

# The White Ribbon

FOR GOD AND HOME AND HUMANITY

VOL. 24.—No. 279. WELLINGTON, N.Z., SEPTEMBER 18, 1918.

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## WOMEN POLICE.

Some time ago a deputation, representing various women's societies, waited upon the Minister for Justice, Hon. T. M. Wilford, asking for the appointment of women police, women jurors, and women Magistrates.

The Minister definitely refused to appoint them. For a man holding so responsible a position, he showed only the most superficial knowledge of the subject, and wrenching words of Miss Damer Dawson's from their context conveyed quite a wrong impression of her meaning. The document printed below will give Miss Dawson's own report of her women police.

Two ladies from Taranaki, moved by the evils they saw rife, took up work in the London streets to help our boys. The first approached General Richardson, who told them everything possible was being done. They replied that their suggestion, an appeal personally to the boys by New Zealand women, was not being tried. The General turned to the doctor accompanying him, and asked what he thought about it, and the medico replied: "Well, I think the ladies have something in their favour, and if their plan is to give the personal touch to these boys, well, I think it is worth trying." The General then said: "Ladies, I am in need of help, effectual help, but I don't think you can do anything, but in order to convince yourselves, I suggest that one of you go to London and try." The ladies submitted this report to the General:

(Copy.)

### WOMEN POLICE SERVICE.

Headquarters,

6, Eccleston Square, S.W.1.,

26th March, 1918.

Dear Mrs McHugh,—I herewith send you a copy of the report.

I would ask you to submit the following points to your General. Both in speaking and writing, and in various reports submitted to the authorities, I have urged the appointment of a force of women police in London, in various boroughs where large camps are situated, and in other camp areas, in order that police women should deal with problems such as drunkenness, pilfering, immorality, etc., which is the natural outcome of large bodies of strange men imported into areas where there have always been a preponderating number of women. We have claimed that the work of women police would have prevented a great deal of the trouble which has resulted from the influx of large numbers of soldiery. Our representations have been favourably received by the English Y.M.C.A., by the War Office, and by the Home Office. I submitted a memorandum to Lord Derby, which was well received, and handed on in the House of Commons. I have had interviews with the ex-Home Secretary, Mr Herbert Samuel, with Sir Alfred Keogh, then commanding the R.A.M.C., with Sir Arthur Yapp, head of the English Y.M.C.A. All these officials have expressed their interest and belief in the efficacy of women police, but for one reason or another the appointment of women police on a large scale has not been achieved.

Police women are at present employed by private effort in five parts of the Metropolitan area and in vari-

ous boroughs, and the experience of these police women, which now extends over two years, tends to show that uniformed official women are able to exercise an influence for good in the streets which cannot be attained by either civil or military police. The police women working in the Metropolitan district naturally come across a large number of New Zealand, Canadian, Australian, and other overseas soldiers during street patrolling. They also know by sight, by name, and in many cases personally, the girls and women who are leading immoral lives, and who take money from these soldiers. It is our aim to place police women in different streets which are known to us to contain a certain number of houses where constant immorality occurs. These houses the police and local authorities have not succeeded in closing for various reasons.

"On two occasions two men, one an Australian, the other a Canadian, appeared in the street and went to a certain house suspected to be used for immoral purposes. I stopped the soldier and asked him if he knew anyone in the house and if he were lodging there. On each occasion the soldiers answered in the negative. I was able to persuade both of them to leave and go back to their hostels. One of the men said that he was quite willing to give up going on the condition that I would escort him out of the street, as he was afraid of being molested by girls. I accordingly escorted him to the nearest terminus."

The police women find that the men are very easy to deal with, even when intoxicated and quarrelsome. They are very child-like in their capacity for being turned from one idea to an-