

Book of the Week.

CAPTAIN JUNE.*

For an hour's quiet reading, when one wants merely to enjoy oneself without any severe mental effort, "Captain June" is a delightful little companion. It is one of those stories of a non-descript character upon which it is difficult to put an age. A child would undoubtedly listen to it with deep interest, quite unconscious, and therefore unworried by the fact that there was something in it that he could not understand. Meanwhile for the grown-up there is a little spice of interest, and speculation to commend the tale.

Moreover, and this goes without saying in a criticism upon any work by Mrs. Alice Hegan Rice, the book is exceedingly prettily written. There is quite a fascinating picture of Japanese life, all the more attractive that it is so simple:

"Is it like a story-book all the time?" demands six-year-old June of his little Japanese nurse, Seki San.

And really one cannot help feeling that it must be, that like June on his arrival in Japan, we should inevitably think Aladdin and Ali Baba and all our old friends of fairy lore would presently appear. "It was where they all lived," June reasoned, "There could be no possible doubt as to that. Here was the biggest picture book he had ever seen."

"June's father was a young army officer stationed in the Philippines, but when June was a baby the little lad was so desperately ill he and his mother had to be sent back to the States, where Captain Royston visited them when he had leave. But this year June and his mother came all the way to meet him in Japan. Unfortunately instead, when they arrived there, the bad news met them that Captain Royston was too ill to start, and leaving June in the care of Seki San, Mrs. Royston hurried on alone to nurse her husband.

Thus June is left to lead a real story-book life, but Seki San says:

"Oh, no, June; story-book land is back in America, where grown-up houses are, and the rich fine furnitures, and strange ways."

And so one realises it must be for her. Seki San lived in a regular toy house, "which was like a lot of little boxes fitted into one big one, and there was no furniture." June discovered that it was quite wonderful how one could get along without furniture, indeed, it must be bewildering to the simpler nations to find that we of the West need so much.

For companionship June had Seki's younger brother, Toro, and they soon became great friends, though neither could understand a word the other said.

But June's real adventures have all to do with a certain elderly French officer upon whom he literally, as well as metaphorically, stumbles one day in a garden that "was very old, and very sacred to the Japanese," but where the children

sometimes had leave to go. It is the story of this curious old man, whom June likens to the White Knight, that a child-reader would not perhaps follow, but June plays a very important part in the queer French officer's life. It would, perhaps, be as well not to point out the moral, the tale is quite sufficiently adorned without it, but it is entirely by an act of disobedience that June contrives to be of so much service to his peculiar friend!
E.L.H.

COMING EVENTS.

February 17th.—Miller Memorial Hospital, Greenwich. Lecture to Nurses, "The Blood and the Lymph," by Mr. W. H. McMullen.

February 18th and 19th.—Thirty-sixth Annual Central Conference of the Poor Law Authorities of England and Wales, in the Council Chamber of the Guildhall, the Right Hon. Sir Edward Fry, G.C.B., presiding.

February 18th.—Infants' Hospital, Vincent Square, S.W. Lecture by Dr. Ralph Vincent on Rickets. 5 p.m.

February 18th.—Royal Ear Hospital, Dean Street, Soho. Lecture to Nurses on General Instructions in Nose and Ear Nursing. By Mr. Macleod Yearsley, F.R.C.S., 4.30 p.m.

February 19th.—Colonial Nursing Association. Council and Executive Committee "At Home" at the Imperial Institute, 4—6.30 p.m.

February 21st.—Public Meeting organised by the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, Caxton Hall, Westminster, London, S.W. Address by the Lady Helen Munro Ferguson, who will preside, 3 p.m.

February 21st.—Miller Memorial Hospital, Greenwich. Lecture to Nurses, "Antiseptics." By Mr. Hugh Davies, F.R.C.S. 8 p.m.

February 21st.—Irish Nurses' Association. Lecture by Louis H. M. Dick, Esq., Secretary, on the Royal National Pension Fund for Nurses, 7.30 p.m.

February 26th.—Post Graduate Lectures. Actions of Medicine, II. By Dr. F. D. Boyd, Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, 5 p.m. Nurses cordially invited.

A WORD FOR THE WEEK.

"What is the secret of success?" asked the Sphinx.

"Push," said the button.

"Never be led," said the pencil.

"Take pains," said the window.

"Always keep cool," said the ice.

"Be up to date," said the calendar.

"Never lose your head," said the barrel.

"Make light of everything," said the fire.

"Do a driving business," said the hammer.

"Aspire to greater things," said the nutmeg.

"Be sharp in your dealings," said the knife.

"Find a good thing, and stick to it," said the glue.

"Do the work you are suited for," said the chimney.

The Christian Age.

* By Alice Hegan Rice. (Hodder and Stoughton.)

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