

books, pictures, flowers, horses, and gowns, beautiful beyond all that she had ever imagined. And yet, "hardly a day passed that Laura Jadwin, in the solitude of her own boudoir, did not fling her arms wide in a gesture of lassitude and infinite weariness, crying out: 'Oh, the ennui and stupidity of all this wretched life.'"

But, after all, the story is for the Jadwins a comedy, not a tragedy, for he could say at last, "the wheat cornered me and not I the wheat."

J. H. DILLARD.

A BOOK AND A PREFACE.

President Roosevelt wrote a prefatory letter to the book "The Woman Who Toils," by Mrs. John Van Vorst and Marie Van Vorst (Doubleday, Page & Co., New York), which letter started the discussion anent "race suicide" running for some time in the columns of the daily press. In this way the book received a certain amount of advertising which will bring it to the attention of a number of people who might not otherwise have read it. It will be a great mistake and injustice to the book, however, if these readers see nothing further in it than concern for the size of better situated families—the question which has so agitated President Roosevelt.

The President wrote his letter to Mrs. Van Vorst after reading Chapter III. of her part of the book, in which she does mention, in a casual way, that among the women workers who are supported by their families and spend their money on clothes, there is a tendency to shirk motherhood. But this is quite by the way, as both writers have seen that with "the woman who toils," as with all other workers, the trouble is not too few children, but too many.

It is a great pity that President Roosevelt did not wait to read the magnificent closing chapter on "The Child in the Southern Cotton Mills," by Miss Marie Van Vorst, before writing a letter for the book. It would have been of far greater interest and importance to the serious portion of the American public to hear what our President has to say on the subject of making a decent existence possible for American children already born, than to read his opinions on the Potential Unborn. It would have been of inestimable value to have had an expression of opinion from Mr. Roosevelt on the abuses of child labor; but alas, he dilated on the purely theoretical question, and left the question of burning practical import untouched.

Of itself, the book has considerable value, in that it shows that two women of the favored class, when they make an exploration into the unknown regions inhabited by the submerged tenth, have their eyes opened

in a great many unexpected ways, and discover all sorts of things. These two ladies deserve great credit for their frank acknowledgment of their discoveries and the train of thought aroused thereby. They are not sociologists. Certain remarks on the subject prove that the field of radical thought is unknown to them. They went about their task of living with the factory hands as one of themselves in a most beautifully unbiased frame of mind, unbiased by conservative thought as by all that has been written on radical political economy. Whatever motive may have actuated them in their undertaking, they went into it in a spirit of fairness and they emphasize their sympathetic desire to help.

They made the discovery of that startling and incomprehensible fact, for women of the favored class, that the workers are human beings like ourselves, and that where they appear different it is the fault of conditions. The writers are clear-minded enough to see that conditions which can so warp human beings cannot be right, and although they discover no remedy beyond some palliative scheme of industrial classes, etc., the very facts they give with impartial clearness are strong enough to be of great value in themselves.

Mrs. Van Vorst quotes the words of an old farmer stranded in a Massachusetts mill town:

"I think Mr. Carnegie would have done a great deal nobler if he had paid his men a little more straight along. He wouldn't have made such a name for himself. But don't you believe it would have been better to have paid those men more for the work they were doing day by day than it is now to give pensions to their families? I know what I think about the matter."

Mrs. Van Vorst passes over these important remarks without a word of comment, which no one who understood the great truth of them could do. But this very fact certifies, perhaps, all the more to the authenticity of the quotation, and points to the fact that the old toiler had a clearer insight into economic truths than many a college professor.

The most important part of the book, from the sociological point of view, is the closing chapter above mentioned, Miss Marie Van Vorst's account of the children at work in Southern cotton mills. All radicals should read this chapter. It gives them many a statement of fact which can be used with effect in the fight against this worst of all economic abuses. The author does not reason nor seek for causes, but she sees plainly a terrible abuse, and she describes it in burning words that linger with the reader long after he has laid the book aside. Pity, pity 'tis, that President Roosevelt did

not advertise this chapter of the book in his letter.

GRACE ISABEL COLBRON.

LITERARY NOTES.

Four articles on bank currency appear in Sound Currency (52 Pine st., New York) for March. One is by Lyman J. Gage on the principles of bank credit currency; the second is by Charles N. Fowler on bank currency and branch bank. Louis H. Ehrich contributes the third, which is on assets currency, and in the fourth R. W. Millsaps presents the history of banking in Mississippi.

The Nation has in a recent number a lengthy review of Nova Solyma, the novel recently brought to light and attributed by the translator to John Milton. The original is in Latin. It is interesting to have the view of the Nation's critic. He concludes that "the diffuseness of the work and the absence from it of any passages of the highest imaginative quality... tell most heavily against the supposition of Miltonic authorship." It is true, however, that many judges have at least accepted the possibility of the fact that we have in

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