

WOMEN'S Christian Temperance Union Of New Zealand.

Organised 1885.

"For God and Home and Humanity."

PRESIDENT:

MRS. DON,
Ravensbourne, Dunedin.

VICE-PRESIDENT:

MRS CRABB, Fitzherbert Street,
Palmerston N.

RECORDING SECRETARY:

MRS. W. A. EVANS, M.A., Hiropi
St., Wellington.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY:

MISS HENDERSON, B.A., 26 Tui
St., Fendalton, Christchurch.

TREASURER:

MRS BENDELY, Aratonga Avenue,
One Tree Hill, Auckland.

Official Organ:

"The White Ribbon."

Editor: Mrs Peryman, Port Chalmers.

Associate Editor: Mrs Evans, M.A.

Business Manager: Mrs Peryman,
Port Chalmers.

The White Ribbon.

For God and Home and Humanity.

WELLINGTON, NOV. 19, 1917.

THE QUESTION OF ILLEGITIMACY.

The Hon. G. W. Russell, speaking in Wellington at the annual meeting of the Society for Protection of Women and Children, referred to what he characterised as "a most appalling matter," the illegitimacy question. He would have to tell his audience some terrible truths, but if they were truths, they ought certainly to be made known. Five years ago the Statistics Department began compiling figures showing the ages of mothers of illegitimate children, with the following results:—

Years	1912	1913	1914	1915	Totals
13	4	—	—	—	4
14	5	4	7	4	20
15	12	14	17	14	57
16	31	32	38	30	131
17	71	54	73	62	260
18	94	87	110	88	379
19	87	114	115	114	430
20	84	91	114	118	407
21	92	100	102	89	383
Totals	480	496	576	519	2071

During the four years under consideration no fewer than 2071 illegitimate children were born to mothers of the age of 21 and under. When it was remembered that the age of consent was 16 years, it would be recognised that a sorrowful state of affairs existed. The Minister called on the women of the country to assist in checking this evil; and he stated that he hoped very soon one or two suitable women would be appointed as Health Patrols, so as to guard the young and unwise who went about the streets and public places, and were thus exposing themselves to temptation and danger.

IN THE FIELD.

Auckland was reached on October 4th, and on Tuesday (9th) a home meeting was held at Mrs West's residence, Otahuhu. Tenth District Convention at Auckland, with a very fine representation from the auxiliaries. In the evening and the following day I represented the City Union at a meeting called by the Women's Civic League to discuss the Social Hygiene Bill, and addressed the Ponsonby Union on the same subject.

Tuesday, 16th, found me at the Hamilton District Convention, and at the end of the week I assisted at our stall on "Our Day," when the sum of £100 was raised for the Red Cross, without raffles or guessing competitions. I had been up to Pukekohe to see how the land lay, and on Tuesday returned for a few days' work, again receiving the hearty Devonshire hospitality of Mrs Stevenson. The meeting on Friday was very successful, two or three new members and subscribers to the paper being the result of the visit. Odd meetings were also held at Tuakau and Birkenhead; indeed, this month has been a sort of "washing-up bill" of the Auckland district, clearing up all left undone. A visit was paid to St. Helyer's Bay, with a view to organising, but the time, as in regard to a number of other places communicated with, was considered inopportune.

M. S. POWELL,

Dominion Organiser.

Address: Miss Powell, c/o Mrs Houlder, 108, Wallace Street, Wellington.

SUPERINTENDENT'S LETTERS.

CRADLE ROLL, LOYAL TEMPERANCE LEGION AND BAND OF MERCY.

Dear Fellow-workers,—

The work of this department is growing rapidly, thanks to Miss Powell, our energetic Organiser.

As each new Union is organised there is nearly always a request for information regarding the working of the Cradle Roll Department.

It is gratifying to note that several "Y" Unions have taken up the work, but I must again repeat that it is largely neglected by the older Unions.

During the year, having to reprint C.R. Pledge Cards, the suggestion made by our World's Supt. was acted upon, and our enrolment card now reads thus:—

I promise not to give or allow my child to take any intoxicating drinks, and accept this card as a pledge of membership of the White Ribbon Cradle Roll."

The importance of helping parents to train their children in the principles of total abstinence and purity, is becoming apparent to all intelligent people.

Leaflets on purity and medical temperance should be distributed, and enclosed with the birthday card.

We must aim at winning the parents over to the ranks of total abstinence. Will Superintendents take a note of this, and report the number of mothers who have joined the W.C.T.U. after their babies have been enrolled?

Also how many babies are on the roll?

How many meetings have been held for mothers and the subjects of addresses given?

I would urge all Unions, who have not already done so, to begin this work without delay.

Owing to the increased cost, I am obliged to raise the price of Birthday Cards to 1s. per dozen.

Supplies for this Department are:—

Enrolment Cards, 1s. per dozen.

Birthday Cards, 1s. per dozen.

Certificates to send with the 8th year Birthday Card, 2d each.

Purity Leaflets for Mothers, 5d per dozen, or sample packet, 8d. All post free.

L.T.L.

As the years pass, and the babies enrolled by the various Cradle Roll