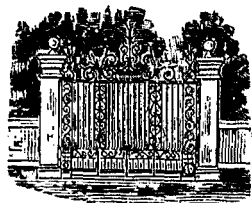


## Outside the Gates.

### WOMEN.



In connection with the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, the Marquis of Salisbury in the House of Lords said that no one seemed to pay the least attention as to what women thought of the Bill. He had always been an opponent of women's suffrage, but this Bill very much shook him. He believed that if women had had the vote the other House would have adopted a very different attitude with regard to this question.

The Bill will have served one useful end if it convinces the opponents of women's suffrage of the justice of giving to women a voice in the making of laws which they are bound to obey, or which, as in the present instance, intimately affect them.

The House of Lords, which once more considered the Qualification of Women (County and Borough Councils) Bill on Saturday last, on the motion of the Earl of Crewe, did not insist on its amendment preventing women from being Mayors of Boroughs, or Chairmen of County Councils. This was permitted in the Bill originally introduced, deleted when returned to the House of Commons after amendment by the Lords, and restored by the Commons to its original form, in which form it has now been passed by the House of Lords.

The papers set in the recent theological examination for the Archbishop's Lambeth diploma for women were evidently intended to secure a high standard of knowledge in the recipients of the quasi-degree of Student in Theology. It is stated on good authority that some of the papers set were sent to Cambridge for the Theological Tripos and returned as too difficult!

The Committee of the Shanklin Home of Rest which belongs to the Winchester Diocesan Council of the Girls' Friendly Society, and provides rest and change of air for women are, with the object of benefiting the funds of the Home arranging a small historical loan exhibition which is to be held at Guildford in May, 1908. The promoters of the exhibition are anxious to get together a really interesting and unique collection of small memorials of the noteworthy women who from the earliest pages of our history have been connected with that southern portion of Britain formerly comprised in the Kingdom of Wessex, of which Winchester was the capital city. They wish to include souvenirs of women who have been noted for their virtues, their talents, the circumstances of their lives, such as founders of abbeys, colleges, and hospitals, queens and the ladies of their Courts, the mothers and wives of great men,

writers, teachers, musicians, painters, philanthropists, etc. The exhibition is to consist of small portraits, miniatures, seals, ornaments, autographs, manuscripts, letters, etc., that are definitely connected with the history of the notable women.

## Book of the Week.

### THE CRIMSON AZALEAS.\*

"Choose which you please—there are two possible interpretations of my story, a material or an occult," says Mr. Stacpoole in effect, "take it your own way, it is perfectly simple." And so, but for one feature in the book, it is. The plot, which is an unusual one, is treated with unique frankness. It would seem that our author, having thrilled us to the top of his bent by some episode that is weird in the extreme, suddenly rounds upon us with a laugh at our credulity, and sets himself to work to immediately disillusionise us.

Two eminently material and prosaic Scotsmen, walking along a beautiful road in Japan, sit down to rest. Before them is a little valley hedged on either side by cypress trees and thronged with crimson azaleas, a sight to gladden the heart of a poet! Moved, perhaps, by the romance of his surroundings, Dick Leslie imparts his life history to Tod M'Gourley, the latter a hard-headed business man for many years resident in Japan as merchant. But Dick Leslie has only recently come there, ignorant of the language, the country, and its ways. He speaks of himself bitterly as "a remittance man," kept on a miserable allowance by a stern and disapproving father. In the early pages of Dick's story there was a certain Jane Deering, with whom he was seriously in love, but the girl's parents, objecting to his past record, broke the engagement, and Jane married someone else.

Across the telling of this tale there falls the "tap, tap, tap" of a blind man's stick coming down the road—a blind man with an appalling face—the countenance of a creature long in communion with evil. He begs for money wherewith to purchase opium, and promises as a return to show them some magic. Leslie, dare-devil as ever, laughingly bids the Blind One show them Satan. The beggar accordingly draws a circle round him in the dust of the road, which the onlookers are warned not to touch, also various mysterious figures, and then proceeds to blow mournful notes upon a cane pipe. The incantation is weird, but Leslie, moved by an impish impulse, leans forward and draws just inside the circle the form of a cross, in doing which the point of his stick touches the Blind One's heel. The result is awful, for, as if possessed, the hideous creature rushes frantically from the circle away and away up the road. Days afterwards the body is found, battered and beaten, among the hills, as if the Blind One had fought to the death with devils. It is the first chiquée given us—the touch on the heel

\* By H. De Vere Stacpoole. (T. Fisher Unwin.)

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