

The White Ribbon

FOR GOD AND HOME AND HUMANITY

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WATCHMAN! WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

"Who waits His time shall surely see
The triumph of his Constancy;
When, without let, or bar, or stay,
The coming of His Perfect Day
Shall sweep the Powers of Night
away;

And Faith, replumed for nobler flight,
And Hope, aglow with radiance bright,
And Love, in loveliness bedight,
Shall greet the Morning Light!"

Long has the Liquor Trade cast its gloomy shadow over this world of ours. Fierce and stubborn has been the conflict with the Powers of Darkness. The smoke of battle has enveloped us and mingling with the fogs of injustice, the mists of tears, and the clouds of suffering, has darkened the very skies, and well nigh shut out from us the light of Heaven. The ground is drenched with blood of the thousands of victims, who have fallen in the conflict, the weeping of wives and mothers, the sobbing of little children ever ascends to High Heaven in one great chorus, crying, "How long. O Lord! How long!"

But now appears the morning star, and athwart the dark clouds are shooting the golden rays, which herald the appearance of the Goddess of Dawn.

"Lo! the day of God is breaking.
See it gleaming from afar.
Sons of men from slumber waking,
Hail the bright and morning star."

We are now entering upon the last fight of this long campaign. Short and sharp will be the conflict; our Great Commander is calling up His last reserves, every soldier to his place ready for a grand advance all along the allied line of temperance societies, churches, business men, and social re-

formers. Every force that makes for righteousness must unite in one grand irresistible sweep against the Huns of Liquordom. Like the Covenanters of old we must prepare for that advance upon our knees. Praying devoutly till the word for advance is given and then hammering away stoutly.

The foe is utterly merciless, he spares neither youth nor age. He has shortened lives, ruined homes, filled our gaols and mental hospitals with mental and moral degenerates. He has lowered our birthrate, increased our death rate, lessened the efficiency of worker and thinker alike, till, when the red glare of war lit up the scene, we saw ourselves standing upon the precipice of national ruin and extinction.

Drink hindered repairs to our ships, delayed the transport of troops, destroyed grain, sugar, and other food-stuffs, employed men in manufacturing poison, who were badly needed elsewhere; it took space in trains and steamers, and delayed food supplies; it rendered the soldier unfit, and was such a menace to our troops that always a small army was unfit through "preventible diseases."

It lay in wait for the returned soldier, delayed the recovery of the sick and wounded, and even marred by its action the celebrations of Anzac Day sacred to the memory of our honoured dead. The infamous rum ration debauched boys who were conscripted from temperance homes, and sent them back "slaves to the glass."

The trade has about filled up the cup of its iniquities, every man's hand is against it like Ishmael of old. Our Government has closed bars at 6 o'clock, forbidding shouting, and prohibited liquor being given to soldiers under medical treatment.

And now for our final advance. We are determined to clear our land of this enemy "before the boys come home." With the help of every worker we intend to present to Parliament the largest petition it has ever received. Our triennial poll has been taken from us, and by this petition we intend to show the Government how universal is the demand for a vote on this question.

After repeated conferences it has been decided to petition for a poll upon the lines of the recommendations of the Efficiency Board. This grants the trade "reasonable" compensation. Naturally, there are differences of opinion among us upon this question. We women, though willing to pay a commutation to get immediate Prohibition by a bare majority, thought it would have been better to leave the question to Parliament, but we realise that the only hope for the enemy is a division in our own ranks, and to avoid the slightest suspicion of this, we have locally bowed to the wish of the majority.

We women are in this fight to the last penny we possess, and to the last ounce of our strength. If you live in a lonely district, and can get a few signatures, send for a petition form, and secure those signatures. We have driven the enemy into his last trench, he is outlawed by every decent organisation and individual, it only remains to us to labour and to pray till we secure the right to out-vote him.

The "White Ribbon" will be posted to any address on receipt of 2s 3d, payable to Mrs Peryman, Port Chalmers.