

noise and dirt of the streets of small "flats," which house so many of the city's workers.

A very interesting chapter tells of co-operation farms, another of sanitarium work.

All in all this little book adds to the list of valuable and interesting volumes from the pen of Mr. Hall. But he really ought to make an intelligent Single Taxer of Mr. Borsodi, before a further collaboration. Mr. Borsodi has too much sincere love for humanity to let it thus run waste in side-issues.

GRACE ISABEL COLBRON

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\*A PLEA FOR THE "LABOR COLONY."

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This is an earnest and ever sympathetic study of the tramp problem—in so far as is possible to consider that problem apart from economic causes. The title promises much—The Elimination of the Tramp—and this consummation is sought for in the adoption of the Holland, Belgium and Swiss Labor Colony plans with some modifications that are suggested to fit them to conditions prevailing here. The Swiss plan as exhibited most notably in the labor colonies of Witzwyl and Tannehof, which are self-supporting, is the one to which Mr. Kelly inclines, and the adoption of which in this country he advocates with much optimistic prediction.

We have said that the study is a sympathetic one. It belongs to the class of literature of more enlightened philanthropy which of late years has kept pace with the advance of economic thought. In other terms, it has borrowed something half unconsciously from the teachings of Henry George—and from the socialists as well—while refusing to recognize the recommendations of either school. The philosophers and students of charity and modes of public relief have learned much from radical teachings, and the very phraseology they employ is often

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\*The Elimination of the Tramp. By Edmond Kelly. Questions of the Day. 12 mo. cloth. 133 pages. Price, \$1.00. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London.

like our own, though strangely incongruous when conjoined with the rejection of all proposed changes in economic conditions and the substitution of elaborately designed schemes of charitable relief. But we are estopped from such criticism of Mr. Kelly's little book, by what he says (page 90):

"It is useless in this connection to inveigh against existing industrial conditions, they may be revolutionized some day; but at this moment they are producing paupers, vagrants and criminals faster than we can relieve or punish them."

In this curious paragraph is exhibited conspicuously but unconsciously the temper of mind of men who think like Mr. Kelly. Conditions may be changed some day, but never mind that. Let us, instead of trying to change conditions which are turning out paupers and criminals faster than we can relieve them, nevertheless use all our energies in trying to relieve them, paying no attention at all to conditions that produce them!

Yet at what are all of these elaborately and painfully constructed relief plans aimed? Solely the providing of work, with which in a normal condition of society the worker provides himself! Does not Mr. Kelly perceive the tremendous contradictions involved in his own philosophy? He sees that alms-giving, soup houses and "indiscriminate" methods of charity intensify the poverty they are intended to relieve. "It is a matter of importance that there should not be a wholesale pauperization of the working class," he says on page 79 in anticipation of the objection he foresees that the labor colony might be liable to abuse if conditions prevailed which would tempt large numbers of workers to enter it. Yet on page 89 he says in the following emphatic words: "It may be laid down as an indisputable fact that no perfectly *healthy* man or woman prefers begging to working." Yet in spite of this indisputable fact he can conceive as a possibility against which it may be necessary to guard, "the wholesale pauperization of the working class"—though we would suggest to Mr. Kelly that in the event of such "pauperization" if anything approaching "wholesale", he

might ask himself where the needed funds for any kind of relief are to come from?

The reader of this book notice will however do Mr. Kelly an injustice if he jumps to the conclusion that the problem is throughout persistently misstated. The tramp is not considered as something apart from society; he is actually seen and for the most part pictured—in spite of a slightly amusing table of classification which looks like a page out of Cuvier—as a phenomenon among the phenomena of the unemployed. For we are told that if we will take the pains to scrutinize the men while they throng through the Bowery Mission for their midnight meal we will recognize that “more than one half of them are self-respecting working men without employment.” Elsewhere (page 4) he says in even more emphatic terms: “And yet these men are the necessary and innocent victims of existing conditions who are turned out every day as surely as chaff is produced by a threshing machine.”

Mr. Kelly has told us that these conditions “may be revolutionized some day”—*may* be, not certainly *will* be, let the reader observe. But they need not be revolutionized to produce greater degrees of relief than the best modes of public charity to which Mr. Kelly pins his faith. They need only be changed—and even slight economic changes bring immense improvement in conditions. Lightening the burdens of taxation on improvements, lowering the tariff, increasing the burdens upon land monopoly, and kindred measures of relief will do more than a hundred labor colonies.

All communities are labor colonies. Why, Mr. Kelly, is there a tramp problem? Because, as you clearly see, there is a problem of the unemployed. But why is there a problem of the unemployed? This you have not answered. You have said that healthy men and women prefer working to begging. You are right. But if so why don't they go to work? Is there not vast opportunities all around them? farm lands, coal lands, ore and mineral lands, and city lots all idle? Lands that yield to labor not only cabbages, but houses and office buildings, locomotives

and Hoe presses? And is not the real problem of the Elimination of the Tramp in the uniting of these separated factors, Land and Labor, rather than in the Labor colony which you seem to regard as nearly the ultimate human achievement in the solution of the problem of the unemployed?

To this volume there is a preface by R. Fulton Cutting.

He speaks of the labor colony as an “expedient.” It is something that its true character should be so recognized. But why does not Mr. Cutting seek for that thing for which this is the “expedient?” Is it Justice?

J. D. M.

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\*A VALUABLE RECORD.

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An exceedingly valuable compilation is the volume before us containing the Addresses and Proceedings of the National Tax Conference which met at Columbus last Fall.

It is not to be supposed that in the present state of the public mind the members of this conference should come to unanimous decision upon any of the more vital distinctions respecting the problem they had met to consider. There were almost as many theories of taxation as there were delegates in attendance. But of the forty-odd addresses delivered on this occasion it would be hard to extract a single one which could be condemned as not worth hearing. For the least valuable of any of them “mark time” in the movement for rational reform in taxation, in which David A. Wells nearly two generations ago was the most distinguished pioneer and Henry George the final and foremost teacher.

Popular apprehension of the truths taught by these men—and among them one must not forget Thomas G. Shearman—has grown powerfully in the last twenty

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\*State and Local Taxation. First National Conference under the auspices of The National Tax Association, Columbus, Ohio, Nov. 12-15, 1907. Addresses and Proceedings. Published by The Macmillan Company, New York.