

PRESIDENT'S LETTER.

WITH THE MAORIS IN BAY OF PLENTY.



Dear Friends,—

Here is a prayer which we may well use as we face the battle against the bottle:

"Our Father, draw from us base content and set our eyes on far off goals. Keep us at tasks too hard for us, that we may be driven to Thee for strength. Deliver us from fretfulness and self-pity; make us sure of the goal we cannot see, and of the hidden good in the world. Save us from ourselves, and show us a vision of a world made new. May Thy Spirit of peace and illumination so enlighten our minds that all life shall glow with new meaning and new purpose, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

As we pray, our minds will be enlightened to see how this prayer may be answered. I believe that one way to have an answer is to use every open door for service. Church guilds, and other organisations of women, are often glad to receive a speaker. Arrange for speakers, and thus you arouse interest in this very definite Christian work. Votes will be won, and the numbers at the poll will mount up in the right direction. Opportunity is now.

Another way to help answer that prayer is to give out literature. Several new leaflets should be in the hands of Mrs. Ross now, and we want these leaflets to reach every home in New Zealand. "Keep us at tasks too hard for us that we may be driven to Thee for strength." I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. That is the secret, His strength not ours. Do you remember how the spies who were fearful said, "We are not able to go up against the people for they are stronger than we"? But Caleb said, "Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it." Caleb knew where to obtain

It has been my privilege to return for a brief period this year on "Field Work" for the Union among the Maori people.

The need is very great. Leaders of the Maoris are calling out for protection of their young people against the awful ravages of the drinking habit and the enticement of the hotel bars.

The result of the 40-hour week and increased wages—leisure without knowledge and provision for its rightful use—is disastrous to the Maori men. The liquor bars are reaping their increased wages, families are not benefitting as they should. The only agencies at work for the real uplift and help of these people are the Church's missionaries and the W.C.T.U. A terrific warfare is being waged by the missionaries of the Cross against the legalised liquor traffic for the soul of the Maori race. Twelve years ago I met a native Maori minister wearing the White Bow. Asked why he wore it, he replied, "This is my fight." Every Maori worker, Maori and Pakeha, can say the same. The forces of liquorism are the greatest bar to the evangelisation of the native race. Many of the old native customs are passing, as the Maori assimilates Pakeha civilisation, but this dread vice of drunkenness bids fair to engulf and destroy a noble race.

During the past few decades the Maori has gradually come into line with the Pakeha in dress, food, education, sport, organisation (e.g., W.C.T.U., Women's Institutes), professions, and so on—all to the good. The liquor habit is retarding their progress and it is here we must help them.

What are we as a Union doing?

Well, we are sounding the alarm. Our educational work has gained a footing in many native schools. Children know the truth about alcohol and are warned. Young people in the Y's are receiving sound training in total abstinence and good citizenship principles. Students in Maori Girls' Colleges are enthusiastic total abstainers and Y members and these become temperance missionaries in their Pahs on leaving college.

The White Ribbon is circulated in many homes and Pahs. Maori Unions are not so numerous as they might be, but we have a few.

I have just spent a week at the Maori Mission in Opotiki. Several temperance talks and travellogues have been given in native schools, two Y meetings attended, Sunday School and other Mission meetings addressed. "Kia Toa" Y's have lost many of the older members through marriage and departure to other parts of the district. A new and younger generation is coming in and these are being trained.

strength to overcome. God grant that we shall say, "In the strength of the Lord we are able."

Yours for victory,

JESSIE HIETT.

Membership is being re-built slowly. Most of the older boys work on farms and other jobs several miles out of town. The Mission car brings some of them in for meetings while others depend on "lifts."

At "Muriwai" Y meeting on 23rd June there was no light in the hall. A lamp was there but no oil! None could be obtained, so the resourceful Superintendent, Rev. R. Morgan, ran his car into the hall doorway and we held the meeting by "car-light." It was a bitterly cold, frosty night. We froze, over 20 of us, round the open door, and talked about the things of God and temperance. We sang bright hymns, answered questions and asked a few. A steaming cauldron of lovely odourful cocoa and buttered buns made a welcome finish to a really good meeting.

On Saturday evening I was present at the Y footballers' tea and social hour. There were nearly fifty lads and girls present. Hungry boys from the football field enjoyed a W.C.T.U. tea, played Badminton, ping-pong, draughts, etc. I told a temperance, illustrated, story.

This is a definite counter-attraction to the hotel bar. There is nowhere else for these lads to go. Their homes are miles out.

After football, you know, a bath is urgent! A queue forms in the hall of the Mission House, a muddy queue, and too soon all the hot water is gone! The missionary smiles, "Ah, well, it has kept them from the hotel bar."

The renovated, freshly painted hotel has just installed some new hot baths for footballers. The Mission Committee got busy, and with the co-operation of the local W.C.T.U. plans were quickly made to instal two sets of hot and cold showers behind the Mission Hall. These will be a tremendous boon to the Y footballers and other players, and, we trust, will save many more precious lives from the hotel "trap."

On Sunday several personal opportunities for temperance talks were opened up and in the evening a lantern film of the "Life of Christ" was given in the hall. In the afternoon I had conducted a small Sunday School in an old shack in a paddock near one of the Pahs. The children were very bright, the singing was very hearty, and the response very good.

Sister Morgan and her father are doing a great work here for God and temperance. Cast-off clothes, and new ones, play a very great part in the work. Great quantities can be disposed of. The Maoris buy them and the proceeds "oil the wheels" of the Mission work.

Practically all the Union girls are in the Mission basketball teams "Kia-Toa," and they look so nice in their bright red and white sports dresses. Many of the girls are in situations in town, where they do well.

Remember this work in your prayers and in your Unions in practical ways.

C. M. McLAY.