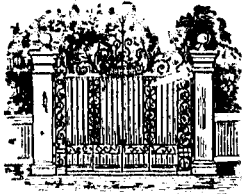


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN



The Countess of Darnley recently distributed the prizes at the Horticultural College, Swanley, in the presence of a large gathering.

The report of the year's work was first-rate. There were seventy-three students in residence. Sixteen entered and all passed the Royal Horticultural Society's examination, and one (Miss French) took the first place and obtained the society's gold medal. Five students had obtained head gardeners' posts in England and Ireland, three had obtained good posts in Canada, and one had gone to Natal to do gardening, dairy work, and cooking. It was hoped that shortly there would be a Swanley in South Africa, a sort of *dépôt* there where women could be educated in horticulture. The Countess of Darnley expressed the hope that they would not rest with extending their work to South Africa. Why should they not make a centre in Australia? The work they were doing at Swanley was magnificent, and she trusted that success would attend the college in the future.

Pity the city child! A London scientist declares that life in a big city makes young children quick, but not intelligent. He thinks it often destroys their chances of being clever, for it hastens the development of the brain unnaturally. It makes them superficial, alert, but not observant; excitable, but without one spark of enthusiasm. They are apt to grow *blasé*, fickle, discontented; they see more things than the country-bred child, but not such interesting things; they do not properly see anything, for they have neither the time nor the capacity to get at the root of all the bewildering objects that crowd themselves into their little lives.

Miss Kenney, who is in Holloway for her determined objection to being classed with criminals, lunatics, and babes, says that the women she has seen in prison makes her all the more determined in her opinions, so her time is not being wasted.

The new woman of Japan is well exemplified in Yessu Hattori, who has lately arrived in Tacoma, U.S.A., to enter Whitworth College for the study of domestic science. Yessu Hattori, who is 35 years of age, comes from Formosa Island, where for ten years she has acted as trained nurse in one of the hospitals. It has been her ambition to study American methods of nursing, and to perfect herself in the English language. With this end in view she has worked and saved since the death of her husband cast her on her own resources several years ago. She has one child, a daughter, 15 years old, who is taking a course in a high school at Tokyo, while her mother is acquiring a college education in America.

Book of the Week.

THE FACE OF CLAY.*

Mr. Vachell's new book is in many respects a very interesting one. It is based upon a story which hangs to the plaster mask of a dead girl's face, taken after her body had been found in the Seine and deposited in the Morgue. I believe I am right in saying that this story is not invented, but found by Mr. Vachell, that there really is such a mask, and that it was the cause of tragedy. The girl's face, so says gossip, was fixed in a mysterious and ineffable smile, a smile which, like that of the Sphinx, seemed to guard some secret of insight, as though she had looked forward, in death, and seen that what lay beyond was bliss. It had such an effect upon the artist who modelled it, that his mind became deranged, from a constant poring over the enigma, and he finally committed suicide, in order to discover what it was that the dead girl had seen.

Mr. Vachell alters the circumstances of this case to fit his story. He lays his scene in Brittany, in a colony of English artists, and his heroine, Téphany—the name inevitably suggests a certain celebrated jeweller's in New York—is the daughter of an English father and a Breton mother. Orphaned in early girlhood, she goes to England to stay with some very Philistine and uncompromising relatives, and is, while with them, discovered by a great singer to have a very fine voice. We are not told how it was that, in face of the horror of the prim relatives, she was able to get her art training—only that she did get it, and presently she returned to the scenes of her youth as a celebrated singer. Her reason for coming back to Brittany was twofold: first, she had strained her voice, and been told by a great specialist that she must rest it completely if she ever wished to sing again; secondly, she was in love with a man named Michael Ossory, an artist whom she had known in her youth, but who had, for some mysterious reason, ceased to write to her.

The mystery which overhangs Ossory is not dispelled until near the end of the book; it concerns the Face of Clay.

The story is a story of two people, Michael and Téphany. A Californian artist is introduced, as we say technically, "to complicate the issue," but this he does not succeed in doing, for a moment.

The story is full of merit of various kinds, the writing is always creditable, at times admirable, and the author has caught to perfection the modern terror of the obvious. I always wonder, in reading his books, why they leave me invariably quite unmoved, why I feel that I could have better liked a worse story, why they have a certain dryness and hardness which enables one to lay them down at any moment. The reason I believe to be that the author has no knowledge of women. Those that he has known have been apparently of the English "county" type—admirable, but unemotional, sensible, even pretty, but always well conducted, well regulated, never *femme passionelle*.

*By Horace Annesley Vachell. (John Murray.)

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