

that the tribute of affection, gratitude and respect which the Hon. Whitelaw Reid came home to render on the occasion of the Greeley centenary is delayed solely with the purpose of making it as nearly perfect as possible in literary form and finish.

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### A Race Question.

In the February issue of that "record of the darker races," *The Crisis*, of which W. E. Burghardt DuBois is the editor, we find this startling story:

Here is a colored boy, the son of a Southern white man, a boy with a fair common school education, good-tempered, pleasant to look upon and a regular worker. He is arrested under a law the essential principle of which has since been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Courts of both South Carolina and the United States. His plea of self-defense in killing an armed and unannounced midnight intruder into the very bedroom of himself and his wife, after he himself had been shot, would have absolutely freed any white man on earth from the slightest guilt or punishment. Yet it could not free a colored man in South Carolina. It brought a sentence of murder in the first degree.

Then follows a tribute to the Governor of South Carolina for commuting that death sentence to life imprisonment, as a brave act; not for its justice, but for its defiance of a dominant public opinion demanding the Negro's blood. The same tribute is paid to "strong papers like the *Columbia State*"; but, asks *The Crisis*, "what shall we say of the civilization of a community which makes moral heroism of the scantiest justice?" The white man, proud of his race, must give a shamefaced answer if he gives any; unless his race pride is for race iniquities. It is beyond dispute, if the statement quoted above be true, that this Negro boy is punished by white men for an act for which white men would applaud one of their own race. But, after all, is this a race matter? May it not be an instance of that cowardly quality to be found in all races and everywhere which makes the strong side popular and the weak one despised?

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### Illinois Land Grabbing.

Revelations of unlawful land grabbing in Illinois have been made recently by a legislative committee. But what of it? What difference to the community will it make a few years from now, whether those lands were grabbed for nothing or bought at full price? It is not as if a horse or a cow were grabbed; or a house, if a house apart from its site could be grabbed. In those cases the owner loses the cow, the horse or the house, and the grabber gets them for nothing. If they

are bought instead of grabbed, the value will have been paid, and it is the gain or loss of this that makes all the difference. In a little while the subject of the trade will have passed away. Not so with land. This is the earth itself. To buy it is to trade value for value; to grab it is to get it without pay. But in either case the land will remain in perpetuity a site for industrial life, increasing in value as the community grows.

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What is really grabbed in a land grab, or bought if a price be paid, is not a transient thing. It is the power and privilege of taking in perpetuity for private purposes an increasing premium for the use of that spot on the globe. Nearly all the school land of Chicago—a mile square in the heart of the city—was sold some 70 years ago by the school authorities for \$40,000; the same land will now yield an annual ground rent of as many millions. What difference does it make to the people of Chicago to-day that the titles to that land extend back to a \$40,000 purchase price instead of a grab? In neither case can the title be impugned at law; and in either case the present owners are enriched by the growth of the city of Chicago. To attack land grabbing may be useful in bringing to public attention the fact that all land monopoly, whether bought or not, is essentially land grabbing. But the simple and practical remedy for it is not to bother about old titles but to make their owners pay all taxes in proportion to their respective interests in the site value of the land, exempting improvements and everything else which by making a city grow make the site of the city increase in value.

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### SHRINKAGE OF BANK DEPOSITS.

\* Interest has been excited by recent news dispatches concerning a decrease of \$158,312,849 of individual deposits in the 39 New York national banks.

The assumption in those dispatches that this large sum represented money was surprising. Still more surprising were their statements that "no two Treasury officials agree about where it went."

But editorials in some financial periodicals indicate that their editorial departments are as much puzzled as the Treasury officials. All of them seem to assume that the amount "was withdrawn" from the banks.

The probabilities are, however, that the reported decrease represented no money at all—or very little.