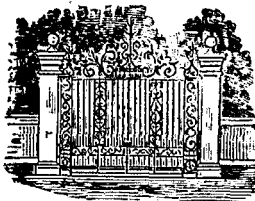


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



Women in the north of Scotland are busy making the final preparations for the coming of the National Union of Women Workers to Aberdeen, and the Conference Committee includes a number of well known names, with Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon and Mrs. Elliot O. Clark as Hon. Secretaries.

Equal pay for men and women clerks, with a minimum wage of 35s. a week in London and the large centres, and 27s. 6d. in rural districts, is the standard demanded by the National Union of Clerks, who are conducting a vigorous campaign against the under-cutting in wages by women and girl clerks. The undercutting by women clerks is considered a grave evil. Men who have grown up and married in the employ of firms have recently been got rid of and girls taken on in their places at about half their salary. Where the men got from £80 to £150 a year, the women get £1 and 30s. a week. Girl clerks fresh from the training schools at from 5s. to 10s. a week have taken the places of men clerks at from £1 to £2 in another City office.

Miss Crickmay, of Wimbledon, states that her appeal for funds to provide a trace-horse to assist the many heavily laden horses which toil up Wimbledon Hill daily met with a quick and most generous response, and she has now over £80 towards the fund and substantial subscriptions are still being sent, either to her or to Mrs. A. J. Coke, of "Our Dumb Friends' League."

In the Colonial report for the year 1907-8 on the Nyasaland Protectorate it is stated that a certain amount of disturbance has been caused by the sudden appearance of a native prophetess. A woman of the Chikinda tribe, named Chanjiri, received "supernatural intelligence" of the fact that during the year all Europeans would be forced to leave the country. Consequently, she said, it would be absurd to pay hut tax to the British Government, but lest the tribute should be wasted she herself was prepared to receive it. Unfortunately for British authority she was, says the report, wise enough to remove herself into Portuguese territory and there await the coming of the tax. She was not disappointed. So credulous were the neighbouring tribes that many of them abandoned their work, returned to their villages, and there sat down to await the coming of the millennium, when all the Europeans should disappear into the sea. There must be much disappointment when the natives find that the payment of the tax is enforced by the lawful authorities, and that it has not been defrayed by their subsidies to Chanjiri.

Book of the Week.

THE RESULT OF AN ACCIDENT.*

The work of Miss Beatrice Whitby is always fresh and wholesome. Though perhaps not one of her strongest books, "The Result of an Accident" has some unique features that raise it above the level of the ordinary love story. To begin with, Miss Whitby has had the courage to present her characters with a faithfulness to life that at first sight makes them rather unattractive, but anyone with the power of insight into human nature soon finds that these people are flesh and blood, not models of perfection, or inhumanly wicked.

The whole family of De Cartarets, father, mother, son, and three daughters, arrive, in the first chapter, at a remote seaside place in Wales, intending to stay there for their annual summer holiday. As the result of an accident there they are forced to remain making little Glwendon a permanent home. It would seem at first appearance that in this quiet spot nothing very out of the way could take place, but the accident which eventually deprives the always unsuccessful Oliver de Cartaret of his life, brings about many changes in the family fortunes. The first is to be expected—having allowed his legal practice to go to pieces there is no provision for De Cartaret's wife and children beyond a miserable two hundred pounds a year, which has to support, educate, clothe them, and pay for the sick man's needs. As a matter of economy, the De Cartarets take up their abode in Glwendon. Here they are followed by an elderly but rich suitor for the hand of the second girl, Floss, who is not yet eighteen. The wooing and wedding of this affectionate, but unemotional young person is not a difficult matter. A rich son-in-law is a welcome addition to the family. But the love affairs of Violet, the elder girl, run less smoothly, and end in such a common-place way, so entirely as they must have done in real life, that one is left with grave doubts as to the wisdom of the course the young people take, and an absolute certainty that they have all their troubles before them. As may be supposed, Dr. Brown, the local practitioner in an unfrequented neighbourhood, is a poor man; in addition to which he is an enthusiast in his work, and is ruining his nervous system in the service of his patients, Welsh cottagers for the most part. It is very natural that Violet should fall in love with him, still more so that he should not be sufficiently heroic to hide his love for her and leave her.

Miss Whitby does not expend the whole of her powers upon the young people. We have seldom read a more pathetic chronicle than that of Mrs. De Cartaret—proud, sensitive, mated to an unbusiness-like, but light-hearted man who faced ruin with apparent callousness, it is not surprising that often in her voice there was a fine sharpness, a sting somewhere in a quite inoffensive remark. One has met women like Mrs. De Cartaret. The result of the accident in her is a very lovely one—she is the finest character in the book—it is worth reading for her sake alone.

E.L.H.

* By Beatrice Whitby. (Methuen.)

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)