

Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.

The second annual meeting of the Anti-Sweating League, to secure a minimum wage, was recently held at the New Reform Club. Amongst those present were Mrs. Carl Meyer, Miss Gertrude Tuckwell, Miss Clementina Black, Miss Alice Crompton (Warden of the University Settlement, Manchester), Fräulein Lansberg (an official of the German Consumers' League), and many others.

The annual report recorded that during the past twelve months there had been an ever-widening acceptance of the proposals of the League, which were now supported by a great and almost unanimous public opinion. Legislation had been demanded in a series of meetings held in London and elsewhere, and the Sweated Industries Bill, introduced by Mr. Toulmin, had passed its second reading amid a chorus of praise without a division. That was the best conceivable testimony to the efficacy of the work of the League alike in revealing the evil of existing conditions and in arguing for the remedy to be applied. The Executive Committee were now awaiting the report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Home Work, to which Mr. Toulmin's Bill had been referred, and they had hope that it would be of a character to justify progress being made with the Bill during the autumn session, or the early introduction of a Government measure on similar lines.

Fräulein Lansberg said that in Germany home work meant sweated work. They would be surprised to know how much it resembled in some ways that done in England. The answers to the inquiries made by her Association in Germany might almost have been translated from the answers familiar to their English League. They had in Germany a feeling of deep gratitude for the work they were doing in England, and were most keen on their success. They were actually waiting for the legal enactment against sweating, because a similar enactment would be sure to follow in Germany the year after. The example of England would be most useful to them in their work.

A very influential committee was elected.

The report of the House of Commons' Committee on Home Work was issued on Monday as a Parliamentary paper. The Committee recommend legislation with regard to the rates of payment to home workers engaged in certain industries, the establishment of wages boards, and the registration of home workers.

We fear that the Sweated Industries Bill will not reach the Statute Book this year, as the Committee has not had time to go through and remodel the clauses as suggested.

At the Congress of the Royal Institute of Public Health, held last week at Buxton, Miss May Yates,

of the Bread and Food Reform League, London, read a paper on "Underfed Children: a National Danger." She pointed out that a proper selection of food was even more important than good environment and healthy dwellings. The Bread and Food Reform League suggested that the most effectual means of remedying the terrible suffering amongst children was to spread information amongst parents about healthy, economical foods, and encourage their supply through ordinary trade channels. Charitable persons who proposed starting soup-kitchens or children's dinners would do more permanent good if they would (without advocating their exclusive use) induce local shops to supply pea-soup, oatmeal porridge, cooked, unpolished rice (the same as was used in China, India, and Japan), good bread made from finely-ground whole-wheat meal, or standard household bread containing the germ or embryo, and more of the outer portions of the grain, and give necessitous families in the district credit for certain quantities per week during the winter months.

Book of the Week.

RESTITUTION.*

It is a real gift to be able to write a dramatic and sensational novel without producing a melodramatic and unreal effect, and such a gift Dorothea Gerard (Madame Longard de Longgarde) possesses to the full. Her latest novel, "Restitution," bristles with interest and adventure, as is to be expected of a story dealing with Poland and her troubles; but the book is written in an easy, masterly style, free of those ranting superlatives that always savour of improbability. "Restitution," therefore, does not read like a column from a would-be popular newspaper full of catching headlines; it rings true throughout.

In the opening prologue we discover ourselves in Lithuania during the stirring times of 1861-63. It is with bated breath that we watch a procession of Poles taking part in a great demonstration that is of such political significance as to call for more than gendarme supervision. Cossacks stand in double file across the road the procession means to traverse, but the Poles, regarding them as if they are thin air, press on into their midst. Men, women, even children are there, all with equal calmness disregarding those murderous points. That is one episode—a second born of the first—some twenty young fellows, looking like a pack of schoolboys bent upon a nocturnal escapade, start off on a campaign of their own with the secret intention of awakening their fellow-countrymen to action. The trap into which these youngsters fall is all the more ghastly that it is typical of so much that really occurred. Very few survived the massacre, but it happened that the enthusiastic leader lived to be sent to Siberia, and his lands were forfeited, falling to a Russian who had done good service in the Polish insurrection.

It is the will of Fate that in later years the

* By Dorothea Gerard. (John Long.)

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