

BOOKS

RURAL EDUCATION.

The Work of the Rural School. By J. D. Eggleston and Robert W. Bruere. Published by Harper & Bros., New York. Price, \$1.00 net.

Some months ago an English school man, who had been visiting the educational institutions of this country, was asked on his departure what was his most vivid impression. His reply was: "Lavishness and luxury." Considering what this inspector had seen we need not be surprised at his answer. He had not seen a single school two miles away from a city or from a railroad track. Had he made the circuit of almost any country in any of our states he would have had a very different story to tell.

The two most astounding facts about education in America have never been brought home to the minds of the American people. These tremendous facts are first the enormous disproportion between the amount of money which is spent on institutions of higher education and the amount spent on lower schools, and secondly, the enormous disproportion between the amount which is spent for education in cities and towns and the amount spent in rural districts. In these days we are undergoing many investigations. Here is a field which really needs fair and thorough investigation and a publication of the facts.

The condition of rural schools in almost all parts of the country is disgraceful. In the present volume I find the following statements which perhaps underestimate the bare, bad facts: "Sixty per cent of the country schoolhouses in the United States are unfit, from the standpoint of health and sanitation, for the use of children. Tens of thousands of schoolhouses are not schoolhouses, but shambles. In tens of thousands of them the work is purely and absolutely formal, and in these the schoolroom, instead of being a place of life, is a place of death to youth and hope and enthusiasm."

The consolation is that attention is beginning to be called to such facts. The present national Commissioner of Education, Mr. Claxton, knows and realizes their importance. Educational associations are more and more discussing the subject. Moreover a number of books on country life and country schools are appearing, prominent among which is this volume by Messrs. Eggleston and Bruere.

It is a wise and timely treatise on its important subject, and no one can read it without wishing that it may have a wide circulation and careful reading not only among schoolmen but among all classes of citizens. That we must "hitch up education with life" is naturally its keynote, but

the authors are far from bowing the knee to any modern idol of vocationalism. "The education of the children who are to enter industry," they say, "should not be specialized during their public school career; specialization should be left to the industry itself and to the higher technical schools. For it must be remembered that the object of industrial training in the schools is not the enslavement of the children to any vocation, but the highest development of their capacities." At the same time they show the uses of so-called practical subjects and oppose the separation of cultural studies in one school and the practical studies in another. Their attitude is clearly set forth in the following passage: "It is often said that a practical education is a bread-and-butter affair; that it destroys the finer spirit and vision of a people; and that 'man cannot live by head alone.' It is undoubtedly true that without a vision the people will perish. It is also true that man cannot live by head *alone*. But a man should not be trained to live on his own visions and on another man's bread. He should be so trained that he will be able to have both visions and provisions."

But the main value of the book lies in the fact that it deals with and emphasizes the rural schools. It treats in a most helpful way of such subjects as the Widening Outlook of the Rural School, Co-operative Demonstration Work, Demonstration Work Through the Rural School, Consolidation and Transportation. Each of the fourteen chapters is full of good sayings. The tone is perhaps at times a little too dogmatic, because every community must work out its own salvation in its own free way, but where so much is good one is loth to find fault.

One notable feature in the book can not be overlooked. I refer to the clear and outspoken manner in which it deals with the land question, showing the evils of the exploiter, who buys to sell for an unearned profit, and also the injustice of assessments. It is of course idle to talk about rural betterment without discussing various phases of the land question, and yet it is true that most writers and speakers who discuss the improvement of rural conditions are guilty of ignoring the fundamental issue. It is one of the unique merits of this book that it does not dodge this issue. "The state superintendent," say these authors, and let us hope they are right, "will see, and in his campaign of education will instruct the people in the close relationship existing between the rural school work, the land question, and the question of taxation." I should like to quote in full, were it not too long for this notice, a passage giving a conversation between a state superintendent and a county superintendent who was wondering how to get more money for the schools when the tax rate was at the maximum allowed by law. "How about your assessments?" asked the state superintendent. "Oh," said the county superintendent, "the assess-

ments are very low." And so the conversation continues to the conclusion that the best thing to do is to "preach justice in taxation."

The book is printed in bold, clear type, and the illustrations are aptly chosen.

JAMES H. DILLARD.



IMMEDIATE MEASURES.

"Broke": The Man Without the Dime. By Edwin A. Brown. Published by Browne & Howell Co., Chicago. 1913. Price, \$1.50 net.

Mr. Edwin A. Brown, the author of this remarkable book of first-hand experience, is a resident of Denver, and the possessor of independent means. Some years ago he began to feel the pressure on his conscience of the sight of the misery of our homeless men, women and children. He began, too, to suspect that the aid extended them by charities was not even good as a palliative; that it was, in short, pretty much of a bluff. But he determined to make no charges against systematized charity until he should really have found out for himself how things stood. So he disguised himself in ragged clothes, left all his money at home, and started out to see what his home city of Denver would do to him, when he threw himself upon its tender mercies with no possessions, but with an honest purpose to do any work that there was to be done. What Denver did was a plenty—so much so that he extended the experiment to other cities, to see if, perchance, Denver was a horrible exception to the rules of civilized conduct.

Well, the story is about the same in all cities, although its details vary infinitely. Jail, and treatment within its walls far less decent than that given dogs and horses, clubbings by brutal and quite anarchistic police officers, impudent, patronizing refusals of aid by the paid servants of "charitable" bodies, occasionally ruthless exploitation by those same bodies or by private employers, such is the list of what the homeless and workless man or youth or woman in America may expect.

While alive to the fundamental causes of the condition of such men, Mr. Brown has set himself a task in this book more immediate than their removal. While we are educating people in regard to those fundamental causes, the poor are still with us. And as education is a slow process they are likely to be with us some time to come.

Mr. Brown's plea is for a Municipal Emergency Lodging House, to be established in every city, and to be regarded as one of the routine services to be extended to those who need it, and to be as little regarded as charity as roads and libraries are regarded as charities now.

He devotes quite a little space to explaining the workings of the Municipal Emergency Home,

and the facts he gives in regard to it clearly show that his own scheme is not in the least visionary.

As we have said, however, the actual scheme of Mr. Brown is a palliative, and the value of his book is not measured by the possible successful operation of his particular contribution to our palliative remedies. Rather the main value of the book lies in his graphic and transparently uncolored and unexaggerated pictures of the situation of the homeless. Often he quotes long conversations with these men and boys—conversations, not as they would develop between these people and an inquiring superior, but as they developed between man and man of the lower world—for Mr. Brown went into the experiment so thoroughly that he was never suspected by his comrades of the road.

If any one wishes to know why even hoppers in California have been driven into a strike which was followed by murder trials (of strikers, of course, not the deputy sheriffs who shot them), he should read this book. If he wonders why the unemployed are so unattractive in appearance and so "ungrateful" when charity does provide for them—in a slight degree—he should again read this book.

Written, not with the sophistication of the professional sociologist, but from the heart of a man who has gone out among his fellows to feel their miseries and to alleviate them, it will appeal most strongly to men of good will in whatever social camp they are fighting.

LLEWELLYN JONES.

BOOKS RECEIVED

—Ethics of Evolution. By John Scott. Published by the Author, 28 N. Meigs st., Dayton, Ohio. 1914.

—Why Is the Dollar Shrinking? By Irving Fisher. Published by the Macmillan Co., New York. 1914. Price, \$1.25 net.

—Sunlight and Shadow. By Louise W. Kneeland. Published by Sherman, French & Co., Boston. 1914. Price, \$1.00 net.

—The Gospel of Jesus and The Problems of Democracy. By Henry C. Vedder. Published by the Macmillan Co., New York. 1914. Price, \$1.50 net.

—Insurance Report of the Insurance Superintendent of the State of Illinois. By Rufus M. Potts. Part I, Fire, Marine and Inland Insurance. Published by State Journal Co., Springfield, Ill. 1914.

PAMPHLETS

Labor Laws of the United States.

A compilation of labor laws of the United States with notes regarding court decisions has been issued by the federal Department of Labor. It contains