

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

The quinquennial meeting of the International Council of Women will be held in Christiania from September 8th to 18th. The Queen of Norway, the Norwegian Government and the Christiania municipal authorities are arranging entertainments in honour of the meeting. The proceedings will be held daily in the Norwegian Parliament buildings, and in the evenings there will be public meetings in the largest halls of the town. Delegates will take part in the gathering from many parts of the world.

The National Council of Women announces that its Annual Meeting will be held at Bristol from 11th to 15th October. Further information will be given at a later date.

The Representation of the People Bill, which would confer the franchise on women from the age of 21 upwards, was further considered last week by a House of Commons Standing Committee.

Sir Kingsley Wood said the Government considered the Bill premature. There was no urgency, because as far as one could judge, there was not the slightest possibility of an appeal to the country for some years to come. Sir Kingsley Wood added that it did not appear to be worth while going on with the Bill.

Mr. Sudgen said that the promoters had no intention of dropping the Bill, as that would not be just to great masses of women workers in the country.

The Committee decided to go on with the discussion. It was agreed to pass Clause 1 as amended, placing men and women on an equality in regard to the age limit, namely 21, but leaving the existing forms of qualification unchanged. It was agreed that the Bill should come into operation in 1923, unless an earlier date should be fixed by Order in Council to meet electoral emergencies.

We are of opinion that the age of 25 would be quite soon enough to enfranchise both men and women.

Miss Maude Royden preached in the pulpit of St. Peter's Cathedral, Calvin's old church at Geneva, last Sunday. It is the first time a woman has ever occupied it, and Miss Royden did so on the invitation of the Council of the International Women's Suffragist Alliance, which is holding a week's gathering in the city.

As a permanent memorial to Josephine Butler—to whom none exists—it is proposed to found in Liverpool, her native city, a training centre for workers in the cause of social purity, to be called the Josephine Butler Training House. It is desired to raise at least £10,000, to buy and equip the Liverpool Training House, and to form a fund to provide grants to approved training centres.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

"HARVEST."*

We are told that "the best is kept till last," and this last book, from the pen of Mrs. Humphry Ward, has an outlook and breadth which we have not always been able to trace in her writings.

Its subject is attractive, and we must not complain of its being another war novel, as the war offered so many romantic situations that it is unreasonable to suppose writers will not succumb to the temptation of spinning yarns around them.

Again, this book deals with the land and outdoor farm life, and Mother Nature is bound to make her appeal if she is dealt with sympathetically.

"Harvest" is a romance and a tragedy.

Rachel Henderson, with some odd thousands bequeathed to her in a legacy, decided to make a venture in farming.

She was not a novice in the art, as, though still only twenty-four years of age, she had spent her early years in Canada, where she had gained considerable practical experience. A good-looking, alluring girl, giving the impression of being younger than her actual years.

She arrived in the wagonette amid the criticisms of the village folk, who were sceptical of her ability for her undertaking.

"The old horse jogged on, and presently from a row of limes beside the road, a wave of fragrance, evanescent and delicious, passed over the carriage." Miss Henderson sniffed it with delight. "But one never has enough of it," she thought discontentedly. And then she remembered how as a child she used to press her face into the lime blossom—passionately greedily, trying to get from it a pleasure greater than it would ever yield.

For the more she tried to compel it by a kind of violence, the more it escaped her.

She used to envy the bees lying drunk among the blooms. They at least were surfeited and satisfied. It struck her as a parable of her whole life—so far."

From this passage, it will be gathered that Rachel's nature was far from being a placid one. She had, in fact, in her short life embarked on stormy seas, and the farm life on which she was about to enter, seemed to promise her a haven where interest and healthy toil would recreate her.

Since it is not possible to imagine a personality without some sort of description, we give the following picture of Rachel in her early days at the farm.

Rachel had put on a blue overall above her land-worker's dress. Her beautiful head, with its wealth of brown hair, and her face with its sensuous fullness of cheek and lip, its rounded lines and lovely colour, like a slightly over-blown rose, were greatly set off by the simple folds of blue linen. Her shapely feet and legs in their khaki stockings and shoes completed the effect of lissom youth.

* By Mrs. Humphry Ward. Collins & Sons, London.

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