

hart and Bailey vs. Drexel Furniture Company is now immaterial. The question is not a point of law, but a policy of action. Only through a constitutional amendment can the nation's children be effectively protected.

Apart from the snortings of the modern Bumbles, who are still horrified that Oliver Twist dares to ask for more porridge, there are two arguments against the enactment by the states of the amendment which Congress has passed. The first, that national action will dull state initiative, through inhibition of state action, defeats the end for which it was framed, is answered, as Mr. Fuller shows, by our experience in the administration of the congressional child labor laws before they were declared unconstitutional. The organizations and individuals prominent in the field of child welfare are practically united in agreeing that federal action is urgently needed, and will be effective. Moreover, the proposed amendment does not prohibit state action, but only enables Congress to fix minimum standards, which the States are at entire liberty to raise.

The second objection is not directed to the problem of child labor, but to a theory of government. Centralization, it is cried, has gone far enough—some power must be reserved to the state, and what power is more a matter of state concern than the regulation of the children within its borders? It may be answered that an amendment to give Congress power to do virtually what four Justices of the Supreme Court thought it had power to do without an amendment can not be so radical a change in our form of government. The real answer, however, is put by Mr. Fuller in the form of a quotation from Elihu Root: "It is useless for the advocates of state's rights to inveigh against the supremacy of the constitutional laws of the United States, or against the extension of national authority in the fields of necessary control, where the states themselves fail in the performance of their duty."

If it is true that some of the states are beginning more fully to realize that they have failed in the performance of their duty, it is none the less true that the realization is too slow and too partial to warrant further jeopardizing of the nation's manhood. It is infinitely more important to allow children an opportunity to develop into maturity equipped physically and mentally to meet the struggles of modern life than it is to give the states further time in which to appreciate the evils and injustice which so many of them tolerate. The country is beginning to perceive that the welfare of its children is as much a matter of national concern as its battleships and armies.

REUBEN OPPENHEIMER.

Marbacka

Marbacka, by Selma Lagerlöf. New York: Doubleday, Page and Company. \$2.50.

SELMA LAGERLOF has made a sentimental journey into the regions of her childhood. In these sketches, thin, sweet, and inconsequent, she recollects and drops a tear for old people and things that have passed. She touches slight familiar milestones—summer games in the woods and stories in winter beside the fire, the wonderful bird of paradise that cured Selma's hip-disease, work-days and fête-days, ballads and pranks and fables of the Värmland. Briefly she assembles all the persons, real and legendary, who gathered at the homestead Marbacka

when Lieutenant Lagerlöf was master. It is a delicate Swedish variation on *The Old Oaken Bucket*. The book is an idyl pure and simple—too pure and simple to be quite interesting, if this were not a famous writer describing her early home. The lovely ardor that prompted her to write Gösta Berling has faded, and Marbacka is valuable chiefly because it shows the sources of that masterpiece. The background of Gösta Berling, sturdy country life colored with legend and sentiment, is to be found on the Lagerlöf farm. Literary critics will recognize in the impromptu orchestra that played at Marbacka the originals of the Ekeby pensioners. And they will see the model for Gösta himself in old Color-Sergeant von Wachenfeldt, "who comes driving down the rocky road, while the lone silver bell tinkles feebly and almost mournfully. In the days of his power and glory the sixty silver bells which hung from the harness and trappings jingled right merrily . . . He sits there in a mangy old fur coat and a still shabbier seal-skin cap. He wears thick lynx mittens to protect his gouty hands, but the distorted joints are noticeable even through the thick mittens. Nevertheless it is he—Wachenfeldt—he who has held so many beautiful women in his arms!"

ROSE LEE.

Education in the Making

Experimental Practice in the City and Country School, edited by Caroline Pratt, with a Record of Group Seven by Lulu E. Wright. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company.

WHAT do children do in an "experimental" school? Are they just wandering about at will "being happy" as one critic complained, are they wasting precious time on the latest psychological fad, are they—last horror of all—being experimented on?

Even visitors who have taken the pains to spend a morning or more in one of these newer schools have not been very sure what was going on. To be sure, there were certain obvious changes from the traditional school—disciplinary rows and cumbersome desks have disappeared, "order" as usually defined, is non-existent, children instead are moving freely about, either individually or in small groups, tremendously absorbed in an amazing variety of materials: blocks, sand, paint, crayons, clay, lumber, boats, printing presses, typewriters, science apparatus, stage sets, weaving materials, sewing machines, electrical appliances, tom-toms, tambourines, orchestra bells—and even books. Something different indeed is happening to these children, but just what is hard to determine. Teachers or directors, when pressed for explanation, too often turn on a flood of jargonated oratory which is a great deal more confusing than enlightening.

But here at last is an informing and thought-provoking exposition of what goes on in an experimental school by a pioneer in the movement, whose work for ten years has been claiming the attention of intelligent educators everywhere. The book contains not only Miss Pratt's admirable summary of the principles underlying her work, but also a record, kept month by month for an entire year, of a class of seven-year-old children, by their teacher, Miss Wright. Both record and philosophic ar-

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AGNES DE LIMA.

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