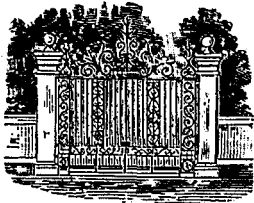


## Outside the Gates.

### WOMEN.



A discussion on "The Cry of the Children" was held at the Women's Institute, Victoria Street, last week, at which Dr. Mary Gordon dealt at some length with the physical and moral effect of alcohol upon women as witnessed by her in female reformatories. Many of the women in such institutions, she said, sprang from three generations of inebriates. They confessed openly that they could not remember a time when they had not been intimately acquainted with drink and the public-house. The crux of this question was that the nation wanted men. It did not wish to see the next generation physically and morally ruined during the plastic years of childhood.

The Society of American Women in London have one of their celebrated luncheons at the Hotel Cecil on Monday, June 10th, to which have been invited several of the foreign ladies who will be in London as delegates of the Red Cross Society. The President, Mrs. Dietz Glynes, will preside.

The most notable recent event in the world of women has undoubtedly been the opening of the Finnish Laandtdag, in which women, nineteen in number, have for the first time taken their seats as deputies. It is a most remarkable fact that a province of Russia should be the first country in which women members are returned to Parliament. Amongst those who took their seats as members was Baroness Alexandra Gripenberg, who, as Treasurer of the International Council of Women, visited this country in 1899 at the time of the International Congress of Women, another interesting deputy is Mlle Mina Silliampe, who was at one time in domestic service, and is keenly anxious to improve the conditions of the domestic classes. We salute the new deputies, and are confident that the Women's Cause, which will be keenly judged by their actions, is safe in the hands of these capable Finnish women.

Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, America's literary queen, who has just celebrated her 88th birthday, writes as her latest word: "Women of fashion seem to me to have lost in dignity of character, in general tone, and in culture. Outside this charmed circle, I find that tone of taste and culture is much higher than I remember it in my youth. I find that women are leading nobler and better lives, filling larger and higher places, and enjoying the upper air of thought where they used to rest upon the very soil of domestic care and detail. The one class that loses is that which assumes to give the standards to the rest."

## Book of the Week.

### THE HOUSE OF DEFENCE.\*

Though wholly unconvincing, Mr. E. F. Benson's latest venture is of great interest to the thinking public. It is always well to be thoroughly well primed in matters upon which one feels most scepticism. To argue upon a subject one has never studied is as futile as to speak in Hebrew to a French peasant—there can only follow confusion of tongues. To shelve a subject that is daily gaining ground and credence is unintelligent; to run away from it for fear of having one's own beliefs shaken is, of course, too cowardly for contemplation.

Mr. Benson in a Dedication to "The House of Defence," prepares us for the fact that he is himself not a believer in Christian Science, that modern craze so aptly once criticised as neither "Christian nor Scientific." It is, of course, this fact that constitutes the main defect of the book. It is written without conviction, and it may safely be prophesied that no one will be perverted to Christian Science by perusal of "The House of Defence," which, of course, must have been the desire of the friend at whose instigation Mr. Benson has written the book.

With great fairness, however, he presents us with both sides of the question, speaking a word for neither in particular, ridiculing neither except in the instance of one character, a Christian Scientist who is used merely as a foil to strengthen the impression of the genuine worth of the hero who is a renowned "healer" of the same sect.

Lord Thurso, laird of the village of Achnaleesh, leaves London in the height of the season for the wilds of Caithness with the heroic intention of helping to fight an outbreak of typhoid fever on his property. His wife, a woman engulfed in her own pet charitable projects, and a leader in London society, does not find it incumbent upon her to go with him, so he is accompanied by his sister, Lady Maud Raynham. Thurso is of an exceedingly highly strung temperament, and as a result of his anxiety and the work he does amongst his suffering tenantry he is at that time a martyr to neuralgia, for which laudanum is prescribed. Under stress of the pain and the necessity for keeping himself up, he slips into a habit of taking laudanum too freely, and from that time forward the habit grows upon him from sheer love of the pernicious sensations it induces. There is nothing strong enough to hold him back; he has not even an incentive in affection for his wife; they are so entirely out of sympathy as to bore each other. Into the midst of the typhoid fever with which neither Thurso's devotion nor medical skill apparently can cope, there appears a young American, by name Bertie Cochrane, by profession a "healer." In common with most things now-a-days, Christian Science has its correct patter—Bertie Cochrane begins immediately to "demonstrate" over the "false claim" of typhoid on

\* By E. F. Benson. (Heinemann.)

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