

L.T.L.

Yet another Union, the Invercargill, offered prizes for essays on Temperance Wall Sheets. A splendid response was made by the four schools. 114 essays were sent to examiners, and many others were written. We publish below the prize essay. A Union can do no better work, none that will have a more lasting result, than to encourage the children of this Dominion to learn the evil effects of alcohol upon their minds and bodies.

INJURIOUS EFFECTS OF LIQUOR.

Ina McNeil, Standard 7, Queen's Park School.

Drink such as beer, wine and brandy are not stimulating foods like milk and soup are. These build up the body, but drink does not. It is the cause of stunted growth. It rather wears it away. Most of these liquors contain a substance, very dangerous to the body, called alcohol. Alcohol belongs to a class of drugs known as narcotics. Chloroform, opium, and strychnine all belong to the same class. These are all poisons, and if taken in large quantities will cause death. Alcohol does not help the digestion, but spoils it. It causes an excessive flow of digestive juice in the stomach and therefore causes an unnatural appetite which is of no benefit to healthy persons.

The lungs become weak and cannot resist disease germs. This is a very serious matter. The liver becomes slow and torpid. Alcohol draws water to itself and draws the juice out of the liver and other tissues, causing it to shrivel up and become hard. It then cannot do its work properly. The kidneys become seriously impaired and do not perform their proper functions. Therefore all the waste matter is kept in the body and so makes the blood impure. This is often the cause of illnesses such as consumption and cancer. The brain and nervous system become impaired and cannot control themselves.

Alcohol does not permanently strengthen the pumping of the heart but weakens, and tends to stretch it considerably. It does not quench the thirst, but rather helps to make a person more thirsty. Water is a better drink. Alcohol also lowers the powers to endure fatigue and hardships. The white corpuscles which guard the body, and fight for us against disease become inert and so the germs find an easy entry. Even

small quantities of alcohol reduce the efficiency of the red corpuscles, which carry oxygen to the tissues and removes carbon dioxide from the blood.

Drink stains the character of a person. Anyone given to drink slowly drifts downwards. He becomes less particular as to the comrades he associates with, as to his language and his dress. He is given to slang and will be often found lingering around street corners, out of work. Children and young folk should not take alcohol except by doctor's special orders. Drink is often the cause of poverty, accidents, insanity and many crimes. A judge once said: "If England could be made sober three-quarters of her jails could be closed." Prolonged drink often leads to paralysis and many other diseases.

Money that is spent on drink is money wasted, or thrown away. In New Zealand 5 years ago the amount spent in drink amounted to £4,000,000 for the year, and to about £12 per man. All that money was simply wasted. This amount would have paid for more than the imports, such as boots and clothing for the year. From 35 to 40 per cent of the people who are sent to the asylum have caused their insanity through excessive drinking. Drink is a great enemy to mankind, and once he starts he doesn't know when to stop. An intoxicated person is a public nuisance. What a happy world this would be if everyone was sober.

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