

mills with the same object. It was also decided to hold cottage meetings at Weraroa shortly, in order to rouse interest in that part of the district. Mrs Finlayson reported a second visit to the Maori Pah, a visit which resulted in an increased desire to further the education of Maori children. It was resolved to nominate three capable women for election on the school committee, and a delegate was appointed for Convention. The rest of the time was mainly occupied in making preparations for the coming Temperance garden party, to be held at an early date, when it is hoped we shall have the pleasure of an address from Mrs Atkinson or Mr Bedford.

Dunedin.

There was a good attendance at our March meeting, including some visitors. It was decided that Miss Moody-Bell should represent the Union at the Wanganui Convention; that Mesdames Mazengarb and A. C. Broad should be the delegates to the United Temperance Reform Council for the coming year, and that Mrs A. C. Begg, who is leaving for a trip to the Home-land, should represent the Union at the British Women's Temperance Association meeting. Mrs Pearson, Superintendent and Treasurer of the Sailors' Rest, stated that that branch of the work was in a flourishing condition.

Concealed Alcohol in Proprietary Medicines and Foods.

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Abridged.

The amazing credulity of the American people as to the curative power of drugs is vividly shown in the immense volume of the traffic in patent or proprietary medicines. It is conservatively estimated that the present annual sales of these preparations reach fully \$60,000,000. In view of the fact that medicines retailing at \$1.00 a bottle do not cost over fifteen to sixteen cents, and very often as little as five to ten cents for production, bottle and contents, it is easy to understand why vast fortunes are made from those sufficiently well capitalized to afford extensive advertising.

There could be no objection to the sale of these preparations beyond the enormous price in proportion to the cost, if they did all that is claimed for them upon the labels and in the advertisements. But when experts in the study of their effects lay to the charge of many of them idiocy, insanity and widespread physical, moral, and mental ruin, it is time people became enlightened as to their real nature.

A careful compilation of manufacturers' announcements shows a list

of 1,806 so-called patent medicines sold to the public in which

alcohol, opium, or other toxic drugs

form constituent parts. Six hundred and seventy-five of these are known as "bitters," "stomachics," or "cordials," and alcohol enters into their composition in quantities varying from fifteen to fifty per cent. Three hundred and ninety are recommended for coughs and colds, nearly all of which contain opium in some form. Sixty remedies are sold for the relief of pain, and for no other purpose. One hundred and twenty are for nervous troubles; of these about one-half have entering into their composition the poisonous coca leaves, or kola nut, or both, or are represented by their respective active principles, cocaine or caffeine.

One hundred and twenty-nine are offered for headaches and kindred ailments, and usually with a guarantee to give immediate relief. In these are generally compounded the poisonous phenacetin, caffeine, antipyrine, acetanilide or morphine, diluted with soda or sugar of milk. Some headache powders and some remedies for colds have been found to contain cocaine.

Dysentery, diarrhoea, cholera morbus and cramps in bowels have one hundred and eighty-five quick reliefs or "cures," nearly all of which contain opium, many of them in addition alcohol, ginger, capsicum or myrrh, in various combinations, and there are numerous cases on record where children and adults have been narcotized by their excessive use.

Forty-eight compounds for asthma contain caffeine and morphine. Thirty-six soothing or teething syrups are provided for infants, some of which contain opium or its derivatives.

That there are many people innocently and ignorantly forming an alcohol, opium or cocaine habit through the use of patent medicines is a fact well known to physicians. Yet if they speak out a warning their words are lightly treated as professional jealousy. But if they find people willing to listen and to learn, they will tell what they know. The Women's Christian Temperance Union has been inviting physicians of late to speak upon this theme in their regular and public meetings, and they have learned much of great value to themselves and their families. They have had clearly taught them that the formation of an alcoholic or drug habit is not the only

danger in the use of nostrums, but that much of

the prevailing ill health

of the American people is due to these medicines.

For instance, a physician was called recently to attend a patient who was suffering from a disease which results only from the continued consumption of an alcoholic liquor. As the sick man was a deacon in good standing in his church, and a voting prohibitionist, the physician was puzzled, but finally bethought himself and asked, "What medicine have you been taking?" The answer was that for months the patient had been taking daily doses of a medicine sold by "a retired clergyman"; examination revealed a high percentage of alcohol in it. As it had been taken in small doses it did not intoxicate, so its nature was not suspected, but its continued use had steadily undermined the health. Nothing would have induced this good deacon to partake, knowingly, of an alcoholic liquor, but the glowing testimonials of marvellous cures in a medicine of secret composition led him upon a path whose end was a wrecked nervous system and a disease which under no other circumstances could have befallen a man of his principles.

Another instance is that of a young woman who had become so addicted to the use of a certain neuralgia "cure" that she had taken nearly a thousand bottles before she went to a physician for help. She was sent to an inebriate asylum with the hope that there she might be *cured* of her addiction to the "cure," which was made up largely of morphine. This young woman would not, in the beginning, have used morphine knowingly.

A third case is of a woman living not far from the writer, who has become greatly enfeebled in health, and a drunkard in addition, by the use of a remedy advertised for the ills peculiar to her sex.

Cases like these might be multiplied indefinitely. The writer receives letters frequently from women telling of loved ones who are as much addicted to some of these medicines as any old drunkard is to his cups. They think they cannot live without the "remedies." It is the peculiar effect of the alcohol or morphine or other habit-producing drug that makes the patent medicine habitué.

It is but right that people should be protected by the State from indulging ignorantly in what knowingly they