

wages for it. This is why her position as a conjoint worker with man has been overlooked. Take the baking of bread, for instance. Once women were virtually the bakers of the nation—all bread being made at home. To-day there are about 80,000 bakers, nine-tenths of whom are men. Take again spinning and weaving. Women always did this; and yet witnesses before the Labour Commission grumble now at women's competition in the mills!

Who can wonder that even in the bookbinding trade, where women have received much kindness from such men as Mr. King, etc., there should be some little doubt about the character of the men's proffered help. Are the men prepared to let women undertake every branch of their work, for instance, provided women *can* do it, and will stand out for equal pay?

Answers to questions of this sort are more interesting to women than vague assurances about desiring women's good. Yours faithfully,

ADA HEATHER-BIGG.

A Hindoo Binder's English.

ONE of our Indian librarians finding the work executed by his native binder of a very inferior character, transferred his patronage to another, when the binder who lost the work addressed the following to the librarian:—"Sir, With most and humble Sub mission the petitioner beg to notice before you sorry to state that I am as building my house at Jallardhur City Having heard from some one here that you have give the work of Libery to the other binder but I know myself that you are always kind to me than any other if so please inform me the cause of it What fault has been from this your poor bookbinder and the work of the Libery is in your charge and I am done it always properly according your orders the Undersigned always praying of for you as you are my good paymaster and give to me the good food for my children hoping if any fault had been occur by me please for give to me for the sake of the Jeajais Christ and I am always going already to your word and I oblige Your most obediently Nizam Deen book Binder."

ONE curious result of the adoption of the eight hours day in the bookbinding trade, says the *Daily Telegraph*, is apparent in the volumes which are now issuing from the press. Publishers have not seen their way to giving higher prices, but have reduced the gold-leaf ornamentation of book covers to a minimum. In consequence of this economy, the designs, very beautifully worked it is true, are now frequently executed in coloured inks upon light-toned cloths. These pictures cannot be printed satisfactorily upon dark backgrounds, but it is well known that booksellers have an objection to book covers which soil quickly. Until, however, publishers can afford to be more liberal with their gold leaf, the purchaser of gift books must be content with the artistic substitutes which are now provided.

Literary Factories.



OF course we all know that all kinds of factories exist in New York, but until last week I never knew that the great metropolis boasted of such a thing as a real and fully equipped literary factory. I ran across this wonderful place accidentally, but when I did, I was glad to spend an hour beside the desk of the manager and watch the *modus operandi*.

This literary factory is hidden away in one of the bye-streets of New York, where one would never dream of finding anything in the shape of literature. It employs over thirty people, mostly girls and women. For the most part these girls are intelligent. It is their duty to read all the daily and weekly periodicals in the land. These exchanges are bought by the pound from an old junk-dealer. Any unusual story of city life—mostly the misdoings of city people—is marked by these girls and turned over to one of three managers. These managers, who are men, select the best of these marked articles, and turn over such as are available to one of a corps of five women, who digest the happening given to them, and transform it to a skeleton or outline for a story. This shell, if it may be so called, is then referred to the chief manager, who turns to a large address book and adapts the skeleton to some one of the hundred or more writers entered on his book. Enclosed with the skeleton is sent a blank form, of which the following is an exact copy:—

"To ——. Please make of the enclosed material a — part story, not to exceed — words for each part. Delivery of copy must be by — at the latest. A cheque of \$ — will be sent you upon receipt of manuscript. Notify us at once whether you can carry out this commission for us. Yours respectfully, —."

Now the most remarkable part of this remarkable literary manufactory to me was that manager's address book of authors upon whom he felt at liberty to call for these "written-by-the-yard" stories. The book was handed over to me to look over—for my private examination, of course. There were the names of at least twenty writers upon that book which the public would never think of associating with this class of work—men and women of good literary reputation, whose work is often encountered in our best magazines.

"Not such a bad list of authors, is it?" laughingly said the manager, as he noted my look of astonishment.

I was compelled to confess it was not.

"Why, those authors to whose names you have pointed are glad to do this work for us. Their willingness is far greater than our ability to supply them with 'plots.'"

"What in the world do you do with these stories?" I asked.

"We sell them to the cheapest sensational weeklies, to boiler-plate factories, and to publishers of hair-curling libraries of adventure."

Upon further enquiry I found that very good prices were paid the authors, and that, of course, even better rates were received by the "factory" from their customers.—E. W. BOK, in the *Boston Journal*.