

# The White Ribbon

FOR GOD AND HOME AND HUMANITY

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## BEAVEN MEMORIAL PRIZE.

(A competition carried out under the auspices of the Invercargill W.C.T.U.)

### Alcohol : Its Effect on the Individual and the Nation.

Some creditable work was done by the candidates who competed for the "Beaven Memorial Essay" on the subject of "Alcohol: Its Effect on the Individual and the Nation." The sum of £10, provided by the late Alfred Beaven and Mrs Beaven, was offered in three prizes of £5, £3, and £2, and the successful competitors were: C. S. Brown 1, F. Simon 2, and Eva McLean 3. The judge (Mr W. G. Mahaffey) expressed himself very pleased with the literary ability shown.

The winning essay was as follows:—

During the past half-century there has been a great awakening throughout the civilised world to the evils arising from the use of strong drink. It had always been recognised, long before this movement began, that the habit of intemperance tended to lower the worth and value of an individual, and that a nation given to drunkenness was handicapping itself in its national life; but it has been left to the last generation or two to discover how vast and far-reaching is the influence of alcohol on every branch of our social organisation,



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and how deep is the harm it inflicts on those who indulge in it.

We have to deal, first, with the effect of

#### Alcohol on the Individual.

It is unnecessary to say anything as to its effect when taken habitually to excess, for the ruin and degradation of life it then causes are too patent to be disputed. There are not wanting those, however, who would not assent to the proposition that alcohol taken in any quantity,

however limited, is injurious to almost every organ of the human body and every faculty of the human mind; nevertheless, this statement is supported by an overwhelming body of evidence from a great variety of sources.

In a recent work, entitled "Alcohol and the Human Body," by Sir Victor Horsley and Dr. Mary Sturge, the conclusions of modern medical science, based on years of observation and experiment by hundreds of workers, as to the physical effects of alcohol, have been summarised, and the more important facts there set forth may be enumerated here. In the first place (though there is still some controversy on this point), it is becoming more and more conclusively established that alcohol is not a food. The celebrated chemist, Liebig, has stated that "nine quarts of the "best ale contain as much "nourishment as would lie on "the end of a table knife."

The true classification of alcohol is with the drugs, not with the foodstuffs. It is, moreover, a poisonous drug. "Alcohol," says Sir Andrew Clark, "is a poison—so "is strychnine, so is opium. It "ranks with these agents."

We may consider its effects on various organs of the body:

(1.) The skin. The effect of

#### Alcohol on the Skin

is to cause a slight dilatation of the blood vessels, so that a greater quantity of blood reaches the