

tious. The neurasthenic may be said to give out a cloud of mental poison gas which has a suffocating effect on the energy and optimism of those who are unfortunate enough to be brought in contact with him."

DOMESTIC HYGIENE.

The third section of the book (on Domestic Hygiene) is perhaps the most interesting of all, and much very valuable advice is given.

Dr. Gordon, in dealing with school life, refers to the "wicked feebleness that allows a boy or girl to grow up without a clear and healthy knowledge of the sex function and its relation to social life."

M. B.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

"GOLD AND IRON."*

We look for good things from the pen of Mr. Hergesheimer, after such notable works as "The Three Black Pennys" and "Java Head," and in the volume under our notice, which contains three short stories, we are justified in our expectation.

The first, "Wild Oranges," is perhaps the best, though they are all up to standard.

It is full of thrill, mystery, and excitement.

John Woolfolk, whose life had been embittered by the tragic death of his girl-bride—"Young. A girl in a tennis skirt with a gay scarf round her waist—quite dead in a second"—had fled the world and led a solitary life on his yacht, with his faithful sailor, Paul Halvard.

He had anchored in a bay in the Southern States, where the water, as clear and hardly darker than the darkening air, lay like a great amethyst clasped by its dim corals and the arm of the land. It was, John Woolfolk suddenly thought, amazingly still. The atmosphere, too, was peculiarly heavy, languorous. It was laden with the scents of exotic, flowering trees; he recognised the smooth, heavy odour of oleanders, and the higher, clearer breath of orange blossoms.

His curiosity was aroused by the sight of a woman swimming in the bay, and he determined to go ashore to investigate what had appeared a very desolate spot. He knew by his chart that nothing could be close by but scattered huts and such wreckage as that looming palely above the oleanders.

One of Mr. Hergesheimer's greatest attractions is his descriptive power. The reader is caught into atmosphere at once fascinating and repellent.

Woolfolk's investigations lead him through the orange grove, where the cold, waxy leaves brushed his face. There was, he saw in the grey brightness, ripe fruit in the branches, and he mechanically picked one orange and then another. Before long he happened on the girl he had seen swimming in the bay.

Her white dress, though simply and rudely made, gained distinction from her free, graceful lines; her

* By Joseph Hergesheimer. William Heinemann, London.

feet, in heelless black slippers, were narrow and sharply cut. John Woolfolk was conscious of the disturbing quality of her person. She possessed the undefinable property of charm.

Against his will her attraction overmastered him, and the memory of his dead girl-wife began to recede into the shadows.

But he had to prove his love for her by violence and the cost of the life of his faithful sailor.

The homicidal maniac, Nicholas, the servant of Millie and her ineffectual father, had held the girl in terror with his unwelcome attentions, from which only the arrival of John Woolfolk's yacht in the bay could have saved her.

The closing chapter, which describes the death of the faithful Halvard, who stayed at the wheel until the ebbing of his life-blood left him no choice but to relinquish it, is a fine piece of writing.

"Tubal Cain" is a strong story of one Alexander Hulings, who became an Ironmaster against overwhelming odds, from sheer brutal force of character, and who married the daughter of the neighbouring Ironmaster—who could have bought him up—with the same determination.

The account of the industry is extremely interesting.

Huling's policy towards his inadequate staff is indicated by the following passage:—

"It was as if they had all been caught in a whirlpool, in which they fought vainly for release—the whirlpool of Alexander Huling's domination. They whispered together, he heard fragments of intended revolt; but under his cold gaze, his thin, tight lips, they subsided uneasily. It was patent that they were abjectly afraid of him.

Strange to say, he had married his rival's daughter because he loved her, rather than from ulterior motives.

"The Dark Fleece" is a story of a different type, and tells how Jason, of humble origin, had made a fortune on the goldfields, and how the Puritan woman to whom he was betrothed repudiated him, in spite of his faithfulness, on account of the rumours of his wild life, and how Honora, of the great house, attracted by his powerful personality, made love to him on her own account, and married him.

All these stories are virile and teem with interest.

H. H.

COMING EVENTS.

February 16th.—National Baby Week Council and the National Sunday School Union. A Meeting at the Mansion House, "The Children's Era." Chair, the Lord Mayor. Speakers, the Right Hon. Lord Morris of St. John's K.C.M.G., the Viscountess Astor, M.P., and others. 3 p.m.

February 18th.—Royal British Nurses' Association. Lecture: "The Social and Moral Influence of Nurses as One of the Greatest Factors in the Welfare of the Human Race," by Miss Graham Hope. 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, W. 5 p.m.

February 19th.—Central Midwives Board: Monthly Meeting.

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