

AMONG THE DEPARTMENTS

ANTI-GAMBLING

A statement appears in the N.Z. "Herald" of May 11 which runs thus: "The Annual Report of the Churches Committee on Gambling states that gambling in Britain has become a 'National epidemic.' The figures for horse racing, greyhound racing and football pools amount to a sum of £1,000,000,000 for last year, probably the greatest increase in gambling throughout the nation that has ever been recorded in history."

The report goes on to say: "An avalanche of betting and gambling is upon us, and at times it would seem almost that masses of our fellow-citizens are being buried under it."

The totals show enormous increases in every form of gambling. In 1946 the figures for horse racing were £400,000,000, and in 1946 this had increased to £450,000,000.

Football pool gambling has become the eleventh largest business in the country. An under-estimate of its turnover last year was £70,000,000.

The scandalous waste of paper involved, and the man-power worse than wasted in the delivering of millions of postal packets weekly, one firm alone giving the figure at 3,000,000 per week, at a time when national-recovery must depend upon hard and disciplined work, children find themselves 'possessed of a mental and imaginative background in which incentive to life and work have become tainted with the hope for "a lucky win," "get rich quick," or the "something for nothing" spirit.

These staggering figures and the picture drawn as a conclusion, of the child whose environment and upbringing are coloured or "tainted" by this gigantic evil, should bring us to realise that our "anti-gambling" department is one we should work with greater zeal and sense of urgency than has been the case.

Glancing over the report published in our Convention Report Book, one feels that a more direct attack needs to be made. The figures in our own country show increases alarming in their extent. Fresh incentives to and opportunities for gambling seem to be on the increase. We read of those in high places stooping to the "art union" and the lottery.

What can we do? In our last issue the "findings" of the Convention Group which discussed the report of the Department, were given. We would stress some of them again. Let no Union Executive think that this Department does not matter. If any suggestion for doing something definite is made it should be carried out, even in Unions where it seems most unnecessary. Knowledge of the conditions obtaining should be given. It is not enough to say "Oh, we never think of going in for raffles or anything of the kind." We need to make an attack and not to content ourselves with our

own security. The demoralisation of our youth and the undermining of character already going on in our midst are things too terrible to be ignored.

The Gambling Commission was not helpful. With the same disregard for the consequences of raffles, lotteries as is evidenced in the Findings of the Royal Commission on Licensing for those of restaurant drinking, they appear to believe that people will not wish to increase the scope of the gambling begun in these small ways. The only logical result to be expected is that the taste fostered and quickened by these things, even though they were held to have no detrimental effect and to produce no social evils, will certainly demand wider fields in which to pasture, sooner or later.

We were asked among other things, to "urge the teaching of anti-gambling to Sunday School scholars, and in Temperance Societies, to ask that Churches and Public Schools refrain from promoting raffles or art unions as a means of raising funds."

Also, we were asked to have a special day devoted to discussion of anti-gambling. And we were to approach Ministers in our respective districts asking them to bring the evil before their congregations.

These are only suggestions. It is for us to do our best for the sake of God, Home, and Humanity in this as in our other great struggle with evil.

LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY CONVENTION FINDINGS

Many Unions are vague as to whom resolutions should be sent. It is felt that more notice might be taken if all Unions sent resolutions or protests, instead of only District or Dominion Officers. It is recommended that as resolutions are passed members should be instructed to whom they should be sent. Unions sometimes send what purports to be a Remit, but is merely an expression of opinion.

PRESS DEPARTMENT CONVENTION FINDINGS

Where the local Press is not willing to publish reports, a special fund may be used for inserting particularly telling paragraphs, or Temperance Facts, quoting world-known authorities. Compare cost of this, and far-reaching effect, with distribution of leaflets.

WORLD DEPARTMENT OF "SCHOOL OF METHODS"

MRS. AMY KASPER, J.P.,

International Superintendent

Today all sorts of gadgets for efficient work in the homes and businesses are being offered to us. There, production is already begun: every homemaker is entitled to the very best offered and ought to make use of value in the mechanics of good house-keeping. National life and international life are just progressive larger units of home-making, and the same principle applies to the Women's Christian Temperance Union, it is one of the fine and very valuable instruments for use in our national good housekeeping, and in order to make the finest contribution that is possible, the W.C.T.U. must have the most up-to-date and effective methods.

Through the years we have tried to keep abreast of the times, by changing our mode of approach when necessary to conform to the changing times and needs. We have a wonderful organisation of itself with aims and purposes and plans of work. We meet in Conventions to work out the best policy and methods of work, but do we give every member an opportunity of studying these methods, and devise the best methods of carrying them out.

Every country must determine the time, place, and name of the meeting. Assemblies lasting through two or more sessions for the purpose of study under the direction of the W.C.T.U. are called institutes, workshops, schools of methods, conferences, leadership, training schools, etc., etc. All of these come under the World School of Methods Department. The purpose of these assemblies is to familiarise the membership of the W.C.T.U., its branches, Youth Groups, and Loyal Temperance Legions, with the history, aims and the methods of work of the organisation, these are primarily for study, but social features often are added, literature is distributed, non-members are invited to attend and to become members.

New officers are being elected at almost every annual meeting; is it right to ask these Sisters to take office without preparing them for these positions? They should be trained, also instruction should be given to every Superintendent of Departments appointed. This can be done in our Schools of Methods.

Knowledge of the work carried out with God's help in a spirit of prayer and devotion must achieve efficiency.

Yours faithfully,

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