

still holds its own, and it will, in all probability, endure as long as the city itself.

The old business center of Baltimore is the present business center, and in Chicago, where physical conditions have, as in New York, compelled an expansion of the business center, the leading retail stores are today situated within six squares of the first trading-post erected within the bounds of the city. The central business area here, as in London, is not more than one square mile; but it will be the greatest money-producing mile in the city for a thousand years to come.

In Philadelphia the active business life has moved somewhat from the river because it no longer is dependent upon the stream, as in the days before the coming of the railroad. The site of the government mint in that city was bought in 1829 for \$31,667, and sold in 1902 for \$2,000,000. In this connection it may be of interest to note that since 1899 the sites of six government mints have been sold. They were located in New York, Milwaukee, Kansas City, Indianapolis, Los Angeles and Philadelphia. They were held for an average of thirty-seven and one-half years. Their approximate total cost was \$1,000,000, they were sold for an aggregate of \$6,000,000, and every one of them was located in the center of the business district.

When centrally-located office buildings do not return a remunerative interest on the money expended in their construction, the fault can usually be traced to extravagance in building or to the fact that the owner is not sufficiently well versed in investment in business property to adjust his expenditure in construction to the amount of rental he may reasonably exact.

Within the last six months a syndicate in a growing Western city purchased a corner upon which to erect an office building, paying for the land \$100,000. The building is to cost \$750,000 when completed. Its owners are going to lose money on their investment from the start, and it will be long before the building pays at all. It probably will prove a profitable investment, but only when the congested business center expands sufficiently to pull it over the brink into financial safety.

The projectors of this enterprise will be obliged to wait patiently for their dividends because they have ignored the fundamental rule that the amount of rentals depends upon the average number of people who pass that particular location in the business day. This rule is as absolute as is the fact that the value of a piece of property as a dividend-payer depends upon the amount of rentals received from it. Land values and rentals are based upon human congestion and that alone. The nearer the vortex of the congestion a property is situated the more profitable the investment.

A FUNERAL ORATION.

As Delivered in the Church of the Holy Dividends in Bond Street, with a Chorus of Unsolicited Responses by Rank Outsiders.

Dear friends, a mighty man hath joined the Blest.
Chorus:

A mighty man indeed, but—let him rest!

A man of works and faith, a man of force,
Chorus:

Who lied, broke faith, and robbed without remorse.

A worthy life was his—a life of toil.
Chorus:

His noble aim in life was boundless spoil.

Steel-nerved, he builded railroad, ship, and mill;—
Chorus:

And ruined all who dared oppose his will.

How sweet and mild the inner life he led!
Chorus:

The tiger, too, is mild when fully fed.

How kind he was a thousand friends will say.
Chorus:

He fed his jackals fat, so well they may!

His faults? Be still! His faults we leave to God.
Chorus:

And teach our sons to tread the way he trod?

What wealth he gave our grateful hearts confess.
Chorus:

His very charity was selfishness.

He filled a million shelves with learned tomes,—
Chorus:

And builded palaces on wrecks of homes.

His gifts to church and college ever grew.
Chorus:

He robbed the poor to help the well-to-do.

Upon these walls his name shall be inscribed!
Chorus:

The Church may take, but God remains unbribed.
—Arthur Guiterman, in Puck.

BOOKS

"A CERTAIN RICH MAN."

A Certain Rich Man. By William Allen White, author of "Stratagems and Spoils," "The Court of Boyville," etc. Published by the Macmillan Company, New York. Price, \$1.50.

The temptation is great when describing this novel to marshal in full force one's vocabulary of laudatory superlatives. But that is a dangerous thing to do with contemporaneous fiction. One must wait for the public opinion of the reading world to ripen.

We venture the opinion, however, that "A Certain Rich Man" may be compared with anything

of Thackeray's and not unfavorably. We may, indeed, go further. While admitting that Thackeray could have equaled or even surpassed this work, had he lived in our day and studied the life of our time and country, we may reasonably contend that in fact he never did equal it. Is that superlative praise? Then let us compare "A Certain Rich Man" with Trollope's fine studies, those charming stories, so true to the life, which had their unconventional merit obscured by the thick Thackerayan atmosphere of the time in which they appeared. "A Certain Rich Man" has all the merit of simplicity, unobtrusive acuteness, and verisimilitude that characterized Trollope's work, plus an appreciation of power in human character that Trollope lacked. Somewhere between Trollope and Thackeray lies the lowest level to which we should assign William Allen White by the test of this strong and rich American story.

It is a true story—not in the sense of fidelity to facts, but of fidelity to truth. Facts are drawn upon freely enough, and living persons are frequently drawn from as models; but the story is a study, and not a history nor a biography.

It is a study of life, for which the framework to the left is the crumbling-of-slavery period of the Kansas-border war, and that to the right the crumbling-of-plutocracy period of the present day, while at the bottom is the natural hell of a plutocratic career, and at the top the heights that men ascend who see God.

Within the limits of those boundaries, William Allen White—he of "The Old Order Changeth"—has drawn a wonderful picture of the beginning of the latest of all the great revolutions of the world's history. And at the focal point he has portrayed with exceptional depth of insight and power of expression, some of the most tremendous character revolutions of individual experience.

Since living models have been used in the study of movement, we may detect familiar features here and there. It is evident that Rockefeller, Carnegie, Gary, Armour, and a host of other plutocrats have sat for the principal character at different times; yet the character itself is none of them, but a veritable type of great conquerors on the field of commercial warfare. It is evident, too, that General Weaver sat more than once to serve the artist in sketching another and opposite type. The Southerner type, too, is there,—both kinds; and a Kansas town is at the geographical center of the story. This is a town that grows before your eyes, from the hamlet of pioneer days to the booming city of the eighties and nineties, displaying as it grows all those phenomena of rising land values and monopolized building sites, which are characteristic of social growth everywhere and always, but fall under the limelight where social growth is quick.

If the book encounters serious criticism at any point, it is most likely to be at the conclusion,

where the regenerated rich man obeys almost literally the New Testament injunction to get rid of his riches. Some of us no doubt would have liked to see him devote himself, whether with or without his money and even unto death, to ridding the world of those perverted property institutions that generate plutocratic John Barkleys faster than Spartan mothers like Mary Barkley can possibly bring them to repentance. It does seem like a waste to let this man die in an effort to save one girl from accidental drowning in a mill pond. There were other characters that might have done it as well; and then there are many girls going down to death every hour, not accidentally, but in consequence of unfair property laws which a repentant plutocrat of Barkley's ability might do much to rid us of.

But the author was telling one story, not two. When he finished that one story he had the repentant plutocrat upon his hands, with no way of disposing of him that would be true to the life we have yet grown up to, except to let him drown himself to save another. Our time can understand that sort of revelation of a new heart. It could not have understood the larger life which Mr. White might have invented for the re-born hero of his story,—could not have understood it because it would have been invention instead of representation, and to invention the author had no right to resort. Anyhow, why may not those of us who would have had Mr. White sink his obligations as an artist in the enthusiasms of a social reformer—why may we not satisfy ourselves with the guess that possibly this finale was symbolic?

The author had a right to symbolize, provided the exteriors of his symbolism were consistent with the externalities of his story. Why may we not infer, then, that the mill pond, alive as it was with the germs of bodily disease, symbolizes a disordered social system; that the endangered girl symbolizes the great mass of mankind whose right to live the human social life is wrested from them by one-sided property laws and institutions; and that the regenerated plutocrat who gives up his own life in that millpond to save that girl from that death, symbolizes whatever the critical among us could severally demand as the finale of this great story? We don't believe that the author intended such symbolism, or any at all; but what is it of his business, now that he has thrown his story upon the world, if we read our own symbolism, each of us, into what he has written? That he is a poet, no one who reads his story can doubt; and do not poets often say much more than we want them to say, than they think they are saying?

All this aside, however, we have in "A Certain Rich Man" a host of individuals, each distinctly characteristic in every movement, and not one of them superfluous to the story. They are strong and weak, and the weak are sometimes strong and

the strong sometimes weak, just as it is in life. Only one is altogether mean, but many if not all are guilty of mean things. Few are essentially dishonest, but circumstances drive more than a few into acts of dishonesty. None are criminal at heart, unless we except the Federal judge, and perhaps he couldn't quite help the effects of early training; but several commit crimes, some of which are exposed and some are not. One of the best of all the characters dies under the shadow of a grave crime against property, which is maliciously exposed to prevent his interfering from motives of good citizenship, with a plutocratic conspiracy set on foot in the interest of property, and against human life—and of course for the "Larger Good."

Mr. White's novel is as wholesome as it is true to life, and none the less wholesome for its faithful picture of that type of evil men of affairs, self-made and self-centered, which our children for three generations have been taught to revere. It is mellow with humor, and it sparkles with wit—wit that sometimes blisters with a wholesome burn. An extraordinarily good novel, simply for its interest as a story, this novel is also, for the reader who has eyes to see and ears to hear, an essay of wonderful grasp and brilliancy and an exalted spiritual poem.

PERIODICALS

President Roosevelt's abusive and really ignorant attack upon socialism in the Outlook some weeks ago (pp. 316, 550) is met with a destructive reply in Van Nordens (New York) for September, from the pen of Jean Jaures, the socialist leader of France.

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In a criticism of the new corporation tax, Alton B. Parker, in Mack's National Monthly (Buffalo) for September, describes it as a long stride in the further establishment of imperial power over the States. On its colored cover page, the National for this month prints a vignette of John Quincy Adams in the upper center of a beautiful full page and tinted picture of the Adams house at Quincy, Mass.

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The Railway Situation in Italy, and Railways in New Zealand, are valuable articles in the Quarterly Journal of Economics (Harvard University) for August. It is especially interesting to note that the substitution of private for public railroads in New Zealand would not be popular, and that in Italy everybody now agrees that there will never be a return to private operation even if public operation should prove to be financially unprofitable.

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The rise and growth of land monopoly in the United States is the subject of H. Martin Williams's

second article on land monopoly, in the July-August number of the Single Tax Review (New York). In addition to this and important news and editorial matter, this issue of the Review contains contributions from S. Tideman, S. L. Moser, Daniel Kiefer, George V. Wells, Jane Dearborn Mills, John Z. White, Alfred J. Wolf, A. G. Hule, James F. Morton, Jr., H. W. Macfarlane, Joseph Fels, Bolton Hall, Peter Vanderwende, William Longstaff and Mary Dixon Jensen. John W. Bengough's story, "The Queer Theory of George Henry," is in its eighth chapter. The frontispiece is a fine halftone portrait of Edward George Hemmerde, member of the British Parliament, Recorder of Liverpool, and a leading land value taxationist of Great Britain.

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The great conception of the function of a people's university which stands back of the University of Wisconsin, is briefly described by Don E. Mowry in the Citizens' Bulletin of Cincinnati (519 Main St.) of August 7. According to Mr. Mowry, "the legislative reference library and the University of Wisconsin authorities ascertained that about five hundred thousand dollars was spent annually by people of the State for correspondence courses given by institutions located outside of the State. What was done? The 'University Extension Division' was established. It reached out for all factory hands, for clerks, for domestics, etc., etc., and gives them instruction along any particular lines they are qualified to take up. . . . The aim and ultimate outcome will be that Wisconsin will provide instruction for all her citizens, in some way or other, from the bread-winner, in the lowest rank, to the college man, drawing a large salary."

A. T. P.

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The Englishwoman is a new English monthly which was started last February (Grant Richards, 7 Carlton St., London, S. W.) under the editorship of Mrs. Grant Richards, with the Lady Frances Balfour, Lady Strachey, Miss Cicely Hamilton and Miss Lownes as a coadjutor editorial committee. The Englishwoman announced in its first number that its purpose was to reach the cultured public and bring before it, in a convincing and moderate form, the case for the enfranchisement of women. No support would be given to any particular party in politics. The subject of woman has been well to the fore in its handsome pages, examined from very many points of view—notably with plain speaking and good sense by George Bernard Shaw in the March number. Essays, verse and fiction from clever pens make excellent reading. An article on "The Taxation of Land Values," by Harold Cox, in the July number, was effectively replied to by W. R. Lester and Joseph Fels in the August number.

A. T. P.

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In writing of "The Confusion of Pragmatism" in the July Hibbert Journal (London, and Boston, 6 Beacon street), Professor George Trumbull Ladd scores the Pragmatists for their "vague and improper use of that much abused word 'idea.'" "We are continually told," he says, "about true and false ideas;" and he quotes William James as