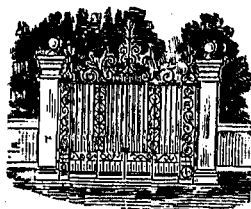


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



Mr. Asquith has consented to receive a deputation from the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. It is believed that the deputation will be introduced by Mrs. Fawcett, LL.D.

Mr. Haldane, Secretary of State for War, recently attended a meeting of the Scottish Liberal Social Council held in St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, under the presidency of Lady Helen Munro-Ferguson, at which he expressed the opinion that we were advancing nearer year by year to a state of things in which it would be impossible to withhold the suffrage from women, and his opinion was that the time was coming very close when that would be recognised.

The late Mr. Wilkinson Smith, a well-known Nottingham lace manufacturer, whose estate is estimated at between a quarter and half a million, has bequeathed the bulk of his property for the benefit of widows and spinsters in the county. As poverty and not class is to qualify for the benefits under the will, its provisions are very far-reaching and sensible.

The articles which Mr. George R. Sims recently contributed to the *Tribune*, giving a record of children's suffering as seen by him in various parts of London, Birmingham, Sheffield, Liverpool, and other towns, have now been published in book form by Messrs. Jarrold, under the title "The Black Stain." It is a terrible story, and were we not quite sure that it is strictly true would be almost incredible. It is a startling fact brought out by Mr. Sims that neither poverty nor housing conditions are responsible for the appalling child neglect which prevails. "Where children are cruelly neglected," he says, "there is in 90 per cent. of the cases a history of habitual intemperance in one or both parents." He rightly points out that for men and women to drink away the health, the comfort, the food, the clothing, and the bedding of their children is a vile form of cruelty, and should be recognised as such. "We do not allow a drunken man to be in charge of a horse, but we allow a drunken woman to have charge of children." He thinks that the necessity for strengthening the laws relating to children in order that the condition of the nation's children may be morally, mentally, and physically improved is one that does not admit of argument or dispute.

From the Shakespeare Head Press, of Stratford-on-Avon, is put forth a volume of sketches of old Warwickshire families and worthies, with the title "Shakespeare's Warwickshire Contemporaries," by Mrs. Carmichael Stopes. The author deals in the main with persons who have not been fully dealt with in biographies, though some famous figures appear in her gallery, such as Drayton.

Book of the Week.

"ANCESTORS."*

The sudden elevation of John Elton Gwynne to a marquissate was regarded by him as the ruin of his career, the downfall of all his ambitions. The blow fell at the very height of his triumph, when he had won his seat as a Liberal, and was looking forward to further successes, which should make him the leader of his party, and a name to conjure with in the country. "You could become a militant Liberal Peer," someone suggested. "Paradoxes don't appeal to me," was his reply, "and the only chance for a genuine fighter is the House of Commons. Besides it is impossible for a man to be a Peer and remain a true Liberal. Power, and inherited influence, and exalted social position have a deadly insinuation." So Elton Gwynne was in the unusual position of having a bone to pick with his irreproachable ancestry—it stood between him and his heart's desire.

Chance and a whim of his mother's brought to their country house just at that time a young American, a connection of Lady Victoria Gwynne's, by name Isabel Otis. Between Isabel and Elton there sprang up at first sight a strong antagonism. She had heard much of the young man's extraordinary political prowess, and was entirely disappointed by his appearance and manner. He resembled a certain mutual "Uncle Hiram." She had expected personality, magnetism—his apparent lack of both made him almost repellant, and the cool speculation in his light grey eyes only accentuated his general dearth of charm. At dinner, which immediately succeeds their introduction, the sense of hostility deepened, and the fact that Gwynne ignored her piqued Isabel into throwing herself with all the ardent enthusiasm of an American into the political discussions absorbing her host's attention. From that moment Elton realised that this girl was not to be ignored; he was drawn by that most subtle of all things, the fascination of repulsion. This is the note that dominates the progress of their mutual love story and most interesting it is to watch the development on both sides of the curious attraction which has its roots in sheer antagonism.

At the instigation of Isabel Otis, Gwynne left England to start afresh in California, sinking his individuality, and becoming plain "Jack Elton." He was a born fighter, and, since he could not fulfil the career he had mapped out for himself at home, he sought pastures new wherein to strive with Fate. That he had taken the step at Isabel's advice rather added to the barrier between them; it irritated him to reflect that anyone, particularly a woman, should have any influence with him, and the struggle becomes intenser between sentiment and cool criticism.

Meantime Isabel, conscious of her own magnetism, desired Gwynne very much as a friend, but laboured under the delusion that she had no desire to marry him; she could not bear the idea of losing her liberty and sinking her individuality, so that

*By Gertrude Atherton. (John Murray.)

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