

THE GARDEN CITY: A STUDY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODERN TOWN. By C. B. Purdom. 330 pages, with 4 colored pictures and 140 other illustrations. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company.

It is the English garden city of Letchworth that Mr. Purdom celebrates in this beautiful volume, which commemorates the tenth anniversary of the founding of that famous community. "Unlike almost all modern towns in England and abroad, the garden city was not founded by some accident or for those merely commercial reasons peculiar to this age. It was founded like the old towns were founded—consciously, purposely, and for definite ends. It was designed with the object . . . of making town life tolerable to people who have come to hate it not merely as William Morris hated it because of its ugliness and grime, but because it is a menace to the vitality of the race. . . . I have tried to set down something of the romance that belongs to what may be regarded as an adventurous endeavor to create a new thing in English life."

So runs the preface to a comprehensive setting forth of what may be termed a humanitarian business enterprise that has notably succeeded. On 4,500 acres, seven times as large an area as the old walled-in city of London, that ten years ago had only a rural population, now live and work something over 8,000 people, in nearly 1,800 buildings, of an estimated value toward \$3,000,000.

There is cooperative housekeeping, and in Letchworth women vote as well as work, wherefore no liquor is sold. A dozen or more industries flourish amid garden surroundings, and these workers live, not merely exist, in surroundings that seem too good to be true, for "fogs, smoke, slums, crowded areas and bad houses are not found here."

But it is not the function of the reviewer to tell what Letchworth is. The book does that, admirably, comprehensively, and beautifully; for the book itself was

made in the garden city, where the Temple press of J. M. Dent & Sons does its great work. A special face of type, a page of perfect format, a singularly readable black impression, and illustrations of much excellence, go to make up a book that is a pleasure to read, even aside from its great civic value.

Those interested in a successful attempt to fight the evils of city life by making "the country" attractive, wholesome and comfortable to live in cannot do better than to get and read this inspiring volume.

J. HORACE McFARLAND.

Harrisburg.



VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT. By Parris T. Farwell, chairman of the Village Improvement Committee of the Massachusetts Civic League. 362 pages, 20 illustrations. New York: Sturgis & Walton Company. \$1.00 net.

The saying, "God made the country, but man made the town," was intended to apply primarily to the city. We are all accustomed to the old idea that most ills of the city could be cured by removal to that vague land, "the country." Latterly, it has come to be known that the slight congestions of the country population which we call villages have, for the most part, a large share of the disadvantages of the city and of the country, and precious little of the advantages of either. Often with the merest rudiments of efficient government, with little civic spirit, scant resources, no provisions for beneficial recreation and a very low ideal—or no ideal—of life, the small community has sometimes provided us with definitely nasty slums, with sordid immorality, with a dull and dreary monotony of life that has made the city seem like heaven in comparison.

But better things have arisen. The first definite village improvement organization is credited to Stockbridge, Massachusetts, in 1853, and of its work Mr. Farwell tells in the excellent book of which the title heads this item.

"Village Improvement" is at once a library of record in small community bet-

terment, and a mint of definite suggestion as to what may be practicably undertaken. Mr. Farwell's twenty-five years of experience in work in small country towns has made him thoroughly acquainted with the problems to be met. Some of the chapter titles may be cited as indicating the breadth of the work: The value of natural beauty; a typical village improvement society; the home and its surroundings; the committee on trees and forestry; country roads and village streets and their furnishings; the country church and village improvement.

There are also chapters on parks, health, law and order, educational work, the public school, clubs, and play, and the appendix gives certain model constitutions, etc.

The work is to be commended as needed, definite, practical and logical.

J. HORACE MCFARLAND.



THE AMERICAN YEAR BOOK: A RECORD OF EVENTS AND PROGRESS IN 1913. Edited by Francis G. Wickware, under the direction of a supervisory board representing national learned societies. New York: D. Appleton & Company. 1914. \$3.00.

This is the fourth issue of the American Year Book and is more complete and comprehensive than any of its predecessors. In other words, the various contributors as well as the editor are learning by experience how best to set forth in concise and graphic form the year's progress in history, politics, science and industry. While there may be those who prefer the alphabetical arrangement of material, nevertheless the topical arrangement has very considerable advantages. As in former volumes the department of municipal government is edited by the secretary of the National Municipal League. It deals with movements in municipal home rule, commission government, efficiency and research, municipal organizations, municipal accounting, housing, vice investigations and the social evil, police, graft, nuisances, and is concluded by a concise bibliography.

OFFICIAL RECORD OF THE FIRST AMERICAN NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION CONVENTION. Held at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, October 13-18, 1913. Compiled by Powell Evans, Chairman Philadelphia Fire Prevention Commission, Philadelphia, Pa. Paper, 6 x 9 inches; pages 541; illustrated.

Many of the broad phases of fire prevention were systematically considered at this convention and after careful deliberation short resolutions were drawn summarizing the consensus of opinion on the various topics. Among the fifteen set topics were such subjects as location, zones of danger, building construction, building codes, protection, education, insurance. The papers, discussions and resolutions under each topic are here printed. Considerable additional information is given in ten appendixes. The volume is well worth the modest price placed upon it and deserves wide circulation.



ST. LOUIS: A CIVIC MASQUE. By Percy MacKaye. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Page & Company. \$1.00 net.

This masque, in the words of the preface, is a contribution "to a distinctive art-form of the civic theatre, in its large scale aspects," as outlined in the author's recent volume.¹ Aside from any question of its literary merit, it is a distinct and interesting contribution to the dramatic teaching of civic ideals. Performed in St. Louis in June in connection with the civic pageant² it is a notable event in civic self-expression, and will undoubtedly be helpful in initiating a new era in civic self-expression, for it is designed primarily as a spectacle. It concludes with the cities banded together by love for the achievement of great ideals.

The stage directions and appended notes make of the volume a substantial contribution to civic uplift and pageantry.

¹ See NATIONAL MUNICIPAL REVIEW, Vol. III, page, 181.

² See NATIONAL MUNICIPAL REVIEW, Vol. III, page 401.