

## OUTSIDE THE GATES.

## WOMEN.

The following is the text of the Memorial influentially signed on behalf of the Young Women's Christian Association, and which has been forwarded to the Home Secretary and the leaders of the various Parties :—

"The undersigned, in the name of the British National Council of the Young Women's Christian Association, having a membership of 90,000 to 100,000, have the honour to address you on a matter which vitally affects the young women of Great Britain and Ireland. The association is non-political, non-party, and concerns itself alone with the social and spiritual welfare of the young women of our country, of all denominations and churches, as well as those belonging to no church at all.

"In the name of this association, we respectfully and most urgently petition that the Criminal Law Amendment Bill be adopted immediately as a Government measure.

"We view with the deepest concern the continual blocking of this Bill, which has already received the approval of the Home Office, and which would, if passed into law, safeguard not only the young women, but also the young men of our country, from many of the grave moral perils that surround them.

"The need of such a Bill is deeply felt by all who are working in the Young Women's Christian Association. Hitherto, we have remained silent, hoping against hope that Mr. Samuel's statement to the deputation which waited upon him on March 30th, 1909—a deputation in which we had no share—meant that the Government intended to make facilities for the measure. Three years have passed, and the Bill has not yet been allowed a second reading.

"We earnestly petition that it be now adopted as a Government measure, and venture to urge that two clauses be added: (a) To raise the age of consent to eighteen; (b) to abolish the clause in the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885, which enables the guilty party to evade punishment, should he be able to show that he had 'reasonable cause' to suppose the girl to be over the age of consent."

The Executive Committee of the National Union of Women Workers are sending copies of the following resolution on the same question to the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary :—

"That the Executive Committee of the National Union of Women Workers earnestly hopes that the Government will adopt, as a Government measure, the Criminal Law Amendment (White Slave Traffic) Bill, which has been already approved by the Home Office, and thus ensure its passing into law this Session."

If Nurses can do anything to influence Members of Parliament on this question, we hope they will not omit to write to them concerning it.

Mrs. Charles Perrin, President of the Society of Women Journalists, is giving a reception to the members at the Westminster Palace Hotel, on May 30th, which is sure to be a delightful gathering. Mrs. A. Llewellyn Roberts has been elected Hon. Secretary upon the retirement of Mrs. Willoughby Hodgson, whose work and charming personality added greatly to its popularity and prestige.

## BOOK OF THE WEEK.

## HERITAGE.\*

Miss Hawtrey has given us a story which may almost be said to be original, and that is saying a good deal. It is certainly interesting and will please a varied class of readers.

Martin Pomblett, of Pomblett's Court, is the son of Nathaniel Pomblett, who had been a great man in his day; a man of dominating qualities, much loved, much hated, but never ignored. The first chapter tells of the old man's death and Martin's determination, misogynist as he is, to make his cousin Cyril his heir. His own mother had left his father, whom he adored, in his infancy, because of his violent and ungovernable temper.

"If you do all this for Cyril," objected his Uncle John, "you practically bind yourself not to marry. I know your views on matrimony, but isn't it rash to—"

"I know what I am doing," said Martin sullenly.

So young Cyril is established as the heir of Pomblett Court, and for a while it seems as though the cousins were well suited to each other, and indeed there appears to be a real affection between them. Martin's violent and overbearing temper, however, is the cause of many a quarrel, and Cyril hurt and wounded, would disappear from the scene for a while. During one of these absences Martin resolves on the vindictive plan of marrying in order to spite his cousin, and in three weeks he wooed and married a girl who was before perfectly unknown to him.

This period is excellently written, and Catherine herself is a creation.

"He was thinking, coherently, dispassionately, considering her as he might consider a picture he was going to buy. It surprised him to realise that she would be quite in keeping with the surroundings in which he wished to place her. What was it in her appearance that made her uncommon? She was plain and inclined to be fat. 'As she advances into middle life,' he thought again, 'she will probably get fat. She will grow into a portly woman, but I think she will get an appearance of a sixteenth century chatelaine.' And he approved of her, too, as the future mother of his son."

And so he invades her happy home and demands her in imperious fashion from her guardians.

"How do we know," they ask, "that you will make her happy? Do you remember that you spoke to her for the first time yesterday?"

He said with quiet conviction, "I know all about her."

As he spoke he caught sight of Catherine herself in the garden quite close by. A gleam from the moon lit up her white dress.

He took up one of the candlesticks and went to the open window. "Catherine," he said gently.

Martin took her hand and held the candle so that the light fell on her face and fair hair. She

\*By Valentina Hawtrey. London: Constable & Co.

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