

The Sun.

Rutherfordton, N. C.

C. D. WILKIE, Publisher.

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ANNOUNCEMENT.

The Sun is printed by The Thermal Printing Company, of Rutherfordton, N. C. The office is on the second floor of the Morrow building, opposite the post office. We will be glad at any time to have our friends call and give us any news they have concerning themselves or their friends that will be of interest to the public generally. The Sun will give its correspondents as wide latitude as possible, but in no case will it be responsible for their views. Brief letters of local news from any part of the county, will be thankfully received. Obituaries not amounting to more than five inches will be published free of charge.

Thursday, April 30, 1903.

DOUBTS FROM TWO DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS.

Before another issue of The Sun, the question whether the dispensary in Rutherfordton shall be abolished will have been settled. The Sun has not the slightest doubt about the result of the vote and never has had. The dispensary must go.

Of one thing The Sun is glad—unprofitable discussion will cease. Those of us who vote with the majority will jubilate a little; and afterwards, to the reflective portion will come the second thought, How far do our personal responsibilities extend into the new conditions which our votes have helped to institute?

For the "dead sure" people, The Sun has less regard than for that large and respectable class who entertain reasonable doubts. On any legal subject, the shallowest-pated one of the periwigged fellows will give instantaneous expression to opinion as if the most abstruse questions of law were always at his finger ends. The judicious barrister will be conservatively cautious even in his construction of the simplest statute.

The writer was sitting with a gentleman on one side of the street the other day, and the two were talking over with each other the dispensary question. The friend said in substance: "My judgment prompts me to vote against the abolishment of the dispensary. I believe the dispensary the best solution of the liquor question. I do not believe it has increased the sale of whiskey in this county. It has seemed to increase it at this point because we see actually or in figures how much is sold. Nor has it increased lawlessness. It has done exactly the opposite. The Mayor tells us that in four years of the dispensary we have had ninety per cent less lawlessness in the town than we had in the four years previous. That fact is amazing. The Clerk of the Court, who is now serving his second term, says not a criminal case growing out of liquor has been docketed from this township since he has been in office. It does seem that this ought to be satisfactory. Yet I have friends here two or three, big-hearted, brainy men, who have acquired the drink habit, not from the dispensary, for they had acquired it before the dispensary was established. Will the banishment of the dispensary be helpful to them? I am afraid not; yet I sometimes feel as if I should be glad to have them try that expedient. I do not know, therefore, really, whether I should rely on my judgment or defer to my sensibilities."

Five minutes afterwards we chanced to be alone with a gentleman across the street. He is known all over the town as a good man, a member of the church, a self-distrustful gentleman. He said, "How are you going to vote on the dispensary?" Without waiting for an answer, he continued: "I thought I had fully made up my mind to vote against it; but sometimes I have my doubts. If to vote it out was all, and that meant to vote out whiskey with it, the thing would be easy. But if I vote it out, and things become as bad as they were when we had blind tigers—five places in this little town selling liquor night and day in addition to the jug and wagon trade—could I look on and feel that I was not somewhat to blame in making the change? Can we by law make a man do any better than he can be influenced to do by friendly appeal and moral suasion?"

For both these gentlemen and both the classes they represent, The Sun has the

most profound respect. But for the swollen Bildad or the Democratic or Republican demagogue; the man who is not satisfied unless he can wind up somebody's else's conscience with his own key, or the other fellow who will juggle with a great social question for the sake of a temporary personal or political advantage, for neither of these classes has The Sun anything except contempt. But both are here; and every citizen of Rutherfordton who knows our people could point you out examples of them. The first of these classes is usually honest but over-zealous; the latter are selfish and narrow partisans.

There is a third class who need only to be mentioned to be despised. The preachers do not know them, though occasionally they are numbered with the disciples and carry the bag—but the people do know them. They pose as saints and you might think they are the bosom friends of the church. Yet they'd promise a preacher in the very temple to "vote out the liquor traffic," and after the dispensary is abolished would send a thousand miles if it were necessary, to get what they "need in their families." These are the hypocrites.

Fortunately, there are not many who belong to these latter classes. Most of our people will do what they believe is right, uninfluenced in any way by rave or rant. To these, after all, when the contest has ceased and the excitement has subsided, must society turn for its peace, its safety, its sense of security. Upon these, when all conclusions have been tried, must church and State, town and country, home and fireside, lean for protection and support.

SPECIAL SCHOOL TAX.

"Once more to the breach, kind friends, once more!"

The act under which an election has been ordered by our Town Commissioners to take the sense of our people as to voting a special tax of not more than thirty cents on the one hundred dollars valuation of property and ninety cents on the poll to supplement the public school fund, contains the following provision:

"In case a majority of the qualified voters at said election is in favor of said tax, the same shall be annually levied and collected in such town or city in the manner prescribed for the levy and collection of other city taxes. All moneys levied under the provisions of this section shall, upon collection, be placed to the credit of the town school committee, composed of not less than five nor more than seven members, appointed by the Board of Aldermen for said city or town, and this shall be, by said committee expended exclusively upon the public schools in said city or town, and there shall be one school district in the said city or town in which there may be established one or more schools for each race, and the school committee shall apportion the money among said schools in such manner as in their judgment will equalize school facilities."

This quotation contains all the provisions necessary to enable our people to vote intelligently.

The largest taxpayer in this town—a cultured business man—said to the writer last Saturday that he should vote for the good roads law and the special tax. His home is here, his business is here. Yet he has no children old enough to avail them of the benefits of this tax. Yet he knows that a good graded school in Rutherfordton would increase the value of his real estate far more than the amount of his tax.

There is a constant drift of the country people to the town; but the drift is to such towns as can and do give them exceptional facilities for the education of their children. A cultured family here and there in a community counts for much—but for comparatively so little. Thrift and enterprise are the results of general intelligence.

If Rutherfordton wants a set-back, all she has to do is to shut her eyes and vote against enlarged school facilities for the children. We have said and sung and written so much on this subject that our fingers are tired and our brain weary.

Surely, surely we do not intend to be left utterly behind in this most important of all important matters.

Last week's Forest City Progress editorially had the following:

"Wonder how much longer that school controversy will be kept up in The Sun. We think it is time for some body to call a halt. Shame!"

The Sun wonders who Progress is striking at. Whether it is firing at Rucker, Morris or Flack or The Sun? And we would also like to know of Progress what it has to do with the school matter, one way or the other?

By inadvertence, the heading of the letter of Mr. W. F. Tomlinson to Capt. Bell in reference to good roads literature, was left out in the copy printed on another page in this issue. It should have been "United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Public Road Inquiries, Washington, D. C." Parties interested may address Mr. Tomlinson as above.

MR. I. E. AVERY AND HIS WRITINGS.

The writer is a teacher, and for more than forty years has been a reader of books and newspapers. Without claim to ability as a writer, he is yet a lover of the subtleties of speech. Any student under Drs. McGuffey and Holmes, of the University of Virginia in the old days, would have been stimulated to some critical study—some acquaintance with the principles that underlie classic expression. Professional requirement, even in high school course, sends one back time and again to the old masters; and for use in daily exercise, to secure force and freshness the teacher must cull here and there from current, and what is called fugitive literature. Apt illustration taken from writers who touch delicately and describe engagingly some phase of modern life, brings out beautifully the distinctive features under which we classify, and often clearly designate even the tints and shades of that difficult thing we call style.

With the best of us, in school class-work the newspaper has become an indispensable supplement to the text book.

The Sun has said this much that it may add its mite to the praise a discriminating public is bestowing on Mr. Avery, city editor of the Charlotte Observer. That paper may well be proud of its editorial staff—particularly of what it calls its bright young men. Mr. Caldwell has a place of his own, and when he chooses, can 'fetch as pretty a compass' as anybody, and in a "dead ahead," as the sailors say, can outwind them all. But we are writing of one of the young knights of the quill—the fine young fellows who do not attempt so much to affect opinion, as to express the true, beautiful, and good in sentiment.

We have watched Mr. Avery with growing interest. He was out in the far East, both in China and Japan, we think, with the American legation under Mr. Jennigan, our classmate. He has had rare advantages; and to high natural endowments have been added the graces of culture and the widening influence of association and travel.

All Mr. Avery's work is strong and tasteful; and in it all there is distinctive flavor. We believe a close reader could tell it if at any time Mr. Avery were out of the city. What he does is all his; but now and then you drop upon something so clearly marked as that it falls into what you are sure nobody else could have written. This we call individuality. It is the personal element—a magnetic force impossible to define, as elusive as genius, but as unmistakable as the glance of an eye or the secret touch of a hand.

His report of the Haywood-Skinner tragedy was a master piece. A lady, in whose fine literary taste we have great confidence, said to us that she did not dream anybody could do so delicate and difficult a piece of work so well. In matters of that character the impressions of a cultivated woman are instinctively correct. Mr. Avery's "Idle Comments" in the Monday Observer have caught even the preachers, and in many instances turned prejudice into praise. We tender him our thanks for the pleasure his writings have given us personally.

If we were asked to put our finger on the one element that more than another gives cast to the charm of Mr. Avery's work, we should say that it is the fine poetic vein that runs through all his prose. Poe in his critique on the poetic principle says there is no true poetry without pathos. Henry Timrod goes further, and in that matchless poem of his on Spring tells us there is a nameless pathos in all things beautiful. The poetic vein in all really classic prose is as the currents in the ocean—here diffused, there defined. Yet they seem to give that mysterious thing we call the sea much of its dynamic force. Mr. Avery has it.

EXHIBIT OF COUNTY DEBT FOR COURT HOUSE AND JAIL.

First cost of court house	\$8,500.00
Second cost of court house	1,200.00
Total	\$9,700.00
Jail	7,796.96
Lot	180.00
Interest on above	\$17,676.99
Interest on above	628.87
Paid from Dispensary proceeds	\$18,305.86
Amount due after July 1, 1903	\$11,676.06

Note: This statement includes credit of \$1,026.60 now in hands of the Treasurer, and ready to be paid. The figures are official and may be relied upon. The whole unbonded county debt which includes above, cost of bridges, etc., is about \$28,000.

SNAKES AND DEMAGOGUES.

The Sun has seen from the beginning how easily the Democratic party could be injured by a heated campaign over the dispensary, and worst of all, be wounded in the house of its friends. Those who choose to do so, will recall that in the last campaign, only a few weeks before the election, an anonymous circular was distributed all over the county, magnifying the county debt, and charging the Democracy with extravagance, if not corruption. The columns of The Sun have been opened to all classes of our people—Jew and Gentile, Parthian and Mede. Where counsel has seemed to be darkened, The Sun has interposed; and, by brushing away the irrelevant, has sought to keep the real cause at issue clear and unclouded. It asked the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners to make, over his own signature, a statement of the county debt. It asked him to state the truth as to the building of the court house and jail, and upon what basis the debt for these needed improvements was incurred. It did this, not that it wished anybody to be influenced one way or another by a money consideration in the settlement of a moral and social question. Nay, as soon as this financial exhibit was published, The Sun, in language as strong as it knew how to employ, said no conscientious man should vote from a money standpoint.

Then, too, we have urged that all the opponents of the dispensary could hope to accomplish was a change of conditions—not from drinking to sobriety, but from regulated license to a secret and irresponsible traffic.

Upon these two things The Sun has insisted. Those who did not understand its purpose have been, of course, too short-sighted to appreciate its position. But just the same it has shone on; and now we face next Tuesday with the sense of duty done. It has driven home to the hearts of its Christian readers the fact that they can not loose their sandals and lay aside their armor simply because they have succeeded in closing one door where drink is sold in this town, but they must gird themselves anew, since they will make it possible for half a dozen others to be secretly opened. The anti-saloon league must in all conscience become the anti-blind tiger league; and ministers of the gospel who have felt constrained to go into the newspaper, must feel enjoined to go into the police court. The appeal has been to Caesar; and those who have prayed the appeal are, to use a legal expression, in duty bound to make effective the authority they have invoked. The Sun promises to be with them and stand by them.

In the second place, The Sun's insistence has lifted the county debt out of the plane of political issue. It is of less public service to kill a rattle-snake than to scotch a demagogue. We are not talking about the few we find in our party. They are usually too weak to do much harm. But we are talking about the Republican gentlemen of that persuasion—the wary, wiry, dangerous fellows, who, following their fashion, have had their sleeves enlarged that they might laugh in them at 'the fool Democrats' quareling with each other during this dispensary campaign. The Sun has had its eye specially on them. It has taken out this county debt and pinioned it where it belongs; and it has done this in such way as that these political plotters in voting against the dispensary have been made to subscribe to the county debt. A year from now, when they get out on the hills and in the hollows, and make political proclamation that the Democrats have burdened the county, it is in the power of any Democrat to ask them if they did not vote to abolish the dispensary and claim to do it from a high manly motive. If they say "yes," The Sun has put it in our power to touch this button, and the hypocritical mouth is shut.

This is the service The Sun has tried to render its party and its people. In the end, its foresight will be appreciated.

GROSS RECEIPTS OF THE DISPENSARY.

January	\$1,122.25
February	986.80
March	1,427.72
April	1,021.20
May	1,029.30
June	866.55
July	1,136.05
August	848.90
September	1,086.15
October	1,043.54
November	1,304.55
December	1,326.05
Total	\$13,199.06

The above is the gross sales—not profits. Out of this amount the liquor has to be paid for, the dispensary expenses deducted, and the remainder divided equally between the town and county. The Sun gives every fact available. It wishes it could give the gross blind tiger sales and receipts; and the enormity of this miserable liquor traffic might be brought fairly before our people. It is appalling.

THE KEELEY TREATMENT.

We call special attention to the article copied from Webster's Weekly on the Keeley Institute at Greensboro. We know Major Osborne personally. He and his Institute deserve every good word said of them.

Leslie E. Keeley was one of earth's benefactors. We heard him lecture on Inebriety in Memphis in 1893. To us the lecture was a revelation.

The drink habit is a disease. The habit is formed as easily as is the tobacco habit. All of them are the results of diseased nerve cells and consequent paralysis of will power. Yet the poor drunkard is an outcast. He is misunderstood by his bosom friends, and made the butt of ridicule and satire. Down by the road side, with no capacity left even to enjoy the drink that once gave him physical rest, he is the victim of a mental torture to which no other species of suffering compares. Priests and Levites take a look, and with jeer and disgust pass him by. No consolation for him in a creed; no sympathy in a sermon; no help in heaven or hell.

Leslie E. Keeley went before the church and as a physician, as a philanthropist, as a Christian, demonstrated the pathology of the drink crave. He aroused the conscience of thinking people, of Christian scientists; and instead of ducking the poor fallen victim, or dumping him as a dog into a filthy dungeon he taught men that it is nobler to treat and strengthen, to help and save. And these Keeley institutes in every land have rescued their thousands and tens of thousands. They are Christian sanitariums, and are the very highest proofs of the fact that as weak and sinful as we are, humanity by slow approach is getting nearer towards God.

THE DISPENSARY AND THE WATTS BILL.

We have said that the dispensary will go, and that it would be strange if it did not. Why? Because, in the first place, everybody is opposed to the liquor traffic. Everybody is ready to 'make a speech on temperance'. To the townspeople in Rutherfordton, this is not, to be sure, the question; but to vote for the dispensary requires that one should put his judgment against his sensibilities. This is always difficult.

In the next place, many will say, If we can not have it sold in the country they shall not have it sold in town. That is the prejudice. The town is vitally interested. It will be sold here anyway. In ordinary things, the country people are ready to let the townspeople govern themselves. It is a sort of spite at the Watts bill.

The writer does not blame them much. The Watts bill is the most undemocratic piece of legislation that conservative old North Carolina ever adopted. Local option—the right of a locality to say by vote what it wishes—is the true democratic policy. This piece of paternalism in government is another drop-down from the old party standards. It will give us trouble some day. Reactions are a part of nature's laws.

SOUP-TABLE EDUCATION.

It is about time that we people had learned to put our hands in our pockets and pay for at least a portion of the education of our children. This seems eminently the day of soup-table education. It does not augur well. We have tried to keep an observant eye on the communities around us—the rural communities particularly. When the State furnished free tuition for about ten or eleven weeks in the year, the people felt that it was a part of parental obligation to supplement the term by private enterprise, and full schools with good teachers for eight or nine months were kept up in neighborhoods which content themselves now with the four months furnished by the State. Besides, the whole thing has been so cheapened that the children get out of the four months scarcely as much as they did out of the ten weeks.

A self-respecting people will be largely a self-educating people.

The Sun is only 18 weeks old to-day and has a paid-up circulation of over 1,300—500 more bona-fide subscribers than any other paper has ever had in this county at any age. From the fact that we carry over 30 columns of advertising each week is evidence that The Sun is one of the best advertising mediums in Western North Carolina. Every week from 1,500 to 3,000 copies leave this office. Our books and post-office receipts show it.