

for all our expenditure in the war, and leave £600,000 to be devoted to the relief of suffering in Belgium, Poland, Serbia, and other distressed countries. Although this could be done, I am afraid there is not likely to be any decrease, for in 1914 the number of persons arrested for drunkenness amounted to 13,890, much the largest in the history of the Dominion. In 1915, during the first six months of the year, 6430 persons were arrested for drunkenness. And the "Otago Daily Times" on 15th February of this year reported that in one of the larger towns of Otago no fewer than 64 hogsheads of beer were consumed in a period of four weeks. As a result of this extensive use of liquor, the police returns for the town show that there are already 20 convictions for drunkenness this year, as against 70 for the whole of 1915.

I yield to no one in my admiration of the British soldier. Compare him with those of other nations, and you at once see how splendidly he holds his own, and if we want our fill of pride in our own men, we have only to turn up press records and read of their undaunted courage at Gallipoli, and how they exceeded the expectation of the whole British Empire in their willingness to lay down their lives for their King and country. And yet there is a danger of this splendid manhood, in many cases, being spoiled through indulgence in liquor. In the light of these facts, should not something be done to protect the soldiers from the people who persist in treating them? If "treating soldiers" can be prohibited in England, Canada, and other places, surely it can be prohibited in New Zealand. Medical testimonies prove that men whose bodies are sodden with alcohol have small chances of recovery from the ghastly wounds caused by the explosions of shrapnel. The nations acknowledge that it is efficiency that is wanted in the war. The alcoholic soldier will always be lacking in that quality, therefore for the general good of our defenders, "treating" should be made a punishable offence.

The Gambling Mania.

It is more than disappointing to record that our protests against gambling during the past year have been so futile. In spite of the protests that were sent from all parts of the Dominion against the Gaming Act Amendment Bill, the Government passed the measure which gives increased facilities for gambling. The same paper which reported the introduction of the measure in the House of Representatives by the Hon. Mr Russell, relates the following:—"The courageous few who stood out prominently in their opposition to the wholesale raffling in connection with the recent Otago Queen Carnival, maintaining that the spirit of gambling would be inculcated and fostered in the young, will find vindication of their contentions in the following: 'A school boy of nine years of age re-

turned from one of the Dunedin schools with his books supplemented by a little cheap volume of songs. Interrogated by his father as to how he had come by it, the young hopeful reported in matter-of-fact tones that he'd won it in a raffle at school. The boy who owned the book originally, and valued it lightly, had disposed of it by lottery, issuing 20 tickets at one pin per ticket.'" And the same paper, in same issue, on 28th September, in a leading article congratulated the New Zealand Educational Institute upon the stand they made in protesting against use being made of our public schools in pushing the sale of lottery tickets. Disapproving of some of the methods adopted in raising funds for our wounded soldiers and their dependents, and telling of the gambling spirit that permeated the carnivals, the writer said: "If we are to have a strong, self-reliant, industrious, and self-respecting people, it will not be by encouraging gambling and 'get rich quick' methods, but by showing our young people that the only sure road to success and real happiness is along the path of efficiency, industry, patience, and honest effort."

After such a riot of gambling among all classes in connection with the war, it is not surprising to read about the riot of gambling in connection with the races that took place during the holiday season. From 27th December, at one week's meetings throughout the Dominion, 23 different towns, no less a sum than eight hundred and fifty thousand pounds went through the totalisator, and that at a time when economy is the policy that should be observed by all prudent people.

When Judges and Magistrates comment upon the evil influence of the totalisator, as they have frequently done, the Parliament should endeavour to curtail its power, and not give greater facilities to gamble, as they did last session.

The Kinematograph.

Two years ago, in my annual address, I advocated a closer supervision of films before they appeared in public. Since then the class of pictures shown in New Zealand has very much deteriorated, and I am pleased to note that during the year the Canterbury Women's Institute forwarded to the Mayor of Christchurch and the Minister of Education a memorandum calling attention to the retrogressive tendency of the picture shows, and asking for their support to arrest this. Since then the Otago Presbytery, the Education Board, and the Catholic Federation have discussed the matter, and all are agreed that a stricter censorship is necessary. We are told that managers of theatres do not select the subjects, but simply show what the Film Supply Companies send them. But surely if the managers, backed up by those who are interested in the moral welfare of our children, demand a certain standard of decency

and purity in the pictures to be shown at our theatres, this demand will be met by the Film Supply Companies.

The Melbourne "Southern Cross" last November published an account of a deputation which waited on the Minister of Internal Affairs in connection with this matter. They stated that some of the productions exhibited to women and children are unutterably and openly vile and filthy. Shameless impurity is thrown on the canvas, and lasciviousness and refined and unrefined corruption are becoming more and more the order of the day. That being so, then we plainly want a vigilant censorship for our picture shows, and it is the duty of our organisation to help secure it. If this were done, I believe it would exercise a most beneficial effect upon the community.

Temperance Teaching in Schools.

We are glad to know that we have in the Hon. J. A. Hanan a Minister of Education who has decided that Temperance Charts must be given a prominent place on the walls of the State schools, and that they must be regularly used, particularly in the upper classes, in connection with lessons on the economic, moral, and physical aspects of intemperance. We have always worked for this instruction to be given to our children. We know that ignorance is the parent of a great deal of vice, and believe that hundreds would be saved from intoxication if they knew the physiological effects of alcohol, and the school is certainly the place to learn this. The State does well to fortify the young mind against perils to which lack of knowledge so readily exposes them.

The Maoris.

In October last I saw in the Press a brief report from the District Health Officer, including his remarks upon the sly-grog selling that goes on among the natives in prohibited districts. He tells how at every funeral, tangi, or entertainment of any kind the majority are drunk. The appalling part of it is that women, and even children, drink as freely as the men. Teachers testify to the fact that school children are often intoxicated after a tangi. One small child of about five years of age was seen by a teacher to be drunk and carrying a bottle of liquor. This sort of indulgence must be injurious to their health, and if allowed to continue, one wonders what the future of the natives will be. We are told that pakehas make quite a big living by selling drink at twice its value among the Maoris.

We have heard similar statements before, and find it particularly galling to know that the law is not able to secure these diabolic offenders and punish them accordingly. That the natives are exposed to these temptations make it all the more necessary for us to have a representative working among them. As you know, Miss Woodhead was obliged, through illness, to leave us early in the year, and so far