

Is Woman's Limit Reached?

MEN WHO SAY SHE IS AT HER ZENITH IN BUSINESS.

Accused of Lacking Originality and the Power of Making Valuable Suggestions—Credit for Improvements Given by Some to Men Alone—The Other Side.

A New York department store recently put a woman at the head of its delivery department. This act provoked many comments and gave new interest to the question, Is woman crowding man out?

At present the situation is understood to be about like this: Most of the large business concerns employ as many women as men. Some employ more women than men. The twentieth century woman has invaded almost every line of business, every profession, all the arts, nearly all the trades.

Women stenographers and typewriters far outnumber the men. Women cashiers are in the majority. The number of women bookkeepers has more than doubled in the last three or four years. Every year more and more married women are included among the wage earners.

Naturally this leads people to ask how far woman's invasion of business will go. The average businessman is not prepared to answer the question. An exception to the rule is a man who has been studying the industrial situation for half a century or more. This man made the following somewhat surprising statement:

"In business pursuits women are not likely to go further than they have already gone, either in the relative number of women employed or the varieties of work they represent. In other words, in business pursuits woman has reached the zenith of her career."

"Why do I think so?" he repeated. "For the reason that in business woman has proved to be the inferior of man in originality, inventiveness, initiative."

"Women are quite as ambitious as men; they will work just as hard, and as a rule they are equally dependable. They are capital adapters and imitators. But when this much is said one has said everything there is to say in woman's favor."

"I doubt if there is one business concern in New York which owes anything at all to original suggestions as from women employees. So far as I know modern methods and systems, they are solely the invention of men who began at the very foot of the ladder and got to the top because they kept on making original suggestions which helped along the business."

"It goes without saying that only a very few out of every large force of men ever make original suggestions, but businessmen find in order to get even a few original suggestions they must hold on to a large percentage of their employees for the reason that women employees are more likely to make any original suggestions at all."

"Of professional women, of women in the arts and sciences, I can't speak. I don't know anything about how they compare in originality with men in the same work, but I do know the business woman, pretty well, and I don't think there is the least chance that she will one day run all the drygoods stores and business offices in this town or any other town to the exclusion of the men—not the least chance."

"A similar opinion is to the businesswoman's lack of originality was expressed by a manager of a business house which employs about 4,000 persons, one-half of the number being women. When the question was put to him he admitted, although with reluctance, that he could not think of any feature of the business which owed anything to woman's originality."

"We had a buyer, though," he went on, "who originated a sort of system in keeping her accounts which let us see

almost at a glance how much profit and loss was represented by her stock every month. None of the men buyers approached her in this one feature. "But when it comes to talking about the hundred and one changes and new features which have been introduced from time to time as the drygoods houses in New York have grown from thread and needle shops to stores which for size and scope of stock can't be surpassed the world over, I'm afraid I cannot give so much credit to the women as to the men employees. Even in the departments given over to women's apparel the improvements made from time to time have been suggested by men. Women have been valuable aids in carrying out the newer ideas, but they did not originate them."

"Are women employees at liberty to make suggestions and changes?" the manager was asked. "They have the same liberty as the men have, as much liberty as the manager has. For instance, in order to get the benefit of any latest originality which may be stored away in any employee, we put up in one of the offices a question box, so called, into which any employee who has anything to suggest or anything to criticize in connection with his or her department, or any other department, is asked to drop a note describing his idea. This box, by the way, was originated by a man."

"Every day the box is opened and the communications carefully looked over by the management, and I am sorry to say that seldom or never is there an original suggestion of any value from a woman employee. As a rule the women's communications consist of irrelevant and often very foolish criticisms. They do not seem to grasp the business sense of things."

"On the other hand, although all the communications from men are not valuable, every now and then one is found which gives a suggestion we are delighted to carry out. No, I can't think of a single plan for increasing the scope of this business in the last ten years which was originated with a woman."

"The reason," I don't know. In the younger women I am inclined to think it is because they do not take their work seriously. They have possible matrimony in view."

"But how about older women?"

"The manager shook his head. "I can't explain it," he replied. "Sometimes I think it is because women are not strong enough physically to stand the grind, the tiresome routine, without a sacrifice of originality."

"A woman will not use her head except to follow the needful routine. With a man, on the other hand, who realizes that in order to get on he must give at least some small evidences of originality the incentive to keep his eyes open and his mind alert is greater."

"I should not like to go on record as saying that in the long run women are inferior to men in originality. I am only speaking of them in connection with this business."

"No, we do not expect to increase our force of women employees. In two departments where formerly the force of salespeople were three-quarters women it is now only one-quarter women. I found the men better adapted for selling the goods in these departments than women were."

"There is another very large department store in this city which set up a question box not many years ago and which employs a very large force of women. In the store's heads of departments, buyers and other employees meet with the superintendent and managers once a fortnight or so to act as a committee of ways and means. On these occasions free speech is the rule. Suggestions are invited. No discrimination between the sexes is made. It is a man, on the other hand, who realizes that in order to get on he must give at least some small evidences of originality the incentive to keep his eyes open and his mind alert is greater."

"Whether it is because the women are more timid than the men I can't say," he answered, almost apologetically, "but the fact is I don't often get an original suggestion from any of them."

"How about the question box?"

"Nothing doing so far as women employees go, nothing that is of value to the business, I mean. Sometimes there is a complaint which leads to a change for the better in some department, but not often. It is to the men I look

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for suggestions which will make the store more attractive and enlarge the business."

The superintendent of a third large concern held a more cheerful and complimentary view of woman's originality:

"The greatest critics in our employ are women, and wise criticism is a kind of originality, and a kind most valuable in this business. Women are far more intuitive than men, and their intuition is as valuable as some other kinds of originality."

"For instance, take the neckwear stock for women. It is true that most of the fancy jabots and ruffs and collars which we sell were designed by men, but the minute a certain saleswoman in that department sees the samples she can tell which will take with our customers and which will not. In that respect she is original."

"It is the same with our imported gowns, hats and suits, most of which, to be sure, were designed by men. It takes a woman to decide which models shall be duplicated and which let alone."

"Again, in reference to many of the improvements introduced of late years into the business, and for which men get all the credit, who knows that indirectly these men got ideas from the women with whom they associated in business, which afterward they put together, evolving one which was given out as original?"

"For instance, take the invention of

writing duplicate checks at the same time by means of carbon paper, which is such a saver of time to a saleswoman or salesman. A man gets the credit of that invention, I believe, when who knows but some young sales girl digging hard into a soft pad and seeing how the pencil marks showed up on the sheet below handed along a modified idea of the carbon sheet to some one original enough to improve on it."

"It's impossible for me to say truthfully that this concern has never had original ideas from women employees, even though I can't point to any one special improvement suggested by a woman. For all I know the men who have suggested improvements from time to time may have got valuable hints from women."

"In this store women's wages have gone up 50 per cent in the last few years, which shows that we consider them valuable employees. Where a woman does the work of a man and does it well she gets paid as a man."

"There is not much chance, though, of woman's ever holding all the best jobs in the industrial market. I am inclined to think she has gone about as far as it is possible for her to go in that direction."

"The position calling for a high grade of business acumen and knowledge and foresight will probably remain in the keeping of men—for some time to come anyway."

The women's side of the question is not easily reached by conferring with business women. Few, if any of them have convincing proof that originality is included to any great extent in the intuitive than men, and their intuition is as valuable as some other kinds of originality."

The head of a private business concern showed by facts and figures that the number of women inventors had been multiplying rapidly in the last quarter century. Her figures were obtained from United States Government reports.

"If," she said, "women are so lacking in originality as some of the businessmen of New York seem to think, why have they not taken out patents for all sorts of useful things?"

"Yes, I understand that inventing one article is not exactly like originating a scheme to enlarge a business, but nevertheless it shows a certain sort of originality."

"The charge has often been made that in the arts and sciences women are principally imitators, and seldom or ever do the originate anything. This may be true, but it is not true, however, in commercial life women lack originality and initiative."

The Death of Sir John Moore

NAPIER'S FINE DESCRIPTION OF THE HERO'S LAST FIGHT AT CORUNNA—STRUCK IN THE LEFT BREAST BY A CANNON SHOT—MOORE'S BRAVE END.

The British army was not provided to fight above one battle; there were no draft cattle, no means of transporting reserve ammunition, no magazines, no hospitals, no second line, no provisions a defeat would have been ruin. A victory, indeed, a battle is always a serious affair; two battles in such circumstances, though both should be victories, would have been destruction. A terrible storm of wind and rain, mixed with sleet, commenced as the army broke up from the position at Lago; the marks were destroyed, the guides lost the true direction, only some of the divisions gained the main road, the other two were bewildered, and when daylight broke, the rear columns were still near to Lago. The fatigue, the depression of mind occasioned by this misfortune, and the want of shoes, broke the order of the march; stragglers became numerous, and unfortunately Baird, thinking to relieve the men during the night, ordered a halt which took place in the night, desired the leading division to take refuge in the weather in some houses a little way off the road. Complete disorganization followed this imprudent act. The commander-in-chief, who covered this march with the re-bridges to be destroyed; but the engineers failed of success in every attempt.

As the troops approached Corunna on the 16th, the general's looks were directed toward the harbor; an expanse of water painfully convinced him that to fortune at least he was in no way beholden. Contrary winds had scattered the fleet at Vigo, and the last consuming exertion made by the army was rendered fruitless. The men were put into quarters, and their leader awaited the progress of events. The reserve was posted between the village of El Burgo and the bay of Santiago de Compostela. For twelve days these hardy soldiers had covered the retreat, during which time they traversed 80 miles of road in two marches, passed several nights under the stars, and were now, after seven days of marching, and now took the outposts, having fewer men missing from the ranks, including those who had fallen in battle, than the whole of the army—an admirable instance of the value of good discipline, and a manifest proof of the malignant injustice with which Moore has been accused of precipitating his retreat beyond the measure of the emergency.

Now a painful measure was adopted. The ground in front of Corunna is impracticable for cavalry. The horses were generally foundered; it was impossible to collect them all in the face of the enemy, and a great number were reluctantly ordered to be shot. Worn down and foot-broken, they would otherwise have been distributed among the French cavalry, or used as draft cattle, and their loss would have been a protracted suffering. But the fact of their being so foundered was one of the results of inexperience. The cavalry had come out to Corunna without proper equipments; the horses were ruined, and the soldiers, without the aid of hammers and nails to put them on, soon the French gathered on the Mero, and Moore sought a position of battle. On the evening of the 14th the French moved forward, and the dismounted cavalry, the sixteenth, the 15th, and 16th, and 17th, and 18th, and 19th, and 20th, and 21st, and 22nd, and 23rd, and 24th, and 25th, and 26th, and 27th, and 28th, and 29th, and 30th, and 31st, and 32nd, and 33rd, and 34th, and 35th, and 36th, and 37th, and 38th, and 39th, and 40th, and 41st, and 42nd, and 43rd, and 44th, and 45th, and 46th, and 47th, and 48th, and 49th, and 50th, and 51st, and 52nd, and 53rd, and 54th, and 55th, and 56th, and 57th, and 58th, and 59th, and 60th, and 61st, and 62nd, and 63rd, and 64th, and 65th, and 66th, and 67th, and 68th, and 69th, and 70th, and 71st, and 72nd, and 73rd, and 74th, and 75th, and 76th, and 77th, and 78th, and 79th, and 80th, and 81st, and 82nd, and 83rd, and 84th, and 85th, and 86th, and 87th, and 88th, and 89th, and 90th, and 91st, and 92nd, and 93rd, and 94th, and 95th, and 96th, and 97th, and 98th, and 99th, and 100th, and 101st, and 102nd, and 103rd, and 104th, 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