

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

WOMEN.

Last Saturday was kept as the "Day of Remembrance and Intercession" in many cathedrals, chapels and churches, the following short "commune" having been sent privately all over the country. It is the outcome of a wide-spread need for some expression other than those of excited anger and disappointment which has filled the papers these last few days:—

A COMMUNE FOR THE HOUR OF NOON.

O Thou, Whose Will is done on earth, even as in Thy holy heaven, Thou Who accomplishest all things after the inevitable order of Thy holiness, Who hast led us by devious paths to the fuller consciousness of what Thy Will may be for us this day, shed now Thy Light upon those who turn their faces toward Thee. Fill us with a sense of Thy perfect power, of Thine unalterable steadfastness! Cause us to look for guidance, that we may see with Thy Sight and desire with Thy Desire the perfect Good.

In Thee all things rest. In Thee all things have gathered the strength to be, growing into conscious need of fuller life, growing into completer vision of the Larger Day.

Of Thee we would receive this hour Thy great gift of wisdom, of clear sight, of pure resolve, of perfect love. The silent approach to Thee gives calm and stillness. We would learn of Thy great ones of old their power of listening, their power of stillness. In this power things were accomplished which changed the face of the world, drove back the relentless waves of the sea, and caused impregnable walls to fall.

As willing workers in the cause of Truth and Light, we pray to-day to be obedient, unself-seeking, attentive, ready to receive guidance, so that our service may be taken up into that larger Service wherein is no more "mine" and "thine," but all has its part in one divine Plan.

The Labour Party passed a resolution at its Annual Meeting last week calling upon the Party in Parliament to oppose any Franchise Bill in which women are not included.

Meanwhile, Ministers and their residences are closely guarded by police and detectives, and for fear of damage Kensington Palace, Hampton Court Palace, Kew Palace, and Holyrood Palace are closed to the public until further notice.

At the suggestion of several friends and fellow-workers of the late Miss Octavia Hill, a large and representative committee has been formed to commemorate in some suitable and permanent form her noble public services and the esteem in which she was held.

Miss Hill is known to have advocated the association of places of natural beauty, permanently secured to the public, with the memory of departed friends, and for this and other reasons the committee have decided that the memorial shall take the form of some hill or other open space within easy reach of London, and well known and valued as a place of resort. Upon the land would be erected a simple stone inscribed with a statement of the circumstances of the acquisition.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

FAUSTULA.*

Since Mr. Marion Crawford set the fashion we have had many novels about noble Roman families. "Faustula" takes us back to the days of Constantine, the persecution of the early Christians, and the atmosphere of martyrdom. The phraseology, however, does not suggest such a remote age, and although its modernism is a little unconvincing, we are bound to say that our patience is less taxed than with the pompous language some writers assign to that period.

Faustula cost her mother Accia her life. Her indolent patrician father was not well pleased at her advent, as we learn from a remark to his little daughter Flavia: "You won't be pet rabbit much longer. Your mother cares only for the last. Why can't you go on being the last?" After so well considered a pause: "Why should your mother begin again?"

Out of the shadow a lady came rather hurriedly.

"Faustulus, where have you been? I've been sending for you everywhere."

"Not quite everywhere. What is the matter? Poor Accia. Is Flavia's new rival come, or on the point of arrival? Yes? I hope Accia is not very uncomfortable, not suffering much; not frightened surely?"

The little daughter, deprived of a mother's care, was brought up by her Aunt Sabina, who although a heathen allowed the child to stay with the Christian family of Acilii. The boy Fabian from the first has a protecting chivalry towards the lonely imaginative child. At the early age of ten Faustulus determines that his little daughter shall become a vestal, and it is from this time that the most interesting part of the story begins. Faustulus had married a second time. "He knew his wife very well by this time, and it was not hard to imagine the slow misery the child would endure were she to continue to live with her."

"You will be quite near us," he said to the child, "just round the corner. You will come and see us often?"

"Never if I can help it," she answered without a smile of any sort.

The description of the daily life of the vestals in the Atrium is very interesting. They lived in splendour and luxury, but the child Faustula naturally found these poor consolation. "She scanned her fellow captives and her splendid prison and disliked them both. The vestals were well enough, but in their loveless company how could she find a home? Extremely unlike her father, a certain whimsical unaccountableness had descended to her from him.

One night not very late Faustula was sitting beside Claudia while the other took her turn in attending on the Sacred Fire.

"What would it matter," she asked, resting her chin on her hand and leaning forward, "if it

* Chatto, Windus & Co., London.

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