

held; the last one, early in December, was addressed by Mrs McCombs. Material was purchased and made into garments for the children's ward in the Christchurch Hospital.

S. MOODY,
Supt. for Y's and Medal Contests.

PRISON AND REFORM WORK.

This department is not naturally so popular as many in our W.C.T.U. work, such as Band of Hope work, the Cradle Roll, etc.; but do we all realise that even the criminal is within the scope of our womanly work and influence? Do we realise also that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ passed through arrest, trial, condemnation, and imprisonment? "He was numbered with the transgressors." "He was taken from prison and from judgment." Who like Him could have power to sympathise and to succour the tempted? It was His mission "to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoner from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house," and "to proclaim liberty to the captive."

Then when the great tragedy of His human life was ended, the world's Great Prisoner became the world's Great Liberator," sending by His people a wonderful message of life and gladness to the sad and miserable prisoner.

In New Zealand prison work is necessarily, and fortunately, much restricted, especially among women, and scarcely anything by way of report has reached me this year. Yet, at the centralised women's prison at Addington, Christchurch, there is an important work to be done, and we beg our progressive Christchurch W.C.T.U. sisters to step into this open door of service, which no other Union has the privilege of doing, for elsewhere there are very few women prisoners. The present regulations, unfortunately, prevent the ministration of women, however suitable, in the prisons conducted for men prisoners.

Mrs J. K. Barney, the World's Superintendent of my department (Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A., writes to me as follows:—

"I am very grateful for the Convention number of the N.Z. 'White Ribbon,' in which I find your report of prison and reform work, which I read with great interest and pleasure. . . . I regret that women are debarred from ministry to the male prisoners. This is an unwise ruling, and I trust you women voters will give attention to it. Of course, we understand that visitors to such institutions should be accredited middle-aged, motherly women, devoted to spiritual help of the prisoners, and also to the help of their families.

"I shall be glad to hear more concerning the Addington Women's Gaol, at Christchurch. . . . A calendar means so much to those that are in for long terms. They

all seem to appreciate them, and if Scriptural, they give a good thought at least each day. Do let me hear again from you. Can I help you in any way?"

I find that ever since 1884 the last Sunday in October has been observed throughout the land as **Prison Sunday**. The movement has been national in its scope, and ministers have been urged to bring the question in its various bearings before their congregations. The results are to be seen in the ever-increasing public interest in more sympathetically intelligent reform. If our Christchurch Convention would also adopt this "Prison Sunday" among the Notable Days, information could be prepared for the October "White Ribbon" to prove helpful in the preparation of suitable statements from the pulpits. Also, if arrangements could be made for some of the Convention members to visit the Addington Gaol much more sympathy would be evoked among our women. At present their views are generally vague, and consequently ineffective.

Pahiatua reports: "An address on 'Prison Work' given at a Home meeting last April by the Superintendent of the Department."

Charitable and Reformatory Work, also included in my department, could surely have been reported from many branches. Was it generally understood that all such work should be reported to me?

Invercargill "Victoria Home for Friendless Girls" is still being conducted with great efficiency and is proving a great blessing to many.

SISTER MOODY BELL,
Supt. Prison and Reform Work.

W.C.T.U.

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