

much good to the local Union and to the Temperance cause in general.

During the evening several vocal items were contributed, which added greatly to the enjoyment of the guests. The proceedings were brought to a close by singing the Doxology and pronouncing the Benediction.

### "WHITE RIBBON" REPORT.

The year 1914 closed with 2031 subscribers, a gain of 30 for the year. The year 1915 closed with a subscription list of 2122, an increase of 91 for the year. Considering how the energies of all have been devoted to patriotic work, this is satisfactory. We must thank our "White Ribbon" agents for their unselfish services. Our thanks are also due to Mrs Evans, M.A., our able associate editor, and to Mr Lynneberg for auditing the accounts.

NELLIE PERYMAN, Editor.

### CORRESPONDING SECRETARY'S REPORT.

Under ordinary circumstances, 1915, the year following the poll, would have been an "off" time, when Unions might consider that they were entitled to rest after their arduous labours in the National Prohibition campaign, but the war has offered to all women unusual opportunities for work, and most of our Unions have vigorously embraced those opportunities. Indeed, it would be right to say that none of our members have failed to realise their responsibility for helping to create "the atmosphere" that is to obtain after the war is over. A few Unions have considered that the claims of the war are so great that all their energies ought to be devoted to the special work in that connection, and they have either given up their Union meetings or have at least met less often. The majority of the Unions, however, have seen that there is more need than ever for the ordinary work of the Women's Christian Temperance Union to be prosecuted with all the earnestness and vigour the members are capable of putting into it.

The most important national effort made by the Unions during the year was the circulation of a petition to Parliament asking that hotel bars should be closed at 6 p.m. during the war. The time at our disposal did not permit of our enlisting the help of any organisations save our own Unions, and thus the effort was limited to those towns and districts where a branch of our Union exists. The delay in promoting the petition was due to the fact that your Executive believed that the N.Z. Alliance had the matter in hand, but as time passed and nothing was done, it was resolved that the Union must take action, and the petition was circulated. At the time there was great uncertainty as to the duration of Parliament; failure to

form a National Cabinet would mean that the House would adjourn, consequently only a few days could with any certainty be allowed for obtaining signatures. Again the majority of the Unions nobly responded to the call, and some thousands of signatures were secured, Dunedin Union taking first place on the roll of honour with over 5500 names. The petitions were duly presented to the House by the members for the various districts, and were in the usual course referred to the Petitions Committee. When that Committee, after much delay, at length reported to the House, it stated that the matter involved being a question of policy, it could make no recommendations, but that considering the importance of the subject, it was of opinion that Parliament should give the question some consideration. The supporters of the liquor trade were successful in baulking any action in the matter, for when the Petition Committee's report was presented to the House, certain members "talked the matter out," and nothing more was heard of it. The question has, however, had little rest as far as the public is concerned. The evil of the liquor traffic has never been more evident than now. It is the earnest wish of every decent citizen that our young men who are offering their lives to the Empire should be both morally and physically fit for the stupendous task that lies before them, and for some this is made almost impossible by the insidious ways in which the "liquor trap" is prepared for them. Under the guise of hospitality and good fellowship temptations to drink are forced upon the men, and our Unions have over and over again protested against the practice of shouting, and have asked that it be prohibited. This, too, is a matter that calls for further action on our part.

Many of the Unions have made a special effort in the direction of pledge-taking. The "K.K." pledge has been in fairly general use. Auckland reports that 40 members took part in a pledge-taking campaign, when 3000 pledges were secured.

Work for sick and wounded soldiers has been enthusiastically taken up by individual members and by Unions, and the report of the Flower Mission and Relief Superintendent should be a lengthy one this year, if the Unions have reported to her as they have to me.

The protest the Unions have made from time to time regarding the punishment meted out to men charged with criminal offences against women and children was this year embodied in a petition which was signed by the officers of our Unions and of many other societies associated with work for and among women and children. This petition was presented to the Minister of Justice by a deputation from various societies in Wellington. The deputation was sympathetically received, but as the Parliamentary session was drawing to a close, the Minister advised that the matter should be held over until the next session.

The win-one campaign has not had the success hoped for. While a number of the Unions took it up enthusiastically, many others reported that women were so absorbed in work in connection with the war that it was useless to approach them, and under the circumstances it was considered that for this year at least the campaign should not be pushed officially. The success attending the efforts of a few Unions should serve as an example to the rest. Palmerston North has 62 new members, Normanby has 26, Patea, Belfast and New Brighton have more than doubled their membership while Birkenhead, Devonport, Onehunga, Otahuhu, Hastings, Stratford, Normanby, Feilding, Wellington District, Winchmore, Timaru, and Port Chalmers show a substantial increase. Opoiki, Napier, Hawera, Pahiatua, Gore, and Tuatapere have also gone forward.

The financial membership is 3333.

Work amongst the young occupies so large a part of the energies of many Unions that it calls for special mention. One very gratifying fact in this connection is the ever increasing number of Unions that offer prizes to the public schools for essays on the temperance wall sheets. It is a question, however, whether it would not be better to set a more definite subject, as the wall sheets offer a somewhat indigestible meal taken wholesale. The efforts of Invercargill District Union must be noted. This Union has a general essay scheme for Southland, and includes 183 schools. The L.T.L. seems to be gaining in favour. Several Unions report L.T.L. societies. Palmerston North has several branches, with a total membership of 216.

Our Union has at more than one Convention voiced a demand for the stricter censorship of picture films. During the year the matter was taken up by the Catholic Federation, and a national demand was organised, and the various branches of our Union gave their hearty support.

At the close of 1915 we had 84 Unions in active work. Two—Tauranga and Sheffield—were not holding meetings, while two others, Taneatua and Westport, had lapsed. The three "Y's"—Oxford, Nelson, and Ashburton—send good reports. In the 84 adult Unions are included two new ones, Greytown and Tokomaru Bay, both formed by our Organiser, Miss Powell. Greytown has a membership of 28, and is working with great enthusiasm. Tokomaru Bay has hardly had time to get on its feet, as it was formed at the end of the year.

In closing this report, I would like to give our White Ribbon sisters this thought to inspire their work for the coming year. Mrs Creighton, so well known among women workers in the Old Land, addressing a conference in October last, said, speaking of the war: "We can hardly dare to think of the sacrifice of all the rich, bright lives, of all the powers from which so much was confidently expected in the future. Our best consolation is to be found in the thought of the child-