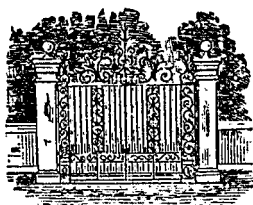


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



There is a sort of unwritten law that creative work by women must be ignored in so far as "honours" are concerned. We often wonder what would have happened if Madam Curie, the great discoverer of radium, had not had a husband for the scientific world to crown—a few rags of reflected glory, thus enshrining the brilliant woman discoverer. Thus we find a Florence Nightingale receives no more recognition from the fount of all honour for her monumental labours in the Crimea than do a group of Society women for philandering around in the South African War.

A lady who lately visited Poet's Corner with a Frenchwoman was surprised to hear her exclaim as her eyes fell on the commemorative tablet to Jenny Lind: "Is it possible in an age which has produced Charlotte Brontë, Elizabeth Barrett-Browning, Mrs. Gaskell, and George Eliot, that the only woman memorialised here is a foreign opera singer? How you English women can put up with such a slight on your sex passes my comprehension." Such astoundment is not to be wondered at. Surely, the National Valhalla might be reserved for our own people, even if classed with the Houses of Lords and Commons, as a place not to be defiled by the presence of mothers and wives whose blood has built and sustained the Empire.

We are glad to note that the Begum of Bhopal, a remarkable woman who rules a principal Mussulman State in India from behind the purdah, has been decorated by the Prince of Wales with the Insignia of the Grand Commander of the Indian Empire. The Begum is the first woman in India to receive this honour. Let us hope she may not be the last.

The Women's Local Government Society (for promoting the eligibility of women to serve on all local government bodies) is anxious to have as complete a list as possible of the women serving on Parish Councils, and the Committee would be grateful to anyone who would forward names and addresses of such elected women to—The Women's Local Government Society Office, 17, Tothill Street, Westminster.

An important loan collection gives additional interest to the annual sale and exhibition of the Decorative Needlework Society at 17, Sloane Street. Her Majesty has lent the fine piece of embroidery, designed by the Society, and worked by the ladies of Radnorshire as a silver wedding gift.

Book of the Week.

THE BROWN EYES OF MARY.*

Those who remember "Susanna and One Other" and "Capricious Caroline," will welcome another book from the same hand. But perhaps "The Brown Eyes of Mary" will make a stronger appeal to those who did not read Madame Albanesi's first charming story; for, to confess the truth, this story is too much like its predecessor. This may seem to be ungracious carping, when the style of the two stories is alike delightful, the scenes and the people equally fascinating. But nobody can do the same thing twice. There was a dewy morning freshness, a spontaneity, a charm about Susanna which is a little lacking to Mary, one can hardly tell why.

Whitefolden is the name of the farm upon which Mary lives, with her particularly repelling father and her younger sister Lavinia.

Geoffrey Wrenhurst is a man who is the victim of a fixed idea. He became, unexpectedly, the heir to a fine old property; and when he found that his realised dream was dust and ashes, that the property was mortgaged to the hilt, and that nothing was possible but to sell it, his reason received a shock from which it never really rallied. Mary allowed him to sit and brood by himself, while she carried on the work of the little farm which was the only portion of the estate which they had been able to retain. If she had insisted upon his coming out and making himself useful, one cannot help thinking that he might have regained some portion of his lost vigour. But she does everything herself, and even takes a place among the hop-pickers when necessary.

It is at this occupation that she is discovered by Sir Humphrey Netherby, a young man who has made her acquaintance some time before, and who is now staying with the Callendens, the *nouveaux riches* who bought Whitefolden. The Callendens consist of a mother, autocratic and ambitious, two sons, Julian and Guy, and one daughter, Cissy, married to a man named Trenchard. Julian Callenden is a kind of Caliban, untidy, dishevelled, and unsociable. For some reason which never clearly appears, he has allowed his mother to assume all the reins of government, and practically exists on sufferance in his own house.

As he is apparently a delightful person, as well as extremely handsome, the pretext of his uncouthness is felt to be rather thin. As a matter of fact, it is the old story of "Cymon and Iphigenia" which Madame Albanesi is telling us.

"And sudden, a blade for a knight's emprise
Filled the fine empty sheath of a man,
The Duke grew suddenly brave and wise."

In fact, Julian saw Mary, and it was her brown eyes which humanised him so wonderfully. Mrs. de la Pasture's fine study of such a character in "Cornelius" may be remembered. The author of this book has failed in her character of Julian.

But she has not failed in her study of Mary's ill-fated romance with the unprincipled Humphrey

* By Madame Albanesi. (Methuen.)

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