

MEMO. ON THE PRESENT ECONOMIC CRISIS IN NEW ZEALAND.

Submitted to the Rt. Hon. G. W. Forbes, Premier, and the Leaders of the Reform and Labour Parties.

This private memo. is forwarded hopefully. Mr Forbes and the Leaders of the Reform and Labour Parties can hardly fail to recognise this crisis as one not far from war emergency, to be met only by decisions as vital and sweeping as war measures.

The country awaits with tensely the economic conclusions of conference between the three political parties. Moreover, the more intelligent citizens recognise the moment as one for decisions economic indeed, but strangely excluded from open summary of the situation. Though only a private individual, not committed to any political party, the writer represents a large, silent, non-partisan vote, turning always at the last to the party with the most solid programme of moral reform. The best world-economists now inevitably associate true moral reform with true economic reform.

Briefly, then, I beg to submit that the time has now come when no effective adjustments to ease a deplorable situation can possibly exclude heroic measures with regard to drink and gambling. Any scheme apart from such measures will fail the country at its need, and entail dire consequences on ourselves and posterity.

The writer would entreat the Leaders to consider this not as a New Zealand crisis alone, but as a Britannic crisis, in which the same factors operate in one close, clamant Imperial necessity. Is it needful to point out how the difficulties confessed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be lessened if even £200,000,000 of the £280,000,000 now annually spent on alcohol in Britain were restored to the people? Would not that tally with the proportionate result if even £1,000,000 out of the £8,500,000, the approximate annual expenditure on alcohol in New Zealand, were turned to the country's benefit? Add to that the less easily tabulated but enormous sum spent on horse racing alone, and it will be seen what a reservoir of capital true statesmanship has to draw upon in this pan-Britannic crisis, a reservoir incalculably deepened by the contingent uplift of physique, home life, and morality.

What lies before us if we postpone putting our house in order? Social chaos at home; facing abroad such

problems as India in revolt, with its inevitable repercussion on Africa. Competition not only with America, but with progressive lands like Germany and Scandinavia, awake to the alcohol menace, and meeting it with education and enactments of a more and more prohibitive cast. Deadliest of all competition with the gigantic, awaking Powers of the East, where drunkenness has never been the prime racial vice.

If Britannic peoples are mad enough to stagger on under this incubus of a past age, what hope even for us in the world-race now begun?

JESSIE MACKAY

Cashmere Hills, Christchurch,

February 20, 1931.

CORRESPONDENCE.

(To the Editor.)

Dear Madam,—

Do you think it would be possible to spare space asking Branch Presidents to urge their members to wear the white ribbon?

It is so rarely to be seen, except at W.C.T.U. meetings, that very much of the advantage that we could gain from the silent advertisement of keeping our badge prominent, or even visible, is lost.

Practically all members own badges, and, financially speaking, they cost no more displayed to view than left hanging up in the wardrobe. As it is, it is a constant surprise to find how often the meaning of our badge is unknown to all but our adherents, while such ignorance is unnecessary. Advertisement pays. Why should we throw away such an easy means of advertisement as merely wearing our badges? The repeated display all the time will pay more than wearing them only about election business.

Yours faithfully,

KATHERINE MERCER.

(To the Editor.)

Dear Madam,—

Through the medium of your paper I wish to thank the Dominion President and officers of our W.C.T.U. for their kindly Christmas and New Year message. That I was one of many made the remembrance no less appreciated.

To myself, and I am sure many others, your greetings brought a warm glow of fellowship. It certainly feels good to belong to a "Sisterhood of Goodwill," whose banded objective brings no personal benefit beyond that of the joy of service to God, Home, and Humanity.

Surely the response shown by the citizens of our land to the sufferers in Hawke's Bay during this past week gives us pause. When the heart is deeply touched, response quickly follows. So with confidence we pray—

May the eyes of our country be opened wide,

and the whole of the facts to see,
That the end of the year may bring us a song,

A glad song of victory.

Yours faithfully,

E. S. WILCOX.

The Manse, Opoho, Dunedin.

TARANAKI DISTRICT CONVENTION

Met in Hawera on February 26th, Mrs Phillips, District Treasurer, was in the chair. The opening devotions were taken by Miss C. M. McLay. A fine representation of delegates was present, including Y delegates—two from Inglewood Y's, one from Eltham, and three from Stratford. Reports of work given were most interesting, and, as owing to change of date, only nine months' work was done, it was most creditable.

The afternoon session was opened with devotional address by Mrs Peryman. Mrs Phillips made a very earnest appeal to all Unions to do their utmost during this year to secure a strong vote at the poll.

Miss Drew gave a report of work done at Seamen's Rest. The Taranaki Unions have helped and supported New Plymouth in this most successful work.

At the noontide hour the President and Secretary read our Memorial Service in memory of Mrs Simpson, of Inglewood, who had lately passed to higher service.

The following officers were elected:—Pres., Mrs Phillips (Stratford); Vice-Pres., Mrs Exley (Hawera); Rec. Sec., Mrs Hayward (Hawera); Cor. Sec., Miss Drew (New Plymouth); Treas., Mrs K. Tarrant (Ngaere).

Mrs Peryman gave a short address suggesting plans of work for coming campaign.

In the evening a public meeting was held. The Deputy Mayor was in the chair. Bouquets were presented to Miss McLay, Mrs Peryman, Mrs Phillips, and Mrs Exley. Some excellent musical and elocutionary items were given. Addresses were delivered by Miss C. M. McLay and Mrs Peryman. Votes of thanks to all who had helped were given, and the National Anthem closed a very fine meeting.