

MARION MILLS MILLER

(See frontispiece)

Mr. Miller acquired his education in the public schools of his birthplace, Eaton, Ohio; at Wooster University in the same State, in which institution he passed through the Freshman and part of the Sophomore courses; and, after the interval of a year and a half during which he taught two country schools to provide himself with the funds to pursue his education at a larger university, at Princeton, graduating there in the honor roll of the class of 1886, although he had devoted much of his energy to work outside of the regular curriculum.

His position as literary editor of the *Nassau Literary Magazine* trained him in writing, and constructive criticism of the writings of others, and his activities in a college debating and oratorical club, the American Whig Society, founded by James Madison, gained him a reputation at Princeton as an orator (he was a prize man in the Junior and Senior public speaking contests) and so procured his appointment soon after graduation as assistant professor in the Department of Oratory and Aesthetic Criticism which had been established by George Lansing Raymond, whose series of books on Comparative Aesthetics, including the principles of artistic discourse, have since won him the distinction of an authority on the subject rivalling Ruskin in originality and soundness of thought, and exceeding him in the correlation of ideas.

Mr. Miller's work under Dr. Raymond developed him into an author in the field of pedagogic literature. In collaboration with his principal he published "The Princeton Speaker," a text-book on oratory, and he has since introduced to the public the aesthetic philosophy of Raymond by compiling in handy volumes extracts from his voluminous works.

While teaching at Princeton Mr. Miller pursued university studies which procured him the degree of Doctor of Literature. Determining to become a professional writer, he left Princeton in 1893 and entered into literary work in New York. Already con-

verted to the Single Tax by his economic studies and by correspondence with his brother, the late Clarence A. Miller, Esq. of Los Angeles, who was an ardent and active follower of Henry George, he sought out the Manhattan Single Tax Club and entered into active propaganda, especially as an open-air speaker. In 1896 he was put up as an independent Democrat for Congress by the Bryan Democracy in protest against the joint nomination by Tammany and the Gold Democrats of George B. McClellan, Jr., a classmate of Dr. Miller's, who had refused to subscribe to the National Democratic platform. While Dr. Miller accepted bimetalism as preferable to monometalism, he did not believe that there was any metallic theory which would definitely solve the money question, and so was more interested in the "other anarchy" in the platform—notably the restoration to the people of the land that had been grabbed by the Pacific railroads. Accordingly, when William Sulzer for whom he had campaigned as the one Tammany nominee for Congress declaring for "every plank of the Bryan platform," soon after his election voted, at the behest of Boss Croker, for the Pacific Railroads Funding Bill, Dr. Miller with Samuel Seabury organized a mass-meeting in Sulzer's district which denounced his treason.

In 1897 Dr. Miller was appointed secretary of the campaign committee of Henry George, candidate for Mayor of New York. On the day after George's death he wrote a song to the tune of "John Brown's Body," called "Henry George Our Hero," which was sung that evening at Chickering Hall, the leader being John W. Hutchinson, of the old Abolitionist chorus, the Hutchinson Singers, which first sang in public Mrs. Julia Ward Howe's "Battle Hymn of the Republic" to the same stirring air. Dr. Miller has in press a volume of his verse, annotated for propagandist purpose, containing this historic Henry George song, and others of its kind written about that time and in recent years. Its title is "The Man sent of God and Other Poems," the titular poem having as its text the characterization of George by Father McGlynn at the great funeral of the dead leader in Grand Central Palace.

Dr. Miller's first book of verse was "Parnassus by Rail," written at Princeton. This as its title indicates, is composed of experiments in versification, a number of selections being translations from the Greek poets, for whom he has a predilection.

In 1900 he published "The Sicilian Idyls of Theocritus," to which Hamlin Garland contributed the introduction. This work, which Maurice Thompson, the poet, said was the most successful attempt to translate Greek poetry into English that has ever been made, procured for its author admission into the Authors Club of New York, in which influential body of men Dr. Miller has done a great deal of successful personal propaganda for the Single Tax.

In 1909 he completed for Vincent Parks & Company, New York, a fifteen volume edition of "The Greek and Latin Classics," containing translations of the masterpieces of that "elder day of art," copiously annotated, and with many introductory appreciations by leading scholars of America, and with biographies of the classic authors largely written by himself. Single Taxers will be interested to know that in this work, the scholarly value of which in connection with its human interest has kept it as a steady seller among subscription books, the editor included a Single Tax story of remarkable charm by Dio Chrysostom, which had never before been translated into English. It will shortly be published separately by the Hillacre Press, Riverside, Conn., the publisher of Dr. Miller's forthcoming book of Single Tax verse.

The Stratford Company of Boston have in press a play in verse by Dr. Miller in the Greek form and spirit, entitled "The Return of Odysseus." It is particularly intended for open air performance in universities and women's colleges, though it is adapted, because of its artistic spectacular features, to appeal as a stadium play to the general public.

For a number of years Dr. Miller was connected with large publishing houses, particularly Funk & Wagnalls Company and P. F. Collier & Son, as editor in the book department where he planned and produced important works. Since 1907 he has been independent of such connection. In that year and the following he edited the Centen-

ary Edition of the "Life and Works of Abraham Lincoln," in ten volumes, for the Current Literature Publishing Company, adopting for the first time the logical order in arrangement of the speeches and letters of the great President, and thereby producing the most popular edition with statesmen, journalists, and all other persons who desire ready reference to Lincoln's utterances. The biography of Lincoln, which appeared in the edition, was built up by Dr. Miller out of the literary remains of Henry C. Whitney, a legal colleague of Lincoln in the days when he "rode the circuit." The late Major William H. Lambert, President of the Lincoln Fellowship, pronounced it to be "the best short biography of the great President."

Recently Dr. Miller assisted Osborn H. Oldroyd, Curator of the Lincoln Nurseries in Washington, D. C., to edit "The Poets' Lincoln," an anthology of tributes to the Martyred President. In particular he contributed an introduction which has been reproduced in extenso in *The National Magazine* and *The Literary Digest* because of the new light that it throws on Lincoln not only as a literary artist, but also as a genuine poet of no mean order. A review of this book appears elsewhere in these columns.

In 1913 appeared Dr. Miller's masterpiece of editing, "Great Debates in American History," in fourteen volumes, published by the Current Literature Publishing Company. It was the work of two and one-half years of unremitting toil. In accomplishing this "appalling" task, to use a term frequently appearing in reviews of the work, Dr. Miller went through the hundreds of fat folios of the records of Congress literally leaf by leaf, his practiced eye passing over at least a billion words. He unearthed argumentative speeches of the greatest importance, unknown to most historians, and he edited this material with such judgment in selections and such clearness and cogency in digest and annotation that the work, though a compilation in form, is a continuous narrative in effect. It has been proclaimed by various statesmen, educators, and writers as a "well-nigh perfect piece of editing," "absolutely unique in the method of arrangement," and "a new invention in book editing."

An aftermath of these labors is "American Debate," a history proper of political and economic controversy in the United States. It is reviewed elsewhere in these columns.

Dr. Miller has shown the pedagogic bent of his mind, as well as his inventive capacity in teaching, in other fields than literature. About a year ago he conceived the idea of reviving the old "mock Congress," and, by the addition of new features, to make it an organization not only for practice in public speaking, argumentation, and parliamentary law, but also for civic service. He organized under the auspices of the Bronx Open Forum the Bronx Congress, and filled the young men who composed it with such enthusiasm that, with preparation of less than a month, they performed a forensic pageant, hastily written by Dr. Miller, entitled "The Declaration of Independence." Dr. Miller has rewritten the pageant, introducing a speech by a Revolutionary forerunner of Henry George, Pelatiah Webster, and a number of new patriotic songs in which a broad democracy, beyond that of mere "flag worship" is inculcated. It will be presented next Fourth of July by the Bronx Congress, and also by the Carnegie Hall Congress, which Dr. Miller is now organizing in the Borough of Manhattan. This Congress is composed of earnest and highly intelligent young men, members of the Liberty Literary Society, which Dr. Miller is also instructing in American politics, using his "American Debate" as a text-book.

He is in growing demand as a speaker on the Single Tax, before various organizations. He appeals particularly in his talks to the spirit of idealism which he is convinced is a growing characteristic of the age, not only in the churches and schools, but in business circles and among workingmen. He takes advantage particularly of the "passion for poetry" latterly manifested among young men, that "strange phenomenon," upon which sociologists are remarking—to draw their attention to the higher things of life by recitations from the great bards of democracy and humanity. He finds that even common sailors, to whom he talks weekly at the Seamen's Institute, have their unusually inert minds roused more by high thought

than by cheap sentiment. In this respect if a more fulsome title be applied to him than the plain and preferable term Pedagogue, it is that of Inspirational Propagandist.