

CANTERBURY PROVINCIAL CONVENTION.

The Canterbury District Provincial Convention was held in Timaru, September 7th and 8th in the hall of the Trinity (Presbyterian) Church. At the reception to welcome the delegates, Mrs A. P. Rule, President of the local Union, took the chair, and read an apology from the Mayor, Mr Guinness, and the first business was the passing of a vote of condolence to Mr and Mrs Guinness on the loss of their son, who had died of wounds received at the Dardanelles.

On behalf of the Ministers' Association, the Rev T. A. Joughlin welcomed the delegates to Timaru, and made a brief appreciative reference to the work of the Union in the Dominion, and throughout the world. Mrs Rule, on behalf of the local Union, also gave a brief address of welcome, and a like service was performed by Mr J. Wallace, on behalf of the Timaru No License League.

Mrs McCombs, President of the District Convention, replied on behalf of the visitors.

At a public meeting held in the evening, Mrs McCombs presiding, an apology was received from Mr Geo. Dash, Waimate, whose place was ably filled by Mr Stewart, a member of the Waitaki Temperance Reform Union. This speaker outlined some of the lessons learnt from the war, making special reference to Russia. Miss Roberts, Christchurch, made an impassioned appeal on behalf of the noble men who were making such heavy sacrifices on the battlefield for the people at home, not to raise money on their behalf by the degrading methods that had been resorted to all over the country. It was an insult not to be suffered, and the lawmakers were allowing the laws, bad as they are, to be openly flouted and set at naught.

Mrs McCombs, Christchurch, made an earnest and telling appeal for all present to help in creating a cleaner environment for the young people of all classes, and illustrated her appeal by facts that had come to her knowledge during her long experience as secretary of the Children's Aid Society.

At 9 o'clock on Wednesday morning the delegates assembled for business. Mrs Kavanagh was appointed press

reporter. Very few written reports were received from the Unions, several secretaries were not aware that this was necessary; in such cases verbal reports were given.

A lengthy report was received from Christchurch, where the Union raised £279 at the Belgium Harvest Festival.

Winchmore had increased its membership by 150 per cent.

Ashburton has the management of the Borough Rest Rooms, and reports on a special occasion 299 visitors in one day.

Rakaia reports a Band of Hope, whose membership includes five denominations.

Rangiora has worked successfully in the K.K. Pledge movement.

Kaiapoi has enlisted the sympathy of the local head master and District High School teacher in arranging essays on Temperance by the school children. The room owned by the Union is the local headquarters for Red Cross Work.

Timaru leads in Cradle Roll membership. Over 200 children enrolled.

Waimate supplies a Temperance column in the local paper.

Sheffield has found it necessary to meet twice monthly.

Lyttelton work among seamen.

Oxford continues the splendid work reported last year. One of the most aggressive of the branches.

Practically all the Unions obtained signatures to the petition for the early closing of hotel bars. Several Unions are engaging in Red Cross work. Certainly individual members from all Unions are so engaged.

Several Unions report prizes given for Temperance essays by Public School children, with excellent results, while the larger Unions also report Rest or Luncheon Tents at various open-air gatherings.

On Wednesday afternoon a helpful paper entitled "The Ideal Home," by Mrs Liddell, was read by Mrs Rule. A paper by Miss Henderson, Christchurch, entitled "Women in the Administration of the Law," referred to several anomalies in the passing of sentences. Special reference was made to the light sentence passed on men found guilty of repeated indecent assaults on women and young children, and again to the heavy sentence passed on Alice May Parkinson. A paper by Miss Roberts, entitled "A National Peril," traversed the

findings of the Medical Conference in regard to venereal diseases. The Unions were urged to support Convention, where members of longstanding, wide experience, and special knowledge, had placed their services at the disposal of delegates, who, with fuller knowledge of the facts, had, with one voice, passed resolutions bearing on this subject.

Resolutions.

1. That the members of the Canterbury Provincial Convention of the Women's Christian Temperance Union desire to tender their heartfelt sympathy with the wives, mothers and sisters whose loved ones have gone to the front in defence of their country, and to express our deep appreciation of the sacrifices they are making in giving up their dearest for the defence of the Empire.

2. That the section of the Licensing Act relating to the sale of drink to minors be amended in the direction of making it illegal for any person to supply drink to minors.

3. That this Convention heartily supports Mr McCombs' amendment to the Shops' and Offices' Act, bringing hotel bars into line with other business places in regard to six o'clock closing.

4. That this Convention urges the Government to amend the Licensing law in the direction of prohibiting the supply of liquor to soldiers in uniform.

5. This Convention of the Canterbury District Women's Christian Temperance Union strongly protests against the disproportionate length of the sentences passed on women (as in the case of Alice May Parkinson) for offences for which men escape with light sentences, or without being made to feel any moral responsibility, and Convention urges that the Women's Christian Temperance Union take active and united efforts to bring the matter before our legislators and urge immediate action.

6. This Convention urges that the Crimes' Act be amended to provide that men convicted of criminal assaults upon children of tender years, and men convicted of more than one offence of this nature, whether the victim be under age or not, shall be detained for life in a reformatory or farm colony.

As no invitation for 1916 District Convention has been received, no place