

OBSERVATIONS

BY SARAH B. HARRIS

Co-Education

The first women who desired to go to college were regarded with horror by the same kind and quality of people who now aim coarse, trite jokes at the women tax-payers who claim a right to express their choice in the administration of their own property. The opponents of higher education said then, as the anti-suffragists say now, that a college education would unsex woman, make her masculine, unfilial, scornful of men, undutiful and disobedient wives and unloving mothers, poor cooks, slovenly housekeepers, and render them altogether unlovely. Woman is, to speak temperately, as good-looking as ever. That is, pretty women are as pretty as they were before they were allowed to study anything not taught in the high-schools. Women in general are as heroic as the mothers of the Gracchi who could neither read nor write, but spent their lives before a broodery frame. The truth is that the tendency to become a woman is firmly fixed in a little girl, and the knowledge and training attained in a college makes her more of a woman.

But all this has been abandoned long ago. The average male college undergraduate has been in the same college with young women long enough to discover that if there are any honors, the girls are more than likely to take them; and that he has not the same chance he would have in a college for men. There is much fearful talk about the feminization of our learning; but that phase is not what displeases the average undergraduate.

There are many college women who shrink from frankly considering woman's rights and from those who believe that women are individuals and are entitled to at least a voting share in the government. These conservatives believe in higher education for women. But unless it is re-enforced by larger civil rights, it is not impossible that some of the present co-educational institutions may exclude women.

Stanford has already limited the number of female students who can be admitted. Professor James of Northwestern university ambiguously approves of the education of women, but unmistakably deprecates that unknown and unaccomplished effect called feminization from which male students are fleeing to colleges devoted to the hard task of civilizing man in his most brutal period. To be sure state universities are supported by the taxation of the entire people. So much property pays a certain per cent of its value to the state for education. The property is sexless. It may be owned by a man; it may be owned by a woman. It is dollars the state collects and the sex of the individual who pays the tax is of no import.

Suppose the voters of Nebraska conclude that all the teachers, books, apparatus and rooms at the university of Nebraska are needed for the education of other voters. According to the logic of the anti-suffragists such a conclusion is inevitable. If a woman's interest in public affairs is impertinent and unwomanly, the less education she has the more likely she is to be satisfied with the role assigned her by the hard and unjust conditions, superstitions and conventions of today. Unless woman is to vote she certainly should not be educated. The slaveholders of the south were right when they made it a crime to teach a negro how to read and write. Catholicity and slavery can not co-exist. The privilege of attending the state university can not be enjoyed by the daughters of Nebraska whose fathers and mothers support it any longer than the voters of the state permit. Undoubtedly the presence of so many

girls in the university is feminizing that institution, and the youths who have noticed the tendency will have an opportunity to say some time whether it shall continue. But the girls who owe their horizon, the sweetness and light of life to the university are legally dumb.

It is singular, considering the history of the race and especially of families, that men should begrudge woman an education and the largest, freest life of the spirit. There never was a man who emancipated his generation, who lighted a torch whose genial gleams still illuminate humanity's march, who did not possess a great mother, a dreamer, perhaps one who held conventions lightly, but one who thought her own thoughts and let trifles remain trifles. It is singular, again, that of all the great men who have lived and served there are few who had great sons. The mothers of the great artists, poets, architects, statesmen dreamed dreams that their sons made come true. Evolution is accomplished by the improvement of both parents and the slow transmission of the improvement.

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Prohibitionists

The cause of temperance is unfortunate in Lincoln in having a figurehead who has been suspected of blackmailing the saloons for his own personal advantage. Prohibitionists, as a rule, though an impractical and unconvincible type, are pure idealists and optimistic to a degree. They do not resemble the professional reformer who advocates his principles for the sake of a job, for a crib at the expense of the public. Your prohibitionist is an idealist pure and simple and without compromise. The devil and his agents do not waste time arguing with him, for they know it is useless. Neither argument nor facts can convince the real prohibitionist that he is wrong. He says there are laws against murder and robbery and yet murder and robbery are committed. Because the laws against these crimes are, in a measure, ineffectual, are they to be abrogated? He says that saloons are criminal institutions and that the community is particeps criminis when it accepts a thousand dollars or more from the saloon keeper and issues to him a permit, a license to run his nefarious business, a business which keeps the penitentiary and insane asylum full of men who must be detained, fed and lodged at the public expense. He says that it is outrageous to give the money which we receive from institutions that ruin homes and make murderers and lunatics, to the schools; and that if we did not procure the money in this way we could not afford to educate our children.

From this point of view the school argument does appear tenuous. When the believer in the doctrine that saloons are a necessary evil replies to the prohibitionist that recent statistics show that only about a third of the inmates of penitentiaries and asylums are drinking men, he holds that the fathers and mothers of the inmates referred to, drank, and that in consequence they were born degenerate and vicious. Statistics stop here.

But for and against aside, it is certain that the prohibitionists, in keeping alive the discussion of this subject and in constantly directing attention to the evil that the saloon is responsible for, are performing a great service to the community. In them more than in all others is the hope of the future. They have not yet convinced the community, but they will. And when places like the Lindell hotel saloon are under the ban of the law, when young men can no longer play a game of billiards and step a few feet

away to a bar to refresh their thirst between games, the reform will be due to the efforts and faith of the Lincoln prohibitionists. The number of working men, day laborers, whom the cause has won in the last few years is a cause for congratulation. A heretic and an observer of how prohibition does not prohibit in Topeka is inspired if not convinced by the clear eyes, zeal and conviction of the men who are doing what they can year by year at elections and between times by exhortation and example to induce men to forswear liquor. And more than all the institutions of Lincoln, more than all the business houses and active, enterprising business men, the hope of the community is in this constantly enlarging group of believers in cleanliness and sobriety.

At the present time prohibition can not be enforced in Lincoln because the majority of the voters are not in favor of it. But the saloon is evil, all evil. Nothing wholesome or for the benefit of the community can emerge from it. It is bad and the men who go into it and come out of it are degenerating. They are not the men they were a few years ago. It is a matter of observation that the men who go in and out of the swinging doors are not the laboring men. Some are the men whose names are printed every week in the society columns of the papers. They are no longer the railroad men, for the railroad companies will not have employes who go in either at the front or back door of saloons. They are men of more or less standing in this community. It is true that their standing and reputation are not what they were. The saloon habitue is under sentence. He is the last man to find it out. But the day will come when he will look back over the long path he has stumbled down hill and for the first time he will acknowledge the cause of his loss of money, influence, position, respect and his own earning and thinking capacity.

If the saloons were closed some of the younger men who are just beginning to swallow drams like men, might be ashamed to go to a dive to get liquor. In the meantime the actual moral elevation, superior faith and tenacious optimism of the prohibitionists of this little city of Lincoln is the most encouraging sign of future regeneration. Politicians are quick to see the beginnings of the source of future power, and the results of the recent election have opened their eyes. They had no idea that the prohibitionists had such a following. The evidence of strength is the only convincing argument to a politician. Since the municipal returns he speaks of the prohibitionist party in this city with an unconscious inflection of respect never before apparent in his elocutionary efforts. The eventual triumph of the prohibitionist party here is assured. It is only a matter of a few years when saloons will be against the law and the school revenue will have to be raised by some other means. A trial may convince a majority that prohibition is impossible. The prohibitionist himself will never be convinced. It is certain that in the near future a trial will be made, and the politicians might as well begin to arrange their sails to take advantage of the wind from that quarter.

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The Color Line at Los Angeles

In families, or in small clubs, or within the boundaries of a coterie of friends, it is possible by agreement to taboo a subject whose discussion has a tendency to arouse prejudice and animosities. But for the sake of peace and harmony such a subject can not be eliminated from the discussions of a large body containing delegates from nearly every state in the union. A number of small clubs have passed resolutions deprecating discussion of the color question at the approaching biennial meeting of the General Federation of Women's Clubs which will meet at Los Angeles on the first, second and third of May. It is quite unlikely that the discussion of whether or not colored women shall be admitted to the general federation can be

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