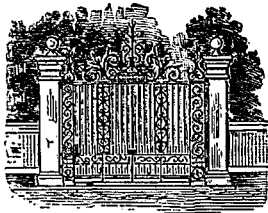


— Outside the Gates. —

WOMEN.

MAYFIELD HOUSE.—ANOTHER LADIES' SETTLEMENT
IN THE EAST END.



A thick fog was covering in heavy black folds all the gloom, and poverty, and wretchedness of the East End (writes a representative of the NURSING RECORD), when we made our first acquaintance with Mayfield House, Bethnal Green, and though the outlines of the Museum, and the Church on the Green, were only suggested in that darkness which even a street lamp fails to illuminate, their nearness to our destination was deep cause for thankfulness on such a night. But having crossed the hospitable threshold, what a change! The fog was promptly shut out by the maid, and the comforts and beauty of a home, in its best sense, were at once visible in the hall, as well as in the well-proportioned apartment to which we were shown, where several of the lady residents were enjoying that most social of meals, afternoon tea, by the side of a bright fire, beneath the sweet face of the Sistine Madonna, and surrounded by the many touches of refinement which so often tell the general character and taste of the owners.

Then we chatted and chatted, passing lightly from one subject to another, but centreing all in the work that has been attempted and achieved. This Ladies' Settlement first sprung into existence some five years ago as a lusty off-shoot of the Cheltenham College for Girls, which is so ably presided over by Miss Beale, the head Mistress. This off-shoot was a practical recognition of the fact that the rich and the educated have it in their power to give more than a casual guinea or a meaningless condolence to the poor; that, in short, they can give themselves—their time, their energy, their culture, their talents, in the service of those who labour or suffer. And this high tone has been sustained throughout. Some of the ladies who come are able to give considerable time and are, of course, increasingly the more valuable, as they become acquainted with the poorer neighbours among whom they have pitched their tent; but others can only stay, owing to home or local duties, a month or two at a time, but are nevertheless very welcome additions to the staff. Each settler, of course, defrays the expense of her board and lodging; however, this is only £1 per week—a modest sum, which might well suggest to scores of ladies living in this great London lonely lives on small incomes, yet living to give sympathy, ready to cheer the miserable and encourage the weak, the propriety of their emigrating to an East End Ladies' Settlement, and there forget themselves in working for others. The general expenses of Mayfield House Mission are defrayed by the guild of Cheltenham College. It is not, however, on record that any one who has sent a cheque or a five pound note down that way has had it returned as a superfluity.

While essentially Christian, Mayfield House pins its flag to no Church party, believing truly that the best

service to God is service to Humanity. The services of the settlers are freely given to the over-worked clergy of the surrounding parishes, in Sunday School teaching, district visiting, at Band of Hope meetings, mothers' meetings, entertainments, etc. And here let it be mentioned that the lady residents know, from their own experience, the truth of the statement that good music and high art is appreciated, and has a good and elevating influence upon the poor, too tired maybe to listen with their ears to any teaching. To conclude in a word, the all-embracing motto of the Settlement, and, indeed, of all such Settlements, is "Excelsior! Excelsior!!"

Science Notes.

INSECTS, BIRDS, AND FLOWERS.

An interesting report appears in the *Kew Bulletin* of a plague of caterpillars at Hong Kong. The caterpillars infested pine trees, a great number of which had been planted in the island in order to re-forest it. Active steps were taken by the Government to rid the trees of their pests by establishing stations where the caterpillars were received and paid for by weight. The plague lasted about two months, and the weight of caterpillars destroyed is said to have been nearly thirty-six tons.

A correspondent of *Nature*, writing from Durban, Natal, describes the mode of fertilisation of a native flower bearing the colloquial name of "lighted candles." The corolla is in the form of an upright cylinder about an inch long, and coloured red and white. After a time, five longitudinal slits appear in the corolla, at the base of which honey is secreted, while the upper part is blocked by the anthers or pollen-bags which press against one another. If a needle be inserted through one of the five slits and passed downwards towards the honey, the effect is to split the corolla tube and release the anthers so causing the pollen to be dispersed.

The observer watching these flowers noticed them to be visited by a species of sun-bird who collected honey by inserting his beak in one of the slits, and so caused the bursting of the flower. Curious to know whether the flowers were capable of opening without the assistance of the bird, the observer enclosed a branch containing from 80 to 100 healthy flowers in a net bag. Not a single flower thus enclosed split open, and not a single seed was produced.

In the above instance it is clear that the bird, going to the flower for honey, and thus bursting open the corolla and receiving the pollen on its head and beak, is the agent by which pollen is conveyed from one flower to the immature seeds of another. Without the aid of the sun-birds no seed and hence no berries would be produced. "There is," says the observer, "an element of irony in it, for from the berries of this plant the boys make bird-lime."

The fate of the berries when not made into bird-lime, is of even greater interest. The plant is a

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