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THE WHITE RIBBON.

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The White Ribbon:

FOR GOD AND HOME AND HUMANITY.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 1906.

The Parliamentary Programme

The political outlook is decidedly promising. The Premier has by his choice of colleagues added both ability and integrity to the Party charged with the administration of the affairs of the Colony. And the Parliamentary programme set forth in the Budget is, without making any pretensions, certainly humanitarian in its trend. The

suggestions to establish a sinking fund for the repayment of non-productive loans, and to make more stable provision for Education and Old Age Pensions by ear-marking Crown lands, savour of true thrift as well as due care for the human. The land proposals have evidently been framed with the object of giving the masses easy access to their rightful inheritance, the God-given earth. Reductions in postal and telegraph charges mean added comfort and convenience to the people; and the loneliness of the back-block settler and his family will be shorn of half its terror by the extension to the outposts of civilisation of telephonic communication. The setting aside of a sufficiency of land for the Maoris will do somewhat to remove the sense of injury and wrong so long and justly felt by a large number of the Native race. Altogether, the Ward Ministry may be regarded as having entered upon its duties with a due sense of its responsibility for the happiness and true welfare of the people.

The Totalisator.

Mr Ell's Totalisator Bill is dead, but the opponents of the engine of destruction are in nowise cast down. Firstly, the vote taken revealed the fact that the friends of morality in the present House are no insignificant minority—29 as against 35 advocates of legalising vice. Secondly, there is promise that the matter will be revived during the present session, Mr Ell having given notice of his intention to introduce the repeal clauses when the Gaming and Lotteries Act Amendment Bill is before Parliament. Thirdly, on 10th inst., a large and influential deputation, consisting of Parliamentary representatives, ministers of various churches, the Mayor of Wellington and other

citizens, waited on the Premier, for the purpose of urging on the Government the necessity of (1) the abolition of the totalisator, (2) the isolation of racecourses from telegraphic and telephonic communication, and (3) making the publication of betting news in the daily papers illegal. Mr Ell introduced the deputation, and the Premier's reception of its views, as voiced by several gentlemen, was markedly sympathetic. He promised to give the matters full consideration, and expressed the hope of being able to assist "in preventing the growth of what is a very great evil in this country."

The Christchurch *Press*, true to its platform, champions the cause of the totalisator. It reiterates the specious plea that Acts of Parliament cannot make folk moral, and then gravely concludes its remarks by saying that "those who wish to prevent gambling" (which the *Press* evidently does not) "must create a feeling against it." Is not this precisely what the totalisator abolitionists are striving to do? The special curse attached to the machine is that the State has through it sanctioned the vice, and, in the eyes of the thoughtless and the young, made it respectable.

Liquor at the Exhibition.

The Cabinet rightly decided that the question of allowing the sale of liquor at the Exhibition lay with the Christchurch Licensing Committee, and therefore declined to deal with the matter. The Licensing Committee has met, and has given its verdict against the sale. Seeing that the Committee was elected by the Christchurch people as an avowedly Temperance one, it was not to be expected that additional facilities would be granted for obtaining alcohol. Some have argued that the