

DEPARTMENTS CALLING

WORK AMONG SEAMEN

Report and Balance Sheet

Presented by W.C.T.U., Timaru, for
Year 1944-1945 as Trustees of South
Canterbury Sailors' Rest

The Timaru Branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union presented with pleasure the report and balance-sheet for the year ending November 30, 1945, and in so doing, thank most sincerely all who have helped them in this most important branch of their work.

We give thanks to God that at last hostilities have ceased and we pray that after the strife and turmoil of these post-war months true peace may come to our troubled world.

The past year has seen a considerable increase of shipping in our port and this has meant a greater number of seamen and particularly gunners visiting the Timaru Rest, and taking advantage of its homelike comforts. Mr. and Mrs. Woodward have been only too delighted to welcome all servicemen and our committee is deeply grateful for all they have done. Letters of thanks and appreciation are constantly coming to hand, not only from the men themselves, but also from appreciative wives and mothers. One says: "Here in England we are more than grateful to you and to others like you for your goodness to our servicemen." And another, "Thank you for making my husband so welcome in your home." We truly feel that the Timaru Rest is doing all its promoters planned.

During the year we celebrated duly the twenty-first anniversary of the present Rest building and to mark its majority and to give greater comfort and accommodation we have already accepted a tender for the glassing-in of the front verandah. We are sorry that this work could not be completed this year.

Our thanks are due to the Timaru Spinning Guild for woollen comforts, the Waimate Navy League for so often forwarding biscuits, to Mr. C. Martin, our honorary auditor, the "Timaru Herald" for interesting articles on the Rest and our work for the seamen, to local firms and organisations that have sent donations of goods and money and also to all those branches of the W.C.T.U. that show their interest and yearly forwarded gifts of comforts and money.

The following is the list of donors: Timaru Harbour Board; Timaru Borough Council; Timaru Gas Co.; Timaru Spinning Club; Westport Coal Co.; Linton Coal Co.; Canterbury Farmers' Association; Bruce's Ltd.; Wilson & Co.; Rattray & Co.; Waimate Navy League; W. Evans & Co.; Turnbull & Co.; Timaru Milling Co.; Mr. G. T. Dawson; Mr. C. G. Baker; Mrs. Norrie; Dr. Burns; Miss D. Austin; "Air-

man" and Ashburton, Temuka, Napier, Karori, Oamaru, Riccarton, Rangiora, Carterton, Woolston, Hamilton, Te Awamutu, Tinwald, Opotiki, Dunedin Central, Christchurch and Timaru branches of the W.C.T.U.

Financial Statement of Timaru Sailors' Rest

RECEIPTS

1944:	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Credit Balance—						
General Fund ..	202	3	5			
Special Fund ..	300	0	0			
				502	3	5
1944-45:						
Donations—						
General	26	13	0			
Unions	10	16	6			
				37	9	6
Interest—						
P.O.				4	5	10
Debentures				12	0	0
				£555	18	9

EXPENDITURE

	£	s.	d.
S.S. Stamps	4	10	0
Bonus, Mrs. Woodward	10	0	0
Telephone	7	10	0
Radio Licence	1	5	0
Stamps	0	13	6
Insurances	3	17	9
Reports	0	7	3
Mrs. Woodward, Chairs	6	0	0
Sundries	0	3	5
	34	6	11
Credit Balance	521	11	10
	£555	18	9
B.C. Debentures	300	0	0
Balance in P.O.	221	8	3
Cash in Hand	0	3	7
	£521	11	10

Audited and found correct.

A. C. MARTIN,

Public Accountant,

25/1/46.

Auditor.

PRISONS AND REFORMATORIES

Prisons: Do They Fulfil Their Objects?

In an article published in our October number, 1945, we saw that the function of the prison was to reduce crime by operating along three well-defined lines. The protection of the community, the just punishment of the offender against community laws, and the bringing about of a desire and will to live so that neither the crime nor its retribution will recur in the life of the criminal were the objects to be served.

The question we set ourselves to consider was whether these three aims were, in fact, fulfilled.

So diverse are the opinions of people as to this point that it can only be as

an individual that one can speak. Natural diffidence because of paucity of knowledge prevents anything in the least dogmatic from finding expression here. The words of L. N. Robinson, a U.S.A. authority on the subject of crime and punishment, apply particularly at this point: "No writer on prisons should depend solely on the words of others. He must see for himself and, if possible, take part in the work. . . . No one can know all there is to know about jails and the institutions that are now helping to bear the load of caring for misdemeanant prisoners." This writer also speaks of the extreme difficulty of obtaining any information from those in authority, and of the conflicting statements made by various people regarding the life of prisoners. What applies in his case is intensified for the ordinary investigator; who has no official status to give him the right to seek information.

To begin with, it comes as something of a surprise to find that a school of thought exists which asks the question,

"Why Prisons?"

We have probably never dreamed of a civilisation in which the prison has no place. From the time of Joseph's incarceration in the king's prison by Potiphar, and probably earlier than that, imprisonment has been an easy and ready means of dealing with offenders. In long-past days in England the feudal lords were at liberty to imprison any of their serfs for as long as they chose, without any reason except that of having been offended in some way by the unfortunate culprit. Dungeons were a part of every feudal castle, and strange it is to wander down the ancient stone stairways into the darkness and airlessness of these dreadful places. The Apostles of the early Christian Church knew what imprisonment meant. Our Lord spoke of those "in prison" on many occasions. And so we have grown up in the tradition that the prison is an indispensable adjunct to the preservation of law and order. The very idea of its being abolished is revolutionary, yet it is true that some very far-seeing, able students of the question feel that a case exists for this very thing to happen.

Does the Community Benefit?

In the matter of the first purpose supposed to be served, that of the protection of the community, it is plain that the shutting away of offenders for periods of varying length is, in itself, a protection, but of a very temporary nature. To be sure, the criminal can do nothing to injure his fellow-citizens during his incarceration; but we all know that when he returns to ordinary life eventually, unless some lasting change in his outlook and powers of self-government has occurred, he is as much of a danger as ever. So that, at its face value the mere fact of his having been placed where he could do no harm for a while, is not justified by its results as an effective