

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

"YELLOW ENGLISH."*

At this moment, when the test question for our politicians is the alien menace in this country, the novel under our notice should be read with interest, for it is written in order to bring into prominence the spy system which was so active in this country prior to and during the war.

The successful banker, Otto Friedrich Shultz, early in his career had realised the need of a knowledge of women as well as men in order to succeed. He used that wisdom when by sheer force of will, the Marchioness was led to the altar a second time, and at the time the story begins she had fulfilled the desire of his heart by presenting him with a son. An English son, born of an English mother, just as he had planned ten years ago, when he had first seen Lady Mary Cranleigh, daughter of the impecunious Duke of Shadford. She had floated haughtily by him, leaning on the arm of her father, and then and there the rising young clerk, Shultz, had vowed in his mind that this aristocratic woman must become the mother of the son he saw he would need for his life's work.

He received a bad blow when he heard of her marriage, but he bided his time and married her some years later.

His life work was needless to say, the interest of the Fatherland at the expense of England, or, to speak more correctly, the Fatherland made it very much to his interest to play the part of spy.

Freddie, his little son, grew up a horrid little boy under the careful tutelage of his father. Everything, down to the smallest detail of the child's life, was carefully planned, so that in time he could fulfil his unworthy destiny. As soon as the child was born a German cousin was instructed to perfect herself in the English language in order that she might prove an able instructress in more subjects than one to Master Freddie Shultz.

At six years he was to be taught the importance of trifles, and also to keep his own counsel.

Lady Mary, although she had no inkling of the truth, was puzzled and disgusted at the crooked ways of her little son, and she conceived an instinctive dislike to the child she had borne, which she vainly tried to overcome.

She pours herself out to Major Couter, who had always loved her. She tells him that Shultz is no more her husband than Freddie is her son. "I go cold sometimes with horror when I watch that hard, perpetually-working machine in human form plotting, working, planning."

"For what?"

"That is what I ask myself. Worldly ambition I could understand, riches, title, honour. No, it is something more. I know no more than you do, any more than I can explain why he has Freddie taken to his study every evening to teach him to watch, listen, report, and God knows what beside."

*By Dorota Flatau. London: Hutchinson & Co.

This outburst was on the occasion of her own daughter, Marigold, announcing her desire to finish her education in Germany, which desire had, of course, been planted in her breast by Father Frederick, as she was wont to call him.

It was not until the artless Freddie was grown into a man that the truth burst upon Lady Mary that both her husband and son were German spies.

In the meantime Freddie had married charming Joan, who, strange though it may seem, really loved her contemptible young husband, but then she, too, had married him in ignorance of the real state of affairs.

When Lady Mary's eyes were opened she denounces her husband.

"I have watched you for years," she was saying, "ever since the first year of our married life. Your mean household spying, contemptible though it was, I might have disregarded as serious, only that I found you carried these methods into every phase of life."

In return for her accusations the wily banker caused a rumour to be circulated that Lady Mary was mentally unbalanced, and he finally divorced her on some unfounded accusation.

But Lord Wellrock, as he was now known, was not to escape his just punishment, and the book closes on the scene of his trial. His miserable son met the fate he richly deserved, by being thrown over the cliff by the women relatives of the men who had perished at sea as the result of his treachery.

The author ends with an impassioned appeal "to tear out this canker that we have weakly fostered."

We mourn our valorous dead; but can we mourn them honourably if we hold the hands, kiss the lips, nurture in our bosoms, the vipers that have caused their deaths?

"Tear out this canker. Tear it out. Tear it out."
H. H.

COMING EVENTS.

December 14th.—League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses. Winter General Meeting, Clinical Theatre, St. Bartholomew's Hospital. 2.30 p.m. Social gathering, Nurses Sitting Room. Tea, music.

December 17th.—Royal British Nurses' Association. Charter Tea. (Royal Charter on view.) 10, Orchard Street, Portman Square, W. 3.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m.

December 19th.—Royal British Nurses' Association. Lecture: "Bokhara and Samarkand" (fully illustrated by lantern slides) by Miss Annette Meakin, F.R.G.S. Chair: Miss Mildred Heather-Bigg, R.R.C., Vice-Chairman. The Rooms of the Medical Society of London, 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, W. 2.45 p.m.

December 19th.—Central Midwives' Board. Penal Cases and Monthly Meeting.

December 19th.—Babies of the Empire Society. Conference. Mansion House, E.C. 3 p.m.

December 25th.—Christmas Day. A Happy Time in the Hospitals.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)