

THE ORGANISING FUND.

(To the Editor.)

Madam,—In the course of my correspondence with the Treasurers of some of our Unions, I find there is a certain amount of lack of understanding of the objects of the Organising Fund, and the reason why Unions are asked to contribute annually an amount proportionate to their membership.

Unions will remember that on the day we celebrate as "Willard Day," in commemoration of the founder of the Union, the collection taken is donated to the "World's Missionary Fund," which is the fund maintained by the World's Union for the purpose of paying women who are engaged as missionaries in spreading the work and principles of the W.C.T.U. in foreign lands.

The Organising Fund may be described as the missionary fund of the N.Z. Union, because it is maintained to pay the women who are engaged in spreading the work and principles of the W.C.T.U. to parts of the Dominion which have not yet been penetrated by our work. On the work of the paid Organisers we depend for the organisation of new branches in towns where none have existed, and for visiting, advising, and helping existing Unions, especially in country places, which may be finding difficulty in carrying on. It is unavoidable that we should depend on paid Organisers for this work, because our Union is for the most part made up of women who have neither the leisure nor the money to undertake such work voluntarily, seeing that it involves a considerable amount of travelling and of absence from home duties, which we cannot neglect, in spite of what our opponents sometimes say.

At the present time we have two Organisers working; both of them willing and earnest young women who have spared neither time nor effort to effectively spread the work of the Union. Their duties necessarily involve not only the discomforts of frequent travel from place to place, but also an almost complete sacrifice of home comforts—and in saying this I do not overlook the hospitality often accorded to them by members of the Union, or other sympathisers with our cause, for which we are very grateful.

Now for the financial aspect of the matter, in regard to which I take the figures which were presented to the 1925

Convention, as those for the forthcoming Convention are not yet quite complete. A reference to the balance-sheet, published on page 18 of the 1925 Handbook, will show that the receipts for the Organising Fund were £398 2s 8d, and the expenditure (salaries, travelling expenses, postage, and incidentals) £327 15s 1d. This looks more satisfactory than it really is, because during the year neither of our Organisers was able to work full time, and consequently both salaries and expenses were less than they would otherwise have been. On the basis of a complete year's work, the charges on the fund would be approximately not less than £400. To illustrate the position more clearly, I give the receipts and expenditure during three years:—

	Receipts.	Expenditure.
1922	£312	£448
1923	475	286
1924	398	337
	£1185	£1071

In explanation of some of the above figures, I may mention that in 1922 two Organisers worked full time, but contributions were only asked for from Unions at the rate of 1s per member; the 1923 Convention raised the rate of contribution to 1s 6d per member, but during practically the whole of that year we had only one Organiser working; while in 1924, as already stated, neither of the Organisers worked full time. Most of the Unions have paid up their 1s 6d per member loyally; a noble few have done better; some have not found themselves able to do as much. Our adult paid membership for 1924 was 5654; on this basis the receipts for the fund should have been £424; actually they were only £398.

Some Unions have objected to the contribution on the ground that if they pay 1s 6d per member, plus capitation fees (7d per member) out of their members' subscriptions of 2s 7d, they will have little left for their own local work. This, however, is not the intention or desire of the N.Z. Union, which considers that local Unions should endeavour to raise their contribution by some special effort, such as a garden party, sale of work, drawing-room meetings etc. The exact method is, of course, a matter for each Union to decide for itself.

Finally, I should like to remind members that we all belong to a world-wide organisation, whose subscription fee—

2s 7d per member—is probably one of the cheapest in the world. We are, I fear, sometimes a little inclined to remember chiefly that we belong to our own small local Union, and to forget that through it we are linked up with the larger District Union, and through that again with our own Dominion Union, and again through that with all the other branches of the Union throughout the world, thus becoming part of an organisation operating in most of the countries of the world, irrespective of race or language, and devoted throughout all of them to the service of God and humanity, and particularly to all causes affecting the welfare of our own sex and of little children. In the work of the World's Union we are partners by the payment of the World's capitation of 1d per member, and the Willard Day collections for the World's Missionary Fund. In the sphere of our own Dominion we can best serve the cause by doing our utmost to spread the work and principles of the Union throughout our country to the fullest possible extent. We are not a band of wealthy women, probably there are very few who are in even more than comfortable circumstances, and most of us have our own homes and families to look after. We are all anxious for the spread of the influence of the W.C.T.U. and—apart from the limited circles in which we, as individuals, move—we must depend mainly on the efforts of the Organisers for the extension of the sphere of our work.

We could do with three, or better still, four, Organisers, two for each Island, in order to cover the ground effectively, because many country Unions, formed under promising conditions, have languished and died for want of more frequent help and encouragement which our Organisers have been unable to give by reason of the extent of country they had to cover. We certainly, however, cannot contemplate any extension of our organising work on our present income, which, on the average, as I have shown, renders it a matter of some anxiety whether we can meet our current liabilities out of our yearly receipts, quite apart from incurring further charges. The contribution per member is not, of course, a compulsory payment (the only compulsory payments are the capitation fees), but the N.Z. Union hopes and believes that all Unions will support the Organising