

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.

MONDAY, JULY 19, 1915.

PROTECT OUR GIRLS.

One woman's paper in England publishes weekly comparisons of punishments. It shows how much more severely crimes against property are dealt with than crimes against the person.

We cannot help noticing lately how much more severe a punishment is meted out in our Courts if the sufferer happens to be a man.

In Napier, a young woman shot the man who had betrayed and deserted her. The jury, in a small measure realising the great wrong she had suffered, and her physical condition, brought in a verdict of manslaughter, with a strong recommendation to mercy. We see little mercy in the sentence of life imprisonment inflicted upon her. Does the law inflict any

adequate punishment upon the man who deserts his unborn child and its mother? We do not say the prisoner was right to take the law into her own hands, but we do say guilty under great provocation, and with the fullest recommendation to mercy.

Now compare this sentence with those inflicted lately on men charged with the dastardly crime of assaulting little girls. In Auckland a middle-aged man served six months' sentence for brutally assaulting a school girl. Then being turned loose upon society in a few weeks, he was brought up again for another little girl ruined, and this second crime only got him a 12 months' sentence. After 12 months he is free to come out and do the same thing again.

At Timaru, quite recently, there have been three cases. In one of these the Judge stated that the little girl had been ruined for life. The learned Judge thought a sentence of six months adequate punishment for a girl's ruined life.

We do not want punishment for the sake of revenge, but we do say that we have the right to demand that our little girls and our women shall be protected from physical outrage and torture, in many cases, too, contracting a loathsome and incurable disease.

We all express horror at the violating of Belgian women and girls by German soldiers, and rightly so. And yet we express no indignation when little girls in our own Dominion are treated in the same awful manner. Six months for a girl's ruined life and life-long torture; 12 months for a second offence. How light the value placed on a little child's purity and innocence. But imprisonment for life for manslaughter when the victim is a man.

Is it not time we had laws to adequately punish these "Huns" in our midst? Also women police and women Magistrates to see them properly administered.

Surely to physically torture a tender little girl, to leave her with a crippled body, and a mind haunted with a dreadful memory of the horror she has been subjected to is worse than to kill her.

We women, who have the vote, are responsible for every little sufferer until we rise, unite, agitate, and demand protection for our children. We can get it if we only show we are in earnest about it.

VOLUNTEER NURSES.

On Saturday, July 3rd, an article appeared in the Christchurch "Star" stating that a movement was on foot to organise a corps of capable women prepared to render service as nurses or in any other capacity in connection with the Expeditionary Forces at Trentham or elsewhere. Fifty women were asked for, volunteers to be between the ages of thirty and fifty. Dr. Valentine accepted the offer of ten for immediate service at Trentham, and these left for Wellington on Tuesday night, the U.S.S. Company providing free passages. The daily papers say hundreds of applications were received.

There is no doubt of the suitability of scores of the applicants. The ages ranged for the most part from thirty to fifty, as requested. Some of the women are married, some unmarried; a very large number of them have previous nursing experience. Many of the women definitely state they require no pay at all, and would indeed furnish their own passage money to Egypt if need be. One man writes to say he is forty-nine, too old to go himself, and his only son, fifteen, too young; therefore he freely consents to his wife going, and she gladly offers her services. Nearly fifty women have signified their willingness to leave to-night for Trentham if required. All day yesterday Dr. Guthrie was busy examining these applicants, and the selection made is his choice. No woman is going except for sheer capacity and suitability. The women are all staunch and reliable to the last degree.

Speaking in reference to the applicants for the first contingent, Dr. John Guthrie said he had been absolutely astounded at the exceptionally fine, strong types of women who had offered their services. "My difficulty," continued Dr. Guthrie, "has been to select only ten from those offering; I could have selected at least double that number who were almost equally fit. Nearly all the women selected have had nursing experience, and they can be absolutely relied upon to do all that is at all likely to be required of them."

"Everything has gone through without a single hitch," said the secretary, Miss E. A. Rout, yesterday. "The Christchurch women have responded most nobly to this sudden call, and