

unappetising. Classes are being arranged at the Passmore Edwards Settlement, 36, Tavistock Place, for good class (at the same time economical) cooking by a Belgian Teacher who holds the highest diploma in the Ecole Ménagère at Brussels. She will make a speciality of omelettes, soups, vegetables, salads, and various dishes known only to Belgian and French cooks. The fee for six lessons will be 15s. 6d., and information can be obtained from 80, Onslow Gardens, S.W.

Joan of Arc's Festival in Paris was somewhat restricted on Monday, because of the War. Catholics were not asked to hang out the Church flag, which is usually a feature of this anniversary, because such demonstrations are to be reserved for victory—sure to come. M. Maurice Barrès, with the League of Patriots, visited the two statues of the Maid in front of the Church of St. Augustine, and in the Place des Pyramides, and the flowers laid around their bases were perfectly magnificent. As soon as War is over, no doubt the official Joan of Arc Day will be proclaimed. The glorious Maid is the greatest national heroine the French nation or any nation can ever possess, and her fame is rapidly becoming a world cult.

MAY.

The dog-wood flings her blossoms out
Like stars amidst the pines,
The sun upon the distant hills
Like burnished copper shines;
And oh, if there were not a thing
In all the world to do
Except to go a-Maying in
The sweet wild woods with you.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

"A BRIDE OF THE PLAINS."*

This book is dedicated to the memory of Louis Kossuth, and in the dedication the authoress cries out to the dead patriot and asks him: "What would you have said now had you lived to see your country tied to Austria's chariot-wheels, the catspaw and tool of the Teutonic race which you abhorred?" This Hungarian tale should be of special interest at the present time. The scene is laid in a village close to the Maros. "The sharp, cracked sound of the Elevation bell breaks the silence of the summer morning. The good Pater Bonifacius is saying Mass; he, at any rate, is astir and busy with his day's work and obligations. Surely it is strange that at so late an hour in mid-September, with the maize waiting to be gathered in, the population of Marosfalva should be still absent from the fields! Hej! But, stranger, what would you? Such a day is this Fourteenth of September. What? You did not know it? The Fourteenth of September, the ugliest, blackest, most God forsaken day in the whole year! What kind of a stranger are you if you do not know that

* By Baroness Orczy. Hutchinson & Co., London.

on this hideous day all the finest lads in the village are taken away to be made into soldiers by the abominable Government? Three years! Why, the lad is a mere child when he goes—one-and-twenty on his last birthday, bless him! still wanting a mother's care of his stomach, and a father's heavy stick across his back from time to time to keep him from too much love-making. Three years! When he comes back he is a man and has notions of his own. Three years! What are the chances he comes back at all? Bosnia! Where in the world is that? My God, how they hate it! They must go through with it, though they hate it all—every moment. They hate to be packed into railway carriages like so many dried heads of maize in a barn . . . and the rude alien sergeant with his 'Vorwärts!' and 'Marsch!' and 'Rechts!' and 'Links!' I ask you in the name of the Holy Virgin what kind of gibberish is that?"

On this particular fourteenth of September, Andor is due to go, and on the eve preceding it, at the village merrymaking, when the whole population spends its last happy four and twenty hours trying to forget its hideous morrow—he tokens himself to Elsa the village beauty. "Ten or a dozen cotton petticoats are tied round that slim waist of hers, no two of a like colour, and as she twirls and twirls in Andor's arms, the petticoats fly out till she looks like a huge flower of many hues. It is Elsa and Andor that everyone is watching. He is tall and broad-shouldered with the supple limbs of a young stag, and the mad irresponsible movements of a young colt." We can well understand how this young couple dread the morrow, which comes all too soon.

They are at the station now, the last bell has sounded. For each lad only one girl! and there she is at the foot of the carriage steps, a corner of her ribbon, or handkerchief or cotton petticoat stuffed into her mouth to prevent herself from bursting into sobs.

It is a chapter full of vivid colour and pathos that Baroness Orczy has drawn of the conscription. And after a space there comes no news of Andor, and Elsa is forced to betroth herself to the wealthy and sinister Béla. She was placed in the terrible alternative of either being faithless to Andor or disobedient to her mother. It is characteristic of that part of the world that of the two sins thus in prospect the latter seemed by far the more heinous.

On the eve of the wedding Andor suddenly reappears, and is indirectly concerned in the assassination of Béla which takes place the same night.

The story begins and ends with festival mingled with tragedy and it is in the drawing in of such scenes that the authoress excels.

"A Bride of the Plains" is widely different to Baroness Orczy's later works, and though it does not keep our imagination on the stretch as have done its predecessors yet it does not lack interest and will be appreciated by her many admirers.

H. H.

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