

them. A large and increasing minority have noted the timidity of city treasurers and when the notices arrive they are thrown into the waste paper basket. This conduct is especially characteristic of some of the city and county officers—men who are paid for their indifferently valuable services by the faithful contributions to the common fund of widows and spinners, of commonplace, honest men who have not yet foresworn their obligations to the community. In not collecting these personal taxes as they fall due the treasurer is making their collection harder and ever harder. For delinquent personal taxes draw twelve per cent interest.

Among the office holding classes, there are men who do not pay their taxes. They are parasites drawing monthly salaries contributed by the faithful many who have discharged their obligations to the community. The many who have never sought an office nor prated of their love and duty to their fellow-men.

Patriotism does not alone consist in enlisting when the country goes to war, nor American patriotism in making spread eagle speeches about the privileges and duties of republican citizenship. Patriotism is the performance of the every day duties of a citizen. It is a bad and insincere lover of his country who is willing to make his living from the contributions to the common fund and who refuses every year to add his own contributions.

The laboring man works out his poll tax on the road. The small merchant who has never held out his suppliant hands to the community for an office pays his tax, the politicians of Lincoln who are in request on Independence day for speeches in the outlying towns, pay no attention to the statement of their indebtedness sent them from the treasurer's office. Owners of realty pay taxes upon their holdings in order to keep them free of incumbrance, but this tax on the personal belongings of all and upon the poll of the voter is more especially a tax levied by the community for the enjoyment of community blessings. The man who refuses to liquidate it does not commit a statutory crime, but ethically, he is a beggar who possesses a competence and still begs. He has no right to any emoluments or honors conferred by the community that he fastens himself upon. The delinquents mentioned in the foregoing were selected because either now or a year ago a hypnotized community accepted their assurances of love for the people and elected them to representative positions.

Washington University.

The Washington memorial association which has undertaken to raise funds to establish a national university in Washington on the plan suggested by the father of his country in his last will and testament has recently held its annual meeting and received reports from its vice presidents in the different states. Mrs. Roebing of New Jersey reported that no money had been contributed in that state and suggested that the work be abandoned and that the funds now in the hands of the treasurer be devoted to purchasing scholarships in universities already established. Miss Daly of Rhode Island said nothing had been contributed there, but "a stray dollar from Rhode Island found its way to the treasurer of the association in New York who sent it back to us and we credited it. It came from Nancy Lee." Mrs. Calvin S. Brice reported that she had collected \$100 for the university in Ohio; Mrs. Mary Garrett reported \$1,107.03 from Pennsylvania;

Mrs. Coleman, \$115.58 from Virginia. Mrs. Siegel, \$800 from Utah; Mrs. Malory, \$1,664.83 from New York. Mrs. Julia B. Shattuck, chairman for Illinois, reported that one initiation fee and the annual dues of four members had comprised her collections during the year, and she tendered her resignation. Therefore \$2,902.54 is all that has been collected so far towards the establishment of a university which is to have a foundation of several millions of dollars, but, notwithstanding the discouraging lack of public interest reported from all quarters, the women show no signs of despair.

The project is not likely to succeed unless some rich men endow it with paltry millions. For millions are paltry when compared with the needs of a great university. In the progress of the dissemination of learning it seems to have been established that a number of colleges scattered about over the country give more light to a greater number of people than a fewer number of large universities. The memorial committee must solicit funds from alumni of other colleges, from mothers and fathers whose children are in some college. For university alumni are interested in the prosperity of their alma mater and parents are most interested in the schools their children are attending. It is thus difficult to collect funds from the whole country for the building of a college at Washington. It is perhaps not too soon for all the members of this committee to resign. The university will never be built by contributions from the states at large. Much has been written about the advantages of a national university located at Washington. The Smithsonian institute the many government collections, and the congressional library are of great educational value and have never been made use of by a body of students, but so long as the per capita is no larger very few young men and young women will go outside of their own district for schooling. This being so the small colleges planted all over the United States are doing immeasurably more good than one larger one, and I have shown that it is a question between them. The income of the smaller colleges should not be reduced by one dollar. Mahomet who is represented by the college has gone to the mountains, which represents the people, who are in the mass and in averages, as we are most apt to consider them, immovable.

Shirks.

It is the immunity enjoyed by the greatest beneficiaries of the community that exasperates men and creates anarchists. We are supposed to be living in a republic where the cost of government is shared by all equally and where the consent of the governed is asked before the governing body begins to govern. This is all a fiction. It deceives nobody, not even Mr. Bryan. In the first place half of the population is women whose consent to the laws and the men who administer them has not been asked. Then the president is not elected directly by the vote of the other half of the people and senators are also elected indirectly. Democracy is only a name and an oratorical fetich, something which men pray to and adjure, but which never answers their prayers. A slight investigation into the municipal machine of any city in the United States discovers the governed as the prey of politicians clever enough to evade their own obligations while getting a living from taxes paid by others. An honest man and a good citizen who convinces himself that treasurers are perfunctory, and are severe only with the comparatively

poor is less inclined to pay his taxes thereafter. Further investigation into government by the consent of the governed is likely to deepen his tendencies towards socialism and even towards anarchy.

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Peace on Earth.

Christmas is pre-eminently the best time for wiping out old scores. There are certain reasons why it is necessary to open another score book on January first. The six days between should be a period of good feeling. On the second day of the year 1900—the first year of the new century—the city treasurer has said that he would collect the taxes or exhaust the legal expedients granted him by the law for the purpose of coercing those who share in the benefits of community life and neglect to pay their own assessment. But all this is to be forgotten for six days while the world celebrates the birthday of the Prince of Peace. It is the children's week. For once in the year the world is theirs. They give much more than they receive. Their cheerfulness, their abounding satisfaction, their careless largess of love to all, is the nearest a blazzy world comes to happiness in the year's round. The only really poor people at Christmas time are those who have no children in the house, or those whom they bother. Such poor, deserve condolence of unusual sincerity. The children's eyes in these pre-Christmas days are large with expectation of mysterious benefactions from fairy land. They are communing with beings whom we have forgotten, beings whom the curtain of common sense has long ago shut from our sight forever. And because of the immunity of childhood, even the motherless, the maimed and the hopelessly homely and poor children share in the mystery and delight of the season. Upon none of the pure in heart is the door shut. And the laughter and sounds of pleasure that reach our ears holden by the years that divide us from them are invitations worth while accepting.

THE PASSING SHOW
WILLA CATHER

When Frohman's New York Lyceum company came to town presenting Pinero's delightful comedy "Trelawney of the Wells," about the most attractive person in the company was Miss Olive May, formerly of Beatrice, Nebraska, and sometime Mrs. Henry Guy Carlton. That is saying a good deal, for it was an excellent company and in it some very exceptional people, such as the dashing young William Courtney, that beautiful Mary Manning, and John Mason, now fully recovered from the baleful influence of light opera morphine and Marian Manola, and doing the splendid work that he is so capable of doing. The play of course offers rare opportunities for good acting, and there is not a part in it that is not full of individuality and flavor. Of all the living English play-wrights, I pin my faith on Mr. Arthur W. Pinero. He never writes a play unless he has something to say in it, and he never says it other than effectually and artistically. He has written, in "The Second Mrs. Tanquary" one of the strongest and most merciless dramas of our time, and he has written some of the most poetic and idyllic comedies. Since I saw his "Trelawney of the Wells," I have believed in him more completely than ever. The play is the least garish, the most dignified and un-theatric that I have seen in many a long day, and it has a

literary flavor rare enough in these degenerate times. Miss Trelawney, the heroine of the piece, is the leading lady at the Wells theatre, London, and the plot of the play hinges on her engagement to a London society youth, her attempt and failure to adapt herself to the hum-drum life of his family and her return to the theatre to discover that she had lost the trick of the florid declamation then in vogue, and that having tried two worlds she now belongs to neither, and is neither a gentlewoman nor an actress. Her lover himself goes upon the stage and finally wins her in her own world and among her own people. The play is quiet, full of subtle elegance, and it reads almost as well as it acts. The declamatory actors who have outlived their period and who are reduced to want by the new school of naturalistic actors, form a pathetic background for the story. And just here, let me say that it is time to denounce the old fallacy that "plays about actors don't go in America," since "Trelawney of the Wells" and "Zaza" were the two most popular plays in New York last year, and Charles Coghlan's "Royal Box" held its own for two seasons.

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But to return to Olive May: she had, after Miss Mannerling, rather the best part in the play, and I am inclined to think that she made it quite the best part. For Miss Mannerling, although her exquisite beauty is worth any price of admission and her personality is one of the most elusive and charming behind the foot-lights today, has always seemed to me a rather conventional actress. Miss May, on the other hand, is clever to her finger tips, and has animation enough for half-a-dozen women and a pair of eyes that tell very much more than her lines. Indeed, she seems to have invented a system of optic elocution of her own. She is fairly bubbling over with that vivacity which won her her first notable success in "The Butterflies." I suppose one might call it esprit, but it is something more than that, for, by her reading of some most unostentatious lines in the third act she achieved the truest note of pathos struck in the play, and I am told that Miss Tyree, who first played the part, made nothing at all of those lines. Miss May's "Avonia" is full of telling technical "points," and her clear conception of the relation of the part to the play shows, if I mistake not, her association with one of the cleverest of our play-wrights. She seems to me remarkably well equipped professionally, and she has that forerunner of success, ambitious industry. The third act she makes practically her own, and though she appears in it in tights she does it so daintily that it never occurred to me that tights are not the most conventional form of dress. After the matinee I had a long talk with her at her hotel and found her quite as young and as good to look at and as full of vivacity as when I first met her four years ago. Her enthusiasm for bicycling has been transferred to golf, that is about the only change. It interested me to see how staunch is her loyalty to the West and how warmly she remembers her friends there, and I got more Nebraska news while the Lyceum Company was in town than I had heard since I last crossed the Missouri. After dinner, when we left the Lincoln hotel for the theatre, the city was shrouded in a veil of smoke and fog, through which the lights in front of the theatre burned murkily, and she made the usual protests against Pittsburg weather. I remarked that we both knew a country where the air was clear enough and where the wind was galloping forty miles an hour over interminable stretches of red-brown prairie.

"Yes," said Miss May "I remember."