

we continue to be handicapped by the three-issue ballot paper, and even with a two-issue ballot paper, we still have much more educational work to do if Prohibition is to be carried, and well enforced when it is carried. Notwithstanding all this, the year has been, perhaps, a busier one than ever for Union activities, for we realize that our work is "For God and Home and Humanity"—that it covers a very wide field and goes on from year to year continuously—that the poll for the abolition of the liquor traffic is but a testing time—a means of discovering how far our work of education on this question has been effective, and a time for reviewing our methods of work, and laying fresh plans for the future in the light of past experience.

The year 1926-27 has not escaped the usual toll of those members who have passed on to higher service, and in both the World Union and in our own Dominion Union, we mourn the loss of many very fine women—most of them we can rejoice to say, full of years and of the fruits of their labours.

Amongst the list are three International Officers:—Mrs Martha M. Allen, for many years Superintendent of Medical Temperance, the Author of some of the finest works on Medical Temperance, and a vast number of pamphlets and leaflets on the same subject—and one who has largely influenced the modern outlook of the medical profession on the question of alcohol being unnecessary in sickness and disease.

Mrs Tomlinson, International Superintendent for Home and Mothers' Meetings, is another who will be much missed, as will also Mrs Stella B. Irving, World Superintendent of Temperance Work in Sunday Schools. Lady Truby King in New Zealand, is another whom we could ill afford to lose—a lady, whose many talents have always been used for the benefit of the health of mothers and babies; and who very ably seconded all the work of her gifted husband.

Amongst our own women, we too mourn the loss of our late beloved Superintendent of Evangelistic Work, Mrs Johnson Wright. We have so long been accustomed to her sweet, gentle, yet ardent spirit, presiding over our devotions at Convention, that by very many her presence will be greatly missed. Her's was a truly Christ-like and saintly attitude towards life and all its responsibilities, not one of which did she ever evade.

After a long life spent in useful service for her fellow men and women, and after years of quiet suffering, she went softly home in May of last year, leaving behind her a sweet memory of life well and faithfully spent for others.

Mrs Scott, of the Taranaki and Normanby Union, Mrs Baird, the mother of the Southland Union, Mrs Dallas and Mrs Edgar, of Te Kuiti, all of them faithful Officers and members of the Unions and women

whose places it will not be easy to fill.

The passing on of such women as these should surely be an incentive for our younger women to arise and face the future, preparing themselves to take the places of those, who have gone, preparing themselves and arming themselves to go forth in the name of the Lord, and in the strength of His might, to replace those who have so valiantly fallen by the wayside.

The two outstanding national events, since we last met, have undoubtedly been the meeting of the Imperial Conference, at which our own Prime Minister, the Hon. Mr Coates, made his first appearance in the Councils of the Empire. The second event has been the Royal Visit. The illness and consequent absence of the Duchess from the South Island was a matter for intense regret and disappointment—as in the North, so in the South, every one was prepared to open their hearts and take both the young Duke and Duchess to themselves, for, like the Prince of Wales, it was our hearts and our common humanity to which they appealed so strongly—youth, beauty, charm and young parenthood meant more to most of us than their royal birth and lineage. Their presence in our midst can have but one result, that of binding us more firmly to the land of our fore-bears and all that England and the British Empire stands for at their very best—all the traditions of our ancestors, all their long, long, struggle for constitutional government and civic freedom—now almost complete. We wish them both a long life of domestic happiness and high service for their country and Empire.

In reviewing the year's work, it is well for us—both for instruction and encouragement—to lift our eyes for a space and look beyond the limits of our own very small horizon.

Whatever touches the well-being and the highest interests of men and women in one country is of vital importance to the men and women of every other country—for in these days of international relationship in commerce, science, education, research, and all branches of ethics, culture and religion, our interdependence makes it a practical necessity that we, as women and citizens, look beyond our own domain and realize what others have reached out towards and possibly attained to.

The fact that we are linked up with the International Council of Women; the Suffrage Alliance; the League of Nations Union, and other bodies of men and women having world-wide interests, makes it imperative that we seek instruction and knowledge along all these avenues of thought and action opened up by their activities. Taking this wider view of world affairs, it can hardly be claimed that the nations are settling down to peaceful relations with one another as readily as was at first

hoped for by the friends of the League of Nations.

The great outstanding event of the year, however, has undoubtedly been the entry of Germany into the League and her admission to a permanent seat on the Council.

If this has any significance at all, it must mean eventually, the greater stabilizing of all the European nations, and thus further help towards a solution of some of the problems social, economic, and otherwise, with which they have had to struggle so fiercely through the upheaval of after-war conditions.

In some countries it certainly looks as though the very foundations of stable government are tottering to a fall. Dictators and militaristic autocrats seem to be crushing the very life out of democratic and national ideals and institutions. This is only too evident in such countries as Italy, Greece, and Poland, at the present time. This, also surely must be but another deplorable result of the same great after-war upheaval. We can but hope that this is so, and that the passage of time, with the awakening of a deeper sense of personal responsibility, will bring about once more a wise and peaceful readjustment on the lines of Christian Democracy, with full freedom for national ideals, combined with a due regard to the rights of those of other races and other colours to the same freedom and ideals as their own.

Looking farther East, the spectacle of China in the throes of civil wars, rebellions, and revolutions, is one to make us pause and wonder. Threatened as she is, from within and without—with no central National Government—apparently at the mercy of any strong alien power who may choose to over-run her land, and withal agonizing through the birth pangs of a new self-conscious nationhood—a consciousness which is the growth in a few decades, of what has taken Western civilisation centuries to evolve and in a small measure to accomplish.

Is this not a picture which fills us with the deepest interest and concern, at times with dismay, and always with the most intense pity. There can be but one issue ultimately possible for a nation like China with its ancient culture and religion—its peace-loving, patient, and painstaking people—its modern education in Western science and Western industrialism—these people must, of a certainty, be allowed, nay, ever assisted to evolve and weld themselves into a united and self-governing nation—a nation taking its full share in all affairs national and international—unhampered by undue outside interference.

This can be accomplished only when all nations are willing to apply the golden rule to world affairs as well as to those of national or personal interest and value, and are willing to concede the very obvious modern position—that financially,