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OBSERVATIONS.

The State Convention.

It was a tangle of many threads to the looker-on. A few astute and experienced politicians kept their eye and their whole attention upon their own particular thread, tying a knot here and untying one there until they accomplished Mr. Dietrich's, Mr. Rosewater's and Senator Thurston's nomination to the various offices they are seeking. Senator Thurston was the only one who was applauded with any spontaneous enthusiasm. Men found themselves voting by request for candidates of whom they did not approve and against others whom they liked and wished to help nominate. They were helpless in the midst of a complicated situation. Unless each delegation voted according to orders and agreement the convention would have become a mass of individuals, disorganized and unlikely to accomplish anything that would have pleased as many as the final compromise. The convention demonstrated, among other things, the strength of the organization effected and controlled by Mr. Thompson. But as an example of a part of a great, free people in the act of selecting their state officers it was not edifying. Kings and emperors that inherit their places are quite as apt

to be useful to their people as the choice of a convention the members of which select candidates not for their fitness but because they live in a certain part of the state and because their nomination will not interfere with the aspiration of some other candidate for some other office.

Preparations for Summer.

Politics are more uncertain than the weather, but nevertheless Mr. Bryan is building a large porch on his house. A two-thirds vote is required to nominate the candidate in the national convention of the democratic party where only a majority of republican votes will be sufficient to nominate President McKinley. That Mr. Bryan will not be nominated there is only a possibility. The last presidential campaign demonstrated the futility of chasing after votes on a train. Speeches from the rear end of a train of cars are lacking in dignity. A snorting engine does not play second fiddle to any one. And when the engineer of even a Bryan special got his orders to move, the engine started, though it split periods in two and caused the orator to end his speech in a shriek. President McKinley stayed at home and drank iced lemonade and was elected. By staying at home he made the small fortunes of a number of the residents of Canton. The building of the porch has rejoiced the Lincoln hotel and boarding house keepers, for it is a token of delegations and of agitated conferences of the great with the great. The seventeenth street cars will be full all summer as far as D street. The hacks of this small city can be relined and fitted to new springs, for as sure as the example of Tammany has been excepted, political delegations do not walk. A hack and a stovepipe hat is the sign and seal of Tammany and Tammany is the Paris of all real democrats. Mr. Bryan is about to confer prosperity in a small way upon Lincoln. When the delegations on special trains stocked in the liberal fashion of man on a delegation from a city, a club, or a state which pays the bills, it will be a holiday every day except Sunday. The railroads will also do a good business hauling democrats to their Mecca and their Prophet. It is not alone the dealers in foods and drinks beds and transportation intramural and overland, that are grateful to Mr. Bryan for building a porch and concluding to speak to credulous generations from it this summer, there are the hatters, laundrymen, bootblacks, barbers and all the purveyors of the ornaments with which the gorgeous politician loves to deck his person though the effect is not always chaste.

Other citizens of Lincoln may build palaces of brick and stone and bronze without conveying the impression of loyalty and devotion to the city's prosperity, that this little porch, eight by ten feet or twenty has cre-

ated. Most of those citizens who have essayed to beautify the city by a structure of stone or brick have sooner or later relinquished it into the hands of insurance companies and gone further west or returned to live the peaceful life of their forefathers in a New England village where men are passing rich on an income of a thousand dollars a year. The first sounds of the campaign are not guns and waving flags but the report of a hammer pounding nails into resinous pine, and this small part of Nebraska rejoices, for whether it rains or not, the hacks will roll up and down seventeenth, between D street and the depots, perspiring patriots will make speeches to thirstiness and the destruction of a mirror polish on collar and shirt bosom, the neighborhood will blossom into pop and lemon-stands, while Mr. Bryan is running for president on the porch of his house on D street between seventeenth and sixteenth streets.

Ada Rehan.

"The Taming of the Shrew," in the reading is not so interesting a comedy as "The Tempest," "The Merchant of Venice," "The Winter's Tale" or "The Merry Wives of Windsor," but in the presentation it is much more interesting. The action is rapid, there are few long soliloquies or explanations and the characters are not archaic and strange to a modern audience. The question too, is as new and no older, and as current now as then. A woman with the temper, the wit, the will of Katharine and the determination to rule a husband, a father, a sister, and everyone else in her family must be conquered if not for her sake, for the peace and comfort of all these others. Petrucio's way was brutal, but starvation is the shortest road to humility. Short and sharp were the pains Katharine suffered before she at last gladly acknowledged her master. In spite of co-education, the leveling influences of learning all women still (though few acknowledge it) really love only their masters.

Petrucio, who reduced Katharine to Griselda in three days or four, was Mr. George Clark, a very dare-devil gallant from Verona; a man who takes the world lightly but has his own way through life by fertile wit, good temper, selfishness and the consciousness of his own superior activity. Other men had been cuffed by Katharine, other men had wished to woo her but none dared continue after the first rebuff, till Petrucio saw her and concluded that so spirited a maid was worth subduing, and that he was the man born to tame her. Mr. Clark's spirited, determined wooing, wedding and breaking was fine acting. Nevertheless there is too little of Katharine in the play when Miss Rehan takes the part. From her magnificent entrance where the portiere is thrust aside to admit her shrewish body, to the last act where

she glides humbly into her trainer she is too little on the stage. How nobly she reads her lines! If the playwright could hear her he must take new pleasure in his verse. Deliberately, always audibly, even when she rages, Shakspeare's words are never sacrificed to any trumpety business. Trained by an adequate, comprehending stage manager, Miss Rehan is the only American actress, unless it be Julia Marlowe, who has the voice, the patience, the intellect, to play Shakspeare's plays and not transform them into something either dreary, pedantic, scholastic or flavored with the vulgarity of the modern Hoyt woman or worse still, an imitation of the French. Miss Rehan is wholesome and frank. She has an exquisite sense of proportion, of womanliness, even of that which is most rare in the women of the stage, I mean, of literature. In her tour of the interior states of this country for their own enlightenment I hope she may still play to large and satisfied audiences like that at the Oliver on Monday night. Her company is large, thoroughly trained and still under the influence of that man of letters and of the stage—Augustin Daly.

The Protector of the Innocents.

Judge Holmes takes his own way in divorce cases. Discriminating decisions are especially difficult in cases, where husband and wife allege inhuman cruelty, frivolity, failure to provide support, chronic absenteeism, or the statutory cause. After a heart to heart talk with plaintiff and defendant which is oftenest not satisfactory and reveals two entirely different and contradictory views of the same subject. Judge Holmes addresses a sermon to the mother and father from the bench on the subject of their duties to their child or children. Setting aside the points of difference between them, their mutual causes of complaint, their long hoarded grievances, their jealousies, well-founded or not, Judge Holmes addresses them or their offspring. The Judge believes that no man and woman should be permitted to ignore the rights of their children whose existence they are responsible for and have forgotten. In the course of seven years on the bench, Judge Holmes has been impressed with the sensual selfishness of the fathers and mothers who appear before him seeking a divorce. They are willing in order to obtain a decree that their children of tender years should bear disgusting testimony relating to the character and conduct of both. It is evident that the Judge has determined that the corruption of the innocents in his court shall cease. The men and women seeking divorce are nearer forty than fifty. Imbittered, coarsened, disillusioned, selfish, sensual, one or the other or both appear before Judge Holmes leading a little girl or boy whose, wide open eyes mirror all the mother and father have