

**WOMEN'S**  
**Christian Temperance Union**  
**Of New Zealand.**

Organised 1885.

"For God and Home and Humanity."

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**The White Ribbon.**

For God and Home and Humanity.

THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 1915.

**PRO PATRIA.**

"Dulce et decorum est mori pro patria." So said the ancient Roman, and to do him justice he never grudged to give his life for the defence of his fatherland. The spirit which animated Horatius burned with equal intensity of the humblest of his countrymen—

"For how can man die better

Than facing fearful odds,

For the ashes of his fathers

And the temples of his gods?"

And so it has ever been, and to-day is with every nation that has attained to anything like a world empire or a

world supremacy. Such superiority has ever been won by the perfect willingness of every citizen to shed the last drop of their blood for their country. As our modern patriotic poet sings—

"If blood be the price of Admiralty,

Lord God we ha' paid it all."

All around us to-day is stirring the same spirit. From Canada's snow-clad forests to India's steaming plains, all across Australia's mighty continent, even to New Zealand's sea-girt isle, young men and old are offering their lives to defend their country. Our Empire is passing through a fiery trial, and her sons and daughters, fiery Gall and stolid Saxon, Canada's sturdy sons, Australia's fair daughters, the citizens of self-governing dominions, the soldiers of protected native States, are all standing shoulder to shoulder as a mighty brotherhood to defend the justice and freedom which British rule stands for.

We honour them for their devotion. We do not doubt their loyalty, their courage they have proved upon many a well-fought field. But we think that there is one thing which calls for an even loftier courage than to die for country, i.e., to live for it. By that I mean to live worthy of a fatherland and a heritage such as ours. So many sons of the Empire willing to fight her enemies are not willing to discipline themselves for greater efficiency. What a pathos attaches to the short terse sentences which tell us that these young men who have gone forth so eager to meet the foe have returned unfit to do battle for their country because they have fallen victims to their lower and baser selves.

It was openly stated in the House of Commons that between 30 and 40 per cent. of the men then in training were unfit to go to the front "through what in military language is called preventable disease, and that in plain English means wine and women." A telegram in our papers from an Australian State speaks of soldiers returned incapable from the front because of "certain diseases."

Think of it! While our Empire is fighting for her very existence, 30 per cent. of its defenders drop out of the ranks because they were unable "to hold the sceptre human soul, and rule thy kingdom of the brute."

Even here the military camps have to be weeded from wasters, those who by indulging passion become unfit to

fight. How are we helping these men? Public opinion is their greatest enemy. It is openly taught that wine is a necessity. Many say, "If you declare hotels out of bounds you must give soldiers a wet canteen at camp." Why? Does alcohol increase a soldier's efficiency? The heads of army and navy don't think so. The late Lord Roberts said, "13,000 abstaining soldiers will do as much and more work than 15,000 drinkers." Captain Ogilvey, a noted gunner instructor, says he has gone carefully into statistics, and found that the shooting efficiency of the men was 30 per cent. worse after the rum ration than before it, the ration being only one-eighth of a pint. Lord Wolseley, in speaking of the splendid health of troops in Soudan, said it was due to the fact that from the time they entered until they quitted it they were not supplied with spirits. Sir Francis Grenfell says the campaign in the Soudan was a teetotal campaign, and at its close "in no other part of the world have I seen a force of men so fit and so well." Admiral Lord Charles Beresford said: "I do not believe that alcohol in any form ever has done or ever will do anybody any good." Yet in spite of all this weight of evidence from army doctors and leaders, we still treat it as necessary that our men should have strong drink. Russia has forbidden vodka, and France absinthe, and is England, the other ally, so dominated by brewery interests that she dare not forbid the liquor which is marring the efficiency of her men. Mr Lloyd George, speaking recently, said that the Government had great powers over the liquor trade, and would use them if necessary. Employers said that engineers turned out 30 per cent. less work because of the drinking habit. Our country requires every man at his best. We do not doubt the Government's power, but we do doubt its willingness to offend large vested interests.

In regard to the other evil, impurity, that, too, is treated as a necessity. Public opinion is not yet quite ready to endorse the W.C.T.U. formula, "A white life for two." The commandant at a garrison town in England recently, when waited upon in regard to an attempt to revive the C.D. Acts, said he was not concerned to prevent vice, but to prevent disease. That cannot be done. All army experts agree that all attempts at regulation of vice are only ghastly