

as a dumping room for sweepings, old papers, rags, and broken furniture, much as is now done with vacant lots. He would be thought crazy or foolish, and told that some one else would pay full rent who had use for it, and would not make it a garbage can and fire trap, to menace the lives and property of all in the building; and further, that the rent was needed to help defray the expenses of the building and its accommodations.

If "municipal government is business," as we so often hear, why don't we follow the example of this business man and manage our cities in the same way—by putting a rental value on all land spaces (lots) and taxing them only, to pay the expenses of the city government, and for expenses of streets, sewers, water, light, street cars, etc.; and by exempting improvements, stocks of goods, personal property, etc., as the landlord does?

The expense of running street cars free would be met by the higher tax, or rental value of the lots benefited; and just so with the water mains, light, heat and telephone advantages. And our citizens would be saved time and annoyance by settling all these bills at one time, once a year, instead of having to go to the gas company every month, and stand in line for hours to get to your window, and the same at the water company's, and the electric and telephone company's, besides your visit to the county treasurer once or twice a year.

How it would simplify county business and reduce cost, if the assessor had only a map of the lots and lands to assess from, like the plan of the rooms in an office building. The assessor could be the county treasurer, too, as he would have all the year to make out tax receipts, these containing only one item to consider; and when once on the books there would be very little variation from year to year.

Why don't we do business in a business-like way when we have such a good example to follow as the hard-headed, conservative business man who is the proprietor of an office building?

Denver, Colo.

L. C. LAW.

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WOMAN'S RELATION TO PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

Louis F. Post, Member of the Chicago Charter Convention, in the Columns Controlled by the Women's Organizations of Chicago in the Chicago American of May 5, 1906.

Women have public as well as private duties. They cannot rid themselves of these if they would, and no good woman of intelligence would if she could. But public duties can be performed in only one of two ways: either by means of public persuasion and through civic action necessitating the ballot, or by private persuasion and through personal influence exerted in the irresponsible capacity of a non-voter.

Many disfranchised women try to perform their public duties in the latter of these two ways, and all women are urged to do so. Adversaries of woman suffrage urge it as the only way. Women are to solicit, with sweet smiles and engaging frowns, the votes of fathers, brothers, husbands, sons, friends, and dependents, and as mothers to

build up the state by molding the civic character of embryonic citizens.

But how can women fitly solicit the votes of voters, if unfit to vote themselves? Or if the mere vote would burden them unduly? Or if it be "infra dig." for them to vote?

And how can they efficiently mold civic character in the young, if denied other than academic opportunities for molding their own civic character?

The only dignified and effective way for women to perform their public duties is through the responsibility of the ballot. This is also the only way in which most women can qualify themselves to rear worthy citizens or to influence political opinion and action worthily and with propriety.

For as a rule it is only as they face the responsibility of considering and deciding public questions authoritatively that they can practically familiarize themselves with civic principles or become intelligent critics of civic policies and competent teachers of civic life for the young. This is not because they are women; it is because they are human.

So the question resolves itself into this:

Shall women participate at all in civic life and civic thought and the development of civic character and progress?

If the answer be negative, then let women hold their peace entirely on public matters; if it be affirmative, then invest them with the only known method of authoritative expression, which is the ballot.

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STATE AND MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP IN SWEDEN.

VII. CONCLUDING REMARKS.

For The Public.

In preceding issues the plain facts regarding state and municipal ownership in Sweden have been put forth. We have seen that government ownership is no recent experiment. We have seen that it can be conducted so as to prove a financial success. We have seen it extended to practically all the various public utilities which have a tendency to become improper private monopolies. We have seen how the government's services can be rendered for a very small compensation with no loss to the national or municipal treasury. In short, we have seen that state and municipal ownership has actually proven to be all that its advocates in this country claim for it.

There is no good reason why the success of a European country should turn to failure in this country. The defenders of private monopolies tell us that conditions here and in Europe are so different. Most of those who tell us so have very likely no clear idea of European conditions. All they know of Europe is either from the superficial impressions of a traveler, or from the columns of the encyclopedia. In fact, conditions in Europe and here are not so different after all. Human nature is pretty much the same everywhere, and what differences there are consist more in degree than in kind. Those who thus defend inequity often base their defense upon this alleged difference of conditions, and they particularly love to refer to the "free institutions of the United States," as if freedom were an obstacle to a

more satisfactory solution of the ownership of public utilities. As to the free institutions, let us not forget that Europe does not lack altogether the presence of true, genuine democracy. Let us not forget that Switzerland and Norway are European countries and that although those countries are small in size, power and population they teach a lesson in democracy to the world. The talk of the different conditions can stand no close criticism. We all know that there can be no fundamental difference, and the objection raised on this ground without specifying what these differences actually are, is really hardly worth mentioning at all, were it not for the fact that the expression "differences in conditions" has become a most universally believed phrase.

Then we have the objection by so-called patriots, who object on the ground that government ownership is not a purely American idea. To them nothing is worth while which cannot be traced back to an American origin. They will accept anything if it can be proven to be American, but reject everything which is not so. This statement may seem exaggerated, and it may be so in words, but truly the spirit indicated is no uncommon occurrence. Tariff, for instance, has been defended on the ground that it was an American idea. In fact, of course, tariff is as old as history. But the belief that it is American has given the system an increased prestige.

With government ownership would follow greater publicity of what are now commonly termed private affairs. This is claimed to be un-American. Americans, it is said, want to be permitted the freedom of secrecy of private affairs. Certainly! But what are their strictly private affairs? Can any matter, the publicity of which would be necessitated by the government ownership of what is properly public property, be considered as a private matter, entitled to considerations which private matters naturally have a right to claim?

We have a right to be proud of our country and our government, whether we are Americans by birth or by free choice. But this does not mean that we should reject any lesson given to us by the actual experience of any other nation. True patriotism should tend to make us eager to collect the best of the institutions of all nations, and frame all into a perfect whole in our own government. It is a fatal mistake, common to many reared in false patriotism, to think that our country needs no improvements, because it has always been considered as taking the lead. Our institutions can never be too perfect, and we will never be so clever that other nations will have nothing to teach us. Let us bravely admit where we are behind, and try to improve. Let us be proud of where we are ahead, and continue to forge ahead. That is true patriotism.

The objections of those who disbelieve in republican forms of government by their insinuation that honest men cannot be found for public office have been met in former articles. Their views are so hopeless as to eliminate them from all optimistic discussion of the possibilities of the future democracy.

Finally, we must consider the fear of those who admit the propriety of government ownership, but think that the indebtedness incurred by the purchase of existing private monopolies would be a burden to future generations. This is a thoughtless

view. An increase of the outstanding debt of the nation or the community, is fatal only when it is not followed by a proportionate increase in property. But in the case we are considering, the property would increase, and the nature of the property would be such as to be a blessing for future generations, rather than otherwise.

To prove the possibilities of government ownership we have taken Sweden for an example. We could have taken many another European country, but we could not perhaps have found any other where almost all the proper functions of the government are so well proportioned and exemplified as in the case we have examined. The government of Sweden has in this particular reached a high standard of perfection, although we willingly admit it is far from perfect in a number of other particulars. But this does not now concern us. Our object is to acquire the best, and reject the less good. We can do so only by studying what other nations have accomplished. No prejudice and no false patriotism must enter into our investigation. If we proceed along the lines indicated we shall some day be the creators of a freer and greater America; we shall be able to call ourselves a free nation in a higher sense than now. We will be a "world power," but not by the "glorious feats of our arms," and we shall have collected all the crystals of the true democracy of our sister nations into one glorious crown, with which we shall crown our king—Justice.

ERIC OBERG.

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THE MAN WITH THE MUCK RAKE.

Portions of a Sermon Delivered by the Rev. Thomas P. Byrnes, of the First Unitarian Church of Erie, Pa., May 13, 1906, as Reported in the Messenger-Graphic, of Erie, Pa.

And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man.—II Samuel xii-7.

This is the text that is usually chosen when a particular sinner in the church is to be hit, and hit hard. This text is often commended to the preacher as an example of direct preaching.

Nathan had told David of the rich man who stole the poor man's only lamb with which to furnish his table for the entertainment of his guest. The story touched David, and he threatened the guilty thief with death.

Then it was that Nathan turned upon David, and with dramatic effect said: "Thou art the man"; thou art the thief who stole the poor man's lamb; you are the sinner before God and man.

This method of Nathan's brings up the question of the place and value of the public condemnation of special sinners and wrongdoers.

This whole subject is now before the American people because we have had a season of Nathan's kind of preaching, and because we have a whole brood of Davids who are squirming and wriggling under these modern Nathans' roastings and lashings.

Many kind-hearted people already think that this method of Nathan, of saying to the sinners of our time, "Thou art the man," has already gone too far, and a demand for a let-up is being called for, especially by the big sinners and their friends.

This question has been especially brought up for