the effect that in view of the appeal made by the Liberal Party to women to assist in maintaining the Free Trade policy of the country, and having regard to the demands of candidates for the help of women at Parliamentary elections, the Council should urge on the Liberal Party to place amongst the reforms mentioned on its programme that of Women's Suffrage. The resolution was carried.

We sympathise deeply with Mrs. Dora Montefiore's point of view. The sale of her goods took place at the Railway Approach, Shepherd's Bush, on Tuesday. "Taxation without representation is tyranny," says Mrs. Montefiore, who declined to pay income tax on the ground that, being a woman, she had no vote. If all women of property could combine to do likewise, we should speedily become an enfranchised sex. Such resistance would be more efficacious than a hundred drawing-room meetings.

We congratulate Mrs. Farquharson of Haughton upon the granting of a new Charter by the King to the Linnean Society to enable women to rank as Fellows on equal terms with men. Mrs. Farquharson has advocated this just reform for many years, and worked unsparingly to accomplish it. We want more women like her, anxious for honourable status for their sex.

At the first day of the sale of the late Princess Mathilde's property in Paris, £17,800 was obtained for the pearl necklace sent by Napoleon I. to the Queen of Westphalia.

It is nonsense to maintain, says W. Daly in the *Tablet*, that the male sex, especially a set of small boys whom one does not usually associate with piety, and who have, moreover, not come to years of discretion, sing more devotionally than women, who have earned for themselves the appellation of "devout sex."

A Book of the Week.

BELCHAMBER.*

This is a book which cannot fail to arrest and interest those who read novels—as, according to Mr. Wells, we all do read a novel nowadays—for something besides the story. It may be as well to warn the reader not to be put off by the stereotyped manner of the author's opening.

"Belchamber," begins Mr. Sturgis, "is one of the most beautiful places in England. The name, if not the house, dates from days when Norman French was the polite language of our kings"—and so he carries on the history of the place, through the generations, just in the fashion of Andrew Lang's sample novel openings; and it is full fifty very closely-printed pages before we begin to have an idea of what he is driving at.

The ground having thus been somewhat over-prepared for the hero's entrance, he comes upon the scenes—Marquis of Belchamber, known to his intimates as "Sainty."

It is a study of the failure of weakness.

Poor Sainty is weak in health, feeble of physique, and, worst of all, he is also weak in will. His father was a wretched young libertine, who, with one foot in the grave, married the excellent Lady Sarah, the typical decorous and estimable young woman of the middle nineteenth century. The early decease of her impossible husband left Lady Sarah sole regent of the historic property, with two sons, Sainty and Arthur. Mr. Sturgis is a believer in heredity to its last dread possibilities. Arthur inherits his mother's constitution and his father's morals; Sainty his father's constitution and his mother's morals.

Lady Sarah from the first persistently misunderstands both her sons. She dislikes Sainty, and loves Arthur; but her love does not enable her to understand him. The inherent weakness of Sainty's whole nature receives no help from her, she being of the class of woman who has herself found no difficulties in life, and cannot understand them in others. Sainty is, from first to last, merely the puppet of circumstances.

In his craving for intellectual sympathy he makes a friend of a shallow, superficial young snob of a don, Gerald Newby, who only tolerates him on account of his being a marquis. And even after Sainty, who is by no means lacking in intelligence, has probed the worthless nature to its depths, he still clings to the man's friendship. Very early in life he discovers the kind of life his brother Arthur, "the typical healthy-minded English boy"—Heaven save the mark!—is leading. But with his incurable, utter weakness he lifts no finger to save him. He makes no effort, not even the smallest, to draw him away from temptation. One is made to feel that he, Sainty, had no temptations, because he really was too little virile to know them. He is humanity and water, always with the best intentions.

His final downfall comes with his egregious so-called marriage. If before he had any spark of manliness, it is now hopelessly extinguished. Still he drifts, like the spar of wreckage, afloat upon the sea of circumstances. There comes at last the crisis—the moment when he must make a decision. He decides: to do nothing! He will let vice stalk on unchecked, he will let it

* By Howard Overing Sturgis. (Constable, Westminster).

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