

WOMEN'S Christian Temperance Union Of New Zealand.

Organised 1883

"For God and Home and Humanity."

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The White Ribbon.

For God and Home and Humanity.

WELLINGTON, JULY 18, 1919.

SOCIAL HYGIENE.

Among the evil effects of the war, one is the great increase of venereal disease. So many cases have returned to this Dominion that in order to deal with them, and to prevent the spread of infection, Government is to be asked to bring in a Bill next session giving the necessary powers.

The measure asked for differs from the old C.D. Acts in several points.

1. It treats both sexes alike.

2. It is to be administered by the Health Department, and not by the police.

3. Its object is to prevent the spread of disease, and not to regulate prostitution, or to make immorality safe.

We understand that the Bill is to ask for three things:

1. Compulsory Notification.—That means that if a doctor is consulted by a patient suffering from venereal disease, he is compelled to report the

case to the Health Department, not by name, but by key number.

2. Compulsory Treatment.—After a patient has consulted his doctor, he must continue under treatment until the doctor considers him cured. If he fails to come for treatment, then the doctor may report him by name. Should the patient think that his own doctor is detaining him too long under treatment, he has the right to ask to be examined by two doctors under the Department, but this only if he himself wishes it.

3. Compulsory Examination of Suspects.—This has always been opposed by women, because it has placed all prostitutes absolutely under police control, and has been a menace to every woman. This was the crucial point of Regulation 40 D.O.R.A., which caused such an outcry in England that it had to be repealed. Under it, perfectly innocent women were arrested under the suspicion that they had communicated V.D. to a member of His Majesty's Forces. They had to submit to a degrading examination, and if innocent they had no redress. But the Act proposed to be introduced here is free from police control. A suspect can only be ordered to be examined by one person, and that is the Chief Health Officer of the Dominion. If several cases of infection can be traced to one individual, then the Chief Health Officer may issue a warrant compelling that person to be examined. At first the suspect is advised to go to his own doctor, and if that is done and he continues under treatment, he is not further molested. In the event of a suspect refusing to see his own medical adviser, then the Health Department compulsorily examines them. There is to be a provision that if the suspect is a woman she must be examined by a woman doctor if there is one within a radius of twenty-five miles.

Competent authorities tell us that this disease must be controlled in the interests of the health of the Dominion. It behoves our Women's Societies to study these provisions, and decide if they are the best means of dealing with the disease, which is already so rife in our midst. If they are not, we must consider what better suggestions we can put forward.

LETTER FROM WORLD'S SECRETARY.

My dear Comrade,—

You will be overwhelmed with sorrow and surprise to learn that our great-hearted, dearly-loved comrade, Mrs Katherine Lent Stevenson, of Boston, suddenly passed away on March 27 at the home of her nephew, Mr Cogswell, in Des Moines, Iowa. Three years ago this dear friend had quite a serious breakdown in health, from which she seemed to have recovered much of her normal strength and vigour. In her last letter to me, dated March 21st, she writes, "I am standing this trip splendidly, and am delighted this is true, for it is the longest piece of work I have undertaken in the past three years." As one of the national field representatives of our Jubilee Campaign, Mrs Stevenson was filling a series of engagements in our neighbouring State of Iowa. She had recently taken the leadership of our great National Department of Americanisation, and an appropriation for the extension of this special work is one of the important items of our Jubilee budget.

We cannot make it seem true that we are not to have this beloved friend longer with us in the activities of our great organisation. It soothes our hearts that she was spared prolonged suffering and that she could enter the activities of heaven without laying aside the amour of active service as a soldier in the Army of the Lord and of the W.C.T.U., which she so heroically and unselfishly served. For her it is all glory and light. How many of our own will greet her upon the other side. For us there is the heartache of separation and the loss of her splendid leadership in one of our greatest lines of work at a critical hour in our national and world life. We need her, the nation needs her, the world needs her. We share a great sorrow, but we are rich in a common heritage of happy memories of our fellowship with one of God's most faithful stewards—one who has tremendously helped in winning many moral battles in this and in other lands. A great soul has entered the Eternal Home. The melody of our comrade's consecrated life will sing on in our hearts and will inspire us to greater faithfulness as together we strive to "take the world for Christ's own kingdom some glad day."—With affectionate sympathy,

ANNA A. GORDON.

The "White Ribbon" will be posted to any address on receipt of 2s 6d. payable to Mrs Peryman, Port Chalmers.