

young soldier boy signed, and broke me up, he was so like my own laddie. I had to choke back the tears that would come which would have put me out of business the rest of the afternoon. "Not much good with the present Government but I'll sign." Three barmaids signed for spite. "Say, Nellie, why should we not get out at six as well as any other shop girl." "If I had my way twelve o'clock would be quite early enough for me," said a jolly red-faced man. "There you are, that signature is worth half-a-crown." I heard the remark, but was too busy to notice the signature. A man of about 45 years of age signed, and said, "It may save a lad or two. I served in South Africa. Left home as young as any who went away. Was a real decent lad of good parents, who begged me not to go. I laughed at the thought that I could ever become fond of drink—look at me now. Oh! save the lads. Stop brewing the cursed stuff."

"Why not get State Control, and do the thing properly?"

"It's our duty to sign, but you look tired. Will you come and have a cup of tea?" Time was too precious, so I thanked her for her kind thought, and refused. "Suppose I brought a tray here, would you drink it in the street?" "Very gladly, if you can spare the time," and in a few moments she returned with a dainty tea tray. The tea was delicious, and we thanked our friend. She said, "I thank you for helping to put temptation out of my boy's way. Good-bye."

"What about six in the morning! Oh! if you women want to know anything about the business, watch the hotels at 6 a.m."

"Look here, Madam, do you know you are trying to make matters worse? What are the soldiers to do with their spare time? Do you know anything about Taranaki street light-houses? Make enquiries."

Darkness was setting in as two weary women gathered up their papers and set off for home. May God bless the work we tried to do faithfully.

WOMEN POLICE AND WOMEN COOKS.

(To the Editor).

Dear Madam,—It has been said that if we oppose the proposed legislation in regard to prostitution and venereal disease that we should have something to take its place. That we should be not simply destructive but constructive. Education and free treatment are the real and permanent remedies, but they do not fully meet the present crisis, and that is the point with which the authorities are at present concerned. Of course the most obvious remedy always seems to be to "get hold of the women who are spreading the diseases," but all the latest authorities state that this is not possible as the most dangerous from a sanitary point are the clandestine prostitutes, the young girls who are just about to lead this life, the later stages of the disease not being so infectious.

At the time of the Trentham scandal, little more than a year ago, when the condition of the camp was so insanitary that men were being stricken down by the hundred, and many died, it was said that if only a few capable women were in charge of the catering and sanitary arrangements such things need not occur.

Now the question is not only physical but also moral, and we think that more than ever woman's influence is needed. This is why we have suggested women police in connection with the camps, and in Wellington, now practically a garrison town. We feel sure that if the authorities could be persuaded to give the women police a trial the results would be, as they have been elsewhere, most satisfactory.

If the authorities will not move in the matter would it not be possible to do as was done in England, train a few voluntary women patrols for work wherever most needed?

Another way of securing the influence of women would be the introduction of women cooks in the camps. We believe there are in the Dominion enough women of suitable character and standing, and patriotic enough to take charge of this work. We also believe that their presence in the camps would have a restraining influence on the men.

We quite recognise that there are men of strong immoral tendencies up-

on whom the presence of women will have no restraining influence, but we hope that they are in the minority. The class we are most hopeful of helping are the young boys who go into camp quite unprepared to meet the strong temptations that face them there; boys from respectable homes, well brought up, who under other circumstances would grow up into clean, honest men, some of whom are now going under. Surely we women know how little it often takes to turn the balance in favour of good or evil.

It is heart-breaking to think of the wounded and dying, but how much more so to see the young life wrecked by perhaps one false step: coming home, "not to receive the welcome and applause of their friends and admirers, but to be rushed off to a venereal compound—there to fret out their long days in a vain regret." Just one instance—A returning transport, on the deck a doctor and a boy—"And will I always be like this?" The doctor replies, "Always." "Then it were better to die." The doctor is silent. Before that transport reached port that boy had disappeared, and his fate is merciful compared with many others.

What can we as women do? What is our part in the work, not of rescue, but of prevention? Are we quietly to fold our hands and say it is not our work, that it is in other hands? Because our own boys may be strong enough to resist, shall we be content to let the others go? Surely if ever there was any work in which women should be interested it is this.

If there is any other practical way of helping our boys, we shall be glad to hear of it, but so far the only suggestions have been women police and women cooks. Both are working in England with most satisfactory results, and we see no reason why they should not be as satisfactory in our Dominion.—Yours in White Ribbon bonds,

J. FIELD.

P.S.—Of course we do not in the least mean to suggest that the soldiers' rooms in Wellington are not doing good work. We are very thankful for their existence, and are sure that they are a great help to many. But it is quite evident that something nearer home is needed,

The "White Ribbon" will be posted to any address on receipt of 2s 6d, payable to Mrs Peryman, Port Chalmers.