

WOMEN'S Christian Temperance Union Of New Zealand.

Organised 1885.

"For God and Home and Humanity."

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MISS HENDERSON, B.A., 64, Tan-
cred St., Linwood, Christchurch.

TREASURER:

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

Official Organ:

"The White Ribbon."

Editor: Mrs Peryman, Port Chalmers.
(Telephone No. 1).

Associate Editor: Mrs Evans, M.A.

Business Manager: Mrs Peryman,
Port Chalmers.
(Telephone No. 1).

IMPORTANT.

Will all Secretaries and others please notice that our Corresponding Secretary, Miss Henderson, has changed her address? Please in future address all correspondence:

MISS HENDERSON,

64, Tancred St., Linwood, ChCh.

The White Ribbon.

For God and Home and Humanity.

WELLINGTON, OCTOBER 18, 1919.

JUVENILE MISDOINGS.

The cases of the five lads who appeared before the Court at Hawera last month contains much to make thoughtful people serious. These lads, whose ages ranged from 14 to 16, had between 25 and 30 charges of theft entered against them. They all pleaded guilty to the theft of a quantity of electrical appliances, money, and a couple of revolvers and ammunition. They were the sons of respectable parents, and the ring-leader was given a good character by

his mother, who had no suspicion that anything was wrong. Two reasons were given: (1) Bad literature. The police gave evidence that most of the money stolen had been expended in the purchase of questionable literature. (2) Undesirable pictures.

For both of these causes the Government is to blame. The sale of books glorifying the robber and the bushranger should be absolutely prohibited to youths under 21. We have a Censor of Picture Films, but unless a thing is absolutely "the limit" in indecency it is never cut out. The Government or the Municipality should run picture palaces where the programmes are suited to young people. There is many a mother who would welcome wholesome pictures for the children, and would never allow them to go to any other if the best were procurable. Pictures may be of great educational value, and others may amuse without injuring, and Government should see that these are provided. At present our picture films, with their glorification of robbery under arms, and vice of many kinds, are manufacturing criminals. The Magistrate said that something should be done to prevent the showing of amateur cracksmen and "stingaree" class of pictures, which had a bad effect upon juveniles. The Magistrate also wisely remarked that a parent should be more than a father to his boys. He should make chums of them, take part in their hobbies, and in every direction take a real interest in their lives. This would be of mutual benefit. It would keep the father youthful in his interests, and it would help the boy and be of benefit if his father was his chum, instead of a boy who might lead him astray.

We can't afford to have our children turned into criminals to fill the pockets of picture palace proprietors. Our children are our best asset.

DRY AND BONE DRY.

In U.S.A. they have two degrees of dryness called Dry and Bone Dry; just at present they are bone dry, and when the Amendment comes into force the whole of the States will be bone dry for all time. Nobody is allowed to manufacture, import, export any liquor containing the half of one per cent. of alcohol. Of course, alcohol for medicinal and religious purposes

are exempted, and denatured alcohol is manufactured for industrial purposes.

Now New Zealand has no bone dry areas, though we have our No License or dry electorates. Should we carry Prohibition next December, New Zealand will be bone dry; neither manufacture, sale nor importation being allowed.

How often has the will of the people been deliberately flouted in our dry districts? The people vote dry by a three-fifths' majority, and then a brewery is planted on their borders as at Invercargill, and drink is poured into the so-called dry districts.

Now our No License areas have a fine opportunity to enforce their will and be absolutely dry. Let them rally all their forces, and strain every nerve for National Prohibition, and that carried, they will reap the fruit of their past labours, and have a really dry territory. No License is good, but Prohibition is infinitely better. Let us all work for it.

THE CURSE OF OLD AGE.

"Old age is the curse of New Zealand." So the Hon. T. M. Wilford is reported to have said in the House of Parliament. Does the gentleman really mean this? He was speaking upon the subject of promotion in Government departments depending solely on length of service. It is not old age that is the curse, but the system of refusing to promote the man who is efficient over the head of the man who lazily refuses to keep himself fit and trusts solely to length of service for promotion. It is a vicious system, because it takes away the spur that would keep a man fit. We are all human, more or less, and if a man knows he will keep his billet, nay more, that he moves up automatically upon the retirement of those above him, he naturally settles down, and does as little as he can. We believe this accounts for the many Rip Van Winkles that are at the head of Government departments. If two men are equally efficient, by all means let length of service count, but the best man should always get promotion. Other things being even, the man who unites the wisdom of experience to the vigour and zest for knowledge of youth is the finest servant any Government or private firm can have.