

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

WOMEN.

The meeting at the Royal Albert Hall on Thursday, November 16th, arranged by the Women's Social and Political Union was a magnificent demonstration.

The feeling of the meeting was voiced in the resolution moved from the chair by Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, and carried enthusiastically, expressing its profound indignation at the announcement by the Prime Minister of the Government's intention to introduce a Manhood Suffrage Bill next session, and demanding its abandonment, and the introduction of a measure giving equal franchise rights to men and women. The contribution to the "War Chest" collected in the Hall amounted to over £4,000, £1,000 of which was given by that good friend of the Suffrage cause, Mr. Pethick Lawrence.

Mrs. Pethick Lawrence sums up in the *Observer* the grievance of living-in women with their position under the Insurance Bill when she writes: "Domestic servants, governesses, hospital nurses and others have as a general rule received medical treatment and nursing in the past without payment, attention during sickness has been practically, though not specifically, included in the board and lodging side of their business relations with their employer. What these women want is not sickness benefit or medical or maternity benefit, but an adequate annuity for the years when they can no longer work. The fund is amply sufficient for this purpose, and the only excuse for giving to three-quarters of the women wage-earners, who are forced to pay contributions, a claim on benefits that they do not want and in all probability will not use, is that the Bill was drafted to meet the needs of the artisan elector, and women were tacked on as an adjunct without any due consideration being given to the special circumstances of their life and their special needs as women."

In these days when, in spite of everything, life is so fresh and breezy, who can fail to sympathise with the promoters of the Fresh Air Fund for Children? Indeed, to realise how enthusiastically many talented men and women sympathise with the aims of the fund, one had to be present at the matinée at the Haymarket Theatre, last week, organised by Miss Floyd Ariston, Mrs. Waldemar Leverton and Miss Nina Wood. The three hours' programme was not one minute too long, and the high standard of the acting and music was enthusiastically encoored by a crammed house. To say that Miss Floyd Ariston charmed the audience is true, but her rendering of "My Little Southern Rose" was just the sweetest thing we have listened to for years. Then why is Mrs. Waldemar Leverton a prosaic editor and not one of

our leading comedy stars? "Tilda's New Hat" by George Paston, is a tragic little farce—if such a thing can be—and as Tilda's mother, Mrs. Fishwick, Mrs. Leverton's acting was so true that it touched the rare altitude of ceasing to be make-believe. We hope that a very substantial sum was realised for the Fresh Air Fund by all the kind friends of city-bred children who gave their talented services upon this occasion. Those interested can address the Hon Secretary, F.A.F., *Home Notes*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

PETER AND JANE.*

After the "Lame Dog's Diary" and the "Adventures of Christina MacNab" we have a right to expect more good things from the pen of Miss Macnaughten. "Peter and Jane" is a pleasant, readable tale, but we are disappointed. It ought to be a great deal better.

Peter and Jane are lovers, quite matter-of-fact ones, though, to the secret distress of Jane's aunt. "What souvenir would they give each other if they had to part?" thought Miss Abingdon. A terrier dog, or a gun, or a walking stick, most likely."

Canon Wrottesley is quite an amusing person. "The 'Well I never, Sir!' even of a rural parishioner did in some sort minister to his vanity. An audience was a necessity to him. He regretted that his cloth forbade him to indulge in private theatricals, but he encouraged Shakespearean readings, and often 'dressed up to please the children.' Sometimes of an evening he would perform upon the piano, indulging in a series of broken chords, which he called improvisation, and upon these occasions he felt that he was a kind and thoughtful master when he set the drawing-room door open so that the servants might hear, and as his servants thought so too it was all eminently satisfactory."

Miss Abingdon cherished a gentle admiration for the Canon. "She occasionally reminded herself that she had not met the vicar till long after his marriage, and she still more frequently assured herself that her feeling for him was one of pure admiration untouched by sentiment, which would have been foolish at her age; and at any age would have been wrong.

"But when the Canon came in unmasked in a friendly way, and hung up his clerical hat in the hall—which, without going so far as to give the matter a personal bearing, made it easy for Miss Abingdon to understand why women married." . . .

Miss Abingdon was a staunch upholder of familiar customs. There was a certain ritual to be observed in Christmas week, and Miss Abingdon observed it. Having suffered fewer bereavements than commonly falls to the lot of women of her

* By S. Macnaughten. (Methuen & Co., London.)

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)