

SMOKING - FOR AND AGAINST

(Written for "The Listener" by Dr. H. B. TURBOTT, Director of the Division of School Hygiene, Health Department)



TO smoke or not to smoke is always a live topic, especially in these days of difficult supplies. Let us try and evaluate the health risk from smoking.

Tobacco can be done without—that seems to be one fact. Another is that tobacco smoke contains at least a couple of poisons, nicotine and carbon monoxide. It also contains tarry substances that have been under suspicion of causing cancer. Nicotine is quite a potent poison taken in big enough quantities. True, you only get a little in smoking—about an average of 0.6 per cent. in smoke from dry tobacco; much more from damp tobacco. But if you are a heavy smoker, you get a little nicotine a lot of times every day. It can have a cumulative effect. Cigarette smoking has more effect than cigar or pipe smoking, as the nicotine volatilises less in cigarettes. Inhaling smoke into the lungs allows most of the nicotine (about 85 per cent.) to be absorbed; dodging lung inhalation as much as possible greatly reduces the absorption of nicotine.

As far as I can discover this is the danger from heavy smoking: it irritates the nose, throat, voice box and bronchial tree, and may set up and keep going catarrhal conditions there. This gives rise to coughing. You can pick out the serious smokers in the early mornings; they go about coughing and barking till they clear their mucous membranes. In some it has an effect on appetite, dulling it. Many non-smokers hate to have indiscriminate smoking going on in dining-rooms. Smoking also has an effect on the nervous system. The speed of nerve messages is interfered with; those to the heart muscle have their timing upset. The beat becomes erratic, or faster, or races whenever one is exercising or undergoing any excitement. Similarly the nervous control of breathing is upset,

and shortness of breath is common under any strain. These are some of the effects of smoking.

Heavy smokers occasionally try experiments on themselves, giving up the habit for a while. Many then gain weight, have better appetite, and feel better generally. Control of the nerves is better. They lose the trembling fingertips, and have less excitability under emotional or other strain; in other words, steadiness improves.

On the Credit Side

Now what can we say on the credit side for tobacco? It does help relaxation. It has an action on the adrenal glands, increasing the blood sugar concentration, and raising the rate of combustion of the sugar. You feel relieved of fatigue and irritability, just as you do after having a meal. Are the heart, nerve and throat irritations productive of permanent damage? There is no real proof of this, though you will find writers making dogmatic statements of heart damage and cancer incidence in smokers. It has not been proven scientifically.

What stand are we to take over tobacco? Moderation for adults, abstinence for young people. There is general agreement that tobacco is bad for the young, retarding learning and spoiling achievement in sport and games. No tobacco until 21 years or older would be a good rule. In sizing up matters for oneself, one has to balance pleasure, relaxation and sociability against the risk of certain ill-effects found in some people, and already outlined for you, and the surety of habit-formation. It is a hard habit to stop once acquired. But the choice remains a personal matter until the day medical science really decides whether permanent damage occurs to the lungs or not. That is not proved yet.

(continued from previous page)

I found out afterwards, that she had watched me, sometimes, through the louveres on the verandah. She said that she liked me from the minute she first saw me, on account of how I looked happy, and her poor old father had been always very miserable, and complaining.

She said that she wanted badly to speak to me, but having been shut up for 20 years, so to speak, she had become afraid of people. But one day she plucked up courage. She had practised saying "Good morning," in front of her mirror, for weeks, and one morning she said it, but in such a small voice that I didn't hear. Poor Emmie! She told me later that she cried.

WELL—time was going on, and one day I left the bin, and came to the back steps and knocked. Emmie came out, and I asked her if I might have a drink of water. She said in a breathless

little voice, "Oh, YES!" as though I had asked her if she would like a thousand pounds.

She got the water for me, and I wondered what she would have said, if I were to tell her, right then, that I was going to marry her, by and by. For, as soon as I laid eyes on her I knew that I had been right about her. Small and dainty she was, with a plain, kind face, and big, very young, grey eyes. She had some lines on her face, but not as many as me. I thought that we would get along very well together.

Every week after that, when I called, she had a cup of tea, and something to eat, ready for me.

I didn't hurry her. She was so little and scary, somehow, and I wanted her to feel quite certain about me. Well—it has worked out fine. . . .

Who would have thought that romance could come out of a garbage bin? But you never know!

FOR YOUR THROAT'S SAKE



CRAVEN 'A'
CORK - TIPPED
CIGARETTES

CRAVEN 'A' are always easy on the throat. By their excellent quality and smoothness they have won the largest cork-tipped cigarette sales in the world.

N 23.6.A

CARRERAS 150 YEARS' REPUTATION FOR QUALITY



For 6 years...

KODAK FILM was in the Factories helping to increase efficiency

By photographing the path traced by a lamp fixed to a worker's wrist, a record is obtained of all movements made to complete a job. Such pictures often show how operations can be speeded and fatigue decreased. In such ways industry, during the war years, consumed vast quantities of Kodak Film and supplies are still scarce. In the meantime, remember Kodak Film is the best film made.

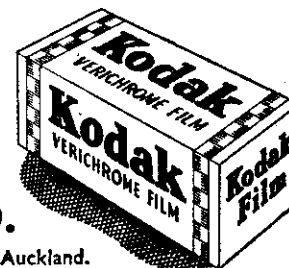
KODAK NEW ZEALAND LTD.

292 Lambton Quay, Wellington.

162 Queen St., Auckland.

681 Colombo St., Christchurch.

162 Princes St., Dunedin.



F-788