

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

WOMEN.

It will give sincere pleasure to the nation that the King has been pleased to grant to Mrs. Kathleen Scott the same rank, style, and precedence as if her husband, Captain Robert Falcon Scott, R.N., C.V.O., had been nominated a Knight Commander of the Bath, as he would have been had he survived.

We note in the press that the promoters of Alexandra Day propose to repeat this very undesirable method of raising money for charity, and are pleased to know that some of the hospitals are wisely determining to have nothing to do with it. To let young girls loose in the streets to pester men of all classes to buy their silly wares produced an extraordinary condition of affairs last year. We spent the afternoon watching the results, and condemn in all sincerity any repetition of such a demoralising affair. Then from a business point of view, how about the balance-sheet? £7,000 was spent to produce £11,000 for the cause! We consider the name of Queen Alexandra should be kept out of this advertising scheme of vulgar social climbers, and that no mother worthy of the name should permit her young daughter to take part in its proceedings.

A letter has been received from the King and Queen approving the decision that the memorial to the late Miss Emma Cons should take the form of a fund to assist the Victoria Hall, Waterloo Bridge Road, with which Miss Cons was associated.

At the annual meeting of the Edinburgh Hospital and Dispensary for Women, at which Lady Helen Munro Ferguson presided, Miss S. E. S. Mair unveiled a tablet to the memory of Dr. Sophia Jex-Blake, founder of the Hospital. The inscription on the tablet is "In affectionate remembrance of Sophia Jex-Blake, M.D., founder of this Hospital, to whose large courage, insight and constancy the admission of women to the profession of medicine in this country is mainly due. Dr. Jex-Blake was a Vice-President of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses.

An interesting case which is shortly to come on in the Court of Session, Edinburgh, is the action raised by the Lord Advocate, on behalf of the Inland Revenue Commissioners, against Janie Allan of Greystone, Prestwick, Ayrshire, for £109, the amount of supertax on her income.

The defendant is expected to conduct her own defence, viz., that as the terms "individual" and "person" have been construed to mean male person in all statutes relative to public Acts, this meaning must be given to them in taxing statutes.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

WIDECOMBE FAIR.*

The West Country and Mr. Eden Phillpotts set us aglow with expectation, so full is the one of romance, superstition, and primitive passion, so able the pen of the other to catch its lights and shades, to probe into its secrets, and to portray powerfully its characteristics. Dartmoor and its surrounding heights, the rural hamlet of Widecombe, the inhabitants of the hamlet, nothing beyond, nothing outside, give ample scope for a long, closely-written volume; none of it dull, all of it fresh, much of it burning, and yet, when all is said, only the simple chronicle of everyday, ordinary people—*only*, it is set forth by a nature-lover, further by a human nature lover, who will not allow the dullest to be uninteresting, and is able to weave a web of romance around the most unlikely.

There is no special hero or heroine in this tale, the characters have an equal chance, none are neglected or set in the background.

The deathbed of Mr. Daniel Reep is told as follows:—

He is summing himself up before his departure.

"None ever saw me bosky-eyed or even market-merry."

"No faither."

"I hope, since it must be, that I drop afore Farmer Sweetland's wife up to Tunhill, because they'll put her in the churchyard just where I want to go if she cracks first. And I must have the same tombstone verse what old Billy Blades had:—

"'Twas in the blooming age of man
God took me from this wicked land."

He turned and sighed.

"All the same, I don't see why I should call it a 'wicked land,' and spring coming and all. How cruel well I know how it is all happening. The plovers be running about so saucy and the trout be moving and the frogs hollering. I know it all—to the song of the latest little cuddy-brown wren—but I shan't see, nor hear, nor smell none of it no more—damn it."

Margery's slow mind was traversing the tombstone verse.

"I bain't sure whether you ought to write 'the blooming age of man,' my old dear, not in your case, you be sixty-eight."

The women's question was not without its champions in this primitive hamlet. "Ah," said Miss Tapper to Mary Hearn, the postmistress. "If women could only get the world's money in their keeping the power would be theirs, every rich wife knows that."

"So it would, then," admitted Mary, "but the dratted men take very good care that we shan't. Look at our wages—look at mine. Shameful tyranny 'tis, for if I can do a man's work and

* By Eden Phillpotts. John Murray, Albemarle Street, London, W.

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