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OBSERVATIONS

Some very estimable people in this town lately paid a considerable price for their credulity. A spiritualist, rejoicing in the euphonious name of Maud Lord Drake, came to Lincoln and began giving seances. Now Maud Lord Drake claimed, incidentally, to possess a power that would smash all the boards of trade in Christendom. She said she could foretell the changes in the market. She made one guess and it was successful. Then a little syndicate was formed by some well known Lincoln men, and a modest amount was put up in a local bucket shop. The syndicate won. And again the next day. Then there came a day when Maud Lord Drake had to guess again. She was wide of the mark and the syndicate lost a good deal more than it had made. Since then it has not dealt any more. There is no spiritualist road to wealth, or it would have been travelled long ago. Spiritualists usually just hang on to the ragged edge of life. Their humbuggery and deception are proved by their own condition. Col. Pope, the millionaire manufacturer of the Columbia bicycle, is a large investor. Men come to him almost daily with large schemes. They offer to put him on to a plan of acquiring great wealth almost at a single bound. To all such Col. Pope says: "All right, that is very well; but are you rich yourself? Have you proved what you say?" And he doesn't talk to impecunious fortune makers. When Maud Lord Drake told these people she could forecast market changes she should have been asked to show her pile. For no one who could tell when the market would go up or down would remain poor. The world would be at this person's feet.

Some of the brainiest, shrewdest men have devoted their lives to trying to do what Maud Lord Drake claimed that she could do off hand, and in the end died in rags. One cannot entertain the highest respect for the acumen of these victims. They really deserved to lose. For a little while, for the space of two days, these people saw visions of a wealth as fabulous as the treasures of old Solomon. They drank, in fancy, from golden goblets and wore divers and sundry kinds of diamonds. Then Maud and the market diverged, and the would-be bonanza kings came back to earth again with a thud. The fickle goddess lets people down hard sometimes. Its a good thing these Lincoln speculators were not carried higher up, else the drop could have been longer, and they might have been seriously hurt.

The announcement that the wholesale drug business of the H. T. Clarke company will be retained in this city is gratifying. Here's hoping that the Lincoln Drug company may be a permanent institution! But there is a suspicion, which I hope is groundless, that the purchase of the drug stock by Omaha parties and the formation of the "Lincoln Drug Co." has back of it a scheme not altogether favorable to this city. It is suggested that the Omaha wholesale druggists would hardly care to have two houses selling the same territory, and the idea is prevalent that the purpose is to capture the trade hitherto controlled by the H. T. Clarke Drug company, and after maintaining the house here for a year or two, consolidate the business in Omaha. It hardly stands to reason that an Omaha drug house would want a branch as near as Lincoln. Every resident of this city would like to see this business kept here; but if the new proprietors should take it away it is altogether probable that effectual measures would be taken to get other people to come in.

Paul Morton has just been made consul for the Argentine Republic in Chicago, and has been officially recognized as such by President Cleveland. Mr. Morton is well known in Nebraska. He is a son of Secretary J. Sterling Morton, and was for many years an officer of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy railroad company. He is now president of the Whitebreast Fuel Co., and vice-president of the Colorado Iron & Fuel Co.

Were ever people so much "received" as Chancellor and Mrs. McLean? Wherever two or three are gathered together in the name of the Lord or any one else the thing they do is to receive the new chancellor and his wife. Why THE COURIER has been seriously meditating giving them a reception on its own hook. Of course their numerous receptions are marks of deserved respect and are well meant, but if this thing keeps up Mr. and Mrs. McLean will be exhausted weeks before the season is over.

I can not help noticing the change in the general bearing and deportment of the university students in the last five years. In '90 there was scarcely a begger's dozen of civilized members of society who attended the institution. There were plenty of good students, strong fellows with high purpose, but O, the cloths they wore, and the general style of them. It was not from necessity or poverty, but because slouchiness was prevalent. It was the customary thing for young men to wear baggy trousers, keep their hands in their pockets and chew a tooth pick. And the girls, the taller they were the shorter they wore their dresses, and the colors in which those maidens would adorn themselves! There really is no reason why a student should not wear clean linen and know what to do with his feet. A man may be literary and clean at the same time, and neckties do not interfere with his scientific pursuits. Everyone who can owes it to society not to be a jay, and culture and good manners can go together. I think the social life which has grown up in the university of late years one of the strongest evidences that the university is really growing to be an institution to be proud of. Ten years ago the students were boisterous, overgrown boys, indulging in cane fights and playing juvenile tricks upon the towns people. Now they are young men and women, not quite so serious or earnest as the old fellows perhaps, but certainly more pleasing and civilized. There is a general refinement about the place now that is of recent growth. It is not to be laughed at either. Frivolity is not a lofty thing, but since the greater part of the world is frivolous its a good thing to be able to do the frivolous. In the present state of society the man who is honest and agreeable and can lead a german well, is about as useful a member of society as the man who can tell the derivation of every word in the language. There are plenty of men who have got through the world very creditably on a pleasant smile. I don't say its an ideal condition of things at all, but its true. There must always be a few learned people in the world, but for the work-a-day average that makes up the business world, there are other things quite as important as an accurate knowledge of the ear of the salamander. After all the only essential thing in men is manliness and in women womanliness. As for culture—well, there are so many definitions of culture.

In Omaha there is a movement on foot to dispense with what is inelegantly known as "full dress" at dances and other evening entertainments. Only last week, as I learn from the Bee, a number of young men endeavored to give a dance with the understanding that they, the young men, were to appear in business suits. I am a little surprised that a city that has always, from the time they stuck the first pig at the stock yards, prided itself on its

quality of "swellness," should favor the unique idea that anything other than evening dress is proper at evening entertainments. There are some places where men go to evening affairs in sack coats and red ties, where the women wear the gowns in which they partook of the matutinal repast. In these places the men also have a habit of carrying guns and flasks in their pockets, and sometimes there are signs displayed, "Do Not Spit on the Floor." The women chew gum and sometimes when they dance they kick. This is the way it used to be in Omaha in the days when George Francis Train was the chief promoter of the town. Omaha wasn't swell then—no, not any part of it. But latterly the town has taken on a considerable amount of importance and affected the things that are "swell." The pioneer times are gone. Now that Omaha is trying to be considered in the same class with Lincoln and St. Louis and Chicago it must be prepared to go the whole thing. It cannot set all rules at defiance, and make society a mob. It must take time to get the grime off its face and hands and change its clothes when it goes out of an evening to a proper social function. It cannot bring dancing in the barn ideas into the modern metropolitan ball room. It cannot be governed by South Omaha etiquette. No, indeed, if Omaha wants to be a city it must do as a city does. And in the cities they wear proper clothes. They don't try to make the dress that catches the grime of the day answer for the festivities of the evening.

Society this winter will be just as gay as in that time before the Nebraska Guy Fawkes set fire to the magazine that blew up Lincoln's prosperity. The functions will be as many if not as elaborate. The starvation parties that were given in the south for a year before the surrender were remarkable for their gayety. There is an excitement about dancing on the brink of a precipice, an exaltation of spirits that nothing but the presence of danger will create. So was Paris gay in the days of the Guillotine. No parties were gayer than those given by the prisoners in the Conciergerie. When you lose your money or your health and have to spend the rest of your days grubbing or on a sick bed it is not the days of feasting and dancing you will regret, but the days you mis-spent in worrying and mourning when you might have been happy.

We do not know how many heads will roll in the basket before next summer but we do know that only to-day is ours. Let us put our mark on it as it races by so that in the days when the "grinders cease because they are few" we shall possess days of happiness that nothing but failing memory can rob us of.