

the South, where the comparisons of conditions most naturally apply.

J. H. DILLARD.



DEMOCRATIC VISION.

The Vaunt of Man, and Other Poems. By William Ellery Leonard. B. W. Huebsch. \$1.25 net.

William Ellery Leonard has hitherto been known to readers of scholarly works as a sensitive writer on literature, the translator of Empedocles, and, to a wider public, as the author of an interpretation of the character of Jesus, which is written from the standpoint of literary—and therefore human—appreciation. All lovers of literature will surely unite in hoping that this first volume of his collected verses will introduce Mr. Leonard to a wider and ever-widening public as a poet who is typical at once of the aristocracy of universal culture, and of the democracy of American life.

This combination of sensitive fineness of perception and spirit with a sturdiness which is typically American, or even Lincolnian, is the most significant thing about "The Vaunt of Man." It is a combination which gives the book especial value for those of us who are preoccupied with public affairs, with the chores of our social life—as so many among the serious readers of the day are occupied. For we have, in that very seriousness and social conscience, a point of entry into the spirit of these poems; and we shall find in them the corrective to that stunting of the aesthetic sense which is so apt to come from social preoccupations and which leads a man like George Bernard Shaw into a Philistine attitude toward form and beauty in art as distinguished from its didactic and will-exciting "purpose."

Mr. Leonard is not afraid to use his art for ethical purposes. He is prophet as well as poet, as the following "Remarks" written upon reading of the intended sale of the White Mountains to a lumber company, may testify:

The nations have rebuked us: "Greed for gold
Costs ye voice, vision; costs ye faith and fame."
Is this their envy? Shall we gloss our shame
Writing it "Progress," "enterprise"? Behold
Our civic life a trade, our rich men old
Bribing opinion for an honest name,
And art and letters counted jest or blame,
When (but how seldom!) they will not be sold.

We traffic with our birthright; our domain
Of torrents thundering inland shall be dumb—
We have sold our cataracts to turn our mills;
And having lifted up our eyes in vain,
Whence our help cometh, but no more may come,
Now we would sell the everlasting hills.

"Now we would sell the everlasting hills"—what a fine contempt and anger is compressed into those seven words, and how deserved must the finer spirits among us feel it to be!

But Mr. Leonard has higher work than social criticism. Passing such poems, as the above, and such national poems as his dedication ode to Lincoln, read at the unveiling of the statue in Madison, with its "dear random memories of a father dead," let us glance at his poems of the inner personal life. These are of a peculiarly intimate nature. One feels in reading them that the poet has faced those aspects of nature and life which we may call God, and is impelled to communicate the sense of vocation, calm, and certainty which he has won in his wrestle with the Infinite.

Lo, I own the dream
Of Plato and the hardness of Kant.
I have all wealth within me; I will look—

—he tells us; but this world within is not an isolated thing, for our will, our "unconquered will," is "part of the epic of the universe."

The largeness and sanity of the communicant with nature inform all these poems, and a like large temper is apparent in those of them which deal with love. Those and other poems of personalities and of nature have been slighted here, for lack of space; and at the risk of giving a one-sided impression of the book, the reviewer cannot refrain from ending these remarks by quoting a sonnet of ethical—or rather religious—import, entitled, "The Test":

Still at the wheel to labor down the sea
With battered funnels and with riven flags,
To overcome the mountain on bare crags
Above the thunder and the farthest tree,
To face a flaring city—the mad glee
And ululations of her reeling masques
And human drift—are self-sustaining tasks,
Because they challenge by their majesty.

But in these swamps, behind the hovel yard
To make my obscene way through stench and flies
And oozy fibers, and refuse glass and shard,
And still to keep some token in my eyes
Of inward dignity and God's good skies,
This, this is manhood, this is truly hard.

But that it is not impossible, is the burden of the poetry of William Ellery Leonard.

LLEWELLYN JONES.



BOOK OF ESSAYS.

Humanly Speaking. By Samuel McChord Crothers. Published by Houghton, Mifflin Co., Boston. 1912. Price, \$1.25 net.

Through Dr. Crothers' latest book with its glancing humor and knightly tolerance, there blows again his free optimism that dispels all fog and freshens the spirit. To be sure, the longer essays—especially those on his travels in Europe—with their too lengthy examples, sometimes trail off down anti-climaxes; and occasionally his favorite translation of financial terms into ethical or aesthetic concepts is over-worked. The essay em-