

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

WOMEN.

A meeting to open a campaign for women's suffrage, supported by Cabinet Ministers, was held at the Horticultural Hall, S.W., on Saturday last, and was addressed by Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Lloyd George. Lord Haldane sent his blessing in a very logical letter, in which he wrote: "If I had been with you and Lloyd George I should have desired to express myself emphatically. The development of political life in this country has, in my opinion, reached a stage where it is no longer either logical or expedient or just to withhold the franchise from women. . . . As for the fear of domination by women because of their numbers, or of their destroying the virile traditions of our race, it does not weigh with me; leadership is no question of mere numbers. I have confidence in the forces that make for the influence of man, and I leave to Nature herself the preservation of the balance, and the solution of problems which ought not to arise while human nature remains what it is. But, for the rest, looking at the complex and intricate social questions which are ahead—questions with which Parliament is being called on in an increasing degree to occupy itself—I see nothing but gain in the full participation of women in the franchise."

Mr. Lloyd George had a practical illustration ready to hand in his own Insurance Bill. He said:—"But the one point which I especially want to emphasise is this, that the Bill affects four million women workers. We never asked women their opinion about it. We could not do it. I received a few deputations, but with the best will in the world I could not receive four millions. A Bill which touches the women workers of this country so intimately has been carried into law without any authoritative exposition of their views by any representatives of those women in the House of Commons. In addition to that, it affects seven million married women. They could only express an opinion through their husbands. Well now, what happens? Those four million women workers will form themselves into societies for the administration of what, after all, is a very difficult and a very complicated Act of Parliament—it was bound to be. And yet the House of Commons, which trusts women to administer a difficult, an intricate, and a complicated Act of Parliament, does not think it worth while to ask the opinion of those women as to what that Act of Parliament is to be. There is another part of that Act which is also rather a reflection on the present franchise. The House of Commons insisted upon there being at least one woman Commissioner. Now, if women are unfit to vote, why should they be fit to be Commissioners? The Commissionership involves enormous responsibilities, which require great skill, great judgment, great experience. It is a heavy and a difficult task, and yet the House of Commons that denies you the vote says, 'We must have a woman Commissioner to administer that Act.' Well, you

will observe from that that whatever qualities and virtues the House of Commons may have, consistency and logic is not one of them."

Mr. Lloyd George made the significant statement: "I feel confident that next year will see the inclusion in the Government measure of an amendment which will enfranchise millions of women in this country." This may be so, but let us make certain *sure* by working for this great spiritual reform—in season and out of season—and all the time—until we have the Royal Assent to the Women's Enfranchisement Bill.

THE SEVENTH MARCHIONESS OF RIVIÈRE.

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The following incident will prove how impossible it would be to record the whole history of Andrea in this place, and why therefore it is wiser to lead up only to the "psychical interlude" referred to last week.

When Andrea was quite a small child, she was one day sitting on the low stone wall, which divided the garden of gardens from the outside world. A gentle rain was pattering down upon her fuzzy curls and upon her bare neck and arms. Her mother tapped upon a window pane and beckoned. Andrea rose slowly—shook the sparkling raindrops from her mane, and quietly reseated herself with her back to the window.

Presently nurse came across the lawn, and remonstrated as she came.

Andrea did not turn her head.

"Hush," she said softly, raising her fat little hand. "Things is rushing by—and I want to catch every instant minute."

A life in which every instant minute has counted, contains incidents, emotions, forces, whirling joys and still tragedies, which cannot be recounted in limited space.

Let us realise that nothing counts but personality—to which environment adapts itself.

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Here we have an almost Arcadian environment. A family of gentlefolk of the mid-Victorian era. Their beautiful old house and garden the centre of the simple village street. The father a man of parts—scholar, sportsman, and patriot. His lady wife—a very high-stepping and glorious lady—whom velvet most becomes, who with skirts gracefully looped over her swaying crinoline disdains the footpath, and who in her walks abroad takes always the centre of the road, and for whose imperial progress muck-carts and gigs divert their course towards the ditch. A small family of children richly dowered with clean quick-flowing blood, great beauty, ardent temperaments, and ready wit.

Andrea was one of this brood. She was the least attractive because of the inflexible will-power which brought her, white and silent, in passionless antagonism to all forms of injustice.

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