

United States, youngest of the great nations, battled with, and overcame proud Spain, the one-time mistress of all the Americas. England's triumph in the Soudan over the hordes that devastated that unhappy country bade fair to embroil her with France. And yet, amid all the stormy weather, the Czar sent out his message inviting the nations to consider the advisability of disarmament. To many, the proposal seemed a bit of irony—disarm in the midst of wars and rumours of wars! Absurd!

Yet the wars have been brought to a speedy close, peace has come to the Cubans and Soudanese, the nations have assumed a pacific tone, and favourable replies have been sent to the message of the Czar.

It now seems probable that the chief question among the nations will be the possibility of mutual disarmament. That there may be some practical outcome of the Conference is a consummation devoutly to be wished. The maintenance of huge armies by the nations is as dangerous a practice as the carrying of revolvers and bowie knives by individuals.

Good-will Towards Men.

At this time of the year, throughout the wide world the minds of men are turned to thoughts of the Prince of Peace. In a few days "Good-will towards men" will be in many hearts and on many tongues. Despite the wreck of creeds, and the fall of systems of theology, the everlasting beauty of the angelic message has not lost its power to soften the crust of selfishness which, even in the best among us, is apt to form, and hide the God-likeness which is in every man. Many of us are but dull scholars in the school of Christ. We cling fondly to our pet theories, whether religious or secular, and are prone to think harshly of those who differ from us. We too often forget

to show the charity which hopeth all things, beareth all things, believeth all things, which never faileth. Each one of us desires the kindness, the esteem, the forbearance of others. But do we not too often forget that the sum of the teachings of all the greatest men the world has possessed is contained in the words, "Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye also so to them?"

It is good, therefore, that we should make a festival of the birth-time of Him who came to teach Love and Peace and Goodwill; that we should at least once a year try to put away from us all that is out of harmony with his teachings, and be again reminded of the eternal truth and loveliness of His lessons.

To all readers of the WHITE RIBBON the Editors send kind greetings and wishes that this may be to them a happy Christmas.

Our Illustration.

THE subject of this month's engraving, Mrs Mary Müller, may be fitly termed the Pioneer Woman Suffragist of New Zealand.

So far back as 1850 Mrs Müller, under *noms de plume*, advocated the claims of women to representation. Her friendship with a number of leading public men in the early days of the Colony—Messrs Stafford, Domett, Saunders, Sir Dillon Bell, Sir David Munro, Sir William Fox, and others, enabled her to do work, which, if not immediately reproductive, helped to prepare the way for others. In 1869 Mrs Müller published a pamphlet on the suffrage question, entitled, "An appeal to the men of New Zealand."

She also corresponded with Mr John Stuart Mill and others, and procured from time to time literature which proved useful. Mrs Müller is now living at New Amersfoot, Blenheim, and although seventy-eight years of age,

still takes a keen interest in whatever may be for the advancement of women. Our readers will join us in hearty congratulations to Mrs Müller in being able at last to see her many years' labour crowned with success.

Women on Charitable Aid Boards.

We are glad to chronicle the fact that Mrs Black, one of the lady nominees to the Canterbury Charitable Aid Board, has been elected to represent the Selwyn County Council on that Board. We were hoping that Mrs Wells, the other lady nominee, would also have been elected, not only for the useful work she might have done, but for Mrs Black's sake, who, at present, is the only woman member. Mrs Black, however, has already attended a meeting of the Board, and bears tribute to the extremely courteous manner in which she was received by the members, so that any feeling of discomfort she may have had regarding her position on the Board has vanished. This is as it should be, and it is only reasonable to forecast that before next year much of the absurd prejudice which still exists concerning women's work in this direction will have vanished, and several other lady members will be elected.

From the Editors.

The Editors request that all contributors to the WHITE RIBBON should see that their items are posted in time to reach Christchurch before the eighth of each month. It should not be forgotten that all work connected with our paper is done voluntarily and without money remuneration, and that those who do it are busy in other directions. The news of unions often require condensing and re-writing, and time is needed for such work. Some of the Union reports arrived as late as the 12th of this month. This should not be, and the Editors hope that those who send reports and correspondence will bear the matter in mind. It should be clearly understood that we cannot undertake to insert matter reaching us after the 8th.

Several annual reports are to hand, some of them too lengthy to publish in full. These have been abridged, and the names of the officers left out, as they will be published in the Convention number.