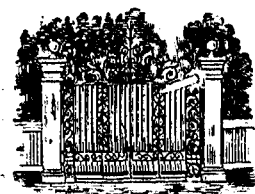


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN



The statue of Queen Victoria, unveiled by the King at the opening of the Royal Victoria Infirmary at Newcastle-on-Tyne, has been placed in front of the administration block of the Infirmary buildings by Sir Riley Lord. It is in Sicilian marble, and pedestal and figure are each 8ft. high. The figure of the Queen is full length, and it is very dignified and queenly. The sculptor is Mr. Frampton, R.A.

The Executive Committee of the Women's Liberal Federation has asked the Prime Minister to receive a deputation to urge that the Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill be included among the measures to be dealt with by the Government during the autumn session.

The election of women on to an Education Board for London has the sympathy of many metropolitan members of Parliament. Now all over the country the children of the poor are educated in institutions which women have no right to supervise. The position of women in the United Kingdom is truly most contemptible.

Lord Salvesen, in delivering judgment in the Court of Session, Edinburgh, has, of course, decided against the claim of women graduates of Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities to vote in the election of a member of Parliament for those universities, holding that the Act relied on was not open to the construction sought to be put upon it.

Who ever hoped for any other judgment? All the same, we sincerely congratulate Miss Margaret Nairn, M.A., and her four spirited colleagues in seeking to establish their right to vote.

Of course his lordship must have his little joke at the women's expense. He hoped it might console the pursuers for their want of success if he reminded them that the legal incapacity of women to vote at Parliamentary elections did not, in the opinion of that very learned judge Mr. Justice Wills, arise from any underrating of the sex, either in point of intellect or work, "but was an exemption founded on motives of decorum, and was a privilege of the sex (*honestatis privilegium*)," and he said that the absence of such a right was "referrable to the fact that in this country, in modern times, chiefly out of respect to a sense of decorum, they have been excused from taking any share in the department of public affairs." If that were so, he was afraid that this action, if it had served no other purpose, had at least demonstrated that there were some members of the sex who did not value their Common-law privileges.

"Less decorum and more dignity," says the modern girl graduate.

Book of the Week.

THE BRIDAL OF ANSTACE.*

Readers of this journal will probably remember with what enthusiasm we reviewed in this column Miss Godfrey's former novel, "The Winding Road."

This work was so far above the average novel that it seemed the writer might have a great future before her.

The present book does not, let it be frankly said, fulfil the hopes so raised. But it is full of interesting things, and has a charm of style hard to analyse and difficult to overpraise.

The weak point is, that the whole story hangs, not upon one only, but upon two impossibilities. We are asked to believe (1) That a man, receiving on his wedding day, after the ceremony, a telegram to say that the former wife he had believed dead was alive, should take the base, cruel and insane course, of disappearing, of simply walking out of the house while his new wife, whom he is supposed to rapturously love, was changing her dress, and vanishing into space with no word to explain the state of the case, no attempt to release the woman he had married from the bond which was no bond; that he should leave her to eat out her heart in absolute ignorance of the cause of his defection.

There was no reason for his conduct, except that Miss Godfrey's plot needed this insensate folly and cruelty in a man whom she seems to think well of. (2) We are asked to believe that Anstace, the forsaken bride, wishing to retire from the world for a space, after being treated in this manner, goes down to a remote part of the South Coast to stay with an old married servant, whom she believes to be there, but with whom she has held no communication for years, intending to make a long stay at her house, without previously so much as writing a letter to announce her intentions or ask if she can be received. Outside of novels, people do not do these idiotic things. It deprives of verisimilitude, a book which contains such able studies from nature as the two Miss Pinnefathers, the Reverend Peter, and Abigail Chinchin.

The character of Anstace is a very sweet one, but she does not impress us as being a real person, probably on account of the two unswallowable camels we have just mentioned. But if the story is improbable, the manner of its telling is delightful. The country round the Isle of Portland is depicted by a hand so skilful that it never obtrudes its local colour, though skilfully using it to give vivid touches. Peter Whitethorne is the most delightful person in the story. He is the son of the vicar, and young, strong, full of energy and power. He was making his mark in a large London parish when his mother died, and he believed that duty called him to come down and be curate to his father, a fine, intellectual old gentleman, but with a fatal drink craving upon him that bid fair to demoralise the whole district and bring scandal and disgrace upon the parish.

Anstace only by degrees discovered the reason of Peter's curious retirement from the world. When

* By Elizabeth Godfrey. (John Lane.)

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)