

BOOK REVIEWS.

THE CARPENTER AND THE RICH MAN.*

Under the above title the Rev. Bouck White, leader of the Church of the Social Revolution, New York, who is now serving a term in the city prison for disturbing the services at the Rockefeller's church in New York city, recently issued a supplementary work to the "Call of the Carpenter" which attracted so much attention some time ago. The new work treats of the parables and economic doctrines of Jesus. According to Mr. White the times made Jesus a social revolutionist. The Roman rule extended into every corner of the known world, robbing the toilers of the fruits of their labor to enrich the local tax gatherers and the land-holding parasites in the Imperial city.

Jesus was a working man. All his training and his associations were of the working class, and the evils which he saw as a result of Roman domination in Palestine fired his soul with the spirit of revolt and led him to champion the cause of the people against their oppressors. His conception of the movement soon broadened into a general revolutionary propaganda which was to free the working class of the entire world from the tyranny of the ruling classes.

The author points out that the prophets of the old testament were social agitators. Moses, Elijah, Elisha were the most democratic of the old law givers and to these He frequently referred. For the aristocratic worthies in the old Hebrew writings he had no sympathy.

Jesus adopted the parable as His favorite method of instruction because of the embargo on free speech. Those of his hearers who were in sympathy with Him could understand; those who were not in sympathy, would fail to catch His meaning, but plain speech would have ended His earthly career long before the crucifixion.

Jesus was a good "mixer" and an audacious

plunger. He was one with the common people in their joys and sorrows, and in the cause of social justice He asked everything himself and demanded complete renunciation in His followers. Only those who were overmastered by the Great Ideal could be enrolled among the chosen band of His followers. Jesus inveighed against riches as such. Only by a rare exercise of saving grace could a rich man enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, i. e., the new industrial democracy which Jesus was trying to establish.

The author asserts that today "Every successful business man is an extortioner." As Single Taxers we know this to be true for the whole economic system forces the employer to bleed his workers of the just reward of their toil. "On the hard hunger cross is labor crucified today."

Before the invention of gunpowder, says the author, sabotage was the only means of avenging wrongs that was open to the lower classes. This invention, however, had a great leveling effect, resulting in the introduction of the ballot in place of the former appeal to arms.

Jesus was hated by the respectable people in His day. Only twice do we have record of His being entertained by the master class and in these cases he refused to sacrifice His class identity. He would not consent to be a social climber, although as His fame grew many efforts were made to bribe and seduce Him from His course. Jesus had a hot heart and a cold head. "A life is effective in so far as a powerful drive finds a firm controller." He knew how to advertise His cause, as witness His entry into Jerusalem at the Passover. When the city was full of pilgrims from all parts of the country, who carried the tidings home with them and so spread the fame of the new prophet. He started with Judaism but developed into cosmopolitanism. The world was His field of labor.

The author has some scathing words for the middle class in society, the compromisers, who are so afraid of going wrong they do not go at all, who ask never what is right but always what is safe. All ethical advance is conditioned upon a conflict of

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loyalties. Between vice and virtue we do not hesitate but when the question lies between two virtues of different rank, we generally do. "Only an intense creed is the mother of intense conduct."

Dr. White argues for the specialization of the word love, limiting it to sexual love and the adoption of the word fellowship to refer to that relation between man and man which is founded on self respect and has its origin in a feeling of brotherhood.

"True democracy," the authors says, "consists not in lifting people above the waiter's job but in exalting the waiters' job into dignity. The moment a man becomes so moral he can no longer fellowship the lowest down class his morality has overleaped itself. It were better for this man that he get sousingly drunk to restore his kinship."

Jesus was the founder of modern psychology. He discovered the mental universe. The empire of human rights is a slow development. Jesus knew that democracy was a spiritual movement. "The Kingdom of God is within you. The only way to change a civilization is to change the ideas that are back of it." The struggle initiated by Jesus is God against mammon. In His crusade to reform the world Jesus linked himself with the spiritual world. He was a God-empowered revolutionist. The corner stone of democracy is self respect. Only in so far as a man respects himself will he be able to respect another.

The Rev. White is much given to sententious statement, for instance: "Money grows big as man grows small." "Show me a land where sepulchres are unrevered and I will show you a land where cradles are untended."

The artistic side of the nature of Jesus is commented upon and a close connection between the artistic temperament and social resolution is clearly brought out. The labor movement is God incognito today. Both evolution and revolution are in nature's plan. Evolution prepares for revolution.

The author finds a close parallel between the present age and the early Christian era. The labor movement is taking on a religious cast like the upheaval in Palestine. Our present civilization is

based on the immorality of being poor while the new civilization will be based on the immorality of being rich. Religion makes for red revolution and a privileged class has never been known to abdicate.

This work, while marred by faults of style, is of great moral power. His picture of the social conditions in Palestine at the time of Jesus and his portrayal of the character of the Great Galileean are highly sympathetic and inspiring to the lover of liberty and the believer in the coming regeneration of mankind.—E. P. I.

A VALUABLE REPORT.

In 1912 and 1913 a committee of nine, appointed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, conducted an inquiry having for its objects the obtaining of an "accurate and impartial account of the social and economic conditions in the rural parts of England," and a similar account of "the nature and working of the existing system of ownership, tenancy, taxation and rating of land and buildings in urban districts and the surrounding neighborhoods, with their effect on individuals and conditions of life." Similar committees worked in Scotland and Wales.

The English committee's report as to rural matters was published in a separate volume (Vol. 1). The second volume, of about 700 pages, recently issued as a red book by Hodder and Stoughton, of London, deals with the urban situation, and offers much interesting and valuable reading to those who would be informed as to the details of proposed local tax reform in Great Britain. It is sold in paper covers for one shilling.

The committee's report is divisible into four parts—housing, the acquisition of land by public bodies for social use, systems of land tenure, and taxation of land, and each subject is treated in a characteristically minute way.

While the committee is careful fully to explain that proposals to decrease taxation of buildings and improvements and increase taxes upon site values should not be confused with the Single Tax proposi