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BOOK REVIEWS

REMEDY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT

"The apparel oft proclaims the man," says the poet, and this is also true concerning the inward man,—his business in life, his antecedents, his training in a certain circle of society. So we find the author of this book to be "a successful manufacturer, inventor and business man." As a corollary to this a reading of the book shows that he is not a scientist or scientific thinker (philosopher), and since he displays ignorance of the very elements of the Science of Political Economy, about which his book is written, we find that his deductions are worse than useless in that they will lead many untrained readers further and further into the mire. It is one of those books that might better never have been written.

Well toward the end of the book (p. 94) we find these words: "The ignorance and shortsightedness of those who framed our banking laws—or rather those who have practically copied these laws from Europe—are alone responsible for unemployment."

This is Mr. Bilgram's conclusion, arrived at without any science, and in a reverse manner—that is, plunging into the intricacies of the subject without even suggesting the elements, from which all scientific research begins.

The book purports to give the remedy for "overproduction, (?) and unemployment"—with thousands of people suffering for lack of the things that have been produced too abundantly. It starts (Introduction) with "the causes of overproduction." Sec. 2, is "inconsistency of terms;" then comes "money," then "credit;" a little further on comes "the scarcity of money;" "the production of money;" "The Remedy; Plan one and plan two." The last subject is "The Land Question" followed by the conclusion and an appendix.

The most casual glance will show the student of Political Economy that the procedure is unscientific and goes at the subject hind-end-to. That the conclusions are absurd necessarily follows because the conclusions can never be more accurate than the premises of an argument. And one of the paradoxes of the human mind is that in scarcely any other field of science,—mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, etc.—would a writer dare plunge into the middle of a subject while ignoring and virtually denying, all of the elements of the science upon which the superstructure must rest.

*The Remedy for Overproduction and Unemployment. By Hugo Bilgram. Vanguard Press, New York. Price, 50 Cents.

Mr. Bilgram and all other writers on the subject must be scientific if they hope to reach conclusions of any value.

Therefore the author should have started with the land question instead of leaving it until last. He should have borne in mind that land is the first PRIME factor in the production of ALL wealth. Labor is the second PRIME factor in production. Capital is the third but a secondary factor in production and consists of wealth (not money, for money is merely a yard stick of values, and the common medium of exchange) produced from land by labor and has comparatively little weight compared with the prime importance of land and labor. Money can be ignored in the early stages of the investigation, for while it is of great importance it is as nothing compared with two prime factors of production, land and labor. The author treats of money first and land last whereas he should have reversed the order.

The author should have told that all labor acts directly or indirectly upon land. The banker, and the "successful manufacturer," the sailor and the aviator, all use land every minute that they live, awake or asleep, and the body of each and every one finally goes back to the land whence it came. Ships on the ocean rest on water that rests upon land, and air planes move upon air that rests upon land. Every human activity is performed upon the surface of the earth, i.e. land. Land is the all-important factor in the life of mankind, this last word falling under the term labor. "The ownership of land gives the ownership of men, to a degree, measured by the necessity, real or artificial, for the use of land. Place one hundred men upon an island from which there is no escape and whether you make one of them the absolute owner of the other ninety-nine, or the absolute owner of the soil of the island will make no difference either to him or to them."

Therefore the warning: If a writer on a Politico-Economic subject fails to place land first, labor second, and capital third, you may be sure that the book is of comparatively little value and must be looked upon with suspicion. This is true of Karl Marx and many other writers. Marx wrote, "Wage, Labor and Capital," (Pub. Chas. H. Kerr & Co., Chgo.) and instantly we should note the fact that the title should have been either, "Land, Labor and Capital" or "Rent, Wages and Interest." Then in reading the pamphlet we are justified in our suspicions. Marx was empirical (the opposite of scientific) and arrives at no true conclusions, though he says many things that are certainly true, but are not properly related to the other truths of Political Economy.

C. LEB. GOELLER.

B. H. NADAL CULTIVATES THE FAIRIES*

It is not easy to write for children; if any one thinks it is let him try it. Mr. Nadal has, we think, succeeded. He has not made the mistake of writing below the youthful mind. He has assumed that children will understand some things which to the mature mind require a lot of explanation. He thinks that beneath the surface of fairy life the subtlest lessons in human behavior may be conveyed to the child mind. We should like to try it out on some children of our acquaintance.

Mr. Nadal is an old Single Taxer, a long-time member of the Manhattan Single Tax Club, and the author of "Woodmites," recently produced in a New York Theatre. The volume before us is pretty and attractive, and the illustrations, which are very charming, are by R. F. Bunner, of the Salmagundi Club, who is the brother of the late H. C. Bunner, once editor of *Puck*, who is pleasantly remembered by this reviewer. The book makes an attractive Christmas present. (See adv.).—

J. D. M.

GREGORY WEINSTEIN RECALLS THE EIGHTIES*

Mr. Weinstein's reminiscences are of vivid interest. He was part of the events he describes. He knew intimately these leaders of the

*The Fairy Court, or Judge Weeks and Her Friends. By B. H. Nadal. Illustrated by R. F. Bunner. Cloth, 118 pages. Price \$1.50. The Avondale Press, N. Y. City.

*The Ardent Eighties. By Gregory Weinstein. Cloth, illustrated. 182 pages; price, \$2.50. The International Press, N. Y. City.

movements of the Eighties, Henry George, Father McGlynn, Josephine Shaw Lowell, James Redpath, and many others. His own life was passed among the stirring events he recounts.

Mr. Weinstein was a child of the Russian pogroms. He describes the slaughter of thousands of Jews in his native Russia, the raids made upon his own home in search for forbidden books, and finally the enthralling vision of America, the land of the free, and the final escape of himself and his family into Germany, and thence to the land of promise through the gates of Castle Garden.

But he was soon to be disillusioned. The land of promise was not all it had been pictured. The green hills and valleys of his old home in Vilna were at least preferable to the dark tenements and filthy streets of New York's lower East Side.

Finally he drifted into the printing trade. He worked for Norman L. Munro among others, (Mr. Munro was then publisher of the *Family Story Paper*, a widely circulated fiction weekly), then at Polhemus' on the corner of Ann and Nassau streets, and later on the *Leader* of which Louis Post was editor, a paper started mainly to help Henry George in his campaign for the mayoralty of New York. He then drifted into reportorial work and finally back again to his old trade of setting type. It is interesting to note that he sought and obtained work on Henry George's *Standard*. William McCabe was foreman of the composing room.

Mr. Weinstein tells interestingly of Shevitch, whose famous debate with Henry George, in which encounter Henry George was not at his best, will be recalled.

The chapter treating of Henry George begins: "In all my recollections of the decade of the Eighties I can hardly recall a man who has left a deeper impress on his generation than Henry George. Even thirty years after his death, his name is revered by many loyal followers and his books are read all over the civilized world."

Mr. Weinstein is not a Single Taxer, but evidently believes that George's remedy will go far toward solving the land and taxation problems while leaving other evils in our "highly complicated industrial life" to be cured by different methods. Evidently Mr. Weinstein, like so many others, does not see the far reaching nature of the proposal which goes a great way toward solving other questions beside the land and taxation questions.

It is a graceful tribute that our author pays to Miss Lillian D. Wald, founder of the Henry Street Settlement, and he links her name with that of Jane Adams, whom he calls "Chicago's greatest woman." Equally to be commended for its fine appreciation and general accuracy—and it would do no harm for certain ill-informed Catholic editors to read it—is Mr. Weinstein's sketch of Father McGlynn.

There are others in this volume to whom we are re-introduced, these devoted souls of the "ardent eighties"—it is a happy title that Mr. Weinstein has selected for his book—Felix Adler, Ernest Howard Crosby, Stanton Coit, Joseph Barondess, and many more. Of these we may say in the language of our author, "They did not live in vain." And not in vain has our author gathered together these memories of his time and the fine spirits with whom he mingled. "Show me the company you keep and I will show you what you are." And it must be a source of gratification to Mr. Weinstein that this was the company he sought. We thank him sincerely for this volume.

J. D. M.

BRAND WHITLOCK WRITES A POLITICAL NOVEL*

If American politics is anything like the thing Brand Whitlock pictures it, then right thinking, right living men will hesitate to adopt it as a profession. And it is like that. Mr. Whitlock strips it of all its garish attractions and presents it as the sordid thing it is.

Do we doubt it? Have we not been through a presidential campaign in which the all too obvious sacrifice of principle and personal conviction on the part of very esteemed and eminent persons in political

*Big Mat. By Brand Whitlock. Cloth, 284 pages, price, \$2. D. Appleton and Co., N. Y. City.