

WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION.

(Paper read by Mrs Brown at
Otautau Union.)

Fellow-workers in a great cause for the uplifting of humanity.—To write an essay is not so easy a task as it seems, especially on such a great subject as the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Much depends on how we understand a subject, the energy we put forward to its carrying out. If I carelessly read and thoughtlessly think, I cannot expect any great results from my efforts. Now I think we will get a better understanding of this subject if we read it backwards, "Union of Temperance Christian Women. Take the first word **Union**. How much lies in it? How much can be got out of it? Union means Unity. Coleman says: "It is many rolled into one." Webster says: "Liberty and Union now and for ever one and inseparable." George P. Morris says:

The Union of Lakes, the Union of
Lands,
The Union of States none can sever;
The union of hearts, the union of
hands, and the flag of our Union
for ever.

So you will readily see we belong to a great band, and with a knowledge of its meaning, we shall also see our duty toward such a Union. We must not measure its strength by the number in Otautau. We are only part of the larger Union, but even this small part can, if united, do a large amount of work, for it is not always the largest number of workers that do the most and best work. Do not forget that our Union reaches north, south, east, and west, and we belong to that. When we feel downcast, because of our seeming smallness, let us never forget how great is the Union of which we form a part. It is true something has been done, but how often we have to cry failure, and undoubtingly we can trace the effect back to the cause, "a divided element in our midst." No society can make progress that is divided. We must each take it to ourselves, and begin with the **U**, "Me." Be united. Don't by any act divide yourself from the rest. Now it's a Union of **Temperance**—that word has a larger

meaning than we think. "Henry VIII." says, "Ask God for Temperance; that's the appliance only which your disease requires." I firmly believe if we would only grasp the side issues of Temperance we would soon bring about a change with regard to the drink question. What do I mean? Are there not more ways than one to close the public bar? We have signed our name to a band of workers to bring about a great reform, then if I can check the flow of intemperance by an act of kindness and deeds of love I must do it. What is the use of my temperance with regard to strong drink, if I am intemperate on other points. I simply pull down what I try to build; it matters not how **long** we live, but **how**.

We live in deeds, not years — in
thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings not in figures on a dial
We should count time by heart throbs.
—He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest,
acts the best.

So when I say I belong to a Union of temperance workers, I must make the best and most out of all sides of life. We much mistake the meaning of temperance if we think it has only to do with drink, we must take it in its larger meaning, and at the end of our term, we may not only have the White Ribbon, but the White Flower of a blameless life, and as Swift says, "May you live all the days of your life." I do trust that our temperance, with regard to strong drink, will not be held back by intemperance in other things. As Johnson says,

Reflect that life; like every other blessing;
Derives its value from its use alone.

Now let us look at the next word, **Christian**. Hare says, "A Christian is God's Gentleman and Woman, also a Christian is the highest style of creature." It does not mean I am to be a loud professor, but in deed and word "A Christian." Why do we add the word Christian to our Union, because our works are or ought to be Christlike. In trying to sweep away the drink we often have to remove other obstacles in the way, and whatever tends to make the world better must have its origin in Christ, and Christianity springs from Christ.

Daniel Webster, says, "Whatever makes good Christians makes good citizens," and another speaking of his friend, said, "He is turning Christian for he is growing kind"; we must not forget it is Christian Temperance, and that bears many side issues, and covers a large space. Do we view our work as Christians should? For as we look, so will our actions be towards it. I often think that we as a Union are apt to look with scorn at the meaner side of our work, and we are wasting a lot of time, waiting until some Act of Parliament will bring about "what we desire—the closing of the bar," and by thus waiting we let slip golden opportunities of doing a grand work in and for our Union. Carlyle says, "Clever men are good, but they are not the best." Whilst we aim at being clever, let us not forget to be good members of our noble Union—

Being wise to resolve, and patient to
perform,
To pity distress is Human, to relieve
it is God-like.

Let us not live in words, but in deed, and of truth, up and doing as Christians should. Now we have our last word. Women—how much there is in this word "Women." One of the most pitiable sights I know is to see a child dressed in a woman's clothes; but how very sad to see a woman as a child. Yet we have not to travel 1000 miles before we meet them children in deeds, children in ways, children in feelings, children in thoughts. They have not done as Paul did. When he was a child he spoke and thought as a child, but when he became a man he put away childish things. Oh, if it could be said of all the women of our world-wide Union "that they had put away childish things, and are women," what powers we should have in our work. We have far too much babyhood in our midst, and it cripples our usefulness. I have often admired our N.Z. President, Mrs Don, how womanly, how noble, how good; she has no time to be childish, her every act speaks of the womanly spirit she possesses. England to-day is waiting for men, but the wide world is waiting for **women**. Some of the grandest and noblest works in history have been accomplished by women. Much more could be said on this word, but I only give a few ideas and leave you to gather the rest, therefore, I ask you to think over the words of our Union—