

must in the nature of the case continue to be. The columns of a century ago cannot support to-day's temples. There is a living source of life, or else life is an illusion.—The Whim.

Sadie was 11 and Alice seven. At lunch Alice said: "I wonder what part of an animal a chop is. Is it a leg?" "Of course not," answered Sadie; "it's the jawbone. Haven't you ever heard of animals licking their chops?"—Little Chronicle.

BOOKS

TOWARD THE LIGHT.

I do not remember that the expression single tax is used in the book, but single taxers the world over may congratulate themselves on the addition to their library of this notable volume (*Toward the Light*, by Lewis H. Berens, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 75 cents). It seems to me to be the ablest and most effective work in support of the taxation of land values that has appeared since the death of Henry George. It is the latest volume of the familiar red series on social science issued by the above publishers, who have done the public a great service by supplying at small cost such a thoughtful set of works in attractive binding and most excellent print. This latter point should be appreciated, because so many of the books on social problems are published at prices that put them beyond the reach of most readers, or else are printed in type that is ruinous to the eyes.

The writer of this book will be known to many American readers as the author of the "Story of my Dictatorship." Those who have read this will remember that, while it had a fanciful setting, there was much of it that called for a deal of thinking. So with the present work, let no one buy it with the idea that its somewhat poetic title includes aught but plain, earnest thought. Its sub-title is "Elementary Studies in Ethics and Economics," and here, again, the reader must not take the word elementary in too light a sense. One of the hardest books ever written on the higher mathematics bears on its title page the beguiling legend—especially designed for the use of beginners. It must not be understood, however, that Mr. Berens' book is a dull, abstruse treatise. It is written in good, clear style, the only possible criticism being that some of the sentences might perhaps become clearer by being made into two. What I wish to do is simply to prepare the readers of the book—and may their name be legion—for the fact that they must not expect to read it with the same suspension of intellect with which we commonly scan the morning papers.

The heart of the book is the land question. Whatever other discussion there may be of ethics or of economics, or of the relation of these subjects to each

other, or of other specific questions, like money, and interest, and government, the central, fundamental plank of the author's platform is the land question.

He argues that economics must find principles in ethics, and that the basic principle of economics may be summed up in the one word justice. Finally, he concludes that the first necessary step toward the establishment of the reign of justice is to recognize and respect the claims of all to the use and enjoyment of the earth.

In the method of effecting this justice he upholds entirely the plan of taxing land values, though he sees, of course, that the term "taxation," is not accurate. He shows most clearly the meaning of economic rent, and how a "tax" upon land values would furnish the natural public revenues. He finds that such a tax best conforms to correct principles, which he states in the following proposition: "Each member of the community should contribute toward the public expenditure in exact proportion to the value of the advantage or opportunities granted him by the community." Such a tax, he holds, "could be easily, effectually and cheaply assessed and collected; and, as each has to use land, each citizen would contribute towards the common expenses, not in proportion to his ability to pay, but in exact proportion to the value of the advantages or opportunities granted him by the community—by his fellow citizens." He shows, furthermore, that "the private appropriation of land values, or the private appropriation of the natural public revenues, is not only an infringement of the law of justice, not only a denial of the equal claims of all to life, but also a direct violation of the fundamental principle on which the institution of private property rests, a direct violation of the great ethical or social commandment: 'Thou shalt not steal.'" Hardly in the writings of Henry George himself will one find the arguments more clearly and forcibly stated.

It is not necessary here to follow him in his definition of terms and in other side issues. One or two points may be mentioned. He seems unnecessarily squeamish about the use of the word "capital," which is, as he says, "calculated to confuse and perplex;" but how can we get along without some such term? When he says "it is labor which employs 'capital,' not 'capital' which employs labor," we know quite well what he means, and it is hard to see what other term he could use for the word "capital," which he persists in putting in quotation marks. However, all that he says on the subject of this term is well worth studying, and it will be seen that he is not entirely in accord with Mr. George's definition.

But his only sharp disagreement with the master, whom he calls "the greatest of modern ethical teachers," is in the question of interest. Speaking of Mr.

George's well-known discussion of this subject, he says: "In short, after his complete overthrow of the current justifications of 'interest,' Henry George enters the lists on its behalf, and sets up a special defense of his own, a defense which seems to us as untenable as those he had just confuted, and which we regard as the main flaw and blemish in his soul-awakening, epoch-making, classical work, 'Progress and Poverty,' which we ourselves hold in almost religious reverence and sacred respect." Whether he satisfactorily rebuts Mr. George's argument based upon the innate power of certain things "to yield an increase, or give a return over and above that which is to be attributed to labor," is a question which the student must decide for himself. There is certainly much force in his reply, which can hardly be given in brief. He holds that the natural increase which Henry George advances as the natural basis of interest, is really the natural reward, or wages, of the labor of those engaged in certain departments of industry; and that "any advantage nature may be supposed to yield to any special branch of industry, would tend to be distributed, or to distribute itself, amongst all those who were exchanging services or commodities one with the other." However, the author well implies that the question of interest will take care of itself. "It is," he says, "a matter of congratulation that differences of opinion on this somewhat abstract, if not merely academic, question cannot be any real cause of antagonism or separation between any who are seriously desirous of establishing justice, and of securing to mankind the fruits of justice."

Whatever subject Mr. Berens touches he discusses in a thorough-going, yet good-tempered manner. His book is one which, by reason of its sincerity and its fair-minded discussion of a great problem, we should read, mark, learn and inwardly digest. It is a book to buy, and lend, and talk about. One cannot but wonder, after reading it, how long it will be before the question which he argues will come to the front as a recognized issue in politics. Who that watches the present anxious trend of social discussions will venture to prophesy that the time may not soon come when the argument of this book will appear a conservative plea for common-sense and justice?

J. H. DILLARD.

PERIODICALS.

The readers of the Ladies' Home Journal will be glad to see in the September number the first of a series of drawings by Mr. W. L. Taylor, illustrating the Pioneer West. The picture in this number, Pioneer Settlers crossing the Alleghenies, is full of character and spirit, telling on a page a great chapter of American history. In Mr. Mable's literary talks on p. 15, he calls attention to the fine practice of reading aloud, a subject woefully neglected in the schools to-day—necessarily so, by reason of the multiplicity of studies forced upon them. Page 10 is given over to that solemn form of humor in which we Americans will