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A PUBLIC CHALLENGE.

To the Editors of the N. P. Farmer.

The *Scientific American* says: "There are men upon whom wine has not the ordinary exhilarating influence, and opinion acts only as a cathartic; and others who are born cunuchs. All these should bear their idiosyncrasies modestly, and not presume to make laws for others who have all the common attributes of humanity." This trite paragraph condenses within the compass of a nut shell, the whole experience of mankind, regarding the totalist fanaticism of abstinence, and the Papist fanaticism of Celibacy. The verdict of this experience is, that the affinity between the human spirit and the spirit of wine, is intended to increase our knowledge of good and evil; and the affinity between the sexes is intended to perpetuate our race. When these instincts are gratified as our maker directs, they lead to the highest conditions of human enjoyment and perfection. When these instincts are abstracted and perverted by the idiosyncrasies of fanatics, the consequences are seen in the degenerating disciples of Neal Dow, and in the hidden cloisters of Papal Rome.

It is half a century since I first heard a totalist lecturer. He declared war against the 'invisible spirit of wine,' as he termed it, and prophesied that all mankind would soon refuse to use it, and it would cease to be sold or made. That war still continues, and similar prophesies are still made with as much enthusiasm as when these fanatics first proclaimed these to our fathers. While fighting this invisible spirit, the figurative army has changed its tactics, and multiplied its men and means many times, but the quantity of spirit used, has multiplied many more times. It costs fifty times more money, contains fifty times more poison, and contains fifty times more crime and diseases, delirium-tremens and deaths. Why should we permit the tides of temperance, health and morals to be thus driven backward, while the tides of science and civilization have made such rapid progress during the same period, wherever true temperance has been cultivated? The rapid increase of intemperance and vice, which prompted me to search for its cause, has obscured the intellect of these totalists, instead of opening their eyes. They assumed that no special knowledge was required to change the whole method of man's alimentation, and they despised the teachings of nature and experience. They tried to prevent the use of outside spirit, without improving the inside supply to fill the void. They insisted that wine injured a healthy system, although it was both food and medicine, when the same system was diseased. Observation would have taught them, that when spirit is supplied by the natural process, equal to its consumption by the mental organs, the whole economy is harmonious. But if the food be defective, or lack cerealine; or the stomach be dispeptic, or destitute of pepsin, the food will pass off undigested, and the brain will crave spirit from any source, even if the stomach be filled with crude food. These defects may be supplied by graham flour, oat meal, or other food containing cerealine; or by ripe grapes or other fruit, instead of spirit, to satisfy the mental appetite. These vinous foods will be digested in the

system, and the spirit will be absorbed by the brain and nervous tissues, which will receive exactly the same renovation gradually, which they would receive instantly if that grape juice was changed to wine, and swallowed at a gulp. Any one whose digestive organs are healthy, may satisfy himself that the spirit produced in his own stomach, is identical with that from the distillery, by this simple experiment. Let him chew up sugar, starch or fruit, till it is saturated with saliva, and spit it into a dish instead of swallowing it; add a little pepsin, and keep this at the heat of the stomach during the time required for digestion, and the fermentable food will be changed into spirit. Strain or decant out the 'lees,' and separate the water by freezing it. The liquid remaining is alcohol, the spirit of wine, the same spirit that temperate people use with their food, totalists use with their drugs, and drunkards use without either food or drugs. Millions of men make all their free spirits in this way, except that they do not freeze out the water.

When food contains the elements of spirit in excess, and the brain work is limited, intoxication may be produced by the vintage in the stomach, and it will reject all free spirit. When food is defective in the elements of spirit, as animal food is, the demand for free spirit becomes uncontrollable. The former is the condition of the people in wine countries. The latter is the condition of flesh-eating savages, and those who subsist upon totalist food. Thus science and observation combine to show, that the appetite for spirit is as natural in man, as that for crude food, or for the conjugal relations. That the licensing, or the freedom of the liquor traffic, does not produce this appetite, but that license is one of the many efforts of society to restrain its abuse. That no human law can quench this appetite, or annul any part of nature; but a competent knowledge will enable us, as it does others, to gratify this appetite with pleasure and profit. This knowledge will teach us to subdue the appetite for spirit, by improving the quality of the food and the condition of the stomach, instead of trying to prohibit the use of all free spirit, and eliminating its elements from our crude food.

Your correspondents, Viola Cole, and W. S. H., caused me to review this whole subject carefully, with the conviction that the rapid increase of intemperance and crime, which follows the abstinence reform, has been suffered long enough in silence, and that the public discussion of the situation will benefit temperance and morality. But its discussion thus in the *FARMER*, is so broken and disconnected, that the fore-end would be lost before the last of it was reached. For these reasons, I propose the public exposition of this problem of temperance in Peake's Hall, or the school house in Wadena. W. S. H., and his associates may state their theories one evening, and I will state mine the next; and so alternately, till the subject is investigated, and better understood. I will pay rent, lights, etc. on my evenings, and the crusaders will pay on theirs, and a condensed report of each will be furnished for publication in the *FARMER*. I will appoint W. J. Whipple, of England Prairie, to arrange details for me, with the agent of my opponent; only stipulating that the discussion take place as early as convenient, and before the evenings will be otherwise employed. Yours, D.

Now is the time for our farmers to begin looking after their machinery, seeing that everything is in running order for spring work. After a little you will be busy and cannot afford time to attend to these matters, while at present you have nothing else to do.

Neighborhood News.

OAK VALLEY, April 11th, 1881.

EDITORS FARMER:
It is not often that I write for a newspaper, but feeling so much gratitude that the scourge which has been hovering within our midst has been cornered, I thought I would say a few words. Last Wednesday, with one death at Mr. Bratten's, which makes four, and five lying sick at Mr. Johnson's, and the expectation that it had entered Mr. Webb's family, things were looking blue in our vicinity. Com. French at this moment was called upon for assistance, and well did he act his part. Without stopping to attend the burial of his brother-in-law's child, but with the words, "I am going to stop this, and don't you forget it," he started for Wadena. For his promptness of action, the people of this town and vicinity should ever feel grateful. People certainly should feel that it is a blessing to have such an officer. Such an officer as Mr. F., is an honor to any community, and it should be the earnest endeavors of all, to uphold such men. He is to be loved and honored. Dr. Babcock who was sent, is deserving of a great deal of praise. He was obliged to take the cases in their very worst stages, but with untiring energy and skill, he has conquered it. Long live such men as Commissioner French and Dr. Babcock, say I. JERRY.

WRIGHTSTOWN.
The all absorbing question now unsolved, is when will spring come, and everybody is anxious to have it solved.

Business is dull, in consequence of the bad state of the roads, they being nearly impassable; but we being a patient set of people, we will wait and hope.

The railroad excitement is all the rage here now. Everybody is anxious to have the road run just along side of their land, on their neighbor's land, and the depots are prospectively located on every section.

Phym Aldrich now drives the boss yoke of oxen, having traded for the cattle owned by W. E. Barber.

John Moore and wife, returned from Wisconsin last week. They think we have been highly favored here this winter, to what they were in Wisconsin.

Uncle Wesley Wright thinks, that unless the snow goes off faster than it has lately, he will not get his corn planted in April this year, as he usually has done.

McDowell has sold his farm to W. E. Barber, and will start for Missouri next week.

The Finance Investigating Committee, for the town of Bertha, found the money matters all O. K., except, that the said committee will have to wait a little time for their pay.

INVISIBLE.

WOODSIDE PRAIRIE.
I have been told, that under the skillful management of neighbor Reece, Mr. Isaac Bratton's children are doing nicely.

Thos. Goodale has purchased a span of horses. They are black, and well matched.

Mr. Geo. Smith, who has the management of the farm, ne1-4 of section 21, is expected some time next week.

The boys south of the river, have commenced to build their school house.

Was it an April fool at Isaac Buck's? Oh no! It was a nine pound boy, at 4 o'clock in the morning, April 1st. Both mother and son doing nicely.

A short time ago, Mr. Batchert killed a large lynx, in the swamp about one mile northwest of his residence.

"Dengo" says there has been a very hard crust on the snow lately. Correct Bro. D. The crust down this way is about two feet thick, but have

patience, delivrance will come by and by. July and August will crack the crust badly, even if it should fail to break it up entirely.

E. Gilmore, father of Mr. S. F. Gilmore, died March 12th, at Winnebago Agency, Blue Earth Co., Minn., aged 73 years.

Mrs. Gilmore returned from Mankato last Tuesday, where she has been visiting friends. She says the snow is deeper there, than in Woodside. INCOG.

PARKERS PRAIRIE.

Miss Hicks, of Wadena, commenced on the 4th, to teach a five month's term of school in our village; not a full attendance yet, owing to the bad condition of the roads.

Miss Jose Logan, is teaching in Effington, and Miss Florence Turner teaching in the Peterson district, this town.

Miss Hattie Reeves, I understand, has been employed to teach in the town of Elmo.

Dr. Farward has gone to Wisconsin. The concert given by the Frazee family, assisted by a number of our young folks, on the 4th inst., was a complete success.

Mr. Logan has commenced the erection of a building in our village, intended for a millinery establishment.

It is said by those that ought to know, that our town is sadly in need of a good lawyer, and we think so too, as the one horse farce establishment, has about played out.

Quite a number of good buildings, are going up in our town this season. Our town is bound to boom, railroad or no railroad. Amongst the numerous buildings going up, is a large and commodious Town Hall, with offices; one for the incoming lawyer, one for a diploma M. D., barber, &c., and then there will be a private office for the demijohn, where all matters pertaining to the elevation of spirits can be discussed.

Mr. Huntly has sold out, and is going west this spring.

DIED—April 7th, 1881, at his residence, in the town of Elmo, of lung fever, Michael Murray, aged 68 years and 7 months. Funeral services were held Sunday the 10th, at 3 o'clock p. m. Rev. John Knight, of Wadena, officiated. A large number of friends were in attendance, and followed the remains to their last resting place, beneath the sod of his homestead. F.

OAK VALLEY.

The weather is beginning to appear quite spring like. Welcome spring! Right glad will we be to hail thy first approach!

Wesley Brink and wife are expected home from Winsor's mill, sometime this week. Mrs. Winsor has been at the mill for a couple of weeks back.

The people of Oak Valley are endeavoring to locate a cemetery, which is very much needed. They have not yet decided on a location, though several citizens have offered a piece of land. For some reason, the people from the southern part of the township failed to put in an appearance, at the last meeting, so that nothing was done, and as yet, we do not know where it will be situated.

Last Thursday morning, at half past two o'clock, the angel of death again visited the home of Isaac Bratton, taking away another little one, a daughter not quite six years of age. Not quite three weeks ago they were a happy family, consisting of father, mother, and five children, with no thought of danger menacing them. Now, the father and two children (the oldest and youngest) are all that are left. The same dread disease that took the others, also ended this young life.

Mr. D. Johnson's family were also called upon to part with another loved one, on the morning of the 8th.

Little Anna has left this life of sickness and pain, and with her twin sister is at rest. The lives of these two little cripples has been full of trials. They have suffered much, but now we can safely say they are at rest. The bereaved parents have the sympathy of the entire community. Two others of the same family are sick with the diphtheria, but the Doctor informed me the other day that all but one was out of danger, and she was better. My little girl has been quite sick, but under the treatment of Dr. Cromett, she is again quite smart. Dr. Babcock is in attendance at Mr. Johnson's.

That item I have been waiting for, has at last arrived, and they are happy.

Married, at the residence of the brides father, Oak Valley, Otter Tail Co., Minn., April 10th, by Mr. B. Burton, Justice of the Peace, Miss Celia Packard to Mr. Nathan Baldwin. May their future lives be as pleasant as the day on which they were wedded, is the sincere wish of

REPORTER.
Why the M. N. Railroad Should Run Further South.

To the Editors of the N. P. Farmer.

In surveying and locating the line of the above named R. R., it seems to me that the company have made a great mistake in running so far north. In the first place, it is making the line just as long, and besides running over a much rougher country, than if it run further south. I have lived in this country quite a spell, and know the country about as well as any of them. Now, in the next place, what is it that pays a railroad company for building a road? Does not the local business pay them? If it does, then it is certainly for their advantage to build so as to get the local trade. It has been ascertained that the four towns, to-wit: Eastern, Parkers Prairie, Elmo and Effington, have marketed the nice little amount of 250,000 bushels of wheat this last fall and winter. This wheat has been drawn and sold in the three villages, Wadena, Osakes, and Alexandria, each of them 25 miles to draw to market, and the prospect is, that next harvest will nearly double the amount to ship from these four towns, to say nothing of Inman and other localities. Now if this R. R. should run on the south side of the timber in Inman, and a depot be located in Inman, the M. N. would get the largest part of this grain to handle. Whereas, if it runs north through Deer Creek, it will not get it at all. Now Deer Creek has a good market, and a good share of the grain raised there, will be taken to Bluffton or Wadena, even if this road should run there. Is it not for the interest of the company to secure the handling of half a million of bushels or more of grain, or is it for their interest to loose it! In the next place, the line that has been seen lately, is a very expensive one. The country is very uneven, consequently it will be a costly one to grade, while the line south is a very level one, and the cost of grading will be but a trifle, compared with the northern line. The southern line, known as Elder Inman's, has not got either a cut or fill of 4 feet from the west side of Pease Prairie to Bluff Breck, a distance of twelve miles or more. Mr. Alexander says it will make the line one mile longer. Well, it may, but that is doubtful. Wadena is just 6 miles north of this line where it crosses section 15. The south end of East Battle Lake is 5 miles south, and section 15 is about half way between East Battle Lake and Wadena. A line drawn from the south end of Battle Lake to Wadena, will run across section 15 in Inman. Now which is the longest, a line running straight from Battle Lake to Wadena, or one running 4 miles north of this! In seeing up the whole thing, I can see only just this, the building of the road on the southern line, secures to the road the benefit of handling half a million bushels of grain, and a less expense of building the road. If the engineers do not believe it, just let them come and view the two lines. Yours Respectfully,

W. M. GARDNER.