

# NEW ZEALAND WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION

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**(Incorporated)**

Organised 1885

"For God, and Home, and Humanity"

**DOMINION HEADQUARTERS**

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## The White Ribbon

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### The Power of the Franchise

#### Election Day Responsibility

Once more the wings of time bring us face to face with a Poll Year. Upon every citizen over 21 years of age who is not disfranchised for any reason lies the responsibility of casting their vote for a member of Parliament. The Women's Christian Temperance Union is particularly interested that women should rise to their responsibility and cast a vote for the man who will later vote for a policy in accordance with the teaching of Jesus Christ, who was the greatest individualist the world has ever known. He taught that every soul stands alone in its relation to God, and each one must bring his own life into accord with God's laws.

It is the duty of the state, that is, the members whom we elect, to see that conditions are fair and just, and to hold the balance evenly between different and oftentimes opposing factions. To all should be given the opportunity to work and to render service. Material prosperity, though, is not true wealth, but a nation's best asset is the character of its people. And to the State belongs the function to provide conditions that will encourage our youth, the men and women of tomorrow, to work honestly and to win the crown of true Christian character.

The W.C.T.U. fought the battle for women's franchise. Mrs Sheppard, W.C.T.U. Franchise Department Superintendent, led the forces to victory and when the fight was won and Earl Glasgow had signed the Bill, the Hon. R. J. Seddon telegraphed to Mrs Sheppard "The Electoral Bill assented to by His Excellency the Governor at a quarter to twelve this day". Later, Mr Seddon presented to Mrs Sheppard the pen with which Earl Glasgow signed the Bill. This pen was later deposited in the records at W.C.T.U. headquarters in Brougham Street, Wellington.

But, though women could elect, it was some years before they could be elected, and still longer

before the first woman M.P. was elected to Parliament, and this was Mrs Elizabeth McCombs, Dominion Treasurer of the W.C.T.U.

#### A DIRECT VOTE ON ONE QUESTION

As well as the power and responsibility of electing a member to Parliament, we have the responsibility of exercising a direct vote upon one question only. Is the Licensed Liquor Trade to continue, and if so, how? The New Zealand ballot paper contains on it three issues, and from these three a choice must be made: 1. National Continuance; 2. State Purchase and Control; or 3. National Prohibition.

The evils of alcoholic beverages have been set forth in these pages for many years. Alcohol remains the same to our day as when the franchise was won for the women of this country. It is still the enemy of children, of mothers, of the home and of the nation itself.

"God has no vote at the ballot box

Save the one that you and I cast for Him."

We must not neglect this opportunity, this responsibility. **Just one vote**, but what a power lies behind the vote of every Christian man and woman in New Zealand. We **MUST** use our vote.

—N.P.

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#### CONCEALED COSTS

"The cost of concealed alcoholism is enormous. In many countries adult males in need of treatment for alcoholism outnumbered those in need of treatment for tuberculosis by several hundred per cent."—United Nations World Health Organisation.

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#### CANADA—EVEN IN MODERATE USE

"There are no drinks conducive to health among alcoholic beverages; even the extremely moderate use of those which have the lowest alcohol content is never really beneficial".—Medical Union of Montreal.