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OBSERVATIONS.

Of course as soon as the Hamilton club has put its shoulder to the car of progress and rolled it over the present obstructions, the members will cease to be inspired by indignation, love of justice and the necessity of economy. They will return to their ordinary occupations and the same old set, or men just like them, will resume their sway over the health and pockets of the men, women and children that constitute the city of Lincoln. But in the meantime we will have had an interim in which men of integrity and ability were in control and it may teach the expediency of continuous exertion that we may have good government all the time.

The eighty-two charter members of the Hamilton club represent the strongest and best components of the republican party in this city. Less than a fifth of them are or have been office holders. For the most part they are men who have attained success by attending to their own business, and allowing the plug uglies who are now apparently in charge of affairs to run the city into its present difficulties. The members of the club have only been aroused from an exclusive attention to their own business by a constantly increasing tax assessment and by the conviction that the plug uglies would soon make Lincoln the resort of the vicious and, in consequence, an undesirable place of residence. There is no reasonable doubt that their in-

fluence will encourage the council to impeach the mayor and Exciseman Vaill and perhaps a few others. With the old ring discredited it will be difficult for any member of it to secure a nomination this spring, though I have heard it stated that there is at least one saloonkeeper listed for councilman. His election would not be surprising on account of the outgrown districting of the city into wards which allow the small saloon wards as large a representation as those inhabited by five or six times as many voters. It is a question which Mr. Abbott, the city attorney, declines to answer, pleading a lack of information, whether the council has the right to redistrict the city. But if it could be done before election it would render the work of reform more effective and easier of accomplishment.

If the grand jury will take advantage of the discoveries of the council investigating committee and put Mayor Graham on the stand, it may be able to find out why he was so anxious for the failure of the A street well plan. If the badgered and baited mayor can be induced to tell who paid him for his services in obstructing improvements in the water service of Lincoln, the thousands who have suffered directly and indirectly from the looting of the Capital National bank, will be gratified at last by a sight of the real villain. Their money is gone forever and no punishment of the thief can restore it, but the rankling knowledge that they have been bamboozled by a man clever enough to keep out of the reach of the law and to place his property so far away that, in case of detection, he can flee to it, will be soothed by this man's compulsory exile. There is nothing truer than that "misery likes company."

This last retirement from office of ex-Water Commissioner Byer will probably be permanent though it is not the only one occasioned by an investigation into his venal conduct of city business. Byer and Melick are old familiar names in Lincoln politics and their retirement from maladministration marks a new era in city politics. Although Mr. Melick is still enjoying official position it is only as a reward for silence and as soon as Mr. Graham is removed his successor will very likely not be able to appreciate the necessity of Mr. Melick.

Inductive Studies in Browning, by Dr. Hans C. Peterson, is a most interesting and instructive volume, containing about twenty-one of the longer poems of Browning, with a page or

more of questions (as the poems vary in length) at the end of each poem. The questions direct the student's attention to the words, phrases or sentences by which the poet accomplishes his effects. The questions, although not in every case easy to answer and in some cases answered by a reasoning contrary to the one demanded by the commentator, perform the functions of setting the stage for the student—for no one but a student, either of human nature or literature, reads Browning. The questions then are a map, they locate the actors in the drama, they reveal the situation and frequently the relative position of the poet to the people and events of his poetry. Browning's poetry so seldom deals with anything but human and all-dramatic situations that this kind of a question map is as necessary to his students as a geography to the historical student. Men and events are so related to topography and the weather that it is difficult to appreciate, even a poetic treatment of them without an atlas such as Dr. Peterson's questions furnish. The object of studying poetry in this way, Dr. Peterson says in the preface, is to determine how the mind operates in appreciating and loving it, and the questions lead it to operating that way. In reading the book I have found that it was necessary to do so with undivided attention or the subtle, under the surface meanings elude one. Much of this sort of reading would teach the most superficial to exclude the irrelevant and immaterial and to learn the lesson of the hour with a single mind. So that Inductive Studies in Browning both strengthens the mind, instructs it, and enlarges the capacity of appreciation.

An editorial of some length in a recent Chicago daily paper, written while the National Federation of Musical clubs was in session, stated that the federation was rent by internal differences of opinion as to who should be president. There was no difference of opinion strong enough to destroy the concord of the federation except in the opinion of the defeated candidate for president who communicated her views to the papers. The facts are that Mrs. Sutro, a wealthy and philanthropic New York lady, addressed the federation and announced her candidacy. She was gowned, although it was a dark and stormy day, in white broadcloth and a plumed hat. She said that she was the only member of the federation who possessed enough wealth, culture and a sufficiently exalted position to fit one for president of the federation. She made this somewhat remarkable

speech, with the aplomb of a devout believer reciting his creed, but there were heretics to the number of eighty in the federation and Mrs. Sutro received only eighteen votes.

One of the greatest, if not the greatest, result of women's clubs is the destruction of caste and the growth of democracy among women who have heretofore insisted on keeping the lines of social position distinct. Especially in the west are such distinctions ignored, and if it came known that a candidate for any office is counting upon position or wealth to secure votes that very fact is enough to defeat her. The possession of the gifts of fortune does not disqualify but it certainly does not elect. The example of Mrs. Sutro whose name is distinguished in New York for gifts to benevolent institutions and for originating several worthy charities, should be an example to other aspirants to keep their possessions in the background when asking for the votes of members of the national federation at Denver. Though club women want a woman of affairs, with a clear head and executive ability—qualities not very often developed in a housewife whose education and experiences have been restricted by poverty—they will have none of them in their officers.

The General Federation of Women's clubs meets at Denver the twenty-first of June. Already there is much discussion as to the different candidates for president. Mrs. Henrotin of Chicago has held the place since the organization of the federation, and is not a candidate for re-election. Mrs. Alice Ives Breed, vice-president for the last two years, announces that she will appear at the Denver biennial as the successor to Mrs. Henrotin. Among western women the president of the Women's club of Denver is spoken of with more enthusiasm than any other candidate. She has shown great ability as presiding officer of that club, and has stimulated the members by example and precept to aid in making Denver a cleaner and better place to live in. The Denver Women's club has grown to be one of the largest and most efficient in this country. Of course this is due to the membership, but the members recognize that much of the activity is inspired by Mrs. Platt and give her the credit of what she is the first to disclaim. There are other candidates for the position, but these two names have had the widest publicity. These few remarks are addressed not to any candidate in particular, but any woman who wishes to hold a position bestowed by a large vote will do well to ponder the easy transformation of her name into mud by a number of women who consider themselves patronized.