

trial body—sandwiched in between statistics on the World's Merchant Marine and the Area, Density and Population of the United States. It may be questioned, too, if it is well in a work of this character to sprinkle quotations, not germane to the subject, at the bottom of the pages. These are doubtless of great importance in some other contest, but one wonders why they were wrenched from their own indigenous soil for such obviously inappropriate transplanting.

There are omissions, too, which one may note. Surely in a statement of the opposing theories touching the concentration of wealth there was room for a mention of Thos. G. Shearman's articles on this subject along with those of Dr. Spahr, Sir R. Giffen and the worthless excursions of Mr. W. H. Mallock into the same field. Mr. Shearman's first article which originally appeared in the *Forum* is by far the most conclusive essay on the subject.

It is especially exasperating to find under the heading, *The Causes of Poverty*, no mention of the theory that holds the chief cause to be the divorce of labor from land, but only a table of Prof. A. G. Warner in which the causes of poverty are shown to be 1st, sickness or death in the families of the poor. 2nd, lack of work, and 3rd, drink. Prof. A. G. Warner is one of the humorists of the Charities Organizations, and some ten years ago printed a book on *American Charities*, in which laborious study of tons of tables from relief statistics of cities here and abroad was entered into, with the result as given above. They call this scientific investigation. Nearly all minds that are tempted to enter this field emerge decrepit. Here for instance is this grave professor telling us that the poor are poor because they get sick and die? Why you can't even make fun of a statement like that. Its imbecility is too profound. And this is the kind of table which under the general heading "*The Causes of Poverty*," is allowed to appear in this work without intelligent and appropriate editorial comment.

There are other defects, too. Why in the name of common sense are Adams Express Company and the Mergenthaler Linotype included among "Natural Monopolies" along with traction and telephone companies?

But all these defects can be remedied in future editions. And of course there is much that is valuable in the work. The spirit in which it is conceived is the true one, for its purpose is to tell the truth regarding social conditions. Information of this kind is sorely needed, and the publishers are to be commended for the attempt to provide a Year Book of this character at a price that shall place it within easy reach of the men and women who have use for the facts and figures it presents.

J. D. M.

*A TRUE POET.

Many of our readers are familiar with the name of James Arthur Edgerton, some of whose verses have attained wide vogue among the journals of the day, especially in periodicals of social reform tendencies. Those who have read these verses must often have been struck with their homely strength, their fine sympathetic note, and the passionate hatred of injustice that animates them. They will be glad, therefore, to welcome the publication of this volume in which these poems are presented.

Mr. Edgerton's verse leaves, it is true, something to be desired. Not always is the thought articulate; we feel that it often struggles vainly for utterance, and that often, too, the utterance is disappointing. There is more of the *soul* than the garment of poetry in the work, for on the artistic side Mr. Edgerton as a verse maker is deficient. But he has a distinctive virility that marks off his work from so much of our current verse. And Mr. Edgerton at his best—and we fancy he is at his best in such poems as the now oft-quoted one in which each stanza concludes with the refrain

"For the God who reigned over Babylon
Is the God who is reigning yet!"—

is a singer of no mean quality of voice.

We quote the following lines on the great Russian prophet and Single Taxer, Tolstoy, not because it is among the best in the volume, but because of the shorter pieces it will interest our readers most.

He sought to follow God. The Church
Respectable and old,
Accustomed but to follow form
Was shocked at one so bold,
To follow God was blasphemous—
It drove him from the fold.

He sought to help Humanity
The despots in command
Had never heard of such a thing—
They could not understand
They thought it must be treason, so
They drove him from the land.

J. D. M.

† "THE MOTHER ARTIST."

This little work by Mrs. Jane Dearborn Mills, whose name is known to Single Taxers everywhere, is a book for mothers. But every lover of children might read it with profit. The spirit that animates it lends an unusual beauty to its pages, and the author's knowledge of the child heart is spiritually clairvoyant in its peculiar intimacy. Every chapter is full of suggestion; and we should like to be able to quote

**Songs of the People*. By James Arthur Edgerton. Cloth, 12mo. 230 pp. Price \$1. The Reed Publishing Co. Denver, Col.

†*The Mother Artist*. By Jane Dearborn Mills, (Mrs. James E. Mills). 12mo. 156 pp. Price \$1. The Palmer Co. Boston, Mass.

its many fruitful paragraphs, full of beauty and instinct with poetry.

Although a book of helpfulness for mothers it is really a plea for the larger life of the child. The same receptivity of mind to the philosophy of freedom that made Mrs. Mills a Single Taxer makes her an eloquent advocate of freedom for the child-soul. She is under none of the modern delusions that afflict the many writers who treat of this subject; she knows that the false economic adjustments of society make most of our social relations false and unnatural. The opening paragraph discloses this knowledge, and it is worth quoting in this connection:

"It has never occurred to human nature to take the best of its best things in earnest—Peace, Marriage, Homemaking, and Motherhood. In olden times it frankly cast them out and trod them under foot. Then it thought, one day, how fine would be the mingling of pretty talk with its real estimate of them. It tried it and liked it, and has kept on, even down to now. So the vocabulary is a queer mixture. The messenger from Mars must find it puzzling to make connection between Hosannahs for "Peace on earth" and Hurrahs for war among men, all in the self same breath. He must turn dizzy at the sight of "holy marriage" as a butt for jokes in funny papers and conversation. He must be curious to know why a mother is a queen and a slave; and all these medleys he may take back to his Martian children to show them what queer minds the folks have on the planet they call Earth."

The time comes when the mother must answer the child's question as to why papa goes to the city every day, and here for the first time our author touches upon our economic system in the same spirit and with the same philosophy that animates the rest of the work.

"Here another revelation awaited you. You had not thought before of the industrial system as more than man's contrivance for the making of the family living and a fortune. That it had anything of God's great purpose in it was a new idea. Now with those earnest child-eyes looking into yours, the question that arose in your mind was startling. Is business nothing but a universal grab bag, a street boy scramble for the pennies God has thrown? And is the normal method of its being done a jostling and a pushing and a grasping of all the fist can hold, and shoving it greedily into one's coffers?"

And with the question comes the revelation:

"Papa's business was no longer a contrivance planned by him for getting money for yourselves. It was a part of a great organism which, from its very nature and in spite of the deformity into which man's greed had twisted it, was inherently a service of every man to all and all to each. It

was worthy to be scanned by the innocence of the child, and to be entered into by the manliness of man."

There are many passages of equal significance in this little volume, but the chief charm of the work is its originality, its suggestiveness and the calm serenity of its philosophy. A thoughtful introduction by Mrs. Hannah Kent Schoff, President of the National Congress of Mothers, fittingly precedes these illuminating chapters.

J. D. M.

*A STORY OF A "LAND BOOM."

Most of our readers know of J. Herbert Quick, once mayor of Sioux City, Iowa, and known as an active worker for the Single Tax cause. They will be glad to welcome a novel by ex-Mayor Quick, that is of sterling value as a story, and tells, unobtrusively, its own moral. It differs from most reform novels in that its author lets the story itself convey the lesson. It is therefore distinctively not of the class of didactic fiction that makes as a rule such dismal reading.

This is not a Single Tax story in the sense that the Single Tax is even mentioned. The author is too excellent a literary artist for that. A more blundering craftsman would have wound up his story with a dissertation on economics, and thus have spoilt all its force. Yet few will read it without having their minds irresistably impelled to the conclusion that the author has lanced to the quick the sore of civilization, that the forces that make for the destruction of society and the brutalizing and dwarfing of every finer instinct are indicated with a strong and sure touch.

The history of this land boom ends in a tragedy, the darker features of which are merely hinted at. Through it all runs the thread of a love story that will heighten its interest to many readers. The characters stand out with some distinctness—General Lattimore, Captain Tulliver, and Elkins, the last the hero of the romance.

There are many quotable passages. General Lattimore, the Union soldier, who was at no time deceived by the fictitious prosperity of this boom town, and Captain Tulliver, whose opinions are a survival of the traditions of a pro-slavery South, and who is none too acute a reasoner on any subject indulge in this interesting colloquy.

"In the midst of forests, suh," went on the Captain, "we had our mansions not inferior to this—each a little kingdom with its complete wo'ld of amusements, its cote, and its happy populace, goin' singin' to the work which supported the estate."

"Yes," said the General, "I thought when we were striking down that state of things that we were doing a great thing for that populace. But now I see that I was

*Aladdin & Co., A Romance of Yankee Magic. By Herbert Quick. Price, \$1.50. Henry Holt & Co., N. Y. City.