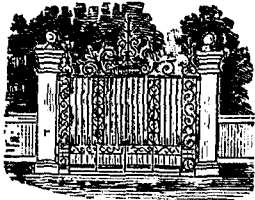


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



The Grand Duchess Elizabeth of Russia, a daughter of "our" Princess Alice, and widow of the Grand Duke Sergius, so fiercely hated by the Reform party in Russia, and who, during the time he was Governor, was assassinated at Moscow, has, according to a French paper, entered a nunnery. Her life has been very tragic. May be she will be happier in retirement, away from the glittering world of Imperial Russia, with merely a protection of tissue paper between it and a bomb.

At a meeting of the Chemical Society, held at Burlington House last week, the President, Sir William Ramsay, announced that 1,758 voting papers had been received on the question of the admission of women as Fellows of the Society. There were 1,094 in favour of the admission of women and 642 against. Some sent in no papers at all, and 22 papers were returned with no particular mark on them. The result of the ballot was received with applause.

Once more Mrs. Pankhurst, pretty Christabel, and Mrs. Drummond have been sent to prison, and there they will spend long dreary weeks for conscience sake. Every effort should be made to support the meeting at the Albert Hall on the 29th October, when Mrs. Pethick Lawrence will take the chair.

The American Woman Suffragists, at the close of the convention of their national organisation at Buffalo, passed a resolution congratulating "the women of Great Britain" upon their gallant fight for the franchise. The lady who presided declared that, "if need be, we will enter upon a militant campaign for our birthright." One of the speakers, Rabbi Wise, of New York, defined a land wherein women are bereft of the right of citizenship as a "manocracy" representing the triumph of the male caste.

It is reported in Aldeburgh that the corporation has approached Mrs. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, M.D., asking her to accept the post of mayor for the ensuing year. Mrs. Anderson was elected a councillor last year, and it is thought that she will accept the invitation. Her father, brother, and her late husband have all been Mayors of Aldeburgh.

Lord Curzon protests against being classed as an opponent of higher education for women: "So absurdly untrue is it that in my scheme of reform for Oxford I am going to propose that degrees (and not merely examinations) shall be open to women on exactly the same basis as to men."

Book of the Week.

MIRAGE.*

Coming as it does from the pen of Mr. Thurston, "Mirage" is distinctly a surprise; that the same author should have given us the grim and sordid tragedy of Sally Bishop, and the tender pathos of "Mirage" is marvellous. It is as though we passed from the heavy atmosphere of artificial scents to the pleasant fresh air, laden with the perfume of new mown hay. All is sweet, and fresh, and clean. The plot is slight, the characters few, but they all live.

We are introduced to Monsieur le Vicomte du Guesclin living in a boarding house in Torrington Square. He has been there two years, ever since he left Paris after the loss of his fortune. A scrupulously honest gentleman, he sold everything to pay his creditors, coming over to England with its grey skies as an easier spot in which to endure reverses than Paris where all is gay. Not that he will ever admit that he is despondent! To be that, he tells us, is "bourgeois."

His is a charming character, full of brave endurance and gentle dignity. That he is capable of inspiring deep affection is proved by the conduct of his valet, Courtot, who after being discharged follows his old master to London, becoming a waiter at a restaurant in Tottenham Court Road. After remonstrating with him for his conduct the Vicomte with evident pleasure goes daily for a cup of coffee and a chat with the excellent Courtot. The scenes between master and servant are all through the book given with quiet humour, and yet such restraint that there is nothing jarring or grotesque.

And now comes a ray of sunshine in the Vicomte's life. An eccentric compatriot leaves him a cottage in Buckinghamshire, and to this rustic abode the Vicomte gladly removes from smoky London, taking the faithful Courtot with him. Here, in the lovely country, the gentle tragedy is played out: the mirage possesses his soul.

The Vicomte is sixty, and when we meet him in the boarding-house we realise he is old even for that—but here in the country he meets Rosanne Somerset, the daughter of that other Rosanne, his cousin, whom he had loved in the days of his young manhood, and loved in vain. The girl reminds him of his lost love, and we watch him gradually falling more and more under the spell of the mirage, till he persuades himself it may be possible for the young girl of twenty to return his affection. That she does love and admire him is evident, though not in the way he would have: when he discovers this the unselfish nobility of the man once more asserts itself, and he releases her.

The humorous element is all through supplied by Courtot: his courtship of Mrs. Bulpit provokes many a smile, but it is never the least farcical.

It is not a book to miss a page of: you never know when you may come across some quaint or beautiful thought. The chapter called "Who is Mrs. Simpkins" is a gem in itself. E. L. H.

* By E. Temple Thurston. (Methuen.)

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