

The White Ribbon

FOR GOD AND HOME AND HUMANITY

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Why Should a Church Member Belong to the W.C.T.U.

(By Mrs. Sarah D. La Fetra.)

DO not the regular lines of church work sufficiently include work for temperance? Why should a busy church member belong to the Women's Christian Temperance Union? We answer, we belong:

(1) Because we believe that the saloon and its allies are the greatest obstacles which lie in the way of the triumph of Christ and His church in the world. The open saloon is blocking the highways along which must come the King in His beauty, and His triumphal reign cannot be ushered in until the dramshop is cleared away and institutions for man's elevation are substituted. The altars of our church are pitifully devoid of young men, and the pitfalls of vice in our large cities are crowded with them. Thus they are drawn farther and farther away from purity, the influence of a mother's prayers, and the restraining and helpful ordinances of the church.

(2) We belong because there is a stultifying lethargy on the part of the average church member regarding the evils of the saloon and a disposition to evade responsibility. Consequently, the aroused and consecrated worker for souls must organise, agitate, and cry aloud in behalf of "the slain of the daughters of my people." It is not enough that we offer a prayer occasionally for the downfall of the drink traffic; not enough that we have quarterly temperance Sunday-school lessons, and once or twice a year a good temperance sermon; not enough that the church periodically pass

strong resolutions against the sale of strong liquors. All these are good; but radical evils must have radical remedies, and the rank and file of our churches are conservative and slow to adopt any such measures.

(3) We belong because, while the evil of the saloon is almost universally acknowledged by the churches, yet there are weapons which must be wielded against the saloon before it is abolished which now cannot be freely advocated under the auspices of the church without dissension, which would be deplorable to many, even of our own white-ribboners. The church has not washed its hands from complicity with the saloon, and while declaring "that the liquor traffic cannot be legalised without sin," a majority of the voting membership sanctions its perpetuation by their ballots, thereby insuring to the traffic the protection of Government. In St. John's second epistle we read: "He that biddeth him godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds." Does not government license bid godspeed to the saloon? It is clear to us that the liquor traffic must be outlawed by the vote of the church, but these subjects cannot be freely discussed under her auspices without a pitiful outcry of "political preaching," "restriction of man's personal liberty," etc.

(4) We belong because the W.C.T.U. wipes out denominational lines in Christian work against this common foe to all, and realises the Saviour's prayer that "they all may be one." This blending of women at the mercy-seat has brought to them such a revelation of the Holy Spirit's power, such depths of love and peace and joy, that they are

conscious that His favour crowns their work and that "He will finally subdue all enemies under His feet."

(5) We belong because the missionary work of all our churches is handicapped in foreign countries by the rum sent out from this and other so-called Christian lands, to the natives whom our missionaries are making every sacrifice to reach and save. Mrs. Mary Clement Leavitt, our first round-the-world missionary, found whole villages in the Congo Free State drunk with rum sent from the United States and Christian England when she arrived with her message of gospel purity and love. God have pity, for the blood of these natives is yet upon our garments.

(6) We belong because the Women's Christian Temperance Union stands for the ecclesiastical emancipation of woman. "Go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead," said the angel to the women. They are preaching the risen Christ as acceptably and as effectively as any on whom holy hands have been laid in ordination by the church. Who that ever heard the sainted Mary Lathrop can doubt that she was called of God to preach the Gospel? And yet the Church she loved and honoured refused to recognise officially that call because she was a woman. I fully believe that thousands of souls who are now untouched, would be reached and saved annually if our churches would but acknowledge and officially recognise God's call to women to preach the gospel. Such convictions of duty have never come to me personally, so I may speak more freely on behalf of others. Our women, by their loyalty and devotion to the