

## BOOK OF THE WEEK.

## MASTERING FLAME.\*

"Leave the East? My dear fellow, I wouldn't think of it, not even for St. James'. And as for Leipsic!"

"You'd get double the salary, and be another rung up the ladder of diplomacy. I can't see——"

The other man interrupted with a negligent shrug.

"One couldn't expect that you would. You haven't been out here long enough. But if you stay you'd understand. I have lived in Hong Kong for five years—which is only another way of saying that I'll never live anywhere else; at least, nowhere out of the Orient. A one-nationality set would bore me into a fit of nerves now. So would permanent people. Here everyone is blessedly transient. You know that if you have a row with B to-night he is liable to be recalled to-morrow, and you need never see him this side of Valhalla; or if you are indiscreet and get into a scandal with Mrs. A, she and A take a run to Manila for a week or two. I make it my rule to let the other side evade the complication; that is why I am a fixture."

Randall Wayne's indolent and apparently indifferent disposition was destined to be stirred by the advent of his friend's wife, Liliith Armstead.

He is first introduced to her in his own house, "in a charming room, all subtle greens, with long bare stretches of wall and window, and soft hangings of pale yellow stuffs at many doors." When Wayne saw Liliith in it he was glad there were no other pictures. . . . He saw the extent of Armstead's knowledge of his wife every time he called her 'Lil.'"

Liliith, whose beauty is described as extravagant, was born in a New England parsonage, her mother coming of a long line of Castilians. Married to honest John Armstead, with whom she had nothing in common, but who satisfied her sensuous, almost childish nature, with the things that spelt happiness to her, until she met Randall Wayne. But it cannot be denied that with all her beauty and subtlety she was distinctly dull. That even her lover felt this is proved when he says, "A new self—at the hands of a woman who does not understand ten words I say." But that her personality developed in her association with Wayne was forced on even her husband's rather obtuse observation.

"Well I'm damned!" he exploded under his breath. Never before in all their nine years had she ventured a dissenting opinion, had she disagreed with him. Was he not in consequence an accomplished monologist? And now—'Well I'm damned,' he repeated softly, staring at the back of the lovely averted head. Then he took a roll of newspapers from his bulging pocket, and in five minutes forgot all about her."

\* Anon. (Mills and Boon: London.)

In due course she endeavoured to follow to Hong Kong the man who held her in remembrance always—who had fled thither to avoid temptation.

She takes with her the boy, Randall's nephew, whom she has always coveted on account of his likeness to her lover, and the fact that he bore the same name.

"You see, my little child"—she took his face between her hands—"we are going to Hong Kong to be with Uncle Randy."

But on the voyage out the ship caught fire, and Liliith and the boy perished.

John Armstead, unaware of what had happened, follows her, and the news of his wife's fate is broken to him by Randall, who essays to comfort him by telling him that—

"It is together we made this woman, gave her back greater than she was sent; and is it not together we must bear the loss of her?"

Though this book is sufficiently interesting, it is eminently unsatisfactory. H. H.

## COMING EVENTS.

*February 22nd.*—Central Midwives Board, Caxton House, S.W. Meeting 2.45 p.m.

*February 23rd.*—Trained Maternity Nurses' Association. Lecture on "The Trained Maternity Nurse," by Dr. Florence Willey. 33, Strand. 3 p.m.

*February 28th.*—Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses Conference of Affiliated Associations, Denison House, Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W. 11.30 a.m.

*February 29th.*—Society for State Registration of Nurses. Meeting Executive Committee, 431, Oxford Street. 4.30 p.m.

*February 29th.*—Association for Promoting the Training and Supply of Midwives. Eighth Annual Meeting. Caxton Hall, S.W. Chairman, H. Cosmo O. Bonsor, Esq., 3.30 p.m.

*March 4th.*—Irish Nurses' Association. Lecture: "Some Diseases of the Respiratory Tract," by Dr. Parsons. 34, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin. 7.30 p.m.

*March 6th.*—The Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh. Lecture: "Clinical Symptomatology in Nursing," by Dr. Matthew. Extra Mural Medical Theatre, 4.30 p.m. Trained Nurses cordially invited.

## WORD FOR THE WEEK.

## THE UNCONQUERABLE HOUR.

We are girt with our belief,  
Clothed with our will and crowned,  
Hope, fear, delight, and grief,  
Before our will give ground.  
Their calls are in our ears as shadows of dead sound.  
All things come by fate to flower,  
At their unconquerable hour;  
And time brings truth, and truth makes free,  
And freedom fills time's veins with power.  
—SWINBURNE.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)