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Filter Question vs. Saloon Question.

We have not cared especially to ventilate the arguments pro and con of the filter question in the NEWS-LETTER. Personally it has seemed to us from the first like a very expensive make-shift which would have the effect of staving off the real solution of the difficulty. But be that as it may, if the public really want the filter and are willing to pay for it, we see no reason why they should not say so, and doubtless they will.

In the mean time we have been told by life insurance companies (and we are not aware that anybody has ever accused them of doing business purely for the love of humanity) that out of 10,000 users of strong drink at the age of 20, the average subsequent age will be only about 15 years, that is to say, they will live only about 35 or 36 years (we omit fractions); while 10,000 total abstainers will average about 44 years, making an average life of about 64 or 65 years. Out of 10,000 users of strong drink at 30 years of age the average subsequent life will be only about 13 years, making about 43; while 10,000 total abstainers at 30 years of age average about 36 years, making an average age of about 66 years. Out of 10,

000 users of strong drink at 40 years of age the average subsequent life will be only about 11 years, making only about 51; while 10,000 total abstainers at 40 years of age will reach an average age of about 68. Or in general terms, the average duration of life of a total abstainer is three times as long from the starting point as the drinker's. If this is true—and nobody ought to know better than the men whose whole life business is in such investigations and to whom it is purely a matter of dollars and cents—then it is vastly more important that we close the saloons and the "blind pigs" than that we filter our drinking water. We can understand how a father would feel and might express deep anxiety about his children lest they should be taken from him by typhoid fever or some other disease, but we cannot understand why the same father will oftentimes destroy his own life inch by inch through the use of strong drink, and deprive his children of their proper protection. Why not close up the saloons? Have not any in Highland Park? Then close up the "blind pigs," if that is the proper name for them. Stop patronizing them and they will close up for lack of business. It is said that we have them running almost wide open in our midst. It is certainly the duty of somebody to see that they are closed. Whose duty is it? The officials'? We are told the officials won't do it. Then we should have officials who will do it. The responsibility rests with the people. It is no use to shirk that question and there is no denying the fearful responsibility for it.

Sidewalks.

Some four years ago, if we remember correctly, there was an ordinance passed by our city council mapping out a certain portion around the center of Highland Park and ordering that so fast as any sidewalk should be condemned nothing but concrete or cement should be used as a substitute. We were not wholly in sympathy with the ordinance when it was passed, and time has not decreased our objections to it. There is no sidewalk more pleas-

ant to the eye perhaps than cement, but there are qualifications in a sidewalk to be considered other than the esthetic. It will be conceded by all that it is an expensive form. Secondly, either it is an unreliable form or else the cement sidewalks of Highland Park have not been put down by competent mechanics. In the third place, it can hardly have escaped the observation of pedestrians that after a rain the cement sidewalk is always much longer in drying and much more likely to hold water on its surface than even the common plank walk. This may seem like a trifling objection, but it is nevertheless a valid one, and surely in the last few days we have seen a serious objection to the cement sidewalks in the fact that they have so often been flooded with water by day and made dangerously slippery with ice by night, whereas the plank sidewalks are very rarely open to the same objection. It may therefore be very seriously questioned whether it is advisable to insist upon the costly, uncertain, and withal unsatisfactory cement sidewalk. We seriously question whether the introduction of asphalt walks would not be better than either the plank or cement.

The enterprising suburb of Wilmette, which has been buying water from Evanston at a cost of \$5,000 per annum: has decided to construct and operate waterworks of its own. The new works will cost \$100,000, will have a capacity of 30,000 gallons a day, and it is said, can be conducted at an annual expense of \$3,500. If the water plant of Wilmette is not called upon to share the expenses of all other departments of the village government there is no reason why the hopes of the promoters of the new enterprise should not be realized. Wilmette will avoid a good deal of extravagance and corruption in the future if it makes a point of fixing the water rate so low that the receipts will simply cover fixed charges and the cost of operation. The village should learn from experience of Chicago and Evanston that one thing to be guarded against is a water-fund surplus.