

the settlement of this question hangs the happiness of thousands of homes—the ruin or salvation of thousands of men. Are we making special preparation so that the woman's vote may be cast on the side of Temperance? Every woman who loves her home, who loves her children, or has family ties of any kind, is deeply concerned in this election. What are our Unions and Societies doing to arouse women to a sense of their responsibilities? The Prohibition Leagues are hard at work. But have we not also our special work in this direction as well as in other matters? Have we educated every one of our members so that she may in her turn influence her friends, acquaintances, and neighbours to vote rightly? Are we making any effort to place women—especially young women who, during the last three years, have attained their majority—on the roll? Most of our Unions have franchise superintendents. Are they on the alert, and awake to the importance of their office at the present time? We hope in our next issue to be able to report that every Union and Society from Auckland to the Bluff has been at work preparing for the General Election, which may be commenced at any moment. Let us not be found drowsing when we should be working.

A Purblind Council.

THE rejection of the Bill for the repeal of the C.D. Acts for the second time in the Legislative Council emphasises the danger of entrusting the power of legislation to a body which is not directly under the control of the people.

Twice have the people, by their representatives, tried to repeal these Acts, and twice has the attempt been frustrated by the Legislative Council.

It is scarcely necessary to recapitulate the objectionable features of the Acts; of their infringement of the

British Constitution; of their menace to the liberty of every woman in the colony who, under these Acts, may, at the caprice of any policeman, be subjected to gross indignity, and of how they encourage license, and hinder a return to virtue.

Most of the councillors gave a silent vote, but there were some who claimed that in retaining these Acts they were protecting the health of the community. Assuming these gentlemen to be sincere, we may respect their sincerity; but we must deeply deplore their lack of intelligence and common sense.

Is it not patent to the meanest intelligence that it is men, and not women, who, in the pursuit of vicious and selfish pleasure, contract the disease and communicate it to innocent persons with terrible consequences? When the Legislative Councillors pass a Bill which will say to men: "If you determine to indulge a debased appetite you become a danger to the community, and will be placed under restraint," then we shall be convinced of their sincerity, and shall give them credit for sense and ordinary fairness.

Not Worth the Candle.

It is becoming painfully evident that in imitating the British Parliament by setting up an Upper and Lower House, we have committed a great blunder.

For years past the Legislative Council has blocked every reform, either by throwing out Bills passed by the House of Representatives, or by so mutilating them that their usefulness has been almost destroyed. The Council, in spite of a slight infusion of new blood, has settled down to a steady policy of obstruction, and has fairly earned the right to be called the "Anti-Legislative Council."

Its members are dignified by the prefix of Honourable. Presumably this is an ironical recognition of the fact that while they frustrate the wishes

of the people, they do not hesitate to draw an annual salary.

In fairness to some of the Honourable Councillors it should be explained that they are not all actively engaged in obstructing Bills. Some of them remain quietly at home, or travel in Europe for a couple of years, carefully, we presume, drawing their salaries in the meantime. These salaries are called honorariums, for the reason, probably, that they are in no sense earned. In all seriousness we would ask the women electors of this colony, in the words of an homely proverb, "Is the game worth the candle?" At a rough calculation, the Legislative Council must cost the colony something like eight thousand pounds a year. This would pay interest on two hundred thousand pounds, which, if expended on State farms, would practically solve our unemployed difficulty. Yet we have paid this money for years past to hinder reform.

In defence of the Council it is said that it acts as a revising chamber, correcting errors in Bills passed in the House of Representatives, and rendering them workable. We admit that there is something to be said for this view. But when it is remembered how frequently our Representatives are busy passing Amendment Acts, it must be admitted that the Council is not only a costly revising chamber, but a very inefficient one also.

We venture to suggest a better plan.

Abolish the Legislative Council. Let a revision Committee of three competent lawyers be balloted for by the Judges of the Supreme Court. Pay the members £500 a year each on condition that they attend in Wellington during the sessions of Parliament, and revise the Bills as they come out of Committee.

We hazard the opinion that the work of revision will be better done, a large saving will be made, and reform will be hastened.