CHOOSING THE LESSER EVIL

Post Canteens from the Point of View of an Army Private.

FACTS VERSUS THEORY AND SENTIMENT

Experience of a Soldier with the Groggeries That Formerly Surrounded Posts—Benefit of the Canteen.

It is an old saying, and in this case a true one, "Of two evils choose the lesser," says a private soldier in Harper's Weekly. The leading spirits in the creation of a post canteen, to take the place of a post-traders' saloon, did, in fact, choose the lesser evil. Beyond question to any rational-minded man, who has a care for the welfare of his fellow man, a drinking resort of any class or name is an evil. The question naturally arises, "Why do such places exist?" Simply because people want them and that is why the post canteen has an existence today.

It has been a well-recognized fact from General Washington's time down to the present day that soldiers are not all saints, nor ever will be, and that a certain percentage of the men will have their whisky or beer, orders to the contrary notwithstanding. The founders of the post canteen did not establish it for the purpose of making soldiers drink or to derive any profit from it, as the only profit there is in it goes to the soldier, the greater share to the one who never enters its doors. Post traders' stores and post traders' saloons have for years been the central figure in all military posts, and many a man with the political pull to get the tradership in a military post on the frontier has amassed a fortune by his ill-gotten gains from the soldier. The store and saloon were under the jurisdiction of the post commander, of course. He it was who fixed the prices on goods for sale in the saloon and certain articles in the store—that is, to soldiers, but the post trader has a political pull and the post commander chanced overlook that fact, so the prices range rather high. The saloon, always presided over by a citizen of the lowest type, eager to make money for himself, would always give liquor to men to whom orders had been given not to serve drinks, the men paying extra for the risk the bartendar ran, he putting the money in his own pocket. He would also take clothing of all kinds, as well as blankets, coffee, rice, sugar, flour or bacon and beans and sell them to ranchers or cowboys, making a neat profit. Many a soldier has parted with nearly all his clothing in this manner, and many a drunken cook and rascally first sergeant has disposed of the company's rations in the same manner.

Dope of the Groggeries.

The liquors were of the vilest kind, all manufactured of drugs, not a drop from any distillery, the rankest poison—pine-top, the boys used to call it. They said it was made of pine-needles and tobacco-juice. Commanding officers in sheer desperation have closed the post saloon for days to try and straighten the men out, but they continued the wheel just the same. How? No other saloon on the reservation—the reservation six, eight, ten or more miles square—the post in the center of the reservation—no passes granted to leave post—strict orders for all men to stay in the post day and night—extra orders to guards to be on the lookout for men going in or out—no one allowed to take a horse or mule from the corral, without orders from the quartermaster, and a sentry to see that they did not take any, and the nearest town fifteen or twenty miles away—and check roll-call every night; that is, the captain of each company each night passed through the quarters with the first sergeant, and looked at each bunk to see if the soldier slept. Good old man, wasn't he? More thoughtful of his boys than many a father. This is how: Just off the reservation at some suitable point are situated one or more vile dens called in frontier parlance "Hog ranches," stocked with a vile assortment of liquors. A sentry on the corral would go to sleep at a given signal, a poor unfortunate horse or mule would be taken and in a short space of time a couple of sacks full of bottles of whisky would be going the rounds of the boys, or would be cached away for the next day, the sentry standing in on the drink free. If no mule or horse was to be stolen away, then it was a case of walk. But how about the captain and the empty bunk? If the first sergeant was in with the boys, he accounted for the man as on guard, in the guard-house or hospital. The captain never looked at the company roster to verify the report of the sergeant, or a dummy served the purpose—a toe of a stocking poked out from under the blanket and stuffed with rags, the elbow of a shirt-sleeve, ditto, and a blanket or other articles underneath the bedding to serve for the form of the body, and a muskrat cap stuffed for the head. There you are! Just imagine the fond captain gazing with admiration at the supposed form of one of his company and at the same moment the real form staggering across the prairie under a heavy sack of bottles filled with whisky and a heavier load inside. Did the officers know this? Certainly. Why did they not stop it? It was simply impossible. Soldiers would drink. So if the evil must exist, why not in a modified form in the shape of a post canteen, where the whole machinery would be in the hands of the post commander, and the soldier might reap some benefit from his folly?

Origin of the Canteen.

The post canteen was started in 1868, I think. We were stationed at Fort Laramie at the time. Each company commander put in an equal amount for his company and I believe some came from the post fund to stock the concern. A second lieutenant was detailed in charge to purchase stock and keep the books and funds and divide the net profit at the end of each quarter among the companies for the company funds, to be used by the several companies to buy anything they might need for their comfort collectively with the consent of the company commander. Thus each man was benefited in a manner by his own or his comrades' folly. All articles are sold at a small profit, giving the men good wine and beer in moderation, a clean place to sit and amuse themselves with games, many having billiard and pool tables in them, and restaurant attached; also all the daily papers and periodicals; no whisky allowed to be sold; no fighting or loud and boisterous conduct; a sergeant present all the time to see that the rules governing the place are enforced and who is accountable to the lieutenant in charge for the preservation of discipline.

In a regular military post the most rigid discipline is enforced. What is the consequence? It relieves many a horse or mule of a long night ride, or many a soldier's legs from a weary tramp, and a great deal of brain-work in studying schemes to get more whisky. It puts money in the company fund to purchase luxuries for the soldier's table and comforts for his quarters—the sober soldier who never spends a cent in the canteen sharing in the profits.

People must understand that soldiers are enlisted for regular or volunteer service from the population of the United States—the personnel of the army is the same as the residents at large of any city, town or county—for that is where they come from. They are of many nationalities and from all walks in life—from the highest to the lowest. The canteen has no corrupting influence. On the other hand, it has the opposite effect. It teaches the men that if they must use liquor, to learn to do so in moderation.

What Can You Expect.

In a camp of 35,000 or 40,000 volunteers, what can you expect? One-quarter drinking are a good many men to be seen by one unaccustomed to such gatherings. A volunteer camp is not the place to judge a canteen or anything else. Who are these volunteers? They are your fathers, brothers, uncles and cousins. Were they members of temperance organizations when they enlisted? Were they teetotalers? Did putting on the uniform of a soldier turn them into drunkards? Did the post canteen debauch all these noble men in one day? No. You only see enacted in such a camp, in an enlarged form, what you may see in your own town in miniature any day you wish to look for it. Why are saloons in your towns? Because people want them. Why don't you close them up? You can't.

The only things I feel sorry for, in this world, are the chronic kickers kicking against something they know nothing about—wasting energy that might be used to a better purpose. Men who have spent their lives in the army and are well versed in all that pertains to army life have only the greatest praise for the post canteen, for the simple reason that it is a necessary evil in the army, just as your saloons are necessary evils in your cities and villages.

TOM REED'S HONESTY.

Refused to Take a Check That Savored Somewhat of a Bribe.

While his political adversaries have scored ex-Speaker Thomas Reed unmercifully for many of his public acts, no one has ever impeached his personal honesty. At a recent gathering at the Cumberland club in Portland, Me., an old acquaintance of Mr. Reed's told the following story illustrative of his incorruptibility:

"It's all right to exalt Henry Clay in history for his famous declaration, 'I'd rather be right than be president,'" said a distinguished republican leader. "He deserved it. But I don't think his honesty was more stalwart than 'Tom' Reed's. It was a quality which cost Clay and, in all probability, Reed the loss of their darling dream of the White House.

"I have known Reed from the days when he was a High school boy," he continued, "and always recognized his intense integrity, but its full strength never dawned upon me until the days of that trying congressional campaign when General Anderson pressed him so hard. Facing a united and enthusiastic democracy, with party dissension caused by disappointed ambition for office and the discouragement of foreign forces interested in Reed's defeat, the campaign went on from bad to worse until it reached a pass where his hopes of re-election seemed slender indeed.

"We were handicapped for money, while the other side had barrels obtained from some source or other. We worried along as well as possible until the last week of the campaign, when funds ran short and money was an imperative necessity. Knowing Reed as well as I did, I was deputed to communicate to him the situation. I found him one morning in his Exchange street office engaged in opening his mail. Without ceremony I pitched into the subject of my call. 'Mr. Reed,' I said, 'I know you're not a wealthy man, but we must have $2,000 at once or, in my humble opinion, you won't win out.'

"'I'll see what I can do,' he replied, and went on opening his mail.

"Presently he opened a letter from which dropped something that looked like a check. Read it carefully and then took up his pen as if to reply. While he wrote a brief note I had opportunity of seeing that the loose paper was a check for $2,000 payable to his order. He finished the note, re-enclosed the check and was about to seal the letter when I caught his arm and said: 'Pardon me, but what are you going to do with that check?'

"'I am going to send it back,' he replied. 'Read this letter,' and he tossed me the note which had accompanied the check. It was from the head of one of the largest railroads in the eastern states and simply stated that the writer, understanding there was a scarcity of funds in his campaign, inclosed the check with the hope that he might use it in securing re-election. I couldn't see anything that would place Reed under definite obligations to the giver and told him so.

"'His road with others will want something at the next session, and I can't support it,' he said.

"'That may be,' I protested, 'but he asks no promises and you are in no way bound. If you don't regard this matter so much for yourself, think of your friends who have put every dollar they could spare into the campaign, and who stake their political strength upon your re-election.'

"'I'm sorry,' he rejoined, 'but I can't take money from anyone whose projects I shall be obliged to oppose.'

"There was nothing more to be said and he remailed the letter while I wandered off to the club in a discouraged frame of mind. I found some of his closest friends there and gave them the story. The upshot of the matter was a pool on the spot, enough money for immediate necessities. We soundly berated him for his scruples, but there wasn't a man of us who wouldn't have gone to the last ditch in his support."

ENGLISH PUBLIC SALARIES.

Curious Discrepancies in the Offices in the Ministry.

There are some curious discrepancies about the salaries attaching to the offices in the ministry, says the London Chronicle. Thus the most important of all, the premiership, carries no emolument and, indeed, no precedence, and the holder of it invariably fills some other position. Lord Salisbury has, except for a brief period when he was first lord of the treasury, always attached to the chieftainship the Foreign office. Mr. Gladstone, when he was not first lord of the treasury, was generally chancellor of the exchequer and in his last ministry he added to the former the sinecure of lord privy seal (of course without extra remuneration), which Lord Salisbury is now to occupy. Can anyone explain that while the secretary of war gets £5,000 the first lord of the admiralty gets £500 less except on the ground that all her majesty's secretaries of state are paid the same salary? The most highly paid position is that of lord lieutenant of Ireland, £20,000, but then there are social duties attaching to that office and consequent expenses which do not apply in other cases.

The lord chancellor gets £10,000—half of which is as a judge of the highest court of appeal, and the other as chairman of the house of lords—a generous remuneration. The lord chancellor of Ireland receives £7,000 less and his duties are wholly judicial unless he is in the cabinet, as the present occupant of the post is. Two thousand pounds sterling is the usual salary for each minor posts as head of the Board of Trade, the local government board, the boards of agriculture, education and works, while the postmaster general, the director of the biggest business in the kingdom, is repaid with £2,500. Men who hold the position of under secretary in the various departments are paid from £1,500 to £2,000. On the whole, it cannot be said that we pay our professional politicians handsomely unless they hold legal offices. Probably the whole amount paid to Mr. Gladstone during his Parliamentary career from the exchequer would not have represented more than a few years' income if he had turned manufacturer instead of devoting his life to the service of his country. It is unnecessary to say that there are other compensations.

Wanted, a good man to do canvassing in the country. Good pay for right man. Address E 4, Bee.

FEEDING CATTLE FOR PROFIT

Damage to Iowa Crop Makes it Necessary to Dispose of It On the Farm.

CRUDE METHODS ARE NOT PROFITABLE

Present Margin of Profit Between Fat Cattle and Feeders Will Not Admit of Waste in the Feed Lot.

With the largest acreage of corn in the history of our state, and an average yield for the closing year of the present century, the greatest that Iowa has ever produced, the question of disposing of the immense crop in the most profitable manner is, at this time, of vital interest to the farmers of Iowa. An abundant crop of this, best of all fat-producing cereals, invariably creates an increased interest in fattening cattle. As much of the corn was injured in the fall by rain and wind lodging it in many places and lowering the quality, it is not surprising that a large number of farmers who heretofore have never undertaken the fattening of cattle are now embarking in the business.

With these conditions existing I may be pardoned for referring briefly in this paper to a few of the salient points in the fattening of cattle for slaughter, whereby loss is often sustained by those inexperienced in the business.

There was a time in the history of Iowa when profit could be made fattening cattle without regard to business principles, the large margin in the price of feeders and finished cattle being ample to insure a profit even with the crude and antiquated methods of feeding them in vogue. But a great change has taken place, the large margins have disappeared, the purchase and fattening of cattle has become a science, and while a few have managed to hold their own, a greater number have failed, and it is only a few who have made a success in the business.

A great many very misleading articles have appeared in print in regard to the profits secured in fattening cattle, and even our agricultural colleges and experiment stations in their reports have failed in many instances to give the whole truth and made a profit appear by means of figures, when in fact there was an actual loss.

When we read that a bunch of cattle was purchased at a certain price, consumed so much feed and realized so many dollars and the profit was the difference between the expenditure and the receipts, to the experienced feeder the fallacy of the statement is self-evident, but the farmer, without experience in feeding, falls an easy victim to the delusion and finds, when too late, that there are other expenses besides the cost of the cattle, food, freight and commission.

The unsophisticated young man who embarks in business purchases an article for $1, marks the selling price at $1.25 and figures his profit at 25 per cent. But the experienced and successful business man adds to the first cost the freight, interest on the capital invested, rent, fuel, light, insurance, repairs, clerk hire, etc., and fixes a price that will yield a fair profit, after paying the necessary expenses incurred in handling the goods. To do otherwise would be to invite bankruptcy, and if the farmer without experience in feeding is to succeed in the business he must of necessity begin right and follow the methods practiced by those who have made a success in the business.

Some Causes of Loss in Feeding.

One cause of loss in feeding cattle is lack of the necessary conveniences, for, while buildings, feed troughs, hay racks, etc., may be of the plainest and cheapest construction, cattle will not gain in weight without shelter in bad weather, and a dirty, wet bed is not conducive to the laying on of flesh, and without troughs and racks much of the food will be wasted.

The purchase of coarse, ill-bred cattle for the feed lot is another factor that almost invariably results in loss, for such cattle cannot be bought low enough to insure a profit in the feed lot.

Farmers, as a rule, accustomed to raising grain for market, find a good deal of time for leisure in the winter months, and when they embark in the business of feeding cattle, are too often found away from home when they should be caring for their stock. To be confined at home day after day, morning, noon and night, no exception for Sundays and legal holidays, does not harmonize with former habits, and the troughs and rack are filled to overflowing at one time and allowed to remain empty the next, hunger following surfeit in regular order. Then again it is convenient to water the stock and again it is not, and perhaps the trough is full of ice or the pump is frozen, but if they did not get water today they will get enough tomorrow. Then the salt is forgotten for some time and enough is given to satisfy the craving, and, of course, scouring results and loss is inevitable.

The corn perhaps is somewhat soft and in very cold weather freezes so hard that it cannot be masticated, but a thaw occurs, and the trough being full, the cattle make up for lost time. Every feeder of experience knows the result, and it will take days and perhaps weeks to regain what has been lost.

There is often serious loss in fattening cattle on account of paying too high a price for feeders and of late it has been well-nigh impossible to get this class of cattle worth the price asked and the amount that must be paid. In purchasing cattle for the feed lot too often the buyer is on the bull side and can see in the future a steady advance in the value of fat cattle, and he reasons that feeders are scarce and by the time his cattle are ready for market he will have a corner on beef. But there comes a day when he stands in the stock yards of one of the great packing centers and he finds that he is not alone, for the yards are crowded with thousands, and it may be tens of tobusands of fat cattle, and their owners, like himself, are surprised at the size of the receipts and for the first time in his life he realizes that ours is a big country and of cattle there is no end.

I have heard and read of bulls and bears and I have witnessed the surging crowds on the Chicago Board of Trade; I have heard the bulls bellow and the bears growl; I have seen the market pounded and battered in an effort to force down prices, but for systematic hammering, deliberate and concerted action in forcing and holding down prices, the buyers for the great packing houses are entitled to first place.

At times the bulls get the upper hand on the Board of Trade, but in the stock yards the only bulls I ever saw were of the four-legged species, and the bears are nearly always in undisturbed possession.

In buying cattle for the feed lot these conditions are too often forgotten, and it is only when the sale has been made, the weighing done, the stock yard charges, the commission and freight paid, and a check handed over for what is left, that the feeder realizes that the cattle cost him too much in the beginning and his corn and labor have been sacrificed in payment for the knowledge obtained.

As a rule the young and inexperienced feeder buys his cattle for the feed lot after the corn crop is assured, and perhaps after it is gathered, placing them at once on feed, and in his haste to get them fattened they are on full feed in a week. With such condition loss is inevitable, for gain in weight made in the feed lot is always expensive, and when unnatural methods for forcing the fattening process are adopted disappointment is sure to follow.

The Other Side of the Question.

Having thus briefly called attention to a few of the factors that contribute to make the fattening of cattle unprofitable, I will now make a few suggestions in regard to methods that, if followed to the letter, will just as surely result in profit.

In the first place there must be ample accommodations, a good sized yard, shelter in time of bad weather, a good dry bed, substantial feed troughs and racks for fodder. An abundance of good water easy of access and at a temperature considerably above the freezing point. Corn and fodder should be fed regularly and judiciously—just enough and no more, never surfeiting and never allowing a single animal to go hungry.

If cattle must be purchased, never buy inferior stock at any price, but select cattle that are well bred, of individual merit, small bone, compactly built, short legs, straight, wide backs, of good color, avoiding any indication of Jersey or Holstein blood, and be sure that the hide is soft and mellow and altogether too big for the animal. Never purchase for the feed lot a steer that has been raised in a semi-starved condition, for no amount of feed will ever make amends for the want of an abundance of nutritious food in early life. Secure your feeders at least a year before you intend beginning to fatten them, and get all the increase in weight possible from rough and inexpensive food. Do not expect to fatten cattle in 90 or 100 days, but give ten months or a year to the work, and instead of getting your cattle on full feed in the least possible time hold back all you can and bring them to full feed so gradually that neither you nor the cattle will be conscious of the change. As to the food, much will depend on conditions, but corn, either in the ear, shelled or ground, with an abundance of good fodder, will, when judiciously fed, give good results.

It is not the province of this paper to discuss the relative value of different foods, but the great staples are corn and hay, with corn fodder, sheaf oats, roots and articles of like nature, produced on the farm, that can be utilized to give variety. Oil meal is excellent in small quantities, but too expensive for liberal feeding. With corn at 25 or 30 cents per bushel it will be found that the less these outside products are fed the greater will be the profit.

While there is no question that profit can be made by fattening cattle as I have indicated, provided they are well bought, still this is an all-important factor and if the price paid is too high no amount of care afterwards can ever redeem the loss sustained in buying above the market value.

I am aware that it is difficult to secure well bred feeders, of the right age and size for feeding, at a price that insures profit on the finished animal, but if they cannot be bought, they can be raised, and then of the profit there is no question. By using high grade cows of any of the leading beef breeds, and pure bred bulls of individual merit, excellent calves can be secured. And if these calves are fed liberally and judiciously from their birth until they are 30 or 36 months old, they will be ready for market and command the highest price. To insure profit these cattle should never know what it is to be either hungry, thirsty or cold, from birth to sale. Having tried all the methods here outlined in the production of beef, I most unhesitatingly give the preference to the feeders raised by myself.

Sure Way to Make a Profit.

It has often been said that a farmer who has the corn can well afford to buy the cattle to consume it, and also, that the farmer who has the cattle, but not the grain, should secure the latter and market the cattle in a finished condition. With good judgment and business ability profit may be made at times by following either of these methods, but the farmer who has both cattle and grain of his own raising cannot fail to make profit in combining the two in a finished product. After an experience extending over an average lifetime in fattening cattle, I am frank to confess that my greatest profit resulted when I produced both grain and cattle, holding in my own hands, not only the breeding, but also the feeding, and present conditions are such that the well bred calf, either steer or heifer, fed liberally from birth, yields the greatest profit.

Profit in the fattening of cattle can only be secured by breeding high class animals, by liberal feeding from birth, by judicious care and the application of good business methods to all the details of the work. The future of the cattle industry is bright for the earnest, energetic, progressive breeder and feeder, and the size of the profit is only limited by the ability of those engaged in the great work of producing the highest quality of beef to be found upon the markets of the world.

NOT TOO MANY WOMEN.

Numerical Excess of the Sex Not as Great as Supposed.

The census recently completed shows that the feminine population is increasing at a rapid rate in the large cities and it is predicted that this country will presently be confronted by a problem that has worried foreign statisticians for some time—the preponderance of women. It is admitted that the women here have the advantage over their foreign sisters in that many fields of work are opened to them and they can also hold and dispose of property to an extent unknown on the other side. So that the American woman is in a great measure economically independent of man, and thus does she escape some of the serious consequences that afflict the foreign woman. It seems a pity that anyone at this late day should fall to worrying about the superfluous woman myth. It is such an old story, and one that has times without number proven to be needlessly disturbing. As to the bogey of so many women, did it ever occur to the alarmists in attempt to figure how many of these feminine overplus were widows, who persist in outliving their husbands ten, twenty or even thirty years, and spinsters of uncertain age? Statistics published about ten years ago showed that in London, where the woman population is greatly in excess of the male, between the ages of 18 and 45 the men were in excess. The trouble appears to be mainly with the women of 50 and over, who are much more persistent about holding on to life than are their contemporaries among men. When women as a class are economically independent the alarmist articles about the superfluous woman will cease, for who would dare to apply to a breadwinner so opprobrious a title as superfluous?

AN AGONIZING MOMENT.

Suspense While the Committee Inspected Mirandy's Carpet.

There on the platform stood the roll of new rag carpet, with the committee inspecting it, and there, not twenty feet away, stood a farmer with his wife and four children, reports the Washington Post. With her own hands the wife had cut, sewed, dyed and woven. She had been encouraged by her husband and friends to enter that carpet for the prize and the hour for the final decision had come. The faces of the committee were impassive and unreadable. There was blue and red and green and purple in that carpet, but those colors did not seem to appeal. They did not look like men who knew what an Ali Ex. copper-riveted rag carpet good enough for Senator Depew's best parlor should be composed of.

"Don't you be skeart, Mirandy," said the husband as he patted her on the shoulder in an encouraging way.

"I'm tryin' to be brave," she replied, "but, oh, Joel, you knew how hard I worked on that carpet. If I don't get the prize I believe I shall fall dead."

"But it must get the prize, mother," said the children in chorus. "We are taught that goodness is always rewarded, and who is gooder than you?"

The committee seized the roll and slammed it down and Joel and Mirandy turned pale.

The committee opened the roll to look for places where bugs might squeeze through and the children grew weak in the knees.

The carpet was measured, walked on, kicked about, rolled up and six persons heard the beating of their hearts.

"I think I'll die," whispered the wife as she sat down on a nail keg covered with a crazy quilt.

"Not yit!" replied the husband. "Now they are consulting together. Now they seem to have come to a decision. Now they are handin' the diploma. Now they—"

"Oh, Joel, I can't stand it!"

"Don't give up. Now one of 'em is writin'. Now they hev got your name—now—now—now—you've hit the fust prize plumb center and are seven feet taller than any other durned woman in the county."

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS.

Hurly-Burly of the Age Was Too Much for Her.

We have not yet progressed sufficiently far for old age to quietly accept the innovations of a progressive generation, reports the Detroit Free Press. This old lady fluttered into her home after a trip downtown, rocked excitedly and then spoke her mind.

"I'd give $1,000 if I were a man," she announced.

"Why," inquired the daughter-in-law, who has a deft way of steering through troubled waters.

"I'd get myself elected to the common council, the legislature, congress or whatever is the right place and I'd get right back to some of the good old ways. If any of my friends saw me down near the city hall I'll be ashamed to look them in the face. I never saw so many street cars in my life, and it seemed as if there were a million or two of bicycles trying to run over me. There I was, jumping, dodging, screaming and wondering if I'd get home alive. I suppose that lots of people thought I was a feather-brained boarding school girl."

The daughter-in-law concealed her merriment behind her hand and said that it was all the penalty of progression.

"I'd give a nice sum right now to have a quiet, peaceful ride on a horse car. As it is they jerk you on, throw you off, make an exhibition of you while you're trying to get a seat and snap at you if you ask a question. What delightful, peaceful and easy trips we used to have! Why, they would wait for you if you were a block off and waved your hand at them. If you were talking when you reached your street they would politely wait until the conversation was closed. I can't stand this terrible hurly-burly, and if it is not stopped I'll either have to walk or get a carriage."

Christmas Blaze at Eau Claire.

ST. JOSEPH, Mich., Dec. 25.—A disastrous fire in Eau Claire, fifteen miles from this city, today resulted in reducing half the business section into ashes. Total loss, $50,000, partly insured.

TALLEST CHIMNEY IN AMERICA.

A New Jersey Smokestack Piercing the Clouds.

The tallest chimney on this continent is being erected at Constable Hook, Bayonne, N. J., whence come the smoke and gases of which the people of Staten island, the Jersey coast adjacent and navigators of the harbor have been complaining for the last five years. The stack is being built up for the Oxford Copper company, whose plant adjoins that of the Standard Oil company, to carry off the smoke and gases from its furnaces which have been the chief source of complaint. It is a costly undertaking, but the companies at Constable Hook have been hard pressed recently by strenuous protests against the nuisance arising from their furnaces. The surveying of the harbor, Lieutenant Commander John C. Fremont, complained to Washington a few months ago of the smoke nuisance as dangerous to navigators and the newly elected congressman from Richmond, Nicholas Muller, pledged himself in his campaign to try to get congress to do something to abate the nuisance so the chimney is being built to head off possible trouble.

It isn't an easy task to build a tall chimney on the made land at Constable Hook, but an expert chimney construction company which has been in business in Europe for the last twenty-five years and has erected several thousand tall stacks over there has undertaken the job. It is, however, the biggest that concern has ever tackled. The company's works are built in the middle of a swamp on filled-in land. To make the new chimney absolutely safe an excavation was made until hard gravel was struck from fifteen to twenty feet below the level of the ground. Then in this excavation, an area forty-five feet square was filled with layers of six feet in each, as fast as they could be put and on the top of them a solid mass of concrete was laid to the level of the ground.

The stack itself has a base thirty feet square for an equal height. Above this point the chimney is round. It is to be built up to a total height of 500 feet. The diameter at the top will be ten feet. The weight of the stack is to be 2,000 tons and the cost of erecting it will be in the neighborhood of $60,000. The builders have promised to complete it in 9 months. The material used is brick, that at the base being fireproof.

From experience gained in other places the company is certain that the new chimney will end the smoke and gas nuisance so far as its plant is concerned. They say that the gases passing up through the chimney will never be noticeable at the surface again.

How about those nerves?

BLATZ MALT VIVINE

stops that nervous feeling, and heads off stomach troubles, indigestion and insomnia. All druggists.

Prop. In Vat. Blatz Brewing Co., Milwaukee.

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DYSPEPSIA.

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