

SUPERINTENDENT'S LETTERS.

MAORI DEPARTMENT.

Will any local superintendents of this department or Union member who has Maori homes near, let me know if they will kindly undertake to distribute our Maori leaflets, and perhaps in this way interest Maori women in the work of the W.C.T.U.? We have five carefully prepared leaflets, under the following headings:—"Care of Babies," "Food for Sick People," "Advice to Mothers," "Evils of Alcoholic Liquor," and "Small Sicknesses and Their Remedies." These are in the Maori tongue, and suited to their special needs. I wish to thank the following ladies for donations to this fund:—Mrs Young, of Palmerston, 10s; and Mrs Evans, of Wellington, 10s; also the following Unions for contributions:—Norsewood, March 22nd, 6s; Ponsonby, March 27th, £2 2s; Hawera, April 7th, £3; Nelson, June 19th, 13s 6d; Gisborne, July, 13s 6d; Ashburton, July, 15s 4d; Waimate, August 6th, 10s; Oxford, August 9th, 8s 6d; Wanganui, August 18th, £2 10s; Fitzroy, August 18th, 12s; Waka (Sub-Nelson), August, 10s 6d; N.E. Valley, August 20th, £1 10s; Winchmore, 10s; also Mrs Fairlie, Gisborne, collection, 10s.

N. F. WALKER,

N.Z. Superintendent Maori Dept.

THE EVILS OF CIGARETTE SMOKING.

Dear White Ribbon Sisters,—Having been appointed Superintendent of Narcotics at Convention, I am desirous of bringing under your notice a few facts concerning this great evil, and to thoughtfully consider its far-reaching effects, and which, like the drink curse, is sapping the young life of our boys. Please remember that I am not now attacking the smoker in general, but the cigarette smoker in particular. At the same time, I am of opinion that the huge sum of money spent annually on tobacco could at such a time as this, when all are called upon to make sacrifices and to curtail expenses, be turned to more profitable account. It certainly cannot be classed as a necessity. What is it, then? A luxury? A pleasurable habit? A self-indulgence? It may be all these, but it is a very selfish habit. I know of nothing that engenders selfishness like

the smoke habit. I am aware that there are some gentlemen who will, in deference to the expressed wish of a lady who objects, refrain, but is it not true that, as a rule, the smoker does not care whether you like it or not? In trains or steamers, despite the notice board in good type, and on the street, well, unless you are prepared to play hide and seek, you cannot get away from it, the fumes, and often sparks, coming into one's face. But on this occasion I want to confine myself to the cigarette, and it is for our lads that I plead, that we shall do our very utmost to instruct as to its evils, and persuade them **not to begin**.

I suppose the greater number begin when still at school, and unknown to the parents, and possibly the first wilful act of deception is when they resort to peppermint to hide, if possible, the tell-tale smell. We ask what is the reason for this early practice? I think the answer probably is that they see their elders smoking. It is doubtful, I think, that any of them really like it at first, but the idea of being like a man catches on, and the first step is taken; the deadly cigarette is brought into requisition, and without knowledge of the evil effects or of the habit that will ere long become a chain to bind and enslave them. Dear sisters, there is so much to be said against it that one finds it hard to say just the wisest thing in the limited time and space at my disposal. At a later date I hope to be able to give facts and figures from a medical standpoint. Many medical men smoke, but I believe, if asked, they would to a man condemn it for our youth. Is the cigarette habit a good one? Has it an upward or a downward tendency? Would you or I be pleased if we learned our boy had begun to smoke? If we met a party of young men smoking, should we conclude that they were going to Bible Class? Some Bible Class leaders smoke, more's the pity, and these have much to answer for, because their example is not on the side of safety. Many lose sight of the Scripture injunction, "Anything which causes thy brother to offend; Am I my brother's keeper?" Yes, in a measure we are, and we should use our best endeavours to remove the stumbling block out of the way of our weaker brother. I am told that the habit is taking hold of our girls also, and that it is a common practice for

young ladies to pass the cigarette round and smoke and chat at their "At Homes."

I think it is time that we realised the seriousness of the position, and as a band of Christian women bound together for God and Home and Humanity, use every endeavour to deliver the young from this deadly thing, that defiles the body as well as the higher and nobler part. A returned soldier, speaking of the strength of this habit, said that our boys would return from the Front "cigarette fiends." He also tells me that the average smoker smokes two packets a day, 6d per packet, at a cost of £18 5s per annum. Some smoke less, and some more. May I ask all Secretaries of local Unions to support the circular I hope to send out shortly by passing on a posted preferred to the leaders of Young Men's Bible Classes.

—Yours in White Ribbon Bonds,
MARY HOARE,
N.Z. Supt. of Narcotics.

GOOD CITIZENSHIP.

When attending the Convention at Auckland this year, I found that some of the delegates who had not been so busy in the work had not a very clear idea of what the Good Citizenship Department is, and I then undertook to write something upon the subject for the "White Ribbon." Pressure of work has until now prevented the fulfilment of this promise; but though rather late in the day, I wish now to try and make a few suggestions with regard to it. One of the pamphlets issued by the American Department has for its motto the words, "Study to show thyself approved and worthy of citizenship in a great country." This seems to express something of the meaning and object of the department. This object is twofold: the education of women in the duties of citizenship, and their organisation for the purpose of practical work.

Good Citizenship is, first of all, the recognition of the solidarity of the community and the realisation of the duties which the members owe to the whole; and secondly, the voluntary subordination of personal advantage to the welfare of the whole.

These are the principles which lie at the root of Good Citizenship, and the good citizen is the one who endeavours to live in accordance with them. Possessing, as we do in New Zealand, the rights and privileges of