

and woman, who on the night of the flood, descending from a Pike's Peak expedition, watch the valley where Colorado Springs is located, fill up with an ocean. The lights go out and the frightened birds from hundreds of miles fill the air above them with bird screams of terror at a sight which neither instinct nor experience have prepared them for. The world is blotted out, so the woman calls the man Adam and he calls her Robin. The arrival of the Pacific ocean has warmed up the climate of Pike's Peak so that three crops of strawberries ripen on the slopes every year. The man and woman find a miner's cabin, furnished with the necessary furniture and stocked with a few groceries and books. There are cows, horses and chickens on the mountain and the former householder's dogs and cats welcome the new occupants. The man is young. He is an orator and has plans of making the world better by making speeches to it. When the flood drowns his audience it sweeps over his career. The woman is a grand-opera first soprano, tired of the world, tied to a brutal husband and in love with the orator. After the shock of watching the world drown, she is glad of their isolation. It is a good riddance so far as the husband is concerned. She is a good house-keeper and the little miner's cabin soon shines with neatness. And after a year's time the orator falls in love with her.

Thoreau discovered that it was necessary to work but six weeks out of the year in order to raise enough grain and vegetables to keep him. After planting three acres with corn and wheat which raised about thirty bushels to the acre Adam computed that if they ate six pounds a day it would require seven years to consume their first harvest. To plant and harvest an acre of corn and an acre of wheat a year could not keep them busy. The toilsome life of a farmer who plants to sell rather than to consume might therefore be alleviated by a change of system. "Hertzka an eminent Austrian sociologist has figured out that if five million men should work a little less than an hour and three-quarters a day they could produce all the necessities of life for the twenty-two million people of Austria. By working two hours and twelve minutes daily for two months besides, they could have all the luxuries also. And that not for a few, not for the court and the nobility only, but for all. There could have been music and pictures and books and theatres, and sufficient food and clothing." This is the object of the story, this and the duty of the two survivors to themselves and to posterity which they finally decided they have not a right to deny. It is interesting as all well-told Robinson Crusoe and love stories are. But the author, like the "Ancient Mariner" has a lesson to teach. He has views of how the people of the world should conduct their affairs. He deprecates their wickedness and if they should all be drowned again save one pair, consisting of an absolutely beautiful and flawless man and a healthy and only less beautiful woman who is also very high minded, energetic and forehanded, he believes that they would manage their household and love affairs as he has related.

There is so much discussion about the way the people of the world manage their affairs. Every man is anxious to express his opinion upon the subject. Those who are not consulted get themselves interviewed. Nobody seems to approve of the way things are going. But there is in the development of life and civilization a seed or a germ which ripens in its

own way. It is of slow germination and of slower bloom. All the efforts made to change it into a flower of another sort are ineffectual and only increase the confusion. If all the people in the world were drowned except one perfect pair, like these, some mistakes might be corrected, some systems reformed, but it is likely that in a few hundred years the persistent seed would blossom into the same institutions about which there is such a babbling now. In remoulding the affairs of men nearer to his heart's desire, Mr. Meredith was right to drown all but one perfect pair. It is so difficult to reform a world full of men and women who insist that their own ideas of reform are best.

City Improvement.

The Pennsylvania railroad has experimented successfully in reducing the dust on its road bed by an occasional sprinkling with crude oil. In parts of Pennsylvania and Southern California the public roads have been subjected to a similar treatment with equal success; the same method has also been employed in several California cities to take the place of water sprinkling. A hard, rain-proof coat is formed on the surface of either dirt or macadamized roads. It is noiseless, elastic to the feet of horses, and is especially valuable as a dust preventive. For bicycle paths this coating is nearly as satisfactory as asphalt, and the cost is very small. Machines for mixing and sprinkling are used, and not more than three applications a year are necessary to keep a well traveled road in good condition. The experiment might be tried with advantage on our own city streets. If houses, shrubbery, trees and streets could be kept free of dust at trifling cost, the citizens would feel that money spent for this purpose was indeed well expended.

The Web of Life.

The despair of youth is hopeless. Even men who are old enough to write books and sustain the dignity of a professor in a university sometimes catch these children's diseases and they are always more severe than in infancy. Mr. Herrick, the author of "The Web of Life," and of "The Man who Wins," is a young man with a smooth, round face, and a placid expression. But he can find tragedy in the cheerfulest seeming circumstances. He has a young man's love for sorrow, for desperate plights and for unmitigated gloom. He enjoys his dreary tales as much as a worldly widow her weeds which she knows are the most correct in cut and texture and represent as perfectly as mere crepe and dead-black wool can, an absolutely crushed and broken woman. Mr. Herrick's gloom is not enlivened by any light. The widow carries a handkerchief, the center of which is white. But Mr. Herrick draws the line more sternly. In "The Web of Life" there is no humour. There is even no humorous aspect. Nevertheless the book is very interesting, though his hero is like Mr. Herrick himself, very much afraid of happiness and sure that it is a sin. He succeeds, like most reformers, in making a mess of his own life, in nearly breaking the heart of one woman and of driving his wife into Lake Michigan. Though Mr. Herrick's reasoning is false or at least inconclusive and though he relates his tragedy with evident relish and with the same aloofness and indifference that a magic lantern "artist" throws pictures on a screen, he is evidently in earnest about his disapproval of the way the Chicago rich live. Mr.

Herrick really cares nothing for his noble, single hearted, simple-minded Alves or for his honest, earnest, priggish young doctor. Like all the rest of the reformers, Mr. Herrick cares less for literary art than to have his say about how the world is going to the dogs and that he for one knows a better way to live and can show two or three puppets living his way.

Rue with a Difference.

An exhaustive exposition of the sin of foolishness and the sufferings the fool's foolishness entails upon his family has never been written. Crimes are expiated on the scaffold, but a fool's mistakes and his officious meddling with other's affairs means misery to every one in his entourage but himself. He dies at last in his bed with roses piled about him and his family actually weeping for him while other and worse men, but who have known enough not to rock a boat or explode unloaded guns in a friend's face, die out on the world unlamented. The family of a real fool never finds out that the head of it is a fool. They think poor Pa is a suffering, benevolent gentleman whose good intentions towards his friends are frustrated by unavoidable accidents, for which he is in no wise to blame.

There is such a gentleman in "Rue with a Difference." He is a clergyman and lives beyond his means. When his wife remonstrates with him he assumes the hereditary attitude and tone of an insulted English husband and informs her, as the head of the house that he knows his own affairs best. And next Sunday he preaches a sermon intended especially to awaken his wife's remorse. After a while he dies and leaves his children and widow in want and his daughter engaged to a man whom she does not love but recommended by her father with his usual lack of insight. The widow's regrets are therefore mitigated. She loved her husband, but with a difference. She was one of the quiet analytic women who recognize a fool even if he happen to belong in the family. Rose Nouchette Cary is a prolific writer of the sentimental school. She is a cut above Rhoda Broughton, but she composes with her unexampled skill and volubility. I think she belongs with Mrs. Van Renselaer Cruger and other very highly placed social leaders who are careful not to be intimate with even derogatory literary types.

La Lucha.

A Cuban-American paper, printed in Havana, it looks more like a French newspaper than like one printed on this side of the Atlantic. The paper on which it is printed is very coarse and a greenish white. It has two title pages, both heavily leaded. The type is large and plain, I think hand-set. The outside title page is set in English, the remaining five pages in Spanish. The third page is also a title-page but the scanty telegraphic news in English does not seem to be duplicated in Spanish. The eight columns are wider by two ems than the ordinary thirteen em columns, and the column itself is twenty-seven inches long. La Lucha is therefore both wider and longer than the ordinary American newspaper.

It is a prosperous paper. Of the six pages three are covered with small advertisements. The Cuban women are not particularly interested in dress-reform. Lectures, on the evil effects of corsets, if they have ever heard them, have not impressed them. The advertisements of corsets are numerous. The cuts accompanying them show a corset such as has not

been worn in America for at least fifty years. The measurement across the chest is three times the width of the waist. There are many advertisements of perfumery, but not one of soap. There are other interesting items about the paper even to a foreigner who does not read Spanish. The Cuban doctors seem to have no prejudice against running a card, stating their address and calling as there are about thirty such professional cards on one page. There are the usual number of patent medicine advertisements, but there are evidently new cures in Cuba. One called estomacalina, cures according to the advertisement, las dispepsias estomacales, las dispepsias intestinales, la disenteria, la gastritis, and los vertigos y vomitos. Although in a strange tongue the list is familiar enough. Chocolates and liquidas, unguents and want advertisements complete the list. When one knows what a people consumes a very good beginning of acquaintance has been accomplished.

A Taxpayer's View.

With two years of large city expenditure in prospect the composition of the council is somewhat discouraging. Socialist and populist brethren complain continually about the influence of rich men in politics. A few more well-to-do citizens in the council would be greatly appreciated by the taxpayers of Lincoln. It is so much easier to spend other people's money than one's own. The office-holding class are continually trying to raise salaries, against the protest of the taxpayers to whose contributions to the general fund the office-holders contribute very little. It is proposed to raise the salary of the captain of police of the city clerk and of other city officials. If any city official can make more money by his own exertions than he now receives from the city, he is at liberty to resign and begin to make it. Most of the city officials serve two terms or as many as they can be elected to. Lincoln is in debt and is paying her present force of clerks, treasurers, deputies etc just as high salaries as the assessment permits. There are plenty of competent men willing to perform the same labor for these salaries. Then why should Lincoln be forced to pay more than the market price? Those who took pains to get nominated and elected to positions were fully aware of the salaries attached to the various positions when they exerted themselves to attain them. Now that they are more or less creditably fulfilling their duties, it is taking an unfair advantage of the city from a position of vantage to work a salary-raising ordinance through the council. The mayor can be depended on to veto such an ordinance, but it seems as though the council too should be on the side of the city. The attempt of Councilmen Lyman, Malone and Pentzer to make up the important committees without consulting the Mayor and to make chairmen of councilmen who were the props of the Graham administration, was frustrated. But the revolt of this element against the mayor is an indication of their designs on the city.

Hawaiian Agriculture.

San Francisco now furnishes most of the vegetables for Hawaii, whose climate and soil ought to make it the garden spot of the world. Uncle Sam has decided that this is poor economy, and an experiment farm of 200 acres, running from the coast to the top of a mountain, will soon be established by the Department of Agriculture. The first efforts of this department will be directed to teaching the poor how to raise vegetables, and to care for poultry, pigs and cows.