

LARGE PERCENT OF LIQUOR USED HERE IS BRANDED CORN

The following article published in Saturday morning's Johnson City Chronicle is repeated by request for today's Staff-News. As to an announcement from one of the pulpits of the city that it "probably appeared Saturday afternoon" it is explained that no Staff-News is issued on Saturday.

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Recent discussions in these columns have been along the lines that there is always plenty of liquor in Johnson City and that hundreds of people know it and consider it a casual occurrence.

What kind of liquor is it?

To make a long story short, the larger percent of the intoxicant consumed in the city and vicinity is **corn liquor – moonshine – "white mule."** It is made in this vicinity.

As a side line, many satisfy their thirst for a drink with a "kick" in it, by drinking extracts such as Jamaican ginger, vanilla flavoring, raspberry, etc.; certain patent medicines with a goodly percent of alcohol; Bay Rum; rubbing solution, embalming fluid, camphor, etc. Some of the discerning drinkers use ginger ale or apricot brandy, or grape juice, and spike it heavily with corn liquor, and other ingenious ones make a liquid by dissolving "canned heat" - the alcoholic solid manufactured for use in small stoves." All of these concoctions have been found in possession of parties searched at various times by the police.

Addicts to the drug, medicine, and cosmetic line, however, are in the decided minority. This is due to two principal reasons: first the alcoholic effect is not so much to the liking of the average individual; and second; there is little trouble in getting real mountain corn liquor, making it unnecessary, in most cases, to resort to substitutes.

In many cases stills have been found equipped to make one run of apple brandy, and some peach brandy has been found.

The making of wine – blackberry, grape, cherry, dandelion, and similar concoctions, has been found to be confined almost exclusively to homes where it is fermented easily, and in many instances is carried on as part of the

spring or summer canning season. Little or none is captured in raids, for there have been no raids in search of home-made wine; and even if there were, it would be almost impossible to inflict any punishment, for proof it was made for beverage purposes would be difficult to produce.

There is a small percentage of liquor “imported” although occasionally some of that labeled “bottled in bond” may be found in the possession of the more opulent. No considerable quantity of “red liquor” has ever been captured here in any shipment.

The average man who takes a drink will frankly admit that he would prefer white corn to imported rye or red liquor. Some will contend that the newness of the corn liquor – sold and consumed almost direct from the still – give it both a good and a bad quality; bad because it hasn’t the “mellow” taste of age, during which it takes on a yellowish tint; and good because when taken in large quantities, the intoxication lasts of certain duration with little bad effects.

Keep in mind, it has been reported often in articles on this question that liquor is just as difficult to get in Johnson City as in other cities and towns in this part of the South. By way of parenthesis, also keep in mind that the facts herein are gleaned from many sources – from officers, from court records, from business and professional men and women, from jailbirds, bootleggers and dope addicts, and from men and women high in social circles – *and are compiled by a person who does not drink intoxicants.*

Moonshine stills make up no uncommon sight in this region. All of them are equipped to make corn liquor. They vary in size from a coffee pot on a kitchen stove, to 300-gallon outfits snugly concealed in some far-away cove in the mountains.

In a recent discussion among officers, the question was asked: “How many people in Johnson City will and do take a drink?” “Half of them,” ventured one. “That’s a low estimate,” said another. Well let’s put it at one-fourth, say 5,000 – which is half the official estimate. “How much will they drink” “Hard to tell – some habitual drinkers and dealers admit they take a half gallon a day! Others think nothing of a quart a day; and there are hundreds who will not drink a pint a month.”

Difficult to form an estimate, but call it an average of half a pint a day, which is half the officers’ estimate, then cut that in two. **Then figure it up – just about three quarters of a million dollars per year spent in Johnson City for liquor!**

There are two answers; one from the rabid teetotaler, who believes that prohibition is umpteen percent effective, and who says "It's a deliberate lie." The other from the man who drinks and the men who sell, who say, "**Well you don't get any wood alcohol in corn liquor, and the money stays at home!**"

Now you tell one.