

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

WOMEN.

The Annual Conference of the National Union of Women Workers, and Annual Meeting of the National Council of Women are to be held this year at Glasgow, from October 9th to 13th. Interesting resolutions are to be proposed on Prison Reform, Criminal Law, and Health Visitors, and the President, Lady Laura Ridding, has down for the consideration of the Executive Committee the following very important urgency resolution on the National Insurance Bill:— "That the National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland respectfully urge on His Majesty's Government and on all Members of Parliament that, on account of the vital importance of women's interests affected by the National Insurance Bill, amendments should be added to the Bill, securing that one of the Insurance Commissioners should be a woman, and that one-fifth of the Advisory Committee and one-fourth of every Health Committee should consist of women."

In this month's *Chambers' Journal*, Mr. H. Hesketh Prichard writes on the Moravian Mission Stations in Labrador, where their members reach strange races—Tibetans, Eskimo, Alaskans, hunters, mountaineers, &c. Yet, after close upon two hundred years of missionary effort, they remain unknown to the general public. Far and wide on the shores or the sea of heathenism are set these light-houses, and silently and steadily they pursue their work.

At each of the Moravian mission-stations there is a missionary called the house-father, with his wife and younger children; and if the number of Eskimo makes it necessary, also an ordained assistant and a layman storekeeper, who attends to the industrial business of the store. The trade done by the mission is of great value to the natives.

It is the trade which holds the people together. The missionaries are not allowed to sell anything on their own behalf, for the trade is undertaken purely in the interest of the Eskimo. Every member of the mission, in addition to being a preacher, is a master of some useful handicraft. Their wives, the Moravian Sisters, not only help in the schools and teach the women the domestic arts, but they tend the sick. They receive no return for their labours, yet the life is far more trying for them than for their husbands. Cruellest of all, their children have to be sent home to the mission schools at seven years of age. Such partings often mean practical separation for a lifetime, and communication with home is restricted to one or two mails a year in most of the stations. These noble women bear their children and tend them through illness mostly without medical aid. The severity of the climate falls more heavily on the women also. Many prefer the winter, for the short summer awakens the mosquitoes and black flies, which make sitting out of doors impossible.

Who shall say that the spirit of martyrdom is extinct?

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

THE EARTHEN DRUM.

The introduction explains the reason of the title of this book, which contains a collection of short Eastern tales.

"The Eastern story-teller in the idle hours of the day—and any hour may be idle beneath an African sun—summons his audience by beating rhythmically upon an earthen drum. . . . The Oriental story-teller's art is to concentrate his hearers' attention for a brief space upon the world of dramatic fancies, to awaken his emotions, to stir his pity or awake his laughter, and withal to set his little history in a form as clear cut and dainty as that of a cameo. This is, too, the object of 'The Earthen Drum.'"

Of the whole collection of weird tales, perhaps the most eerie is "The White Mouse." It tells of a young English girl who fell under the spell and fascination of "a very great marabout while travelling with friends in the vicinity of the desert." In the mornings they usually took their coffee outside in the arbour.

"Well, what did you see?" said Freddy, over his thick coffee cup, as the girl bent to kiss her hostess. "The desert by moonlight, or a new dancing girl?"

"Nothing so frivolous," said Dolores lightly. "Masoud took me to hear some religious singing."

On the following evening she, with her friends, again attend the ceremony.

"The marabout took a step forward and his eyes searched the little party sitting in the shadow. Dolores supported her chin in her tense palms. He had singled her out. Something within her reared itself and met his gaze as a serpent meets the gaze of a charmer. . . . She could understand now the legend of the serpent and the bird. Yet it was farcical that she could be frightened—yes, miserably frightened, of an Arab saint with soft eyes and a womanish dress." The terrible ascendancy that he gains over her against her will ends in her stealing out of the house at night to meet him.

"Let me go!" she reiterated. "Even if I came I could not stay, I should die."

"You think that I shall let you go—now!" She made no answer, but sat staring at him with wide tear-filled eyes.

"He strode to the entrance and uttered a low, cooing note. A figure gleamed out of the darkness.

"What did you tell him?" she asked fearfully.

"To fetch the camels, they will carry me where I shall never see thee or thy kind again." He turned on her white with passion and spat deliberately in her face. . . . The curtains stirred. There was a word of command. The camel sank slowly to its knees, grunting horribly and showing its teeth. The occupant of the *balanka* gave a long, low whistle. The figure of a girl came slowly to the curtains and parted them. She was lifted inside, the camel rose uncomplainingly,

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