

NEW ZEALAND WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION

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(Incorporated)

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"For God, and Home, and Humanity"

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Our Splendid Opportunity

(By Victoria Grigg, M.A.)

Through His servant, Jeremiah, the Lord spoke to the children of Israel: "**Return ye now, every one from his evil way and make your ways and your doings good.**"

This month, through the opportunity given to the people of New Zealand by the Licensing Poll, there is once again, the occasion given to us, whereby we can cast a great evil from our midst. Will we again follow the example of the children of Israel, who answered Jeremiah by saying, "**We will walk after our own devices and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.**"

We can indeed be thankful, that, at least, we still have the freedom as a people to decide this issue for ourselves. In so many countries now in our own time the right of democratic vote has been lost. Let us not regard it lightly, because for many of us, it has been our birthright, gained at the expense of much effort by great souled men and women. If we do not use our vote wisely, our right to vote can be filched from us. The Licensed Trade has already asked for nine year intervals between polls and this could be a short step to losing them altogether. Again a determined effort is being made to secure evening opening of hotel bars. So much specious argument is put forward under the name of liberty. The Apostle Peter has warned us against such people. "Using fine phrases that have no meaning, they bait their hook with the wanton appetites of sense, to catch

those who have had but a short respite from false teaching. What do they offer them? Liberty. And all the time they themselves are enslaved to wordly corruption, whatever influence gets the the better of a man, becomes his master."

Jeremiah went through life, deeply burdened by the sins of his people. He spoke of "the pain perpetual and his wound, incurable." "I sat on in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced," said he. "I sat alone, because of Thy hand, for Thou hast filled me with indignation." Let us thank God that He has filled us, we who are W.C.T.U. members, with indignation at the dreadful evil of strong drink, which is sapping our nation's spiritual and moral life. We have yet to hear of people becoming more spiritually minded through frequenting hotel bars, where actions and words are quite the reverse of spiritual.

Just after the granting of the franchise to women and before the first election, at which they voted, **Mrs. K. W. Sheppard**, the leader of the struggle for the vote, wrote these words:—

"For over fifty years now, our Empire has been governed by a woman. Can the Women of New Zealand now govern themselves? Will they choose honest, upright members to make righteous laws, that will be a blessing to themselves and a noble example to all the world, or will they be led aside by party cries and so sacrifice **their splendid opportunity?**"

"Do not think that your single vote does not matter much. The rain that refreshes the parched ground is made up of single drops. If our women earnestly resolve to vote for none but good members and good objectives, there will be such a moral uplifting of politics, such as the English nation has never seen."

We are again governed by a woman and Mrs. Sheppard's words ring as true today as they did sixty-one years ago, and again today, we face **our splendid opportunity.**

Personal

Loving Sympathy is extended to Mrs. Measkill, 32 years Treasurer of the Gore Union, in the loss of her husband and in her present illness in hospital.

To Mrs. Christian in her continued illness our loving greetings.