

speech—a faithful study and convincing picture of American politics. What has “the woman” to do with it? No one who sees the performance will need to have that explained. Politics is the theme, the whole theme of the play; but politics serves as the background for a unique domestic plot which catches and satisfies the interest of the audience. One of the many artistic touches is the incidental reduction to absurdity, a pathetic absurdity in this case, of the vain masculine notion that politics involves complications which “a woman can’t understand.” Great power, great greed, great graft, a great game with no toleration of “pikers” or “mollycoddles,” a great catastrophe, great humiliations, great loyalty to purpose (bad purpose and good), are skilfully worked out in this play and acted out in its performance. An intensely interesting story impressively told, it has a political moral, a complexity of political morals, to which no one points on the stage but which the audience feels. Nor will intelligent auditors from the “average” class of citizenship fail to see their own not altogether flattering image as faithfully reflected as are the images of powerful politicians and highly trained lawyers.

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Is Murder Murder?

From Associated Press reports of the 23rd from Donaldsville, Ga., it appears that—

Town Marshal C. A. Roberts was shot and killed this afternoon by John Warren, a Negro, who was captured shortly and lynched by a mob that had followed the officer who went to arrest Warren.

The killing of the town marshal may or may not have been murder, but what about the killing of the Negro? Are there any circumstances in which a murder is not a murder if it is a lynching?

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“Grapenuts.”

What are “Grapenuts”? Apparently they are as food what “Muline” is as eye lotion—a simple and innocuous product which anybody can make at trifling expense but which big advertisers alone can sell for prodigious prices. A distinguished medical professor describes the first as a solution of borax and water sold at a profit of nearly 300 thousand per cent, and an admirer of Charles W. Post (the Labor baiter) boasts of the other as a pennyworth of brown-bread crumbs transformed by a “business genius” into many a pennyworth of miraculously nutritious food. We are informed that one of the joys of domesticity is the production of “grapenuts” at home. Why any one should bother about it as long as there are livelier household games we are sure we don’t know, but

it is said to be simple and as a curious experiment it may be worth while. To wit: Buy one loaf of Boston brown-bread; cut it into thin slices; put the slices into a warm oven to dry and harden; crush to crumbs with a common kitchen roller; serve to suit—being careful, however, not to call the dish “grapenuts,” which seems to constitute the miraculous quality of the product as you buy it at the store ready-crumbed and boxed. There is said to be a prize in waiting for anyone who can tell the difference between the store crumbs and the home crumbs without the aid of the name.

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Bad Theater Business.

Theater managers complain of bad business and wonder why it is bad. There are several reasons, any one of which is so near at hand that it would bite these managers if it were a snake. First, foremost and all-enveloping is the fact that business generally is bad. We are in the midst of a period of hard times, which began in 1907* and will continue until a general smash knocks the bottom out of speculative investments. Everybody really knows this. Each one realizes that the times are hard for himself; but the “boosters” make him believe that he is unlucky alone. Under these circumstances theater business would be poor in spite of everything the managers could do. But theater business is worse than it need be for reasons for which the managers themselves are responsible. Theater prices are too high for the general public. Only a small class can afford the luxury, and these are caught only by special plays or famous actors. Add to all those considerations the fact, that in consequence of collusion between managers and ticket brokers many folks find the prices for good seats higher than they are advertised, and the further fact that the fraud upon theater patrons involved in this arrangement is resented, and you have a sufficient explanation of bad business for theaters. No doubt the invasion of moving picture shows plays a part, but not much of a one. While they serve as a sort of substitute for theaters, they can hardly be prejudicial to theaters, but rather the reverse, except in so far as high prices at theaters may make picture shows tolerable by contrast.

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JUST TAXATION.

Like the poor—who are always with us—so is the question of taxation; and in the minds of many the injustice of the latter is in a great measure responsible for the condition of the former.

*See The Public for January 11, 1908, page 963.

That the burden invariably falls on those least able to bear it, is evidenced by the fact that nearly all our present methods of taxation are so adjusted as to make it possible for the first payer to shift the ultimate payment to some less fortunate individual, or evade it altogether.

The tariff tax is doubly iniquitous in that it enables domestic manufacturers to mulct the American people on all their output in an amount equal to the tax on imported articles, without any return to the government; while the American importers add the tax to the cost of their goods and charge it up to the wholesaler, who, in turn shifts it to the retailer with a percentage of profit on the amount of the tax as well as on the original price of the goods, the retailer in his turn duplicating this action of the wholesaler, so that the ultimate consumer foots the total bill.

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There can be only two reasons for collecting taxes: First, in order that governmental or social services may be properly administered; and, second, that proper protection may be afforded to life and property through governmental or social agencies. For these two purposes, the disciples of Henry George contend that the social or communal values created by society as a whole would be ample, if they were converted to public uses. Social services should be paid for—or in other words, taxes should be raised—from socially created wealth. In this way this wealth would be returned to society. Taxes would thereby be put where they belong.

It has been conservatively estimated that it would not take 75 per cent of the socially created increase in the value of land to pay the present taxes of the country. The taking of these social values for governmental purposes would relieve industry from all the burdens from which it is now suffering. It would also compel speculative owners of vacant land to put it to its best use, and thus throw open opportunities for employment—self-employment, hired-man employment or co-operative employment, as they wished—to countless thousands who are at present deprived of the chance to earn an honest livelihood. A premium would be placed upon industry instead of idleness, by making it more profitable to use the earth than to speculate in it; and not a single individual would be deprived of a dollar of his own creation.

LOUIS NASH.

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Truth is as impossible to be soiled by any outward touch as the sunbeam.—Milton.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

PUBLIC UTILITIES IN GLASGOW.

GLASGOW'S POPULATION IS SHRINKING.

An Article from the Denver Times, as reprinted in the Morning Press of Santa Barbara, Cal., for May 18, 1911.

Glasgow is the largest city in Scotland and the second largest city in Great Britain. Its activities in municipal ownership exceed those of even the cities of Australia and New Zealand. It owns and operates the street car system. It owns and operates the water system. It has more than six thousand acres of public parks; a proportion three times greater than that of New York. It has free hospitals; a free university; free public bath houses; free laundries; municipal lodging houses and municipal gas supply. For a time the city attempted to own and operate its telephone system, but the loss on that experiment was so great that it had to be abandoned. The city also undertakes to raze unfit tenement houses and build in their place new ones, which it rents direct. And, having indulged itself in all these collective enterprises, Glasgow is now confronted by the fact that alone of all the cities of Great Britain its population is declining, and declining at a momentarily rapid rate. In the last decade the shrinkage has been considerable; there seems to be evidence that the loss is continuing; and the conclusion is being reached that the socialization of public utilities and the intervention of the municipality in fields of work that belong properly to private enterprise are responsible for the condition.

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An Answer from Glasgow.

Glasgow.

Glasgow citizens are accustomed to receive from abroad wondrous tales of the result of their activities in municipal development. A year or two ago we were told by some admirers in the United States that the measure of success which had attended our efforts to secure for the municipality itself the right to conduct public services of a monopolistic character was attested by the fact that the resulting "profits" admitted of all taxation in Glasgow being abolished. The "fact" was not a fact, and in reality the statement failed to appreciate the governing principle of the municipal public services of Glasgow.

Each money-earning department—water, gas, tramway, electric supply, etc.—is called upon to furnish the best and most efficient service of which it is capable at the lowest possible charge to the citizens. If the annual budget shows that a substantial balance of revenue is likely to remain after all proper provisions are made, assuming that the charges for services of the previous year are continued, the practice uniformly followed has been to make a reduction in the charge. In this respect the Corporation* of Glasgow have not followed the practice of some English corporations who utilize these surplus revenues (sometimes erroneously described as "profits"—a word incorrectly applied to

*Wherever the word "corporation" appears in this letter, it means municipality. In Great Britain the word "company" is used to express what is usually meant in the United States by the word "corporation."—Editors of The Public.