

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

"BEAUMOROY HOME FROM THE WARS."*

Mr. Anthony Hope has always a pretty taste in women, and he will not disappoint his readers in this, his latest work. Mary Arkroyd, a lady doctor (we believe the correct term is "medical woman"), had settled down in the country village of Inkston, and we gather was making her way there, in spite of the disapproval of old Dr. Irechester. We first meet her receiving into her pretty home a paying guest, a charming girl called Cynthia, who for the time being was somewhat shattered mentally and physically on account of her narrow escape from marrying a man whose cheques were dishonoured and who, it was further disclosed, already had a wife in South America. Mary, realising the situation to a nicety, gave her just the treatment required.

"Six years ago, you were a charming kitten, and I used to enjoy being your 'visiting governess,' to say nothing of finding the guineas very handy whilst I was waiting to qualify. You're rather like a kitten now—one of the Siamese ones—with close fur and wondering look. But you mustn't mew down here, and you shall have lots of cream and milk. Even if rations go on, I can certify all the extras for you—that's the good of being a doctor." She laughed cheerfully as she took a cigarette from the mantelpiece and lit it.

Mary's vigorous and sensible treatment soon had the desired effect, and pretty Cynthia's wound was soon sufficiently healed to allow her to feel comfortably thrilled by the attentions of splendid young Captain Alec Naylor, and this little affair is brought to fruition before the close of the book in Mr. Hope's usual graceful style.

But Dr. Mary was quite another matter. She was not of the Siamese kitten type, but, as the story goes on to show, she was not impervious to the affairs of the heart. It was Beaumoroy of all people in the world! When you set out to analyse Beaumoroy you have a hard nut to crack. He might well be described as "the puzzling, unaccounted-for Beaumoroy." The description of his person is sufficiently fascinating. "His features though irregular, were not ugly or insignificant, but he wore a battered aspect; there were deep lines running from the corners of his mouth, and crow's feet had started under the grey eyes which, in their turn, looked more sceptical than ardent, more mocking than eager. His voice was notably agreeable, soft and clear—the voice of a high-bred man, but not exactly of a high-bred Englishman. The hue of his plentiful and curly hair was, rather surprisingly, a plain yellow, the colour of a cowslip or thereabouts. Altogether rather a rum-looking fellow."

This disturbing person suddenly arrived in Inkston. Miss Delia Wall, the gossip of the neighbourhood, puts the reader straight on that

point. "Everybody knows old Mr. Saffron—by sight I mean. A week after the Armistice he went to London and came down by the 4.11 train and those two men with him, and they have been with him ever since. Who was old Mr. Saffron? What was he doing at the mysterious Tower Cottage, and, more mysterious still, what was Beaumoroy helping him to do?"

We haven't space to unravel the complications of these happenings for our readers, and, indeed, the plot is so whimsical that it rather defies criticism. But what we will divulge is that Dr. Mary was called in by Beaumoroy himself, to attend professionally old Mr. Saffron, and, in the course of her attendance, these two very individual people made the discovery that is always so surprisingly fresh and new.

In spite of Beaumoroy's undoubted defects of character, the charm in him swept Dr. Mary off her feet. It was before these feelings had in any way taken shape that Dr. Mary remonstrated with Beaumoroy as to the morality of his dealings with the old man.

"I loved my old man," said Beaumoroy.

It was his only plea; to Mary it seemed a good one.

He had loved his old madman, and had served him faithfully.

Mary answers his avowal of love in her direct and delightful manner.

She drew near to him and put her hands on his shoulders "I'm not a child like Cynthia, I can't dream dreams and make idols any more. I think I see you as you are, and I don't know if your love is a good thing. But if it isn't, think there's no good thing left for me at all. I come to you in faith, loyalty, and love. I'm not a missionary to you, or a reformer, Hector, I'm just the woman who loves you."

"I should have mocked at the missionary and tricked the reformer." He bared his head before her. "But by the woman who loves me and whom I love I will deal faithfully."—He bent and kissed her forehead.

Thrilling adventure, intrigue, wit, and humour, all find their place in this story, and with the love element thrown in, they make a capital whole.

H. H.

COMING EVENTS.

October 2nd, 3rd, 4th.—Incorporated Society of Trained Masseuses. Members' Conference.

October 9th.—Central Midwives' Board: Penal Cases.

October 10th.—Society for State Registration of Nurses: Meeting of Executive Committee, 431, Oxford Street, London, W. 4 p.m.

October 14th.—The Society for the Study of Inebriety. Eighth Norman Kerr Memorial Lecture. Mrs. Mary Scharlieb, C.B.E., M.D. "The Relation of Alcohol and Alcoholism to Maternity and Child Welfare." 1, Wimpole Street, Cavendish Square, W. 1.

*By Anthony Hope. Methuen & Co., London.

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