

## BOOK OF THE WEEK.

## "EARTH TO EARTH."\*

This new volume, to which we have been long looking forward, consists of a collection of short stories. It is rather a disappointment that it should have taken this form; very few writers can concentrate with satisfaction. One is no sooner launched into an interesting situation than down comes the curtain without anyone having arrived anywhere. "The Dop Doctor" and its successors with their finished and brilliant scheme and description make one feel discontented with "samples" from the same pen. Perhaps the most taking of these stories is "A Nursery Tea," which tells of an aged woman who had been nurse in a baronet's family, and who, long after her nurslings had grown up and married, long after her old master and mistress were dead, was left alone at "Fawncourt" up to the day it came under the hammer. The roof of the old home was all that was left to her, for the younger generation had forgotten their old nurse—forgotten to pay her pension, and she was alone, ill and in poverty.

The sale of the property had drawn the members of the family down to see it once again, and they meet in the old nursery.

To Nurse Brown, ill and half childish, these grown men and women were her little charges once again, and their differences of opinion were once more childish quarrels.

"The quavering old voice rose.

"You'll kiss each other, dears, like a good boy and girl, otherwise the tea won't draw and there'll be no sugar on the bread and butter."

"You always used to say that, you dear old thing, when we were naughty," Lady Vibart cried. She straightened the poor shabby cap, and patted the old, worn, veinous hands.

Triumphantly she bade them draw to the table.

"And manners, my dearies, remember. If I'm humble myself I know how my betters should behave. Yes, Master Wilfrid, you may cut the bread. Miss Gertrude likes to butter it. There'll only be brown sugar on the second slices."

Old Nurse died at that strange tea party.

"My boy a-crying," said she. "What, frightened of the dark and me so near. I'm a-coming, my love."

This is a tender and pretty sketch.

"The Hare" comes next in our opinion. The old couple who figure in this story have poacher descendants, and in consequence the old woman "fiercely as she hated the partridges, pheasants and plover, the hare was her chief enemy of all."

"You wickerd leery beast, git along-on do. Ev'n't you done enough harm to me an' mine? Git along wi' 'ee, I tull 'ee."

Her old man would cry sometimes for a bit of meat, or even lard for kitchen to his crust, but

terrible as this was, "it would have been more terrible still to have one of 'they wickerd beastes' brought by some well-meaning but unscrupulous hand across her threshold."

The passage-at-arms between her and the old man about the nightly ablutions is very amusing.

"Take off your 'at!" she commanded.

He held on to the cherished headgear with both hands.

"Take off your 'at, our Dad, an' let I wash 'ee."

"You can wash I when I be de-ad," he declared, "an' not afore."

She turned on him.

"When I be dead you may get so crummy as a cuckoo; but while I live I'll wash 'ee."

The old man caved in."

There are numerous other tales dealing with many conditions of life, but we have no space to notice them.

H. H.

## WE THANK THEE, LORD,

For mercies manifold in these dark days.  
For Heart of Grace that would not suffer wrong.  
For all the stirrings in the dead dry bones.  
For bold self-steeling to the time's dread need.  
For every sacrifice of self to Thee.  
For ease and wealth and life so freely given.  
For Thy deep soundings of the hearts of men,  
For Thy close knitting of the hearts of men.  
For all who sprang to answer Thy great call.  
For their high courage and self-sacrifice.  
For their endurance under deadly stress.  
For all the unknown heroes who have died  
To keep the land inviolate and free.  
For all who come back from the gates of death.  
For all who pass to larger life with Thee  
And find in Thee the wider liberty.  
For hope of Righteous and Enduring Peace,  
For hope of cleaner earth and closer Heaven,  
With burdened hearts but faith unquenchable,  
We thank Thee, Lord.

John Oxenham.

## COMING EVENTS.

May 19th.—Conference on the Nurses' Registration Bill, between representatives of the Central Committee for the State Registration of Trained Nurses and the College of Nursing, Ltd., Royal Automobile Club, Pall Mall, London, S.W. 3 p.m.

June 8th.—Society State Registration of Trained Nurses: Annual Meeting, West Lecture Hall, Royal Society of Medicine, 1, Wimpole Street; London, W. 4.30 p.m.

## A WORD FOR THE WEEK.

Oh, Blackbird, what a boy you are,  
How you do go it!  
Blowing your bugle to the evening star,  
How you do blow it!

\* By Richard Dehan. William Heinemann.

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