

but what do I find? Separate schools cannot be abolished because they are the constitutional right of their supporters. There is no use then in continuing an agitation that has no end in view. Advocacy of Prohibition is in the future rendered impossible because the Reform temperance men will not leave their party while the Conservative liquor dealers do not hesitate a moment. I have therefore to ask an opinion whether we should hereafter advance either of these questions as a part of the Conservative platform. The organ re-echoes the leader's words most emphatically, and we may take it as settled that the Ontario Conservatives have dropped Prohibition for good.

It would be idle to deny that we are pleased with this turn of affairs. We believe that the step taken by the Conservative leader will give great satisfaction to all but a mere handful of his followers, and we have not the least doubt that it will be followed by a similar advance on the part of Sir Oliver Mowat and his party. The people of this province do not want Prohibition, they are tired of the incessant clamor of the fanatics, they want time to attend to their own business, and they utterly refuse to make "the supreme issue" an issue at all. We must say a word, too, in commendation of Mr. Marter. It took courage to do what he did, and it shows a man has sound principle, when, conceiving that he has made a mistake he does not hesitate to take proper steps to get on the right track. He does not sacrifice a jot of his temperance principles in dropping an impracticable scheme of in-temperate legislation.

### A WOMAN'S CLUB.

A Story with a Moral that makes Interesting Reading.

(Aster in the "Horse Review.")

THESE were three of them. They were seated at a lunch-table upon which an order of brown bread and beans, an order of baked apples and cream, and an order of soup (without bread and butter) dissolved an alluring *trio ensemble*. They were women of the broad-winning type, and they all wore crush hats and carried hand-bags. One of them was a blonde, and brainy; another was a brunette, and pretty, and the remaining one of the trio was fat, forty and jolly. They had needed issues and dropped into a cheap restaurant for an economical lunch.

"Isn't it a comfort to think that continued good behavior may take us to a world where we won't have to pay anything out for food?" asked the woman who had ordered beans.

"I declare I am getting so tired of restaurant fare," exclaimed the one who was trying to grow plump on apples and cream, "that if it were not for the fact that there is nobody left to care for the children I'd stop eating and die."

"It isn't love of appetite or financial embarrassment alone that keeps me thin," said the fat woman, "but, I declare, there are no good restaurants left to eat at. And the service is neither clean nor respectful anywhere. Twice lately I have found a superfluity in my soup, and when I called the waiter's attention to it he

seemed to think I was overparticular. I believe I shall begin to carry my lunch from home in a music-roll as Jane Adams does."

"And where will you eat it?" asked one of the party. "I have thought of doing the same thing myself, but there is no place where one feels at liberty to spring a sandwich or to order a pickle and a hard-boiled egg without a special arrangement for the accommodation."

"I know a woman," said the blonde, "who eats her lunch on the front seat of a grip-car in pleasant seclusion. She has fresh air and comparative seclusion, with lunch thrown in, all for a dime."

"A good idea," exclaimed the brunette, "but more than half the time the weather would not permit of such an out-of-door. Pneumonia and pickles would go together, I am afraid, in such a lunch as that."

The three women were quiet for a while, paying close attention to their spread; then one of them spoke again:

"I hear you looked very 'swell' the other night at the wedding. What did you wear?"

As this remark was addressed to the brunette she brightened a bit over her beams and answered:

"Oh, I wore my old black silk with the primrose fittings. It's more ancient than the date of the emancipation proclamation, but I can't afford another."

"I heard you wore the best-dressed woman in the room, and that your hair looked as though it had been brought in a box. How do you manage to keep such a lovely-looking head of hair, anyway, flying about as you do, all day long?"

"This question of the coiffure was a sore point with the blonde, whose own head generally looked as though it had been the plaything of a north-east gale.

"Where do you suppose I dressed for the wedding?" asked the little brunette lady.

"Why, at home, I suppose," replied the other.

"And role in and out, fifty miles all told, after four o'clock, to attend a wedding ceremony appointed at eleven sharp? I'm a pretty good 'hustler,' but I'm not equal to that. No, sir; I didn't go home at all, and I was too abjectly 'broke' to go to a hotel, so I dressed in the wash-room around at the office, combed my hair with a side-comb, and dressed it before a plate-glass window. I slipped my disorder gown into a bundle and hid it under my desk, while, Cinderella-like, I burst upon the elevator-boy in the transformation effect of a silk gown, a rhinestone hairpin and a stunning coiffure."

"Well, I never," gasped the blonde.

"How on earth did you manage? Why, anyone can see through the window of that wash-room as plain as day. Weren't you afraid?"

"I managed all right," replied the smart one. "I turned out the electric light while I was changing my gown, and only turned it on again when the deed was done."

"It must have been exceedingly awkward," replied the fat woman. "I don't see how you ever did it in a place full of men."

"It was awkward," replied the brunette, "but I wouldn't have missed that particular wedding for the world, and there was no other way to make it. I was as nervous as a witch all the evening, and felt like saying to the company: 'If I look like a fright, pity me, but do not condemn.' I am by nature a fastidious dresser, but circumstances have been too much for me. In my busy life I am thankful if I find the time and the place to lave my hands in a running brook and comb my locks with my fingers. Pride has forsaken me, like the captain who quits a foundering bark, not from choice but from necessity."

Again there was silence, while the three women devoted themselves to the absolute extermination of the banquet. At last the fat woman broke the silence:

"What on earth were you doing at the panorama last Sunday afternoon?" Jim said he never was so surprised in his whole life as to see you there when he dropped in with our cousin from the country to show him the sights."

The remark was addressed to the blonde, who, carefully removing the last sandwich of apple from her chin, was about to draw on her gloves preparatory to dropping the place. She blushed a little under the term of her big hat, and answered:

"Oh, I was satisfying a morbid curiosity, I suppose."

"Jim said you looked positively fervent; and that the big man in the military overcoat, who was with you, seemed as uncomfortable as a stricken deer. He saw something was up, and so kept his hands, but I am dying to know what it all means."

"If you have the time to spare I will tell you about it," said the blonde, while her two companions leaned forward to listen.

"Last Sunday night," said she, "I received a telegram from my old friend, Colonel Popper, announcing that he would pass through Chicago, Sunday, and wished very much to see me. He could only stop between trains, and would have no time to go out to my home. You know what excellent friends we have always been—"

"We do," sighed the two.

"And you also know," continued the narrator, "that he has my business matters in charge. It is a year since I saw him, so he was ordered a year ago this last September away out to the frontier. Well, I simply had to arrange matters so that I could spend the whole day on the good part of it with him. In the first place he breakfasted at a restaurant. We sat at the table just as long as we dared, and then we went out on the street. It was bitterly cold, and we couldn't stand it. I wouldn't go to a hotel, for, say that. I wouldn't go to a lunger, regard for the traditional conventions of my youth, I couldn't. You know the colonel wears a big military cape and is as conspicuous as a stage villain. He is in reality as harmless as a dove, but has every appearance of being a blood-spilling until my wife were numb. Then we went out and sat in the depot long enough to give our own woman and child of my acquaintance a chance to cry. 'Ala! we've quitte a chance to cry, 'Ala! we've quitte your tricks.' Driven from the depot, we went in desperation to the park, where I saw a man, whose name I can't remember, who was with me without a enjoy each other's company without a challenge. It was when I saw Jim that I lost my head and said something to the Colonel that made him sad. I could have killed him, but I had to be cheerful. Since that day I have had dread-ful ideas of publishing a bulletin to explain matters. When I passed the cab-man one morning—the one who drove us to take him up one side and tell him the circumstances, and as for the depot ushers I feel such an overwhelming desire to clear up that Sunday's record that I am positively going mad on the subject. I did get so far as to ask one of them if he had put on a glove which my uncle had dropped, but there was something in the young man's looks that prevented my going any further."

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"Which all goes to prove," remarked the fat woman, as they then stepped away for the cashier's desk and walked their way out into the busy street, "that we have been listening to experiences which tend directly upon a question that has very near my heart. We business women need to build and maintain a club home. We shall never be able to enjoy it, and I had relief for 10,000 hammocks until we have a club-home organized on broad principles, like men's clubs and granting like privileges and accommodations. When a man desires a good lunch he doesn't depend on a poorly conducted restaurant, or upon a wandering grip to secure it. He goes to his club and obtains a delicious meal. You would not be forced to dress in a public wash-room, my dear, if there had been a woman's club, of which you were a member to furnish you with accommodation. A poor, puffing one, would not have forfeited your claim to the colonel's regard and the depot usher's respect had there been the wide-open, hospital doors of such a haven placed at your disposal. When an out-of-town woman comes to the city to do a little shopping and having finished it, has an hour or two of unoccupied time upon her hands before the departure of her train, she need not sit at the depot exposed to the indignation of various diseases, the indignation and discomfort and annoyance of which parlor at her disposal, stocked with books and games, as men's clubs are, yielding entertainment as well as rest. I do not want to die until I have seen the achievement of my pet plan for a good 'liberty hall' for women."

"I could talk for an hour upon this subject, said the blonde and the brunette both together, "but I must go. Suppose we defer further discussion!"

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