

The White Ribbon

For God, and Home, and Humanity.

Thought for the Month.

If every church member were just like me,
What kind of a church would my church be?

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THE EDITOR AND THE IMP.

"Good morning, my Editor, you are late this morning, are you not? What have you been doing?"

"Well, my Imp, I've been studying the report of the activities of Dominion Breweries for last year, as it is published in last night's paper, and I must say it was a most illuminating document."

"Tell me what light you received from its study? What impressed you most?"

"In regard to the past I was impressed with the wonderful growth and success of the company since it was started eight years ago. Then I noted its wonderful organisation for the present and the enormous increase of business during last year. Lastly their faith in future expansion, and their preparation for it was an eye-opener as to what faith and preparation can do."

"It's rather a big programme. Let's take it in parts. What of its past growth?"

"Well, in its own words, 'from modest beginnings it has developed year by year until it is in fact a Dominion organisation.' It claims to serve the public in all the more populous parts of New Zealand with the best accommodation procurable, but it also promotes and maintains its large trade as brewers and wine and spirit merchants."

"And for the present How do they stand to-day?"

"In every centre of note there is a Dominion Breweries house where the company's products are procurable in the company's own hotels, or at hotels serviced by the company. The accounts for the year balance at a total of £480,767, compared with the previous year's total of £292,636. The gross profit earned was £148,192. The previous year the gross profit was only £97,648. The net profit earned was £41,257. Shareholders had received a dividend of 10%."

"My! Why don't the Government stop that? I thought interest was to be reduced to 4 or 4½%. People will rush brewery shares with an interest of 10%. But what of the future?"

"Like the fool told of by the Divine Master, they are building new breweries, one is nearing completion, and enlarging



their plant and expect to increase its present output by at least 4,000,000 gallons per annum."

"Gee whizz! the folks must drink some beer!"

"Take note of these figures. In 1935 the Drink Bill was £6,487,943; in 1936 it was £7,545,731; and in 1937 it reached the total of £8,702,553. And note also that the Government collects over £2,300 a DAY in beer duty, and out of this amount N.Z. Breweries contributed last year approximately £1,915 a day."

"Oh; isn't it a problem! We've got to fight capitalism really and truly if we want to abolish the liquor trade."

"We have. There are shareholders who are drawing their 10%, and naturally they won't vote out a trade giving such interest on their capital. Then there is the Government receiving enormous beer duty as well as customs duties on spirits (enormously increased) and they needing money badly are not anxious to close down such a gold mine."

"Don't you think the Government are not so much to blame? The people have a referendum and can vote the Trade out at any triennial poll."

"Let us look at the other side. We've seen the credit (financially), think of the debit side (financially only), and realise our hospital rates mounting, Child Welfare, Justice and Pensions Department, and note that all authorities agree that drinking causes an enormous proportion of these costs."

"Of course, and then there is the waste of life and ruin of manhood, national character our most valuable asset deteriorated by alcohol."

"Now you have said it. The license of the liquor bar means the license to sell a narcotic poison, alcohol, pronounced by the medical profession as the greatest source of deterioration of physique and character."

"And they reckon 4,000,000 more gallons this year. Who is drinking it?"

"Well, the daily papers tell that. First, men crowding hotel bars on Saturday morning, and even after 6 p.m. Law broken and our Maori brothers and sisters supplied with poison. Much has been said of the drinking at dances, so I will not stress this. It has been pointed out how harmful this is to morality and how it degrades the young who are the parents of our future race. But the young men are drinking. Years ago, Sir Edgar Sanders said to brewers, 'We must face the position that the majority of our customers are middle-aged men. We must cultivate the drinking habit among thousands and millions of young men who have never known the taste of beer.'

"Judging by our papers with their court reports they have succeeded in winning youth. And the Christian community looks on unmoved and votes for Continuance. That seems to be true. Take these few cases from the Dominion Press.

"In Wellington, young men amused themselves by letting cars run down a hill and their lawyer said that they were crazy with drink.

"Three young men were charged with discharging firearms. The report showed that they belonged to a country town and had been farewelling one of their number. Their GUEST went to the hotel after hours and got a demijohn of beer; when that was finished they got