

dependent Labour Party had been working. The militant tactics were adopted, but not at first with crime, only by novel methods to arouse the public from indifference. The effect of the policy of crime and violence, that was afterwards adopted, had been to neutralise to a great extent the good already done, but the Non-Militants could not suppress militancy except by becoming Militants themselves.

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## Correspondence.

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(The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents.)

### OUR ORGANISING FUND, AND IS IT WORTH WHILE?

(To the Editor.)

Madam,—We know at times many of our Unions feel the need of more money to successfully carry on the many calls and demands made upon them from time to time, and when the appeal comes through the columns of our White Ribbon paper for financial help for our two lady organisers, perhaps some Union members feel it a tax to give, or even do not respond at all.

I want you to come away to one of our new settlements. We are in the Western District of Southland, surrounded by very beautiful scenery; the mountains are clad with heavy bush from base to summit; on every hand the bushman is busy with his axe, and those giants of the forest which take hundreds of years to grow are laid low in a short space of time. After a while, when the wood and branches are sufficiently dry, a fire is lit on a windy day, and the delicate ferns, climbers, and mosses are a thing of the past, and in those fresh wood ashes the sower hastens to sow seed of the grasses, etc., he wishes to cultivate for his stock, and after a "burn" there usually comes up a tall weed called the "fire weed"; it springs up and flourishes to the detriment of surrounding plant life. I often think, as I look at it, of another fire weed that so quickly gets a footing wherever the population seeks to mark out pastures fresh; it is surprising what enterprise some have, in the midst of sublime scenery and lonely grandeur. In a new district they spend a large sum erecting a large hotel and dealing with the fire weed that is to ruin our men and boys, and also some of our sisters. Into such a settlement about a year ago Miss Powell came to try and counteract some of the evil influences by organising a branch of our W.C.T.U. work. This was successfully accomplished. Also a Band of Hope was started. Only a few days in a busy Organiser's

life, but planted in love, and with God's blessing invoked. "And God gave the increase." The Union looks back on its first year's work, and the members are thankful to have been united in fighting hand in hand a common foe, and getting several young men to sign our pledge (and, thank God, they are keeping true). To meet the needs of a scattered district, and to try and keep in touch with some of its 37 members, different centres must be visited, and women who knew nothing of the W.C.T.U. work before now find the joy of service for humanity, and feel they have stepped into a larger life. The Band of Hope has grown to a bright, interesting meeting. Another centre now has its own meeting, and every child in that day school is a pledged abstainer. Five day school teachers have joined us, though two have since removed. One with us is the faithful secretary of the Union. Can you measure the influence of the work organised in a new district? Surely, sisters, wherever it is worth while for the man with the fire weed to do his deadly work, it is worth our planting the good seed side by side. Now, in the new places opened up in New Zealand there must be many places where there is great need for our Union to be implanted, and try and reach the young men and young women by arranging socials and letting them have good music, bright games, a helpful address, and supper, and try and influence all for good.

The name of Miss Powell will dwell long in the minds of many, and if this one place of work had taken much longer and cost the Unions much more money, would it not have been worth it all? So I trust, as our present Organiser goes on her work (that the angels might envy), although at times discouraging and unpleasant, rich results may follow that, if not seen in this world, may be revealed to us in His own good time.

Our Union hopes to send a donation shortly to the Organising Fund. We arranged for a social recently, but our young men were fighting bush fires, and could not attend. We hope to arrange another shortly, and send the proceeds along as we would like to help on the work that harnesses the latent power for good in so many of the New Zealand women in the quiet corners, as well as the busy centres. Wishing our Organisers much joy in their arduous labours of love.—Yours for God, Home, and Humanity.

L.H.

(To the Editor.)

Madam,—The W.C.T.U. has no party politics, therefore this moment is chosen to point out, without prejudice, what may prove to be our most important question to candidates in November, after the No-License majority. The Criminal Code Amendment Act, to raise the age of consent, and afford other increased protection to girls, which was promised by the Government, but shelved

last year, is still upon the provisional programme of Parliament. If it has been passed, in the form accepted by the W.C.T.U. and other women's societies, before these words are read, the Government has proved itself in earnest in making this promise, and deserves thanks from the women of New Zealand. If it has again been shelved, the Government has proved that on every social and humanitarian issue the country has merely been marking time for three years past. We know that this year is not as other years, but we know, too, that Parliament has had time or made time to pass many Bills of local and comparatively slight value, and one Bill of less than no value, namely, that to give the country thirty additional race days to gamble in. Want of interest will have been the cause if this needful and important Bill is not carried through.

One word more, should the Bill still be a matter of enquiry before the polls, the Unions should bear in mind the amazing clause introduced in this Government Bill, and strongly opposed by all the women's societies. It was proposed, in case of an offence against a girl under the prescribed age of consent, that no prosecution could be commenced without the written permission of the Attorney-General, a handicap on justice not imposed in the case of any other crime. The Unions are doubtless aware that this arbitrary Star Chamber clause was imported straight from England. It was one of the hostile "amendments" successfully employed in the House of Lords against the similar Criminal Law Amendment Bill of the Bishop of London. And it must never be grafted into any New Zealand statute. Of course it is trusted that, ere this reminder is in print, the Government has dropped the amendment, passed the Bill, and added another important page to the notable social legislation of our twenty-one years of emancipation.—I am, etc.,

JESSIE MACKAY.

Christchurch, October 16.

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### STEAD MEMORIAL FUND.

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Further donations to this Fund are acknowledged as under, with thanks:—Ponsonby Union, 10s; Auckland, £1 5s; Blenheim, 4s; making in all £5 15s contributed by the N.Z. Unions. The money will shortly be forwarded to England, and will go towards the fund for the erection of an "Overseas Hostel," to be paid for by the contributions of the British colonies and Dominions.

M. JUDSON.