

**ESSAY COMPETITION.**

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Alcohol is a chemical combination of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. It is a drug, belonging to a class called narcotics. It excites a person for a short time, and makes a person sad for a much longer time. Alcohol is a poison in the same sense as chloroform. Alcohol attracts water from the tissues of the body. Meat and vegetables contain water, and if there is alcohol in the stomach it absorbs the water from the foods, and consequently they become tough and hard. This makes the food difficult to digest. Drinks that contain alcohol do not quench the thirst, as they attract water.

Beer contains from 5 to 6 per cent. of alcohol, wines contain 9 to 23 per cent., and spirits, such as gin, rum, brandy, and whisky, contain from 40 to 50 per cent. Alcohol is used in the manufacture of a variety of products, such as chloroform, and ether, and perfumes. Its most general use is in imparting a stimulative action to liquor for consumption. If these liquors are taken in sufficient quantity they will intoxicate a person. When alcohol is diluted with 10 per cent. of wood spirit it becomes methylated spirits. Alcohol, when used in the right way, is very useful for lamps. Alcohol is rightly used when used in industrial purposes. Chemists use alcohol when making liniments for sprains.

The presence of alcohol in the stomach hinders the digestion of the food. If the foods do not get digested in the proper manner, the blood cannot obtain its full nourishment. Alcohol tends to make the juices of the stomach flow too freely, causing inflammation, from which mucus is given off. The liver conceals bile, which is very unhealthy if allowed to stay in the blood. When there is bile in the blood it causes the skin to turn yellow, and cause jaundice. The liver is a large gland, which separates the bile from the blood. The lungs have to get rid of carbonic acid, and have to gain a fresh supply of oxygen, so that we can resist disease germs. A person who is not a total abstainer, and drinks a great deal of spirits, is more liable to catch disease.

The red corpuscles carry oxygen

round the body, and carry away the carbonic dioxide. The work of the white corpuscles is to fight for us in time of disease, and if we have taken alcoholic drinks frequently the corpuscles will become motionless, and we will catch the disease.

Alcohol weakens the heart; its nerves and the muscles become stretched and paralysed. Heart failure is often caused by alcoholic drinks. A person who has been drinking may die from a shock that a total abstainer would not die from.

The kidneys separate the waste substances from the valuable. Alcoholic drinks stop the proper working of the kidneys, and thus waste products are allowed to stay in the body, and the good substances are able to escape. When these waste substances remain rheumatism and other diseases are often caused. When the kidneys get in a diseased condition people get what is known as Bright's disease, and one who has it cannot be cured.

When people indulge in alcoholic drinks they cannot control their movements. Drink often causes a limb to be paralysed. Much drink affects the brain very badly, and unsoundness is often caused.

The amount spent on alcoholic beverages for five years would pay for all the books, shoes, and clothing imported from the United Kingdom for one year. It is far more profitable for a man to insure his life than to spend his money on drink, for if he keeps his insurance paid up he would be able to draw out a fair sum of money. If there were not so much money wasted on alcoholic drinks there would not be so much wretchedness in homes. When the father is a drunkard, instead of bringing home his week's wages, he stops at the public-house, getting drunk, when the rest of the family is often starving.

The greatest curse of the whole country is drink. A large percentage of the cases of insanity is caused through drink.

A large proportion of accidents are caused through drunkenness.

Judges say that about three-fourths of the crimes are caused through drinking of alcoholic drinks.

Drunkenness does not only affect the persons and those belonging to him but he also affects the whole people, because a drunken nation is never prosperous.

Alcohol stops the development of the

body, and it also stunts its growth.

People who go to explore the polar regions will not allow the use of alcohol in any form.

Wounded soldiers that are not total abstainers take much longer to heal than total abstainers. Total abstainers can do more work in less hours than one who drinks. If the men who work at the munition works were total abstainers there would be many more shells and other ammunition to carry on this war. Their weakness for alcohol is helping to delay the war.

**THE ANGELS OF MONS.**

The following is an extract from a letter written by Miss Fanny Balfour to her cousin in Melbourne:—

"I heard something that might interest you. A cousin of mine, one of the Buchanans, told me. She gave no names, only initials. A lady, the daughter of a landed proprietor in Devonshire was interviewing a soldier (I suppose wounded) and he said to her, about the retreat, quite early in the war, from Mons, 'Madam, it was awful. The Germans came on in such fearful numbers, and we were in confusion, and had to retreat. When suddenly I saw a great angel, with outspread wings, between us and the Germans. He seemed to shut them off, and we all got away safely.' The lady was telling this to her brother at home, and two officers who had also been in that fight, and she rather smiled at it as imagination, when the colonel looked at her gravely and said, 'The man was quite right. I saw it too.'"

"Isn't that beautiful?" the letter continues. "It gave me such a feeling of God on our side. You know in that early action our men were left for a while without any support, tremendously outnumbered, and people said how marvellous it was our men were not all cut to pieces. This, to my mind, accounts for it. The age of miracles is not past. Our extremity was God's opportunity."

**EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK.**

The Illinois State Board of Administration has ordered that all women employees of State institutions shall receive pay equal to the men for the same work.