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PRIZE COMPETITION.

TEMPERANCE ESSAY.

FIRST PRIZE.

(By Carrie Watson, Tinwald.)

Alcohol is a beverage. One of the substances from which it is made is barley. After many processes, the barley is turned into sugar, after which it is fermented. The beverage contains three gases—carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen. It does not contain nitrogen, which is required for the tissue throughout the body, therefore it is not a tissue-builder. Alcohol is classed as a stimulant, narcotic, and as a food. As a food, the alcohol acts in the ratio of one part to one thousand six hundred and sixty parts. As a narcotic it produces sleep, and stupefies the feeling to pain, distress, or care.

Alcohol is sometimes thought to be a source of heat, but this is not so. The drink makes the inner parts colder, and the blood coming to the surface makes the skin feel hot, but when the temperature is taken by the thermometer the usual temperature is found to have greatly decreased.

Drink is taken especially by the poor, for the want of a good wholesome drink. The public-house is the only place where they have a good time. The want of mental and bodily pleasure drives them there, and they spend what little they have in the brilliantly lit up gin palace. Persons in distress or pain, or heavily laden with care, indulge in spirits, and become intoxicated.

There is not an organ of the body that is aided by alcohol to carry out its proper functions. Spirits have a great effect on the different organs. The internal portion of the stomach is reddened the instant alcohol enters it. Painless ulcers are formed. The food remains undigested, and vomiting and inflammation usually ensue.

The liver is enlarged by the deposited fat; the walls of the heart are changed into fat, and the beating is more rapid. The skin becomes liable

to any disease that is prevailing, and coloured spots are often seen on a drunkard's face.

The mind of the drinker progresses temporarily, and the thought quickens, but later it becomes confused. By prolonged drinking the brain becomes noisy and helpless. The drunkard suffers from inflammation and brain disease. By the constant drinking of alcoholic beverages 35 per cent. to 40 per cent. is fairly approximate estimate of insanity directly or indirectly due to the cause. The moral sense is dull, and men who are overpowered by drink are often liars, and they cannot control their will.

When they see the liquor they have no strength of will to resist it. When intoxicated, the drunkard is very obstinate, and will not listen to advice.

The nerves are greatly affected by alcohol. Persons indulging in it become nervous, and have no power to control themselves.

The habitual drinker is liable to consumption, cancer, and poison, which circulates through the body, and renders the person liable to death. The great causes of drinking are to be relieved from care and made happy for the time being; also want, misery, and bad homes, which, especially in London, cannot be called homes at all. The men and women also are struck by the dazzling lights of the gin palaces, which, unfortunately, are at every corner. Worry and excitement and idleness are causes of this crime. Some poor people have no will, and are tempted by other bad men, and these victims cannot resist the temptation.

The craving for alcohol is sometimes hereditary, and nothing but rigid abstinence will keep such persons safe from the liquor traffic.

"Drink is the mother of want, and the nurse of crime." It is said that the largest portion of the sufferers in the London hospitals is due to the effects of alcohol, and most of the pauperism of London is also due to

this terrible poison. A great deal of the trouble of the world is accounted for by the drinking of alcohol. There is scarcely a person in the world who has not suffered directly or indirectly from it.

The climate has a great deal to do with drinking. The colder the climate the more a person is inclined to drink. It is drunk, unfortunately, to make the body warm, but those who leave the liquor untouched in the cold regions are hotter than those who indulge in it.

By realising the bad effects of alcohol on us in general, we can see it is best to be temperate in all such things. There have been formed many temperance societies, which have succeeded in getting hotels closed at 6 p.m., which are doing good work in lessening the liquor traffic in all parts of the Dominion of New Zealand.

PRIZING THE CROSS.

If thou impatient do let slip thy cross,
Thou wilt not find it in this world again;

Nor in another; here and here alone
Is given thee to suffer for God's sake.
In other words we may more perfectly
Love Him and serve Him, praise Him,
Grow nearer and nearer to Him with delight.

But then we shall not any more
Be called to suffer, which is our appointment here.

Can'st thou not suffer, then, one hour or two?

If He would call thee from thy cross to-day,

Saying: "It is finished, that hard cross of thine

From which thou prayest for deliverance."

Thinkest thou not some passion of regret

Would overcome thee? Thou would'st say,

"So soon? Let me go back and suffer yet awhile

More patiently. I have not yet praised God."

Whensoever it comes, that summons that we look for,

It will seem soon, too soon. Let us take heed in time

That God may now be glorified in us.
—From Ugo Basi's Sermon.