

PALMERSTON NORTH SCIENTIFIC TEMPERANCE COMPETITION, 1916.

PRIZE ESSAY.—FORM III.

(Margaret Shaw.)

"Happy is the State whose people learn in youth,
To conquer evil with the Sword of Truth."

Drink is one of the worst evils of this world, and we must all do what we can to abolish it. If every one did his little bit this evil might soon be done away with.

All drinks are not foods as milk is, for they do not give nourishment to the body. They do not help the growth of the body, but rather tend to wear it away; also they do not increase the strength and warmth of the body, as many people think.

Spirits contain a substance called alcohol, which is very dangerous to the body. Alcohol in small quantities is a stimulant, but a stimulant is not necessary to a healthy, vigorous person. As the whip and the spur are not natural to a horse, so alcoholic liquors are not to a person; corn and grass are the natural foods of a horse, as meat and bread are to us.

Alcohol decreases the power of a person to resist disease, fatigue, or hardships. The white corpuscles in the blood become less active by coming in contact with alcohol, and so cannot fight so nobly against the germs. Thus a person who is given to heavy drinking may die of a disease which with a total abstainer would mean only a short illness. We find that men who do not drink are always the best soldiers on the march. Polar explorers forbid alcoholic liquors, as they cause a person to succumb quickly to the cold. Athletes, when in training, do not take any spirits.

Heavy drinkers do not, as a rule, lead long or healthy lives. Life insurance agents have found this out, and do not offer such favourable terms to a drinker as to total abstainers.

Those people who drink think that spirits help to quench the thirst, but this is not so, for they only tend to make a person wish for more. There is always a tendency for this desire to become irresistible. Most people find that the first glass of beer is not too

pleasant a beverage, but they endure it, for they see others taking it, and they soon begin to like it.

Money spent on spirits is money wasted, and often we find that a home is ruined because the breadwinner spends his money on drink instead of on food and nourishment. Beverages such as cocoa or milk, though they cost less than spirits, contain flesh-forming and warmth-giving substances. Thus a man would get a fair amount of nourishment in a loaf of bread which would be lacking in a glass of beer.

It is always found that most of the crimes committed are the result of drink. Often a man commits a serious crime when he is under the influence of drink. Insanity is often the result of heavy drinking.

Intemperance is likely to render a person liable to many diseases, chief among which are consumption, cancer, inflammation of the lungs, and brain disease.

Spirits of any kind should not be given to children, unless by the doctor's express orders, for they help to stunt the growth.

If we could take away from this sinful world all the vice, wretchedness, poverty, and ill-health which is caused by heavy drinking, how much happier and brighter this world would be.

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