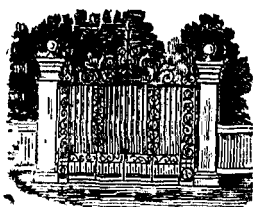


Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



The new Secretary of State for the Home Department has been well advised to at once put an end to the scandalous manner in which his predecessor, now Lord Gladstone, attempted to crush out in prison the militant demand of women for their rightful status in the body politic, the Draft Rule proposed for the amelioration of prison treatment for offenders in the second and third division reads as follows:—

"In pursuance of the power conferred on me by the Prison Act, 1898, I hereby make the following rule, to be added after Rule 243 of the Rules for Local Prisons made on April 21st, 1899:—

"243a.—In the case of any offender of the second or third division whose previous character is good, and who has been convicted of, or committed to prison for, an offence not involving dishonesty, cruelty, indecency, or serious violence, the Prison Commissioners may allow such amelioration of the conditions prescribed in the foregoing rules as the Secretary of State may approve in respect of the wearing of prison clothing, bathing, hair-cutting, cleaning of cells, employment, exercise, books, and otherwise.

"Provided that no such amelioration shall be greater than that granted under the rules for offenders of the first division."

The Earl of Lytton has written to the press protesting against the official imputation of untruthfulness on the part of his sister, Lady Constance Lytton, by the Home Office, in connection with her treatment in prison as "a lady in her own right," and as poor, unknown "Jane Wharton" in the Newcastle and Liverpool gaols respectively. Lord Lytton leaves the public to form their own opinions of the justice of a Government Department which brings accusations of untruthfulness against an individual while refusing the only means by which the truth can be established. Let us hope now that a new Secretary of State has happily been installed at the Home Office we shall hear no more of the brutal ill-usage of, and assaults on, women political prisoners, which have impressed with the deepest resentment the minds of all self-respecting women, and which have brought the Home Office of late years into the greatest disrepute in our Colonies and other civilised countries.

The Rowton Houses and other lodging-houses, provide comfortable lodgings for men, but women who need cheap lodgings of a similar type are but ill provided for. An experiment is about to be made in the parish of Holy Trinity, Woolwich, in which there is a large common lodging-house population, to provide such a house, which will be carried on without any desire for personal profit, under Church management, and with this object a

building, until recently used as a public-house, has been taken. The Bishop of Woolwich, in a letter to the press, says that when once fairly started it is confidently expected that the house will be self-supporting, but that to furnish the house in the simplest manner, to effect needful repairs, and to satisfy the requirements of the L.C.C., about £350 is now needed. He believes that the establishment of the house will be heartily welcomed by many struggling women who at present are compelled to live in circumstances which tend to encourage or confirm them in vicious habits.

In addition to the election of Miss Cleghorn, of Sheffield, as Vice-President of the National Union of Teachers, five women have been elected to seats on the Executive Committee.

Book of the Week.

AN INTERRUPTED FRIENDSHIP.*

One takes up a new book by the author of "The Gaffly" with mingled feelings, for it abides in the memory as unutterably sad, albeit it was arresting, compelling, and the personality of Arthur—lovable, dominating, tragic, defiant—so vivid in quality, that his memory remains with us as that of a dear friend rather than of a character in fiction.

The present book begins with the funeral of the wife of the Marquis de Marteuvelles, whose death shook to its foundations the life of her husband—a middle-aged Egyptologist. "She had been a mother to him as well as a wife, had kept the strain of poverty off him, and sheltered him from all the jars and frets of domesticity; he had never known anything about her, or suspected that there was anything to know; she had been just Françoise." She had had a "desperate and unaided fight against the typhus fever which had seized on three of her children, and she had risked her own life, and protected that of her husband as a matter of course. Distinguished scholars were too precious to be allowed to run risks. He, for his part, had refrained from interference, not out of cowardice, but simply because he never interfered. He had every confidence in Françoise, and would no more have thought of questioning her judgment in practical matters than she of disputing his on a papyrus. Now, having saved one child, she had followed two others out of the world with no more exalted dying sentiments than a gentle anxiety as to whether the servants would keep the children neat and make the coffee properly when she was no longer there to attend to things herself."

The first duty which faced the Marquis was the future care of his children. Marguerite, the baby girl, had been allowed to fall downstairs during his absence at the funeral; Henri, the eldest boy, just recovering from the fever, had been sent to the funeral in thin shoes, and became again

* By E. L. Voynich. (Hutchinson and Co., Paternoster Row, London, E.C.)

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