

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

"A LADY AND HER HUSBAND."*

The title of this book is well chosen, for it is just the chronicle of a lady and her husband, and quite original reading it is.

James Heyham, was a hardworking business man, rich and successful. Mary his wife—well, she was his wife. She figures from first to last in that capacity. At the time we make her acquaintance first, she was sitting "in her usual place by the side of the hearth, behind the glittering fire-flushed tea things. She was wearing a chain that her husband had given her, set with pearls and crystals—that caught the light, and so did a brooch that was a present from Trent, her son. Behind these witnesses of masculine esteem there was the vagueness of grey stuff, of lace, of pale brown hair, and a face where the play of lights and shadows blotted out expression."

Her last remaining unmarried daughter is cogitating how best to tell her of her engagement. "She put out her hand to press the soft hair pressed against her knee. Rosemary turning quickly caught the wandering fingers. Her eyes were wide open and she was trembling a little, 'Mother,' she said, 'I've got something to tell you! I've promised—I'm going to marry Anthony.'"

Afterwards, when Mrs. Heyham was alone, she gave way a little to her jealousy and her regret, to the fierce dislike she had felt when she thought of Anthony touching her Rosemary's hair—turning up her face to enjoy its loveliness. James her husband, watched her carefully, and though she was charming about it he felt the engagement still distressed her. He took his problem to Rosemary: "We've got to think of some way," he told her, "of interesting your mother."

"Rosemary agreed with him. Now that she turned her mind to it she could see that her mother's life needed interests. Mrs. Heyham was a graceful woman, good, simple, sensitive. She respected herself and was respected by others. That was her spiritual share of the loot of the centuries. Rosemary herself was a Socialist, and she could not help feeling that if her mother were to take up some sort of work amongst her father's employées the results must be thoroughly satisfactory to all right-minded people."

It was then that trouble began between the lady and her husband. At first Mary shrank from a venture that was altogether foreign to her upbringing and experience. It was plain to Mary that James wanted her to be pleased about Rosemary's scheme. Dear James! Dear children! How sweet of them to think of me, she told herself hurriedly.

"But, James, supposing we don't agree?"

James accepted the admission with a smile.

"And I shall give way!" Of course she would give way, it was simple enough.

But the gentle little mother, once she was launched upon her reforms, caused her husband a great many uneasy moments. Her eyes were opened to life as it is, and not as she had always imagined it to be. Her interest in the employées went deeper than was at all agreeable to James.

In the matter of increased wages, "he was brisk but showed no signs of yielding."

"My dear little woman," he said, "I am not angry with you in the least. You will remember when we first discussed this subject we agreed to differ. Well, I agree and all I ask of you is that you shall agree too."

Mary felt as though she were a sheep, and James a very large and efficient sheep dog. "I can't," she brought out at last, "I feel too deeply about it." She also began to look at James himself from a new standpoint, and learnt some very startling facts. She decided to go away and think things over by herself.

"For a moment he thought of Mary as an angry peasant thinks of an animal. She was his—his possession—his woman and she had defied him."

This is a book that women interested in social reform should read.

H. H.

THE BRABANÇONNE.

THE BELGIAN NATIONAL ANTHEM.

Fled the years of servile shame!
Belgium, 'tis thine hour at last.
Wear again thy glorious name,
Spread thy banner on the blast.
Sovereign people in thy might,
Stedfast yet and valiant be,
On thine ancient standard write:
King, and Law, and Liberty.

Strive, nor seek discharge at length,
Hold thy courage as thy crown.
God, Who keeps thee in His strength,
On thy labours smileth down.
Over all thy fruitful land
Labour's prize is full and free,
On thine arts enthronèd stand,
King, and Law, and Liberty.

Foes, that were our friends of old,
Are returned to love at last.
All the free we prize as gold,
Praying that our strife be past.
Belgians and Batavians, friends,
Knit in brotherhood shall be;
With one voice the shout ascends;
King, and Law, and Liberty.

Belgium, Mother, thus we vow,
Never shall our love abate.
Thou our hope, our safety thou,
Hearts and blood are consecrate.
Grave, we pray, upon thy shield
This device eternally,
Weal or woe, at home, afield,
King, and Law, and Liberty.

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* By Amber Reeves. Heinemann, London.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)