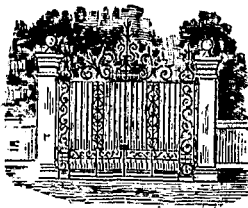


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



The "Lords" have wisely shown themselves open to conviction, and with one ridiculous amendment have passed the Qualification of Women Bill, which gives us the right to be elected on to County and Borough Councils. Thus a very unjust restriction on women's scope of work for the public good has been removed, and only one citadel stands between us and complete enfranchisement and full citizenship—the grim old Fortress of Prejudice, which jealously guards the Parliamentary suffrage. A little more sapping and mining, to say nothing of bombardment, and down it will come with a terrific rattle.

In an admirable survey of the question, Mrs. Fordham points out that women interested in local government have for many years been concentrating their attention on a Bill to enable women to act as members of all local governing bodies, as in the early days of our country's history they were eligible for membership of local bodies along with men, and as soon as the new Bill becomes law, women will have the same opportunity as men in municipal government.

It will enable ratepayers to place directly elected women on education authorities (instead of co-opting them), to secure their services in other matters of local government, such as the housing of the poor, the looking after public lodging-houses, the management of lunatic asylums, the regulation of the employment of children, provision for the prevention of cruelty to children, the supervision of industrial schools containing children from three years of age, the supervision of midwives and of baby farms, of homes for inebriate women, of police courts and police-court waiting-rooms. Will anyone who has the welfare of the country at heart deny that women are needed to help men in such work?

Women have leisure, opportunity, and the love of country at heart. This Bill will enable them to give their time, their ability, their devotion, to their kind and kingdom.

A very warm mead of praise and gratitude is due to the Earl of Crewe for the gracious way in which he guarded the interests of women, and incidentally the interests of the people, during the debate on this Bill in the House of Lords, and we also heartily congratulate Miss Annie Leigh Browne, the untiring Hon. Secretary of the Women's Social Government Society, upon this well deserved victory.

Book of the Week.

COLONEL DAVERON.*

A more consistent example of the fact that nothing can make up for the lack of moral responsibility in a man could scarcely be found than the story of Colonel Daveron. As regards plot, there is very little to be said, as a faithful character study a good deal.

When Evelyn Deene meets Captain Julian Daveron she falls in love, not with him, but with an ideal suggested to her by his exceedingly handsome face and most fascinating personality. She endows him with every generous impulse, every good motive that springs from her own beautiful nature, and worships her heart's desire.

The real man is a cold-blooded, shallow, selfish fellow, but so consumed with vanity that when he discovers what she expects of him, albeit with a sense of profound boredom, he sets himself to live up to the standard. The marriage is a good one for him: Evelyn has money and can afford to indulge her impulses.

Daveron has a young nephew, an orphan who is left practically destitute—a lad full of promise, for whom a brilliant future was prophesied. His father's death brings these ambitions to an abrupt ending, and when the Captain is appealed to for assistance, he does his utmost to shirk all responsibility. The generosity of Anthony Derrick's schoolmaster shames Daveron into contributing a miserable five and twenty pounds towards the boy's education. The extent of his liberality he carefully hides from his fiancée, and she magnifies it in her mind into something greatly to his credit which, after their marriage, she largely supplements, and by her influence Derrick gets his chance, a good public school and University education.

But as years go on, disillusionment is bound to set in; Daveron could not keep up the pretence without, to begin with, lapses, and eventually the indulgence of his real temperament. The gradual revelation of her god's clay feet is sufficient test for any woman, but Evelyn is called upon to stand a fiercer one when she meets the embodiment of her ideal at last in the flesh. Blake is all that Evelyn had imagined her husband to be—generous friend, splendid soldier, and honourably ambitious. There is an unpardonable blot on Daveron's military record: in an affair on the Indian frontier he loses nerve—the situation is only saved by Blake's courage. This brings matters to a climax. Daveron, now Colonel, has to retire, the mishap as carefully slurred over as possible. Evelyn Daveron takes the blow with her eyes shut, and to all her husband's follies and imperfections she is steadfastly blind, using everything, everyone within her reach for the carrying out of a forlorn hope. She sets herself to recover for Daveron his lost self-respect; Anthony Derrick, about whom she learns the truth, Blake himself, whom she loves, are both pressed into the service. This is her conception of wifely duty, and the

* By Percy White. (Hurst & Blackett.)

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