

## OUTSIDE THE GATES.

A great reception awaits Her Majesty the Queen when she visits Oxford on Friday, March 11th, to receive by diploma the degree of D.C.L.—the first ever conferred by that University upon a woman, although women were admitted to its degrees in October last.

The Queen will take the opportunity of visiting Lady Margaret Hall and Somerville College, and we hope that Her Majesty's interest will have the result of directing attention to the need of financial help for these women's colleges.

Invitations have been sent to various organizations of Nurses to attend a meeting at the Central Hall, Westminster, to protest against the system of reprisals in Ireland, when a resolution protesting against reprisals will be proposed. The signatories to the letter of invitation are headed by the Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair—always more Irish than the Irish—and other well-known Asquithians, including Lady Bonham Carter. We are pleased to note that the signatories "denounce murder and the use of lawless violence by either side." Why therefore take sides?

We consider such political agitation calculated to still further stir up strife, and do not intend to advise organised trained nurses to take part in it, as those we have consulted agree with our conclusions.

The Second Reading of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, introduced into the House of Lords by the Bishop of London, was down for March 9th. The Bill places the age of consent at 17 instead of 16, as prescribed in the Act of 1885. It further provides that the assent of a girl under 16 shall be no defence to a charge of indecent assault, and eliminates the defence to a charge of assault that the accused had "reasonable cause to believe that a girl was of or above the age of 17." It further extends to 12 months the time in which prosecutions may be instituted, and increases the penalties which may be imposed on brothel keepers on first, second and third convictions to £100, £250, and £500 respectively, as against £20, £40 and £100.

## COMING EVENTS.

*March 17th.*—Association for Promoting the Training and Supply of Midwives. Seventeenth Annual Meeting, The New House, Airlie Gardens, Campden Hill. 3 p.m.

*March 18th.*—Nurses' Missionary League, Day of Thought and Prayer, University Hall, W.C., 10.30 p.m.

*March 29th.*—Professional Union of Trained Nurses. Annual General Meeting, The Plane Tree, 106, Great Russell Street, W.C. 1. 4 p.m. Tea 1s.

*April 30th.*—Sale of Work. Nurses Memorial to King Edward VII., Victoria Infirmary, Glasgow.

## THE BOOK OF THE WEEK.

### "LANTERN LANE."

There is always a great attraction in a good historical novel, and when it happens—as is the case with the book under our consideration—to be exceptionally well written, it comes under the head of fascination.

Fascinating indeed is "Lantern Lane," putting as it does a fresh interpretation on the private life of the dissolute Charles II in the light of his love for Barbara Rackstraw, who was to him what no man or woman had ever been, a secret inspiration—"the woman whom I cannot help but love"—describing in thrilling and lurid word-painting scenes in the great plague; bringing before the imagination of the reader the insolent gallants of that period; charming with cameos of old London and its environments.

The plot and purpose of the story is to tell how one, John Fairfax, a country squire, was fired with a desire to leave his peaceful pursuits and to go to Whitehall to serve his King.

A pretty picture is sketched in the opening chapter of Luce, the daughter of his neighbour, Sir Philip Paradell, bidding him goodbye on the eve of his departure.

"Will you write me a letter, John?"

"Of course," said he.

"He was like a big boy to a small boy in his attitude towards Luce. There was no sex in her as yet, or Fairfax had not felt it. He liked the shine of her eyes, her buoyancy, her frankness, her freckles and her tumbled hair. In some subtle way, she made him feel a big fellow, very strong, a man of the wide world. No one had told him that he was little better than a bumpkin, in spite of Winchester, Oxford and Shere Hall." He was to learn that quite unmistakably later on.

Luce had a kindly, honest father and a wanton vain mother. John's introduction to Whitehall was obtained through his uncle, Sir Roger Pagan, and his first interview with his King was to surprise him at a secret meeting with Barbara in the Mall at night. From that moment he became her ardent admirer and the chosen confidant of the King, and the bearer of his messages to his love. John's first vision of Barbara caused his "wits to fly like moths round a candle. She was dressed in a gown of blood-red velvet the colour of which made more vivid the brilliant pallor of her face. Her hair was intensely black, falling in little curls over her neck and face. Her eyes were very dark, yet luminous like some soft dark fabric shot with light. Nor was her loveliness a mere beauty of the flesh; it had that undefinable mystery that mere fleshly beauty lacks."

Alas! that this beautiful vision should have perished in the plague.

It was while he was acting as sentry outside Barbara's House, while within she sang to her royal lover, that Teg Hargreaves, a Court gallant passed by and flung him an insult. It was like,

\* By Warwick Deeping. Cassell & Co.

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