

of the young in these truths is revolutionising the thought of the day on this question.

#### Premier Interviewed.

Soon after Sir Joseph Ward's return to the colony and his elevation to the Premiership your President and Miss Roberts waited upon him in Christchurch. On behalf of the Union he was congratulated upon his appointment to the leadership of the Government, and on the success of his efforts at the Postal Conference, held in Rome, to obtain the assistance of the various countries represented in suppressing the circulation through the post of gambling circulars. As a petition in favour of the abolition of the totalisator was being circulated by the Union throughout the colony the time was thought to be opportune for ascertaining from the Premier what was likely to be done during the coming session in that direction; also if the Government were disposed to do what had already been proposed in Australia, to suppress the publication of betting news and the results of Tattersall's sweeps. We received a non-committal answer, though we were informed that his colleagues would be consulted on the matter. Subsequent events proved that we were to be bitterly disappointed.

#### Abolition of the Totalisator.

This department has had special attention this year, and an effort has been made to impress our legislators with the fact, that the best element in the community is in favour of the suppression of the gambling machine. The work of circulating and obtaining signatures has been well taken up and carried out by our Unions. It has been calculated that 20,000 persons signed the petition, and in face of the fact that our plans were in the beginning upset by the sudden death of the late Premier, and in the end the work had to be done very hurriedly, I think we may congratulate ourselves on the results. But the answer to our petition in the House of Representatives was most disappointing. The Premier's Bill, though in many respects good, failed to satisfy at all those who desire to see the suppression of licensed gambling. Sir Joseph Ward's Bill simply provides for a heavier tax on the totalisator, which tax may be applied to the relief of the local Hospital and Charitable Aid Boards, thus making it almost impossible to induce ratepayers to look with disfavour on an evil which eases them of rates. Feeling assured that our Unions would not approve of such a provision in the Bill, your President wrote to the head of the Government to that effect. As the same Bill, or a similar one, is certain to be introduced into Parliament next session we think no time should be lost in preparing and circulating another petition on the same lines as the last. Much interest has been aroused throughout the colony on the question of the Abolition of the Totalisator. Newspaper editors, judges, the ministers of religion have been speaking and writing with no uncertain sound, being almost unanimous in denun-

ciation of such a source of evil and degradation. Our opponents, also, are at work, and petitions in favour of the totalisator are being largely signed at race meetings. Do not let us lose the ground we have gained, but with God's blessing continue the fight against a legalised vice which is helping to undermine the morality of the nation.

#### W.C.T.U. Exhibit.

The Convention last year approved of a suggestion made by the Christchurch branch, that the N.Z. Union should be represented at the International Exhibition, to be opened in Christchurch in November, 1906. To this end an appeal for funds was made to the branches of the Union throughout the colony, and the response has been met by most Unions, with promptitude and generosity. A committee was formed of several members of the Christchurch Union, whose duty it has been to carry on correspondence with all parts of the world, collect exhibits, arrange for space, and for the erecting, furnishing, and fitting up of the bay. This has entailed a large amount of work, but I may perhaps be allowed to say, that your President has enjoyed very much the opportunity presented for intercourse with our sisters in many lands. The letters received, full of kindness and cheer, the evidence given of hands always ready to aid where possible, and the kindly advice offered where needed, go to prove that the tie that binds our organisation together is not one of empty name alone. As the secretary will offer a detailed report, I need say no more, excepting that it is certain our presence at the N.Z. Exhibition will have a far-reaching effect, and will advertise our Union as it has not been advertised hitherto. The educational value of our exhibit is considerable, and our good fortune in securing Miss Roberts as attendant ensures that the work is being well done. The only place in the Exhibition where woman's work for humanity has received any recognition is at the W.C.T.U. bay, and for that reason the Union has included in its exhibits photographs of women who, while not members of our organisation, have done much for the furtherance of social reforms.

#### A Liquorless Exhibition.

When a proposal was made by the Exhibition Commissioners to override the decision of the Christchurch Licensing Committee by applying to Government for a permit to sell liquor at the Exhibition, a letter was drawn up by your President and forwarded to all Unions, embodying a resolution asking the Government not to interfere with the decision of the Christchurch Licensing Committee. Each Union was advised to pass such resolution and forward to the House of Representatives. As the Government declined to interfere with the decision of the Christchurch Licensing Committee, no further action was taken. When the Government's decision was made known the most doleful prophecies were indulged in to the effect that the Exhibition would be a dismal failure, and that it would be

as well to close it at once, for very few would wish to attend an Exhibition where liquor could not be procured. The person who has stayed away from the Exhibition because he could not obtain liquor has yet to be found. Seeing that during the three months the Exhibition has been open a million persons have visited it, it can scarcely be argued that the absence of liquor has been disastrous, except to those who expected to make money out of its sale. The effect of the absence of liquor has been seen in the absence of drunkenness and crime. Although dense crowds have often assembled in the Exhibition and its precincts order has always been in evidence, and as far as a constant visitor can judge, there is not much work, if any, for the large body of police who patrol the grounds. The success of the Exhibition from a liquorless point of view is not to be lost sight of by those who are advocating the total abolition of the liquor traffic in New Zealand. We have once more the privilege of testifying that absence of liquor means absence of crime, and increase of respectability and morality.

#### Sly-grog Selling in Ashburton.

While touching upon Liquor questions I may draw attention to recent happenings in Ashburton. The seeming sympathy of the magistrate with law-breakers in sly-grog selling cases, as evidenced by the difficulty in securing convictions, induced an appeal by petition to the Government, which was followed up by a personal appeal to the Premier, who said amongst other things "That in a No-license district sly-grog selling must be suppressed." The magistrate has since been relieved of his duties in Ashburton.

#### Bare Majority.

The No-License party have decided on a campaign in favour of the principle of the bare majority being used to decide the question of license or no license. For years past the principle would have been recognised if a sympathetic Government had been in office. Every reasonable man and woman admits the unfairness of the handicap under which the Temperance party is labouring at present, and even if it be only thought a question of expediency for the purpose of preventing any district from going back to license on a narrow majority, we have no right to the advantage on that score. Besides which no politician has the power to promise that the law will not be varied, so soon as it would be to the advantage of our opponents. Nor could we conscientiously oppose the change then. I would urge all our members to help in any endeavour made to remedy a wrong, under which we at the present time lose the victory for no license in most of the North Island electorates, beside many in the south.

#### Children's Rest.

As a Women's Union it was thought only fitting that we should make an effort to induce the Government to make some provision whereby the mothers who visited the Exhibition might be relieved of the care of their little ones while they them-