

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

WOMEN.

A charmingly refined woman is Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, the President of the International Suffrage Alliance, and in her untiring zeal for the freedom of woman's conscience she has now travelled around the world—sowing the seed of her high ideals of womanhood wherever she goes. The special correspondent of the *Observer* writes from New York:—

“After her trip round the world Mrs. Chapman Catt finds that, compared with Chinese women, American women are almost as helpless as babies in their subjection to their clothes. She thinks that it is high time that American femininity kicked itself free from swaddling draperies and declared its independence in dress as in politics.

“Mrs. Catt even recommends a modified form of Chinese dress, which, she says, is the most sanitary, healthful, comfortable and artistic costume woman can wear. When asked why she did not adopt it herself, she said:—

“The American woman is mis-shapen; her back is curved and her hips bulge from wearing the corsets and dresses she is thrust into. We think we are beautiful, but we are not to be compared in natural grace with our Chinese sisters. Their costume permits of the greatest ease of movement. They can climb ladders, go up and down stairs in comfort, bend and use every muscle of the body without feeling the strain.

“The American woman, like her European sister, is nothing more than a rack, upon which dressmakers hang ideas embodied in fashionable fabrics. Can you fancy Chinese women being the slaves of European dressmakers? They would not permit it. We in America have been their slaves too long.

“But the most radical change I suggest is for women to go without hats. Hats are utterly useless. Women in other countries do not hide their hair under huge, heavy millinery, and they are all the better and happier for this freedom.

“Let us show our independence of fashion creators. The money you used to spend on millinery you can give to the cause of 'Votes for women.' You would be accomplishing untold good in the world, and for your sex especially.”

All this may be sound advice, and, if we are not yet ready to act on it, let us be thankful for the wonderful improvement in the garments of women since Victorian days. No more “hour-glass” figures—now we have graceful flowing lines and draperies. No more false modesty—no more “trains” and petticoats in the street. Instead we wear neat, businesslike tailor coats and skirts—and comfy knickers beneath. Heads and hats still require common sense, but even here one may go as one pleases and not appear a freak. By all means let all the money saved be spent in furthering Suffrage—and freedom of conscience, which impels its demand.

At the Dudley Galleries, 169, Piccadilly, W., there is now being held an Exhibition of Water Colours illustrating the Homes and Haunts of Ruskin, by Miss E. M. B. Warren. The pictures shown by this accomplished artist, one hundred in number, are one and all characterised by great beauty of colouring and perfect finish. Derwentwater, Coniston, Oxford, Switzerland, Venice, Verona, Assisi, Rome, in these and in many other places the painter has followed closely in the Master's footsteps, and has chosen for her subjects all that is most lovely in Nature and dignified and splendid in architecture. The Exhibition will remain open until December 23rd, and for students and lovers of Ruskin's works, it is one that should not be missed. Many of the drawings form illustrations to Sir E. T. Cook's recently published book on the “Homes and Haunts of Ruskin.”

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

“THE JOYOUS ADVENTURES OF ARISTIDE PUJOL.”*

“The man's life was as disconnected as a pack of cards.” Verily Aristide was an amazing man. If you feel at all downhearted read his adventures, and we venture to say that if you have a spark of imagination you will catch something of the buoyant and altogether delightful irresponsibility of the man, and you will be as much in earnest over his escapades as he was himself. The worst of it is that they were so many and varied that it is not possible to allude to them all.

An enthusiast of enthusiasts, our friend Aristide embraced with guilelessness and thoroughness the cause of fair ladies who bamboozled him and distressed persons who swindled him. His volatile nature, and sense of humour prevented these from having any lasting effect upon him.

In his time he played many parts. French master to a ladies' school, the headmistress appreciated his style which was colloquial. The colloquial Aristide was jocular. His lessons were a giggling joy from beginning to end. He imparted to his pupils delicious knowledge. Recited to them, till they were word perfect, a music-hall ditty of the early eighties: “*sur le bi, sur le banc, sur le bi, du bout, du banc*”; and of the irregular verbs their knowledge would have disgraced a kindergarten.

He travelled in an automobile to sell a corn cure. “Had it not have been for the car, he told me, he would not have undertaken the undignified employment.” On his travels he picked up a deserted infant by the roadside.

“*Mon pauvre petit*,” said Aristide, “you are hungry. I wonder when you last tasted food. If I had only a little biscuit and wine to give you. But, alas! there is only petrol and corn cure, neither of which, I believe, is good for babies.”

Aristide clambered back to his seat, took the child on his knee and commiserated it profoundly.

* By WILLIAM J. LOCKE. John Lane, London.

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