

The White Ribbon

FOR GOD AND HOME AND HUMANITY

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THE MAIDEN TRIBUTE TO THE MODERN MARS.

Is the New Zealand soldier an immoral and an unclean animal? A letter from the pen of Miss Ettie Rout has raised this question in our minds. Do these soldiers of ours, who fight like heroes in the trenches, when on leave rush into a welter of animalism and sensualism which would shame the last days of the degenerate Roman Empire. This statement we absolutely refuse to believe, considering it an insult to hundreds of our fine young soldiers. No statesman has dared openly to say that immorality is necessary to a soldier's well-being. It is true that those in authority act as if they expect men to be immoral, but it has been left to a woman, and to the shame of our Dominion, be it added, a New Zealand woman, to state publicly the diabolical doctrine that it is necessary for thousands of young girls to be immolated upon the altar of Mars to satisfy the needs (mark, the writer does not say the lusts) of our young oldiers. Without one word of the necessity of a clean life, or of the need of self-control, Miss Rout calmly says that the only way to deal with venereal disease is (1) to control loose women, and (2) to issue prophylactics to soldier and civilian alike.

The most charitable construction we can put on this letter is that the writer never stopped to think what her words, carried to their logical issue, really meant. Is she aware that in asking for the control of loose women she is practically asking for the White Slave Trade? And does she not realise that the woman who deliberately, and in cold blood, asks for this measure, stands upon a lower



WILLARD HOUSE,
Palmerston North.

Willard House has been opened by the W.C.T.U. in Palmerston North as a home for soldiers' relatives. A medical corps of three to four hundred are always at Palmerston North. The married men can get leave to come to their families at Willard House in time for tea and stay till the next morning early. It can accommodate 15 families, and just before Christmas it was full, with seven babies in the house. The furnished rooms are let to tenants, who have the use of gas for cooking, and a dining-room, hall, lounge, and other necessities. The rent varies from 10s to 20s per week, according to the size of the rooms.

moral plane than the poor girls who are the victims of the traffic?

Control of loose women! What does it mean? It means compulsory examination of all prostitutes and compulsory detention of diseased ones, both of which measures the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases pronounced against. It means the creation of a class of women who are to be sacrificed to the lusts of men. Now, the life of these poor creatures is always short; a very few years of vice removes them from the barbarity of men to the mercy of God. Who is to step into their places? Young girls. The Commissioner of Police in Sydney stated in evidence before the Royal Commission that every loose woman known to the police of Sydney began the life before 21 years of age, and most of them before 18. And so our young girls hardly out of childhood must step into the ranks as victims to the young soldiers' lack of self-control.

All history shows that, even in spite of our bad economic conditions, which drive women to sell their bodies for food, yet sufficient do not offer themselves voluntarily. So to supply this demand of man, which Miss Rout seems to think a perfectly legitimate and proper one, a host of procurers and white slave traders are employed, and girls are trapped, drugged, and ruined in all our large cities. Just as the liquor trade cannot exist without boys to fill the places of those whom alcohol kills, so a class of loose women cannot continue to exist unless constantly recruited from the innocent girlhood of our land. And no woman ought to uphold the recognition of prostitutes as a class by law unless she is prepared to give her