

# The White Ribbon

FOR GOD AND HOME AND HUMANITY

VOL 32. - No 375. WELLINGTON, N.Z. SEPTEMBER 18, 1926.

3s Per Annum Post Free  
Single Copy, 4d.

## AROUND THE FIRE, ON A A WINTRY NIGHT.

A.: What is your opinion of the Licensing Bill which our M.P's. were considering, and have had to drop owing to lack of time.

B.: A slaughtered innocent! And there's nothing innocent about it but the name.

C.: Right you are! It's absolutely the worst Licensing Measure that the House has had to consider. And I say this from a fairly wide experience extending over more than a quarter of a century.

B.: Absolutely one-sided. Evidently the man who drew it up had little imagination, and was utterly destitute of the ability to see both sides of a problem.

Mrs. A.: I know one thing. It's entirely a man's Bill. Everything in it to protect Vested interests, nothing in it to protect the Home and the child.

A.: But, my dear, you must remember that Vested interests are Sacred.

Mrs. A.: Am I likely to forget it while we are governed by men who will set up a Commission to investigate the cause of the mortality among lambs or pigs, but views with complacency the slaughter of the children by "vested interests."

A.: The Bill is entirely a retrograde measure. It threatens the loss of Reforms won by years of toil and strenuous endeavour.

D.: True for you, old man. For over a quarter of a century in spite of our great increase in population the number of licences has remained stationary.

A.: Not on your life. Do you forget our No-License Areas, all these have lessened the number of licenses, as also did our reduction vote, while we had it.

Mrs. D.: Will this Bill affect the number of Licenses?

A.: Certainly, because it makes provision to increase the number of licenses.

B.: Quite an astute move that! Some time ago the Trade wanted a redistribution of Licenses.

Mrs. D.: What exactly do you mean by that?

Mrs. A.: In many places there are licenses now held where population has left and gone elsewhere. It would suit their book fine if these licenses could be transferred to growing and thriving townships.

Mrs. D.: Is that not permissible now?

Mrs. A.: No it is not. Licenses can only be moved very short distances, I think it is a mile in a county and half that distance in a Borough.

B.: Now they are going one better than Redistribution and are asking for power to grant issue new licenses.

E.: My! It was a brainy man, who drafted this Bill. Fancy taking a Referendum in regard to lengthening the time between the Licensing Polls.

D.: A Referendum!

A.: Yes, it proposes that at next election the voters shall say whether the next Licensing Poll shall be in 3 years or in 6 years time.

E.: Well that seems fair enough!

A.: Probably some of our M.P's. will agree with you. After promising to vote against any extension of the time, it will be quite a relief to

throw the responsibility back upon their constituents.

B.: I think a very serious feature of the Bill is the proposal to increase the facilities for drinking. Particularly do I dislike the proposal to make it easier for young people to obtain liquor.

Mrs. A.: The fight centres round that point. If we can keep the young people from acquiring a taste for alcohol, then we win the fight in a generation.

Mrs. B.: And well the Trade knows this. Hence, the large number of people before the courts for supplying liquor to youths under 21 years of age. This is one provision of the Licensing Act which the Trade can't afford to obey. Their very existence depends upon a fresh crop of drinkers growing up to take the place of those who die. And, drinkers don't often make old bones, as the Life Insurance records prove.

C.: If Cabarets are allowed to supply liquor after hours, then licensees who pay a license fee, have a grievance, and soon they'll be asking for permission to sell liquor after 6 p.m.

D.: Does the Bill provide for a Referendum in the King Country?

A.: No! but a Minister of the Crown has given notice to introduce an amendment to that effect.

B.: Pity a Cabinet Minister should advocate breaking a solemn compact entered into by a predecessor, especially in view of the strong protest put in by the Maori Chiefs.

D.: Any provision for a two-issue ballot paper?

A.: Not much, but an M.P. has given notice that he intends to intro-