

Book of the Week.

THE REST CURE *

A book that grips. Mr. Maxwell draws with consummate skill and decisive strokes the history of John Barnard, and it is to the marvellous personality of this man that the book owes its power.

John Barnard, M.P., on the road to make a fortune in rubber, "full of health, full of strength, full of confidence, he almost wished the world was larger, so that he might have more to conquer." At the close of his life he confesses: "It was all for myself—not greediness for money—but a selfish, blind delight in the personal struggle."

At thirty-five "he lived in spacious rooms, belonged to good clubs, enjoyed a steadily expanding income, and had saved exactly ten thousand pounds.

He gave the ten thousand pounds as a free gift to his mother. And he could be happy after this in comfortably reflecting that he had fulfilled all obligations. It was fine in a sense, because the gift of all his hoard showed such resolute self-confidence. It left him again with nothing—except his brain and his health. But with these possessions he felt absolutely safe.

After his mother's death, "when she reposed mutely under the granite slabs and iron chains paid for by him, he felt he had finished the business. "If he ever thought of his family again the thought need be no more distracting than when he remembered some docketed, pigeon-holed, stamped and receipted account."

His sheer masterfulness compels Lord Rathkeale, an Irish peer, to consent to his marriage with his daughter, Lady Edith.

"I promise you," he said, with conviction, "that Edith shan't be ashamed of me if she gives me time to work out the career that lies before me."

"Really," said Lord Rathkeale, "you must not speak of her as Edith, don't you know, as if implying your right to do so had been in any way countenanced. No—honestly, I am afraid you mustn't think of that idea any more."

"But I assure you I shall never think of anything else."

"My dear fellow, dismiss it from your mind. Not to be thought of. Go to any parent of an attractive girl like Edith—brought up as Edith has been brought up—with certain advantages—well, of birth, and so on—and tell him you can only offer a settlement of—what was it? Eighteen thousand pounds?"

"No," said Barnard, firmly. "I never offered to settle anything. That is my working capital."

But he marries Edith all the same.

During the honeymoon at Mentone, we are told "that everyone seemed instinctively aware of the touch of a masterful hand." They liked him, these humble folk. He might be abrupt, or angry, or really rude, and they bore him no malice."

The lust of work grows on him and slowly but surely estranges the wife, to whom he is really devoted, from him. The severe strain on his nervous

system from the high pressure at which he lives ends in a complete breakdown, from which he emerges a physical wreck, "like a foundered race-horse, a run-down clock, a stove-in boat, like anything broken, worn out, and utterly done for."

The incidents relating to the close of his life are related very touchingly. Lady Edith and he are once again united, and all their early love restored, but in his dying agony she is constrained to confess to him that which his amazing intuition has already suspected—that she has been unfaithful to him.

He remained passive in her arms, with his head against her neck.

"Jack, do you hear me?"

"Yes."

"Am I forgiven? Do you forgive?"

"Yes—yes." The word was a faint whisper, repeated again and again as he drew the faint breaths.

"Edie. I'm so tired. . . . Give me rest. Let me rest."

She was holding him as a mother holds a sick child, and his breathing was like a child's—very rapid, very faint.

"Yes," she whispered; "rest, my darling—rest."

H. H.

COMING EVENTS.

November 1st to 5th.—Cookery and Food Exhibition, Royal Horticultural Hall, S.W. Nurses' Invalid Trays on view on 3rd and 4th prox.

November 4th.—National Council of Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland. Annual Meeting, 431, Oxford Street, London, W. 4 p.m. Tea.

November 5th.—National Food Reform Association. Conference on the Feeding of Nurses. Caxton Hall, S.W. 2.30 p.m.

November 8th.—Nurses' Missionary League. Lecture: "Difficulties and Possibilities in a Nurses' Life," by Miss Haughton, Matron, Guy's Hospital. University Hall, Gordon Square, W.C. 7.15 p.m.

November 9th.—Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh. Lecture on "Surgical Nursing outside of Hospital," by Mr. John D. Dowden, F.R.C.S.E. All trained nurses cordially invited. Extra-Mural Medical Theatre, 4.30 p.m.

November 19th.—Meeting of the Central Committee for Registration of Nurses, Council Room, British Medical Association Office, 329, Strand, London. The Right Hon. the Lord Amptill, G.C.L.E., will preside, 3 p.m.

NURSES' MISSIONARY LEAGUE.

The Sale of Work will take place at 52, Lower Sloane Street, S.W., on 19th November, 11.30—6 p.m. Parcels are already coming in; but articles need not be sent till November 12th. The General Secretary, Miss H. Y. Richardson, will be grateful if all members will do their best to send things for sale, and to come themselves, and bring their friends to buy.

WORD FOR THE WEEK.

More pain is inflicted in the slaughter-houses in one day than in the laboratories in a year.

DR. OSLER.

* By W. B. Maxwell. (Methuen and Co., Ltd., London.)

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