

NEW ZEALAND WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION

(Incorporated)

Organised 1885

"For God, and Home, and Humanity"

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"THE WHITE RIBBON"

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"Fairlight," Tauranga.

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The White Ribbon.

"For God, and Home, and Humanity"

WELLINGTON, MARCH 1, 1949.

CONVENTION OPENS

With Timaru sunshine streaming through doorways and windows, and really lovely bowls and vases of flowers on and about the platform in the Hall of Trinity Presbyterian Church, we have assembled once again; friend has greeted friend, acquaintances have been renewed, and now the happy buzz of conversation is quietened as our President, Miss Kirk, "Calls Convention to order." The mighty "Battle hymn of the republic," appropriate in its every word, rings out as the delegates sing them with high hope and courage in voice and heart, like a challenge to the hosts of wickedness. The beautiful words of Psalm 47, as read by the President, find their echo in all hearts; and later, those of the Revelation of St. John come with deep significance. Miss Kirk speaks of the visions that lead to action and endeavour; good and evil visioning both leading to their appropriate end. "Christ crucified through the Vision Terrible; but Christ triumphant through the Vision Beautiful" are the closing thoughts which lead naturally on to the Lord's Prayer. And now, 1949 Convention is opened.

Welcomes follow. Mrs. Holdgate, President of the Timaru Union, tells us how glad the Timaru members are to have us here and Miss Kirk wonders whether she can think of any-

thing, during the silent watches of the night, which has not been done for our comfort and convenience. Mrs. Densem makes announcements of pleasant things to come, and tells us just how to find places and things we shall wish to see. Very complete and satisfying to new-comers are these helps towards feeling really at home; and delegates settle down with a sense of well-being.

Follows the Dominion Secretary's report. This is a careful and comprehensive statement of our position; and calls for serious thought. We gather that all Unions have not sent in their reports; and that some figures have been culled from last year's statistics. Now comes a discussion on the membership returns, which are not so encouraging as we should like them to be. Mrs. Hiatt, with quiet forcefulness, urges District Officers to make the well-being of their Unions a matter of concern and soon the report is adopted. The Dominion Treasurer, making her first appearance at Convention in this office, is somewhat shy; but gives her report most efficiently and wins a round of applause. Questions are asked and answered, with special reference to Headquarters; and this report is also adopted.

And tea is brought in—so delicious and so refreshing on this warm afternoon; and then Mrs. Kasper gives us a very interesting account of Temperance Work in the U.S.A. Most illuminating information on all aspects of the work of the Union is contained in this address. Then comes the call for N.Z. Fund contributions; and with the Benediction pronounced by Mrs. Hiatt, our first session is over.

THE RECEPTION

A Convention Reception is always an agreeable function, but surely this one is even more so than usual. Pretty frocks, lovely flowers, smiling and happy faces and voices give it a character fully in keeping with the balmy, moonlit evening—so still that every falling wave of the sea fills the air with its murmur.

We have been welcomed individually in a letter received by every delegate from His Worship the Mayor, who is quite unable to be present this evening. He is represented by the Mayor-ess, Mrs. Hanam; who sits by our President, with other ladies and gentlemen of the city, who come to

express good wishes. Mrs. H. Densem occupies the chair with charming efficiency. Mrs. Hanam speaks her welcoming words with sincerity and evident appreciation of our work and aims. On behalf of the local branch of the Alliance and of the Trinity Church Session, the Rev. Mr. McKenzie gives us greeting. Mrs. Cumberbeach, of the National Council of Women and the Rev. Ian Borrie, speaking for the Ministers' Association, both strike a very cheerful note; though a phrase from the speech of the last-named rings in the ear. It is a reference to the possibility of our country making the "tragic mistake" of allowing six o'clock closing to give place to ten o'clock. The grim shadow of our peril in this regard causes a momentary break in the festive spirit of our gathering; but smiles return when music of high quality is given to us by Miss D. Smith, in two songs, "The Secret" (Schubert) and "Songs my mother taught me" (Dvorak). Then comes a real "Highlight" in a greeting by the Maori Delegation from the King Country. Mrs. Aupouri Joseph, in beautiful English, speaks of the sacredness of a pact to the Maori people; and her words meet with warm murmurs of sympathy. Then a hymn is sung in Maori, and a very delightful, short Haka of greeting is given to the delight of everyone. Mrs. Wilkison sings three charming songs for our pleasure, and Miss Kirk, with her usual apt wit and sparkle, acknowledges the many greetings. Mrs. Hiatt then speaks on the present position, and gives her clarion call for dedication to the great warfare in most moving and inspiring words.

Supper follows, during which many new acquaintances are made and old ones renewed. "And so to bed" for most, but not all of us.

CORRECTION

The name of Marion Francis was given as "Marton" Francis in our last number of the "White Ribbon" as being the winner of the first prize in the Dominion Essay Competition. We apologise for the mistake, and take the opportunity of congratulating Marion on her splendid win. We note that she is a daughter of the Rev. and Mrs. S. C. Francis, of Fitzgerald Avenue, Christchurch.