

## OUTSIDE THE GATES.

### WOMEN.

To those who can remember her coming and marriage in March, 1863, it seems incredible that Queen Alexandra has been with us for half-a-century. But so it is. The fiftieth anniversary of her arrival in this country falls on March 7th, and her marriage followed a few days later. Well do we remember that day—the ringing of church bells, the rejoicings, decorations, and junketings in the little Nottinghamshire village of Thoroton in which we then lived; the buying of favours and *cartes de visite* of the very handsome young bridegroom and lovely bride. At six, nothing is too unimportant to note and remember. The *pièce de resistance* of national rejoicing was, of course, the tea and supper, spread for the whole village in a splendid old barn. Here laurel ropes and paper-roses hung from its cobwebby rafters; and the tables simply groaned with magnificent joints, piles of vegetables and fruit, and puddings the size of a harvest moon. We remember helping to wait at that feast—and how Mester This and Mrs. That cracked pleasing jokes, and demolished plate after plate of steaming viands; and how we wondered if they were hollow! We remember the Squire leading off the dance with the most sprightly widow in the village—dressed in an airy fairy, discarded ball-gown—“sheep dressed lamb fashion,” as ladies of more sober fashion whispered; and how her cap was trimmed with red, white and blue ribbons, into which was sewn over either ear a bunch of tight little black silk curls! We remember how she nipped up her partner, as “hands across and down the middle,” she ducked under extended arms, and brought him triumphantly laughing and breathless from end to end of the barn with surprising agility. We wonder if country girls can dance like that in these days? We saw “the Princess” herself a few months later when she came as a bride to visit the Duke of Rutland, at Belvoir Castle, and beheld a vision of grace and beauty never to be effaced from memory, which surely has never been excelled. In this year of Jubilee, Ministers of State and Corporations will, no doubt, offer to Queen Alexandra national congratulations, but by her special wish such ceremonies will be observed as quietly as possible.

At a delightful reception held last week at the Grafton Galleries, by Lady Frances Balfour and the Executive of the London Society for Women's Suffrage to meet Mrs. Henry Fawcett and the members of the National Union Council, Lady Frances paid a well deserved tribute to the life long work for the elevation of womanhood, and their political emancipation of Mrs. Fawcett.

Miss Edith Palliser then presented Mrs. Fawcett with a badge of gold and enamel, on behalf of the 400 societies of the Union, the badge being adorned “with five opals for steadfastness and

courage, green leaves for undying hope, and white pearls for the righteousness of our cause.”

Mrs. Fawcett declared that she was much impressed by the warmth of their love and kindness, and that the National Union was the joy and pride of her life.

## BOOK OF THE WEEK.

### FORTITUDE.\*

“’Tis not life that matters! ’Tis the courage you bring to it.” The title of this book shows its purpose, and the above utterance of old Frosted Moses is taken as its motto. It has what all writing worthy of the name should aim at, a definite concrete object, and the deadly earnestness with which that object is pursued and worked out puts the history of Peter Westcott beyond the charge of morbidity, and places it in the forefront of those many attempts to deal with that most difficult problem, heredity.

Briefly, young Peter has a bad father and a bad grandfather, with badness of a sinister character of which its worse attributes are implied rather than described, for which the reader is grateful. The atmosphere of little Peter's home is conveyed with a realism that one's first inclination is to resent, so surely does the terror of it make us suffer with the child. To what purpose we ask is such a book written? But we read on and understand. Peter's mother is an invalid, her bedroom was white and smelt of flowers and medicine; he was always glad to get out of it. She was dying slowly of terror at his father. But at the last mother and boy understand each other.

“She lay back on her pillows with a little sigh. “You are very strong.”

“Yes; I am going to be strong for you now. I am going to look after you. They shan't keep us apart any more.”

“Oh, Peter dear,” she shook her head almost gaily at him, “’tis too late, I am dying. Oh, Peter dear, I've wanted you so dreadfully, and I was never strong enough to say you must come! But oh, I am happy at last.” . . . She stroked his cheek with her hand—the golden light from the great cloud filled the room and touched the white vases with its colour.”

The painful description of the boy's school-life should receive the close attention of all who are interested in the root matter of social evil; and though we cannot but believe that in the present-day (for this is a Victorian story), the crude, cold-blooded cruelty and bullying no longer exist, yet, alas! the more insidious evil that is hinted at still remains as a hideous canker. But Peter—and this is the point—fights his way through for himself and others, and comes out unblemished. As monitor he brings about the expulsion of Jerrard Dawson, the most popular

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[previous page](#)

[next page](#)