

CONVENTION SATURDAY

8th MARCH, 1947

PEEPS AT THE QUEEN CITY

Our Convention Hostess Union, the Auckland District Executive, arranged for us on this day a very interesting programme. We were taken for a drive of over two hours, to introduce us to a few of Auckland's beauty spots; then to Pitt Street Methodist Hall for rest and tea, the whole concluding with a very bright and happy entertainment in the evening.

Three buses for our own especial use drew up at the Town Hall just before two o'clock and found between seventy and eighty delegates awaiting them. Perhaps most of us were beyond the age of showing excitement in the anticipated trip, but we certainly showed animation. The day was just as beautiful as all the Convention days had been—a gentle cooling breeze, though not as gentle as some would have wished at the top of Mount Eden, but enough to temper the steady afternoon sunshine.

Our route was first to St. Heliers, along Auckland's quite deservedly famous Water-front Drive. Here, as at all other parts of the drive, the delegates who knew the city were in great demand. "What's that point at the back of that vessel?" "Are there usually so many seaplanes on your harbour?" "How high is Rangitoto?" "How long does it take a ferry to get to it from the wharf?" These, and scores of other questions were heard from left and right in the buses, and very often the attention of the enquirer was attracted elsewhere before the answer was given. Mission Bay and its Mission House and Museum came in for its share of attention, and then we were very soon at Kohimarama, where the interest was to catch the "cheerio" from our late Vice-President, Mrs. Kasper, who would be watching for us. Having caught the cheer germ and shouted back our greetings, we passed on into St. Heliers Bay, with its cool green lawns for bowls and tennis on the one hand, and the blue expanse of silvery sea on the other. From the Bay we drove as if we were returning from the city. We were taken towards Meadowbank, past Bishop Selwyn's old Church of St. Thomas—such an interesting old ruin, and St. John's College was pointed out to us, and then, before we had finished peering over the Tamaki stretch we found ourselves with a change of direction, and were passing through the new settlement, or if not new, new to most of the delegates—Orakei. It is quite a city in itself, and a very pretty one, too, with its attractive houses and gardens. From there, via Orakei Road, we crossed Remuera, and were soon driving down Green Lane. There was a shout of amusement and surprise when we found ourselves in the very unfamiliar grounds of Ellerslie Race Course. The gardens were in perfect order, planted with meticulous care. Nowhere could I see any sign of the attentions of grub, slug,

or other garden pest. Where were the dead flowers and withered leaves in about a mile of garden borders? The water-lilies were a source of great pleasure, so many lovely colours were to be seen.

From Ellerslie we went via Market Road, past St. Cuthbert's to Mount Eden. This was the *piece de resistance* of the trip. Such extent of country and variety of scenery left one gasping. We visitors knew before that Auckland was New Zealand's largest city, but it takes the opportunity such as this was, to help one to realise what that means. There below us, on all sides, seemed to be thousands and thousands of houses, with their net work of streets. Here again the Auckland delegates were in great demand! I'd like to have seen a few score of children playing in the huge grassy crater, but that joy was denied us.

The buses were not long in returning with their loads to the City, and we were soon refreshed by a rest before tea.

The Auckland District Executive had arranged the tea for the delegates in order that they might be spared the to-and-fro for the evening meeting. We did justice to the appetising meal and very much appreciated the generous thought and attention of the Executive in providing it. Some eighty ladies sat down to it.

THE "Y" CONCERT

Following close upon the meal, came the "Y" Branch Concert. A surprisingly large number of young Maori boys and girls assembled. Their happy, smiling greetings were a pleasure to see. But when they SANG,—well, that was something of wonder. Led by the newly-appointed Youth Director, late President of the "Y's," the Rev. J. B. Chambers, M.A., choruses were sung before the programme proper began. The beauty of the voices in some of these was remarkable.

Miss Kirk presided at the gathering, which was a very large one. Devotions were conducted, and the Maori Choir sang several fine anthems, doing great credit to their conductor.

The great event of the evening was the Speech Competition, prepared and impromptu speeches. Four "Y" members competed, all showing good promise. The natural eloquence of the Native Race was well exemplified by Ann and Adam Latimer. The latter spoke really brilliantly, and produced enormous enthusiasm among his hearers. Miss Edmed acted as judge, and her criticisms were truly masterly. With an unerring finger she pointed out faults and weaknesses, but in so fair and gentle yet humorous a way that no one could feel in the least humiliated or hurt. The Shield and the Banner went to "Rangimarie" Branch. Mr. Les George gave an enjoyable solo. The evening was a delightful close to a happy, interesting day.

Licensing Commission—continued.

tection to us to-day. (3) We are trustees for the future and must hold this great protection for our children."

These elders stated over and over again that drink is the greatest enemy to the Maori race. We therefore claim that the N.Z. Government is under a solemn obligation to honour the pact. T. T. Wetere, official representative of the King Country Maoris says: "There are very few in any real Maoris of the King Country who want to break the pact." This statement was signed by 93% of the adult population of the King Country, and yet the Commission recommends a vote being taken by pakehas and Maoris in the King Country as to whether or not drink should be on sale. If such a vote were allowed it would be the pakeha vote which would bring in the drink. We are concerned that these findings of the Commission, if put into action, would be the most retrograde step in living memory, and would wholly favour the Trade, opening the door wider for the committing of all that is detrimental to the public welfare.

Then the world food crisis is a tremendous question. Not only now, for the food crisis is not an unusual situation; it is unusually severe because of all the devastation of war. Two-thirds of the world's people are chronically undernourished. As the world's food problem is not easily solved, it would certainly seem that even the most pro-liquor advocate, if he had any thought for his neighbour, would have to concede that no food should go into any unnecessary product, at any period. Millions die every year, apart from war, through undernourishment. If the members of the Royal Commission had given one thought to the world food problem, could they have sent forth these uncalled-for suggestions or recommendations?

The W.C.T.U. is committed to the abolition of the liquor traffic. We are fully aware of the hold and of the power it has over a majority of the people of our land, and upon many members of Parliament. We are banded together in the name of the Lord of Hosts to resist all endeavours to entrench the liquor more firmly in New Zealand, and we give our hands, our heads, our hearts to this holy crusade to rid our homes and our land of this devastating power of evil. We should be encouraged in our determination by knowing that one-third of the U.S.A. voters are for prohibition. That means that more than 20,000,000 vote for prohibition, and the numbers are increasing. Every new member we gain is a direct blow to the liquor traffic, so let us go all out for new members, and defeat the powers of evil, whether Royal Commission recommendations, advertisements, or propaganda in favour of drink. We are

"Standing by a purpose true
Heeding God's command"

in this glorious enterprise to make New Zealand dry; in our building up of a Christian nation. Our motto still stands, "For God, Home and Humanity."