

## NEW ZEALAND WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION

(Incorporated)

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**WHY I REFUSE STRONG  
DRINK**

By Pastor Wm. Campbell, Auckland

**ADDRESS GIVEN AT THE  
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Of sheer necessity I was early taught thrift. I never lacked the necessities of life, but every penny had to be spent to advantage in my home. Neighbours' children went ragged and hungry, because the parents drank. The fear of God, and reverence for His Word were instilled into my young heart in my home, and at Sunday School and Band of Hope. One text was emphasised: "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Prov. 20:1). There were many public houses around, and I saw this text exemplified continually. Further, Solomon wrote: "Ponder the path of thy feet," and "Keep sound wisdom and discretion." Before I knew the meaning of these words I was led in these paths; and I am grateful today.

In youth I pondered about Eternity. I read (1 Cor. 6:9, 10) that drunkards would not inherit the Kingdom of God. It grew upon my consciousness that strong drink constituted a delusion for this present life, and a fatal

snare as to the life to come. There was something in drunkenness that earned the wrath of God: I desired His favour.

When I definitely became a Christian I began to study the Bible, and saw more about this matter. There is much in God's Word, in one way or another, about wine and strong drink: but quietly running through it all is not only God's wrath on excess, but His favour towards abstinence. In general, there was 1 Thess. 5:22, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." Strong drink has the very appearance of evil to me. If I see any one taking it, or smell it from the breath, immediately that one's reputation drops heavily in my mind.

Again, there is 1 Cor. 10:31 "Do all to the glory of God." Indulgence in strong drink is the very opposite of that.

As a young man I was led to engage in Christian service among children. I frequently addressed a large meeting of boys and girls. I myself owed much to the high example of Godly parents and Christian friends; and I felt the responsibility towards the younger generation to supply them with an example equally high. That utterly excluded strong drink. 1 Cor. 8:13 says "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." Nowadays food is not presented to idols; but the underlying principle applies to strong drink.

As I progressed in understanding of the Scriptures I saw deeper lessons still. In the time of Moses, as now, new laws had to be enacted as new circumstances arose. In Lev. 10:9, 10 a new regulation was laid down: "Do not drink wine nor strong drink . . . when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die." The preceding verses indicated the reason. Aaron's two sons, Nadab and Abihu, entered God's presence with incense in their censers of a wrong mixture. God had stated emphatically the apothecary's prescription for the incense which was to be reserved for Him. Nadab and Abihu were probably hob-nobbing with some idolatrous heathen friends around the camp, and had received some of their incense and thought it gave a better odour; and they had been drinking; and in their fuddled state of mind they over-

looked God's law of the incense, and presumed to go into His presence with the incense of the idol; and fire flashed forth from the divine Presence and slew them. This law prohibiting wine before entering His Presence was then laid down, to prevent further tragedies of this kind.

The regulation, however, seems to infer that taking strong drink at other times was not forbidden. It is to be remembered that Israel did not have ideal laws laid upon them, because of the hardness of their hearts (and in this they represented humanity in general) they could not bear them. For the Christian Church, however, the position is raised to heights without limit. "Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them . . . Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." (II Cor. 6:16, 17). If we belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, we cannot ever get away from the presence of God; for by His Spirit He dwells inside of us all the time. How much more, then, is it laid upon us to leave deceiving drink alone.

Doubtless we have all read some brief indication of the strict training laid upon the two famous princesses, Elizabeth and Margaret, in England; training with a view to high position and responsibility amid royalty. God gave brief injunctions to those who would occupy royal positions in Israel. "It is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes, strong drink: lest they drink and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted." (Proverbs 31:4, 5). How much more shall not this injunction rest upon us, of whom it is written: ". . . blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3). Evidently all who are Christians are destined for very high positions in heaven; and this present life is a training school to prepare for that. Indulgence in strong drink, therefore, ought to be far beneath us. All such specific injunctions are swallowed up in that brief exhortation, expressing the highest possible ideals for Christians today: "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." (Eph. 4:1).

But the work of the Women's Christian Temperance Union is not only towards personal abstinence for one's own sake, but to strive to lead