

The Alliance Herald
TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

BURR PRINTING CO., Owners

Entered at the postoffice at Alliance, Neb., for transportation through the mails as second class matter.

GEORGE L. BURR, Jr., Editor
EDWIN M. BURR, Business Mgr.

Official newspaper of the City of Alliance; official newspaper of Box Butte County.

Owned and published by The Burr Printing Company, George L. Burr, Jr., President; Edwin M. Burr, Vice President.

THROUGH JAUNDICED EYES.

"The Dance of Death," a second attack on the modern dance by the Rev. Mearl C. Smith, was slated as a subject for editorial comment in the Tuesday Herald this week, but fortunately or otherwise, the Sidney Telegram, with its outburst of spleen against the Alliance Elks vaudeville show, seemed to be the leading candidate for correction and castigation. Thereupon the discussion of Mr. Smith's latest diatribe was placed on the "time" hook for future consideration. The Herald allows itself the luxury of bursting but one bubble in each issue, although human nature is weak and temptation sometimes overcomes. Temptation, be it remarked, was strong in this instance. However, the knowledge that Mr. Smith was making little or no headway in his crusade to re-establish the narrow prejudices of a past generation, and that plenty of others were lighting upon his defenseless neck, heak end down, as it were, allowed us to live up to our rule.

The second in the Rev. Mearl C. Smith's series of three sermons against the dance appears in its proper order. As a rule, the charge that this amusement is a wholesale factory for the manufacture of prostitutes comes along in the middle of the books on the subject, although a few daring writers reserve it for the final appeal. Mr. Smith, however, makes it the second in his series of sermons, and thereby not only conforms to the precedent set by the leading anti-dance reformers, but saves himself from a possible taint of originality. Some of the clergy, we understand, have a feeling that it is almost unethical to be original, or to stray even slightly from the beaten path.

The Herald has no quarrel with the Rev. Mr. Smith. It concedes that he is undoubtedly actuated by religious zeal. But the gentleman must not be allowed to defame and vilify a large number of people in this city without challenge of obvious misstatement and distortion of fact.

We have, in a previous article, suggested to Mr. Smith that in arguing from books written by others, it were well to see to it that the books are up-to-date. It may be further suggested that books should be selected which bear some slight relation to the matter under discussion. Mr. Smith will concede that a book dealing with the sins of the geisha girls, or the degenerate Polynesian dances, would not be pertinent in attacking the dance in Alliance. What he does not perceive, apparently, is that attacks on the dance as found on the old Barbary coast in San Francisco, in brothels elsewhere, in low dives in Chicago and New York not only bear no relation to the dance as it is found in Alliance, but that he insults the intelligence of his hearers when he peddles this filth and seeks to give the impression that there are to be found in Alliance similar evils. May be the reverend gentleman really thinks that the statements he has quoted are universal in their application, and if so we shall give him due credit for sincerity, but there will go down some black marks for a regrettable deficiency in judgment.

Mr. Smith should realize, before he gets his foot in it too far, that Alliance is not Chicago or New York. No one will dispute that there have been in those cities unregulated public dances that have resulted much as his authorities say. Mr. Smith does not say that efforts have been made to clean up these places, just as red-light districts have been cleaned up, and that this evil is diminishing. Maybe the books neglected to state this. Apparently he has an idea that all dances are infested with procurers, seeking whom they may ruin.

Such statements as this: "One thing that makes the dance dangerous for young girls is that vile men and professional seducers of girls attend dances for the purpose of procuring innocent girls and bringing them to moral ruin," are absolutely unjustified by the facts in Alliance, and Mr. Smith should be politely but firmly invited to prove his case so far as Alliance is concerned, or else explain that he is misrepresenting the facts to an Alliance audience. Shoot Roger, or give up the fowling piece.

As a matter of fact, there were hundreds of thousands of prostitutes in the country before the era of modern jazz dances, and so far as Alliance,

Box Butte county and Nebraska are concerned, there is less of this sort of thing right now than in any year which has gone before. Mr. Smith, with his jaundiced views, may not have investigated this point, just as he depended on his "authorities" for other statements in his indictment. He will, if he makes a personal investigation of conditions in Alliance, admit that this city has never been better morally.

And so it is safe to assume that other charges in the indictment will prove to be made of the same thin air as the professional seducer charge, so far as they relate to Alliance. In this city dances close at a reasonable hour. Business men, members of Mr. Smith's and other churches, working men and clerks, stenographers, housewives and students attend them. Were these people dancing every night in the week until the early hours of the morning, there might be some justification for the charge that health and vigor are disappearing like dew before the morning sun. Does Mr. Smith know how many dances there are in Alliance during the average week? Does he know at what hours these dances close? It is apparent that he knows little or nothing of the dance he condemns. He got this idea from the books which tell of the terrible conditions in New York and Chicago. They don't fit Alliance any more than the old custom of the suttee.

W. H. Coleman, school superintendent at Crawford, is listed with the authorities to prove that dancing is harmful mentally. Mr. Coleman's figures may be accurate, but the old saying concerning statistics is just as applicable here as it is anywhere. Figures prove anything—and nothing. If it may be true that of the 30 per cent of the students classified as dancers, 43 per cent failed to pass; and of the 70 per cent of non-dancers, there were only 20 per cent who fell by the wayside. These figures have an imposing sound, but even though they be absolutely accurate, there is no proof that those who failed did so because of dancing. If dancing made these sinful students fail, what vices brought about the failure of the non-dancers?

To be frank, this sort of evidence is exceedingly unreliable. By the same process of so-called reasoning, it could be shown, for example, that boys and girls who eat cabbage regularly are either mentally superior or inferior to the non-cabbage eaters. It could be argued—and proved, if Mr. Smith's point is regarded as proved—that the boys who wear white starched collars are better or worse students than those who wear soft collars; or that silk hosiery and rolled stockings have a definite effect on the grades. Again, figures from one small town are not conclusive evidence, nor do they prove anything. Undoubtedly the dance appeals to the lighter-minded and frothy students more than it does to the bookworm type. But it is the rankest kind of logic to infer that because the frivolous students like dancing immensely, therefore all who like dancing are immensely frivolous.

Reformers make untrustworthy authorities. One of them will tell us that 55 or 70 per cent of the inmates of brothels came to this plight through the dance. Another will say with equal positiveness and apparent sincerity that 60 per cent of the ruined girls say their downfall is due to the unregulated movie. Another will say that spooning in the parks ruins over 60 per cent of the girls who are eternally lost every year. Joyriding in automobiles ruins another 50 per cent. Love of candy, ice cream, silk clothes and other luxuries must ruin at least 61 per cent, not to mention the 57 per cent who are ruined through the Demon Rum. Isn't it reasonable to suppose, in the face of all these claims, that there might be a dozen contributing causes, not the least of which might be unhappy home life, the struggle for existence, and perhaps—who knows?—the narrow minded views of preachers and fathers toward amusements that are really innocent, but in which fanatical eyes see nothing but disgrace, death and eternal damnation.

Because some weak boys and girls, men and women, without proper moral training and lacking in stamina, attribute their downfall to the dance, is not adequate proof that every other dancer runs the same risk, nor is it acceptable logic to argue that if there were no dance, these weak brothers and sisters would never get started on the primrose path. Isn't it at least possible, Mr. Smith, that the morally weak would still find opportunity to go wrong if dancing were prohibited?

The charge that comes from Dad Elliott, the great Y. M. C. A. leader, that the aftermath of every university dance is a flocking to the vice resorts, is an outrageous calumny, a nasty insult to fully half the students in our colleges. Evangelist Elliott—or our Mr. Smith, would not dare to make it before an audience of college men and women. Alliance parents whose boys and girls attend the university know that this statement is absolute tommyrot. Recall the boys from Alliance, and see if you can believe it, even if a thousand evangelists took oath to it on

a stack of Bibles a foot high. Good taste and common sense should have suggested to Mr. Smith, in compiling his talk, that this one point should be omitted. But apparently Mr. Smith wanted only the most sensational charges, and cared little as to the foundation for them.

This comment is considerably longer than the importance of the sermon series warrants, but the Herald believes that in justice to the dancers of the city, who include among their number representatives of all churches all professions and nearly every class of our citizenship, practically all of the statements made by Mr. Smith should be challenged and refuted. We do not hail the dance as the greatest blessing that mankind possesses, but what few faults this amusement possesses, as it found in this city, cannot be remedied by such distortion, such unwarranted inferences and such illogical conclusions as distinguish the attacks made on the subject. It has been the endeavor to examine all the charges made by the Alliance pastor, and to deny that he has proved his case against the dance as it is found in his home city and as it is participated in by members of his own church.

It remains to be proved that any of these accusations are justified by conditions in Alliance. Testimony as to New York, Chicago, Kamchatka or Polynesia is incompetent, irrelevant and does not pertain to the case on trial. If Mr. Smith can attack the dance in Alliance with competent evidence, now is the time to do it. If he doesn't, in all probability he will find himself in the position of the colored boy who yelled for assistance to let go of a wildcat.

ARE WE PUBLIC SPIRITED?

Alliance citizens are prone to tell the world that this is a progressive and public-spirited community. There must be something to it, for we have heard the statement made often by visiting orators who have had less than an hour to discover this mighty truth. But now and then something happens which makes us stop and wonder just how much foundation there is for this belief. Is Alliance public-spirited, or are there only a few live wires who accomplish enough work to account for the reputation that has gradually spread all over Nebraska?

The last instance that has caused this doubt to arise is the series of benefit concerts by the Alliance band. There isn't a business man or an ordinary citizen but will say frankly that a good band is a fine asset for any town. Most of us will admit, if we tell the truth, that there is just enough of the school boy and the circus fever in our constitution to make an outdoor band concert enjoyable on the warm summer nights. Men who are interested in drawing crowds to the city for the business that will ensue will say frankly that a good brass band is an attraction not to be sniffed at, even when compared with horse races. In fact, there is not only a general realization that a band is a good thing, but a desire to have one in Alliance.

But—and here's the rub—there is no organization that is willing to step out and sponsor the financial end of it. A day or two of work, and there would be a sufficient fund pledged to enable the Alliance band to get needed music and whip themselves into shape. It's no soft snap to organize a band without public support. The expense is pretty high. Even with fair pay for all engagements, it's a losing game for the players. The band players put in much more time than they draw pay to cover.

Despite the fact that there is no assurance of support from the business

men; despite the fact that in the past the band has put in a good many days for which pay was promised and never received, and in the face of the difficulty of getting and holding players in the trying days when no money is coming in, John P. Mann has made a good start toward a band. He's got a fine bunch of players together, and there has been regular practice. They are going ahead in the hope that they can make a place for themselves after they have demonstrated their worth. The band has done its own financing to date. Two benefit concerts have been staged. The first one was only an indifferent success from a financial point of view, and the last one, on Monday of this week, was a flat failure, with an audience of scarcely a hundred.

The Herald doesn't think for a minute that John P. Mann is a second Sousa or that there are a bunch of players under him who are qualified to go on a European tour. But these men gave a creditable performance a couple of weeks ago and showed considerable improvement by last Monday. If the public will get behind them, John Mann will have a darned good band ready to entertain us with summer concerts. We want one, of course, and the only way to get a band is to support it until it gets on its feet financially.

There'll be another benefit concert some of these days, and it's up to all of us to show whether we're really public-spirited, or whether we're just bluffing about it.

Sometimes the suit for breach of promise is the only promise connected with that attempt to marry.

Until the next war scientists and engineers will devote themselves to peace. There's unselfishness for you.

If poison gas is barred from civilized warfare something should be done to bar poison propaganda.

Explorer Stefansson says the winters in the arctic are but little worse than those in Montana. How could they be?

In addition to abolishing poison gas in international clashes it might be well to oust it from political campaigns.

A perfect day is experienced mostly by those who work nights.

Leather is now so cheap that even the cheaper grades of cattle are found in it.

"Reptiles are not found in the arctic region," announces the Indianapolis News. And the scarcity of polar bears is one of the idiosyncrasies of the tropics.

Presumably, there are not marines enough for each country bank to have one.

If the marines on the mail cars keep on shooting in this wild, free manner, train robbing will lose much of its old-time charm.

A historian says that women ruled the world 2,500 years before the birth of Christ. They also have ruled it 1,921 years since.



Washington's
Spirit Guides
This Bank

Washington achieved undying fame and the gratitude of his country by his adherence to those principles of liberty and freedom for which our Constitution stands.

The Alliance National Bank is a sincere admirer of his principles and a firm believer in the fact that the welfare of the people is the welfare of the nation; that the interests of the people are the interests of the nation—the city—the community.

In this spirit we offer our services to the people of Alliance.

Alliance National Bank

Reduction In Price

of the Dependable

BEATRICE



We are pleased to announce a very substantial reduction in the price of this wonderful Cream Separator.

- No. 43-A guaranteed capacity 550-600 lbs. \$75.00
- No. 48-A guaranteed capacity 750-800 lbs. \$85.00

The BEATRICE is positively the most economical machine to buy. It will pay for itself several times over during the many years of its satisfactory service.

ALLIANCE CREAMERY CO.

Imperial Theatre
2 DAYS—Feb. 28, March 1
Matinee and Night

DW. GRIFFITH'S
Greatest Production



A TALE OF LOVE
AND LOVERS IN A NEW
ART FORM COMBINING
DRAMA, PAINTING,
POETRY AND MUSIC.

Has taken America by Storm
Proclaimed an Eighth Art

A picturization embodying the story of the famous play of the same title with a Selected Orchestra & Symphony Players.

Will go thundering down the ages because it is so human.
Boston Traveller.

The Greatest spectacle ever seen on land or sea.
N.Y. Globe.

Note—Owing to cost length of production and ironbound contracts, Why Down East, never will be shown at less than first class theatre prices.

PRICES:— Adm.—22 and 50c & W. T.