

## District Conventions 1959

**Hawke's Bay:** The annual W.C.T.U. Convention was held in Napier on 12th November being well attended by delegates from Wairoa, Hastings and Napier. Union reports indicated considerable activity in various spheres. Both Napier and Hastings had contributed articles dealing with the origin and aims of the W.C.T.U. to the N.C.W. Centennial booklet, "Through the Years". Hastings Union had staged a Court urging the use of fruit and non-alcoholic drinks, and showing also, the wide scope of W.C.T.U. work throughout the world at the Festival of Arts, arranged by the N.C.W.

Hastings and Wairoa had combined to send a parcel of Christmas gifts to the W.C.T.U. Refugee Childrens Home in Austria.

Mrs Pitt, who retired from the District Presidency, having been in office since 1951, was presented with a book as a small token of appreciation of her whole-hearted devotion to the cause of temperance. Mrs Stickley of Hastings was elected President. The other officers were thanked and re-elected. A small sub-committee was set up to plan the visit of Mrs Richards after Dominion Convention.

At the afternoon session the guest speaker was the Rev. J. Sands, who stated that the problem of increasing alcoholism would never be solved until Christians took a look at why people begin to drink. One of the reasons was man's inherent need for fellowship, though the quality of the fellowship found in a hotel bar was in the inverse ratio to the amount of alcohol consumed. The speaker paid tribute to the work of the Salvation Army in providing temperance hotels in the cities.

A second reason given was the tragic uncertainty of life, which made some men turn to alcohol as an easy way out—a fact that is verified by stories told by many members of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Christian should be ready with sympathy and practical help in such cases.

A sense of boredom was another cause. New Zealanders are rich in leisure but have a poor idea of how to use it. Probably the major cause for drinking is the general decay in the religious life of the nation. There had been a marked breaking down of moral standards under the stress of two world wars. "The best temperance reformer is the Evangelist," said the speaker, who was warmly thanked for his address. The next District Convention is to be held in Hastings.

**Taranaki Convention,** held in New Plymouth, began with a Communion Service conducted by the Rev. W. Greenslade. It was a very helpful service and well attended. Mrs Cole, the District President, presided over delegates from Hawera, Eltham, Inglewood and New Plymouth. District reports from all unions were encouraging with various areas excelling in different activities.

Many more unions throughout New Zealand are helping towards the working expenses of the Seamen's Rest of the New Plymouth W.C.T.U. Thanks expressed.

A minute was recorded expressing appreciation of long and faithful service rendered by several members, namely, Mrs Hobbs, Inglewood, for 25 years Dist. Corresponding secretary, Mrs Towers,

Eltham, local Cradle Roll Superintendent; Mrs Holly, Eltham, Devotional Superintendent; Mrs Hurrell, Hawera; Mrs Tuffrey, New Plymouth, sick visiting 46 years; Miss Gaustad, New Plymouth, Maori work, 40 years; and also others for lesser, but still lengthy periods.

The afternoon devotions were conducted by Mrs Hurrell of Hawera. The Seamen's Rest exterior painting is completed. Interior decorations and alterations and painting to be done now. Several items were rendered and appreciated; Mrs Wagstaff, reading Christmas, by Peter Marshall; Mrs Simons, songs accompanied by Mrs Cole; Mrs Palmer, recitation "The Church Choir"; Mrs Brown, poem "Christ, a citizen of the World". A happy day of fellowship and service ended with the serving of afternoon tea.

**Northland Convention** was held in Wellsford on 24th November with a good attendance of delegates from Dargaville, Te Kopuru, Whangarei and Wellsford. Mrs E. V. Singleton presided and opening devotions were conducted by Mrs H. O. Bickers, Te Kopuru. The report of the Secretary, Mrs G. Keyte, and Departmental reports showed much activity and work accomplished during the year. The Treasurer, Mrs E. T. Heathcote, revealed in her financial statement that over £90 had been raised since April for the special 1961 Dominion Convention Fund for Whangarei Convention.

In the Whangarei Corso report, Mrs W. J. Roberts stated that 15 large cartons of excellent used clothing, shoes, blankets and 21 warm bed rugs, mostly large size, had been sent to Corso. Grateful thanks expressed to so many who had washed, mended and packed for her. Similar reports were received from Dargaville and Wellsford Unions. All officers were re-elected for another year.

After a delightful luncheon, provided by Wellsford members, an inspiring afternoon session followed, when Mrs E. Yates sang sacred solos accompanied by Mrs Busbridge at the organ and a most helpful and encouraging address from the incident of Elisha at Dothan, was brought to us by the Rev. G. Trebilco of Warkworth.

## UNION NEWS

**Takapuna, November.** Mrs Prussing presided and devotions were conducted by Mrs Parsons. Mrs Leman gave highlights of the District Convention. Mrs Prussing reported on the reception given for Miss V. Jackson on her return from the World Convention and she had an interesting story to tell. Christmas social being held on December 7th.

**Oaehunga.** Regular monthly meetings and several Home meetings have been held during the year. One School of Methods conducted by Miss Appleby, a cradle roll party and a break-up party for the Kurahuna L.T.L. girls have also been held. Several new members gained. Speakers at some of the meetings have helped to make them interesting.

**Tauranga, November.** Mrs Kelly presided. Mrs Christian took the devotions, reading from Ephesians 3, leading us on from the thought of the hush of expectancy when waiting for a fountain to play, to the hush that precedes prayer. "Let thy prayers rise like a fountain." She reminded us of the prayers throughout the Bible and the power of corporate prayer in the work for temperance and the daily individual prayers as we lift our hearts to God in our homes. A good report of the District Convention held at Cambridge was given.

**December meeting:** Mrs Bensley led devotions. The meeting was held in the home of Mrs Christian which made it a pleasant final meeting for the year. Mrs Hills of Mt. Albert Union and also Mr and Mrs Maunder, who were celebrating their Golden Wedding were welcomed. They were presented with flowers and a gift. Reports of the Pan Pacific and N.C.W. were given. A message of greeting and sympathy sent to Mrs Stark. Flowers were presented to Mrs Kelly.