

Rest and Refreshment Booths.—Mrs Upton, Victoria Avenue, Wanganui.
Education Bureau.—Mrs Young, No. 4 Line, Fitzherbert W., Palmerston North.

Back Blocks and Work Among Railwaymen.—Mrs Moyse, 27, Halifax Street, Nelson.

Notable Days.—Mrs X. Jones, Ngaere, Taranaki.

Peace and Arbitration.—Mrs Judson, 16, Van Dieman Street, Nelson.

Press.—Mrs Peryman, Port Chalmers.

Military Camps.—Mrs Whincop, Gasworks, Greytown.

Medical Temperance.—Mrs C. Neal, Pahiataua.

"White Ribbon."—As the year does not expire till December 31st, will all "W.R." Agents send report to Mrs Peryman, Port Chalmers, by January 31st, 1919?

MAORI REPORT.

Dear Sisters,—Since publishing the list of donations received in the August number of the "White Ribbon," the following Unions have sent contributions to this fund, and our thanks are due to them for their interest in this department of our work:—Wanganui East, 13s 6d; South Dunedin, 10s; Oxford, £1; N.E. Valley, 27s; Oranawhero, donation to Soldiers' Fund, 10s.

Though no regular paid Organiser is at work just now, in many centres of the North Island we have good voluntary workers doing all that is possible in their respective districts. Mrs Lee-Cowie has also kindly written a leaflet for our Maori sisters, which will be translated and circulated.—Yours in Union service,

N. F. WALKER,
N.Z. Supt. Maori Dept.

DELAY IN PUBLICATION.

Owing to the influenza epidemic in Wellington, our mechanical staff has been seriously depleted, most of the men, including the two principals, being prostrated. We are sure our readers will, under the circumstances, excuse the delay in publication.

EDUCATIONAL REFORM.

(Address delivered at Gisborne W.C.T.U. by Mr F. Rowley, headmaster of the Gisborne School.)

Let us look for a moment on the present conditions of our education, considering first the children, then the teachers, then the conditions surrounding the school. 1. The children. The State begins to look after the children at five, and refuses to have anything to do with them before that age. If the conditions of the home, the work of the parents, or the surroundings, demand that the child under five should be looked after away from the home, the State refuses to do it. The child, the future citizen, may be left, to be cared for by unwilling neighbours, may play in filthy backyards, or streets, picking up diseases of body and of mind, and the State cares not, until he is five. Private philanthropy may establish kindergarten schools for such children if it wishes, but if not, the children may go bang. Then the State provides free education up to the passing of Standard VI., and compulsory education to the age of 14. After that the brainy child may, if his parents wish and can afford it, go on to a secondary school or a technical school. Does not the slower child need the care of the State even more than the brainy one? Fourteen is just the age when the child needs control. He is just bursting into the adult condition, his whole system full of energy uncontrolled by experience. It is just then that he knows more than his teacher, and his father is one of these conservative old fossils who have to be submitted to because an antiquated law passed by similar old fossils says so. Just at that time we loosen the bonds of control when we ought to hold them more firmly till the danger period is passed. Again the old idea that it is necessary to develop manual dexterity while the child is still young is being disproved by the war when the educated men and women are showing in the munition and other factories that their increased mental alertness more than compensates for the lack of manual training. Thus from two points of view we see that by raising the leaving age of our children we are going to benefit the nation (1) from the moral, and (2) from the efficiency standpoint.

2. The teacher. To say that for the efficient education of our children we need as teachers the very pick of the race is to state a truism. But is the Government of the day making any serious attempt to reach this ideal? Do the best boys and girls take to the teaching profession? If not, why not? In the whole Poverty Bay district there is one young man a pupil-teacher. About one-third of the teachers of New Zealand are uncertificated, because there is not a sufficient supply of certificated teachers. Of course, the war has had much to do with this. But even before the war there was a large percentage of uncertificated teachers. Years ago a goodly number of candidates applied for every position that was open, even though the pay was much lower. Now there is difficulty in getting a sufficient number to apply to fill the vacancies on the pupil teacher and probationer staff, even though the number required has been very much reduced. It does not pay to become a teacher; the pay is too poor at the start and through the whole system to the very top. It pays a boy or girl better to go into an office than to be a teacher and it pays an experienced teacher to leave the profession and become an inexperienced lawyer. The country must be prepared to pay for its education. I believe the country is prepared to pay for it. But the men at the head of the Government, instead of being leaders, have to be pushed. Other countries are recognising the value of education, and are paying the price. New Zealand is lagging behind. England is proposing to introduce compulsory education to the age of 18.

3. The surroundings of the school. Too many of our schools have playgrounds too small. The central school in Gisborne has three acres. That is not big enough. There is no room for football or cricket, and our neighbours are constantly annoyed by the children invading their yards after balls. Our girls' ground is smaller than the boys', and the infants have less still. Far too many schools have much less. The game, which used to be considered a luxury at school, is now considered a necessary part of the child's school life, and the means for carrying on the games should be provided by the school, so that there should be no call on the children to provide funds, which may shut out