

## NEW ZEALAND WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION

(Incorporated)

Organised 1885

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"For God, and Home, and Humanity"

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"THE WHITE RIBBON"

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the Business Manager, to whom all payments  
for Advertisements, Beacons, Y.P. Supple-  
ments and subscriptions must be made.

## The White Ribbon.

"For God, and Home, and Humanity"

WELLINGTON, SEPTEMBER 1, 1947.

## WE COME TO UNITE

## Pathways to International Peace

## PRAISE CHANGES THINGS

In the early days a missionary came to the Far North of New Zealand. Recognising the beautiful quality of the Maori voices, he taught the people to sing great hymns. One day, word came that an enemy tribe was advancing. Preparations for war were made, and the missionary intensified the singing of great hymns.

A river separated the pa from the advancing host. The day of battle opened. The missionary marshalled the people along the banks of the river on the pa side. The enemy danced the fierce haka and waited.

At a sign from the missionary, the trained choir broke forth into song. The beautiful words of the gospel of peace and love reached the ears and the hearts of the astonished foe. Hymn after hymn pealed forth, till at last the implements of war were thrown down, the river was crossed, and empty hands were held out in friendship. "Your songs have reached our hearts and have brought peace."

How easily might quarrels be averted, foes turned into friends, war for ever ended, if only people would learn to sing.

We are told that the Maori is the finest native race in the world. Much has been said and written about the gentle, kindly, responsive nature of the people. Those who work with them know this to be true.

How many people pause to think of the tremendous ordeal into which the Maori race was thrust just one hundred years ago? A great colonising nation, with an old civilisation vastly different from their own, with habits and customs and ways of living which they could not understand, swept into their primitive life, and changed the very face of their world. The shock must have been tremendous, and the marvel is, that utterly unprepared as they were, they have so quickly assimilated and adapted themselves to the life of the Pakeha colonist.

One dares, to pause again and to think how wonderful it would have been for the Maori people had the colonists brought only that which was good and constructive, and worthy of emulation in his own civilisation.

## The Best and the Worst

But facts must be faced. While the Pakeha brought that which is best, the foundation of his civilisation, the Word of God, he also brought the curse of his nation, alcohol, and the beverage alcohol habit. To an aboriginal race, alcohol spells destruction.

How quickly the alcohol habit spread among the Maori people!

Ignorant of its destructive nature, and guilelessly following the example of the Pakeha, the Maori easily became the victim of this deadly, poisonous drug. Alcohol, being a racial poison, causes degeneracy, and degeneracy is a great source of crime. In his book, "Alcohol and the Human Race," A. P. Hobson says: "The necessary basis for war is found in degeneracy. Remove degeneracy and there will be no more necessity for wars within the human species than within any other species in nature. Put an end to degeneracy, which is only another way of saying, 'Put an end to drink,' and wars will cease from the earth."

If that be true, what a marvellous crusade the W.C.T.U. has engaged in!

Our organisation was founded over 70 years ago primarily to outlaw beverage alcohol from the nations of the world, because a few thinking women had learnt the great facts about alcohol.

## Maori Organiser

Shortly after the Union was organised in New Zealand, a department of

work among the Maoris was started. A young Maori woman, Miss Hera Stirling, was appointed Maori Organiser, and did a remarkably fine piece of work for the Union among her people. Trained as a Salvation Army officer, Miss Stirling travelled throughout the East Coast of the North Island, Rotorua district, the King Country, and in far-away parts inaccessible to the Pakeha. Gifted with a magnificent singing voice, Miss Stirling sang her way into the hearts of the people, preached the gospel of redeeming love, and "organised for doing good" the people of her own race.

Her only means of transport was a horse, and the familiar figure of the rider on the steed brought the light and warmth of friendship into many a heart and home. Many Maori Unions were formed. Temperance teaching given in schools and colleges to Maori Youth, and always the great foundation principles of Christian Faith and living were the keynotes of her work. Men in leading positions among the Maoris today testify to her influence upon their young lives, and thank God for her coming.

After many years of faithful service and varied experiences, Miss Stirling became the wife of a clergyman of the Church of England, and continued her work in a new capacity. Mrs. Hera Munro is still carrying on her temperance work among young people in Rotorua.

## Moral Landslide

The unsettled state of society, world-wide, consequent upon world wars, and its attendant serious moral landslide, has greatly increased the alcohol habit among the people of all nations. Men and women drink to get away from the realities and problems of life. The Maori has not escaped this reaction.

The need for the friendship and the educational work of the W.C.T.U. among them is more clamant than ever, and the women are especially eager to co-operate with us in our efforts to arrest the moral landslide which threatens the well-being of both races.

As Maori Organiser, I have had the privilege of visiting and working among the Maoris for some years, and have learned to love and appreciate them. I would pass on for your consideration some impressions gained and glimpses of work accomplished or begun.

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