

BOOKS

MEMORIES OF WILLIAM T. STEAD

My Father: Personal and Spiritual Reminiscences.
By Estelle W. Stead. Published by George H. Doran Co., New York. 1913. Price, \$2.50 net.

In her foreword Miss Stead explains that she has aimed only at showing the beginnings of some of her father's activities which relate largely to human service in many important directions. But she gives an extremely interesting story of a life actuated by the highest motives and the purest devotion in all philanthropic and educative work undertaken and pursued with characteristic zeal and fearlessness.

No more unique figure has appeared in private and public life than this man, who dwelt in two worlds and strove to change the discords of one into the harmonies of the other. The materialist may scoff at the visions and premonitions of the idealist, but if they lead to noble endeavor and splendid accomplishment who shall assail them?

From his youth the record of Mr. Stead is one of pure service to humanity at large with no taint of self-seeking. In his crusade against legalized vice in the city of London, he suffered arrest, conviction and imprisonment as a criminal, in a spirit worthy of the Master he served. As he said in a Christmas letter to his family during his incarceration, "If any of you imagine that I, being a prisoner, am needing consolation and that you ought to address me in accents of crape—don't!"

His soul was fired with a zeal of helpfulness that made him impatient with the time-serving Christianity that moves not a finger to lift the grievous burdens bound on the shoulders of men. "I think," he adds, "Christ must be mortal sick and a little mad at the way people who call themselves by His name and go bowing and scraping and singing to a dead idol which they call Christ, and all the while never say a word or give a sixpence, or shed a tear or take a single step toward those whom Christ left us to take care of."

No more fearless exponent of evil in high places, no more vigorous worker for the establishment of moral law and order in civic and national governments ever appealed by voice and pen to the conscience and power of men. Both the *Pall Mall Gazette* and *The Review of Reviews*, under Stead's guiding hand, were strong champions of needed reforms, world-wide in their bearing.

The "Peace Crusade," in which he took a leading part, was never more strenuously pressed by an advocate who missed no opportunity to urge upon rulers and nations the wisdom of peaceful arbitration. His conferences with sovereigns and councils with eminent men might make in them-

selves a volume of peculiar interest to those who are seeking to abolish the horrors of war.

In fuller biographies, which will doubtless follow this loving tribute to the memory of William T. Stead, we may look for a more complete record of his public work. But the present volume, written by one who knew and shared the inmost life of the subject, has a distinct interest and charm for those who have been comforted by a faith in the close relation existing between the worlds of cause and effect. Whether or not the evidences which were sought were as indisputably established as the patrons of "Julia's Bureau" believed, it is clear that only the purest instructions of love and duty came from the invisible source, whatever its claim and however criticized and condemned. In such matters the rational human faculty approves or denies, though the soul that went out on the Titanic returns to say, "All that I told you is true."

A. L. M.



WAGES AND STANDARDS OF LIVING.

Financing the Wage-Earner's Family. By Scott Nearing. Published by B. W. Huebsch, New York. 1913. Price, \$1.25 net.

It is not necessary for the average wage-earner to read a book to find out how little he can do with his income. But there are people in better circumstances who do need instruction as to the painful struggle that is going on around them. On some of these, emotional appeals would be wasted; but if they could be induced to give attentive consideration to a calm, dispassionate statement of facts their interest and sympathy would be aroused.

Such a statement of facts is to be found in Dr. Nearing's book. He finds that "among the wage-earners engaged in American industry not one in ten has an income of \$1,000 or over, while fully half fall below \$600." He shows what \$600 means in food, clothing and shelter; how many meals and what kind of meals and how they compare with prison meals; what specific articles of clothing and what kind of clothing; and what kind of living accommodations. Dr. Nearing is not talking of applicants for charity who plead that they can find no work, but of people who have work and who do work every day the mill or factory is running. There is no rhetoric in the book and it is all the more effective on that account. The man is not to be envied to whom the facts and figures make no appeal.

"Available data," says Dr. Nearing, "indicate that a man, wife and three children under fourteen cannot maintain a fair standard of living in the industrial towns of Eastern United States on an amount less than \$700 a year in the Southern and \$750 a year in the Northern States. In

the large cities where rents are higher this must be increased by at least \$100."

Advocates of the minimum wage movement will find in this book ample material to support the contention that wages are too low. But they will also, perhaps, find food for thought as to the possibilities of their remedy.

WILLIAM E. MCKENNA.

PERIODICALS

Chicago Schools Under Mrs. Young.

George H. Mead in *The Survey* (New York) of January 10 writes on the recent school crisis in Chicago. Mrs. Young is, in Professor Mead's opinion—and few men, if any, know her work and the Chicago school system more thoroughly—"one of Chicago's greatest and most competent servants." His brief statement of what Mrs. Young's superintendency has meant to education in Chicago will be enlightening to non-Chicagoans who, from certain more or less recent Chicago newspaper articles, may very reasonably have concluded that this city is an educational laggard in the modern school world:

During Mrs. Young's superintendency the Chicago public schools have faced about and come into active touch with the growing community at the most important points at which the schools and the community should directly co-operate. The limitation of the school funds in Chicago forbids expensive and wide-reaching changes; yet the technical high schools have not only perfected their technical work, but have enormously widened their vocational field. They have taken classes of retarded children of the sixth, seventh and eighth elementary grades, and held them in school beyond the compulsory period by the attractiveness of the school work. In sixteen or eighteen elementary schools industrial courses in the upper grades, in which only half the time is given to academic subjects, have been introduced with striking results, both in awakening backward pupils, and in holding children in school beyond the fourteen-year period, and even in passing them on to the high schools. Carpenters, masons, and electrical apprentices have regular instruction in the technical high schools, not only in academic subjects, but also in their own callings. The night schools have developed both in giving pupils who had not graduated from the elementary school an opportunity to complete their course, but also in giving older children and adults the sort of instruction they need to meet their immediate concrete problems. This year there have been opened three night high schools. The two-year vocational courses in the high schools have improved, especially the commercial training. This was an improvement needed not only for the effectiveness of school training in this department, but especially important in a city where so vast a force of clerical employes is found. The school board has allowed the vocational guidance work already commenced, largely through the activity of women's clubs, to be carried on through the superintendent's office, and Mrs. Young has asked for an appropriation of ten thousand dollars for pushing this work next year. . . . In the meantime, continued work in reform and reconstruction of the so-called academic subjects has been going on through the work of effective committees of teachers and principals throughout the system. . . . It is not too much to say that the superintendent of schools has proved herself an educational statesman. Nor can we believe that if the sober intelligence of the city were allowed to express itself it

would ever permit her to lay down her task while she continues to have the vigor and health which the office demands.

A. L. G.



Electoral Reform.

The progress of Direct Legislation during the last three months of 1913 is recorded by States in the January number of *Equity* (Philadelphia), which prints also an unusually clear explanation of a Proportional Representation election, and gives, too, some samples of "Gateway" Amendments other than La Follette's.

A. L. G.



Where Industries Are Not Taxed.

John T. McRoy in *Harper's Weekly* (New York) of January 24 writes briefly on Singletax in Canada, concluding as follows: "The situation almost tempts one to say that the beneficence of exemption of industry has been proved. Perhaps its success may not be so marked in older and more staid communities, but no one can any longer afford to neglect a proposition that has beyond all question 'made good' in the region where it has been tried. No party and no body of men in Canada has agitated for a return to the old system."

A. L. G.



Houston Enterprise Again.

The second number of *The Houston Municipal Journal*, January 5, is full of the Houston System of taxation and examples of its direct results. The cover picture is the big hotel "that Houston's plan made possible," another illustration being a photograph of J. J. Pastoriza's famous log cabin with its Singletax signboard.

A. L. G.



In Praise of the Department of Agriculture.

"What Uncle Sam Will Do for You," in the January number of *Suburban Life* (Suburban Press, Harrisburg, Pa.), is the first of a series of articles by Elna H. Wharton about the activities of the United States Department of Agriculture, and about just concretely how this great service bureau may be used to solve the everyday home-keeping problems of the town and city dweller as well as of the farmer.

A. L. G.



The story is told of a former member of the Jersey City Board of Education, who, upon a visit to one of the schools, took a reader from the teacher's hand, and addressed the nearest little girl.

"My dear, can you spell 'eggpit'?" he said.

The little girl didn't recognize the word, but was willing to take a chance, so she said:

"E-g-g-p-i-t."

"Erroneous—can anybody else spell it?" the inquisitor asked, looking over the room.

Other children tried. Some spelled it with one g; others with two t's. Still wrong. The member of the board had his big finger on the word, and knew. He turned to the teacher:

"Of course, ma'am, you know how to spell it?"

The teacher blushed and confessed that, while she