

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Three Acres and Liberty.** By Bolton Hall. MacMillan. Cloth, 435 pp., \$1.50.

Here is a combination of the Single Tax, "Back to the Land" and suburbanite enthusiasm, tempered with the supervision of an agricultural expert and written in charming literary style. Such a combination should be pleasing to a great variety of readers, and it certainly is. The farmer, gardener, suburbanite, chicken-farmer, bee and fruit raiser, nature lover and poet will all find something to enjoy in its pages, while it has much of great value to the sociologist.

The burden of the book is that on three acres enough can be raised to give economic freedom. While the book does many things, as has been suggested, it seems to fall something short of proving its main thesis. There is no doubt but what enormous crops, far exceeding the average at present can be brought from the land. The examples which are quoted, and which are largely taken from Kropotkin, may on the whole be accepted, although some of them seem to lack discriminating accuracy in statement. But the present writer, like Kropotkin, neglects to tell us that the market gardeners of Paris, who have conquered climate and soil and cultivated the earth to an intensity unknown elsewhere on earth are sunk in a poverty as deep as that of the city sweat-shops. Their hours are the limit of human endurance,—their only sleep being often that which they can catch on their carts as they wait outside the walls of Paris, to be first in line at the market. Nor have all those who have tried market gardening been so successful as Mr. Hall would have us believe. There are plenty of failures in the neighborhood of every great city. The fruit belt of Michigan could tell a story longer than the volume before us could contain on this point.

Passing by this optimism, which is excusable in the enthusiast, even though it destroy the heart of the argument of the book, there is still enough that is valuable, interesting and helpful to make it one of the important books of the year. There are a host of practical suggestions from how to buy a farm to what to plant and how to care for it, although on the latter point the writer wisely refers to technical works on gardening rather than cumber his pages with details on points already covered. Here one notes some omissions that might well be supplied in a later addition. A discussion on the possibilities of intensive fruit raising should not have neglected the new dwarf fruit that enable such wonders to be so quickly wrought, nor, in work with so much of detail one should have expected to have seen some reference to the raising of such fruits as strawber-

ries in barrels and boxes. Again the author's pessimism leads him to overlook the failures that have been met with in vacant lot cultivation by philanthropic bodies and to mention only the more remarkable successes.

That there will be a tremendous "Back to the Land" movement as soon as economic conditions permit is certain. That even under capitalism there is much of a movement in that direction is evident. That such a movement can ever solve any problem of present time, or give "liberty" to any large number is doubtful. Yet if it does no more than arouse a desire in those who have the possibility of cultivating the soil it will have done good.

**Sex and Society.** By William I. Thomas. University of Chicago Press. Cloth, 325 pp., \$2.00.

After discussing the various theories that see in woman a partially developed man, a lower human being, etc. Prof. Thomas concludes his chapter on "Organic Differences in the Sexes" with the statement that:

"Man consumes energy more rapidly; woman is more conservative of it. The structural variability of man is mainly toward motion; woman's variational tendency is not toward motion, but toward reproduction. Man is fitted for feats of strength and bursts of energy; woman has more stability and endurance. While woman remains nearer to the infantile type, man approaches more nearly to the senile. The extreme variational tendency of man expresses itself in a larger percentage of genius, insanity and idiocy; woman remains more nearly normal."

The book is a close social and psychological study of sex relations and the part which they have played in race evolution. It is a welcome relief from the vast amount of undigested sentimental rot that it poured forth on this subject; and this whether the reader agree with the author or not. Indeed there are not many conclusions with which to agree or disagree as the work is largely descriptive of facts.

There are chapters on Sex and "Primitive Social Control," "Social Feeling," "Primitive Industry," "Primitive Morality," "The Psychology of Exogamy," "The Psychology of Modest and Clothing," "The Adventitious Character of Woman" and "The Mind of Woman and the Lower Races."

**The Theoretical System of Karl Marx in the Light of Recent Criticism.** By Louis B. Boudin. Charles H. Kerr & Co. Cloth, 286 pp., \$1.00.

The contents of this work are already familiar to our readers as it was first published in the columns of the International Socialist Review. It is an attempt to present the Marxian system of thought, with the emphasis on the system. The materialistic interpretation of history, the doctrine of the class struggle and the labor theory of value are shown to be integral parts of one symmetrical system.

Considerable space is given to a discussion of the various critics of Marxism. In this respect it is particularly timely since the Revisionist movement, which produced most of these critics seems to have practically disappeared so that their criticisms may now be