

fection in a lake of the foliage of neighboring trees, or the wavelets upon its surface when agitated by the breeze?—Daybook & Ledger, of Oak Lawn, R. I., for Jan. 27.

The Review of Reviews lately reported the President as saying:

In John Hay I have a great Secretary of State; in Philander Knox I have a great Attorney General; in other Cabinet posts I have great men.

Mistaken, Mr. President. You have no great Hay, no great Knox, no great man whatever. It is the country that has them. They are not your men; they are ours. They are not working for you; they are working for us, just as you are. You should not make breaks like these. It makes people laugh. But if you must speak like a king, at least choose a time when there is no one near who will rush your words into type.—Life.

## BOOKS

### THE PEOPLE OF THE ABYSS.

It is hard to describe in a brief review Jack London's new book, telling of his life and what he saw in the East End of London (*The People of the Abyss*, Macmillan, \$2). It is one of the great first-hand books that come along about once every half-century. There are indeed many books dealing at first-hand with social conditions, but there are not many great ones, written, like this, by a man of genius.

"It will be readily apparent to the reader," says the author in his preface, "that I saw much that was bad. Yet it must not be forgotten that the time of which I write was considered 'good times' in England. The starvation and lack of shelter I encountered constituted a chronic condition of misery which is never wiped out, even in the periods of greatest prosperity." Farther on in this preface he says: "It has been urged that the criticism I have passed on things as they are in England is too pessimistic. I must say, in extenuation, that of optimists I am most optimistic." This brings up again the false and silly attitude of people who cry out pessimism against those who simply look facts in the face. The real pessimists are those who try to make themselves think that things are about as good as can be expected, and that all that can be done for what is bad is to apply rose-water charity.

It is to be feared that many self-styled optimists will not read this book, which is a pity. It would do them good. They would have to believe it, because it bears the sure impress of truth—even in its hardest sayings. And yet the author says: "It is rather hard to tell a title of what I saw. Much of it is untellable." But surely what he does tell ought to be told and retold, until the ignorant West End can be made to hear.

"The dear soft people," says Mr. London, "of the golden theaters and wonder-mansions of the West End do not see these creatures, do not dream that they exist. But they are here, alive, very much alive in their jungle. And woe the day, when England is fighting in her last trench, and her able-bodied men are on the firing line! For on that day they will crawl out of their dens and lairs, and the people of the West End will see them, as the dear soft aristocrats of feudal France saw them and asked one another, 'Whence came they?' 'Are they men?'"

Nor is the distressing condition confined to the city of London. Mr. London insists that "whatever is true of London in the way of poverty and degradation, is true of all England." "Mr. B. S. Rowntree," he says, "by an exhaustive analysis, has proved for the country town what Mr. Charles Booth has proved for the metropolis, that fully one-fourth of the dwellers are condemned to a poverty which destroys them physically and spiritually; that fully one-fourth of the dwellers do not have enough to eat, are inadequately clothed, sheltered, and warmed in a rigorous climate, and are doomed to a moral degeneracy which puts them lower than the savage in cleanliness and decency." Truly does it seem, as he says, that the 40,000,000 people of England are keeping house badly. "The income is all right, but there is something criminally wrong with the management."

What he says of the drink problem ought to be taken to heart by the temperance advocates everywhere. "It is of no avail," he says, "to preach temperance and teetotalism to these people. The drink habit may be the cause of many miseries; but it is, in turn, the effect of other and prior miseries. The temperance advocates may preach their hearts out over the evil of drink, but until the evils that cause people to drink are abolished, drink and its evils will remain." Those who have heard Father Huntington speak on this subject, will recall that he has repeatedly given the same testimony from his own intimate acquaintance with the slum-life in American cities.

But what is to be done? College settlements, missions, charities, and what not—how little have they accomplished, how little can they ever do! "In the nature of things," says Mr. London, who saw such efforts, "they cannot but be failures. They are wrongly, though sincerely conceived. They approach life through a misunderstanding of life, these good folk. . . . The very money they dribble out in their child's schemes has been wrung from the poor." Shall thrift be preached? "It is sheer bosh and nonsense," he replies, "to preach thrift to the 1,800,000 London workers who are divided into families which have a total income of less than \$5.25 per week, one-quarter to one-half of which must be paid for rent."

These good people who try to help! Mr. London says of them just what Henry George and Tolstoy have said—"they do everything for the poor except get off their backs."

It is greatly to be wished that the publishers will issue a cheaper edition of this book. The pictures may very well be omitted. They add nothing to the value and interest of the work, and the modern smooth-finish reproductions from photographs invariably give false impressions.

J. H. DILLARD.

## BOOKS RECEIVED.

—"The Story of the Lopez Family; a Page from the History of the War in the Philippines." Edited by Canning Eyot. Boston: James H. West Company. Price, \$1.00. To be reviewed.

—"Organize the World," by Edwin D. Mead. A pamphlet including also two other of Mead's tracts in behalf of permanent peace; namely, "Kant's 'Eternal Peace,'" and "Charles Sumner's 'More Excellent Way.'" Boston: American Peace Society, 3 Beacon street. Price, 10 cents.

—"The Principles of the Founders," by Edwin D. Mead. Oration before the City Government and citizens of Boston, at Faneuil Hall, July 4, 1903. Boston-American Unitarian Association. Price, 50 cents net. A Fourth of July address of extraordinary historical value and absorbing interest.

—"Socialism vs. Single Tax." A verbatim report of a debate held at Twelfth Street Turner Hall, Chicago, December 20, 1903. For Socialism, Ernest Untermyer, Seymour Stedman, A. M. Simons; for Single Tax, Louis F. Post, Henry H. Hardinge, John Z. White. With portraits of Karl Marx, Henry George and the six debaters. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co., (Cooperative), 56 Fifth avenue. Price, 25 cents; five copies for \$1.00; 12 copies for \$2.00. Postage included.

## PERIODICALS.

"President Hadley is a reformer, a mugwump, an apostle of the higher patriotism—in his books. When it comes to acting, he is eligible to join David H. Lane's section of the Quay machine." J. H. D.

More and more people are finding out that what "prominent personages" say and write is one thing, and what they really think is quite another. One of the charms of Mr. John Graham Brooks's book, "The Social Unrest," was, as he stated in the preface, that he went behind such talk to the real opinions of people as expressed in private conversation. The Philadelphia Public Ledger has been analyzing President Hadley, of Yale College, and comes to the following conclusion: "President Hadley is a reformer, a mugwump, an apostle of the higher patriotism—in his

## BOOKS FOR STUDENTS

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## A RECEPTION AND BALL

(Postponed from January 15), will be given by the Ladies of the Henry George Association, at Schiller Hall, 103 Randolph Street, Friday Evening, February 26, 1904. Tickets: Gentlemen, 50 cents; Ladies, 25 cents. Tickets of January 15 will be recognized.