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REPORT

OF THE

Council Meeting & Conference

Held in LONDON

October 19th to 22nd, 1926.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN,
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Price 1/- net.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF GREAT BRITAIN.

FOUNDED 1895.

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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN.

Annual Meeting and Conference.

CHURCH HOUSE, WESTMINSTER,

TUESDAY, October 19th, 1926.

ADDRESS OF WELCOME

By The Mayor of the City of Westminster,
Mr. George H. Heilbuth, J.P.

President and Ladies,—It gives me great pleasure to be here this morning and to take part in this, the thirty-first Annual Meeting and Conference of the National Council of Women of Great Britain, and, as Mayor of this historic City of Westminster, I offer you a warm and cordial welcome to this City. I understand that you expect a record attendance, and that over 800 delegates from all parts of England, Scotland and Wales, as well as visitors from the Dominions Overseas, will take part in your discussion.

The National Council of Women is, I am informed by your esteemed General Secretary, Miss Norah Green, strictly non-party ; its sole object being to promote the welfare of the community, to bring together all organisations working to this end, to exchange views with various Societies and as far as possible to prevent overlapping. Your Society claims to represent the views of the thinking women of the country, irrespective of their political or religious views or their social standing. I am told that men are welcome at your Annual Meetings and Conferences, and many sensible men, I believe, take advantage of this opportunity. Women in my opinion have always been great, and indeed played the most important part in the world's history. Nature has endowed them with wide sympathy, unselfishness and understanding. Instinctively they are shrewd judges of character, but until the last few years they have been content to remain in the background. Women's wonderful capabilities are now fully recognised ; all paths are open to them and men must look to their laurels. From my earliest days I have had very good cause to place woman on a high pedestal. You may therefore imagine the great pleasure it gives me to be here to-day. I notice you have many important

and interesting subjects to discuss. I wish I could remain to listen, but I am now due at Westminster Abbey to witness the unveiling by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales of the Tablet dedicated to the Million Dead of the British Empire who lost their lives in the Great War. I thank you for your patient attention to my few remarks. I wish your Congress every success and have no doubt the result of your deliberations will be for the benefit of the human race.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

The Hon. Mrs. Franklin.

During the 21 years that we have carried on our deliberations in the fair city of Westminster, we have evidently behaved ourselves in such a comely fashion that we can be welcomed in such a charming way as you, Mr. Mayor, have done to-day, and our sisters are not feared in their hordes but gladly received.

Although I am a Londoner born, and the daughter of Cockney parents, I am sorry to say that I am not always quite loyal to London ; I do not really, in my heart of hearts, love London. I think I am happiest when I am running about in breeches on moors and in lanes—but, to-day, I do love London. It is looking so beautiful and is giving us so wonderful a welcome. I feel sure that to the record number of delegates who have come here to the meeting of the Representative Council, London will give, besides a little sunshine, of its best in stimulus and inspiration.

We cannot vie with what Birmingham gave us last year,—but do you remember the RAIN at Birmingham. Here is London, with its Whistler-like mist effects, looking its autumnal best.

Since Birmingham, when I ran away after having the honour of being elected President, to speak in South Africa, at the invitation of the N.C.W. there, on the work of the National and International Council of Women, and on the Parents' National Educational Union, I have since my return done my best to make up for my absence by addressing meetings of the branches all over the country, and in my second year of Presidency I hope to do more.

But I believe it has resulted in more people knowing our work. Miss Green is going to give you a most interesting account of the work done. I will not forestall her in telling you of the reforms we have instituted, the Bills we have helped to pass, the deputations we have attended, and the pamphlets and publications we have issued, nor of the public opinion we have tried to form in the right directions, not the least being the very

active part we took in the peace pilgrimage, and the many meetings and conferences we have organised in order to fulfil one of our chief functions—that of instructing ourselves and others.

We are a deliberating body, and should not forget that we unite all societies ; and it is just by this means that we learn to respect and understand other people. Possibly we may be a little too fearsome and timid sometimes. We are a little bit inclined to wonder how it will affect someone else. A great and wise philosopher—Emerson—said " Always do what you are afraid to do"—fear to be afraid. And a greater than he said "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." That kind of fear is the only kind that should influence us—the fear of going against our conscience. I think perhaps fear of conscience is the cause of that deliberateness, which is wholesome though in consequence of it other societies sometimes feel that they must do our work ; possibly they may do it better, but I wish they would either come in with us or turn us out, and do our work better ! Do let us all confer together before we start any other national or international organisations !

Co-operation is one of the keystones of our organisation. Lord Cecil has described civilisation as " the progress of isolation to co-operation." That was the ideal of Miss Janes when she and a few of her friends founded this Union of Societies. We are so glad she is here with us to-day.

This—Co-operation—is our ideal still. We may be timid, but let us remember that in 1920 we, as part of the I.C.W., voted that Germany should be admitted as a member of the League of Nations, and to-day at last we, with the whole world, are rejoicing that that has come about. We rejoice, too, that when Germany sent her delegation, among them was that great woman, Dr. Gertrude Baumer, member of the Reichstag, who had gained her training for her political work in doing her part in her country's N.C.W.

None of us who read M. Briand's or Herr Stresemann's speeches on the entry of Germany into the League could have done so dry-eyed. We must thank God for the new spirit abroad in the world.

Let us remember that we can only go forward by faith rather than by fear.

We are sometimes asked whether we are feminists or social workers, " old feminists " or new feminists : I wonder *what* we are ? I think we all stand for the equality of the sexes. Most of us, I believe—I know I am—are against protective legislation for women. But are we feminists first ? Is it well that we should be

feminists first ?—*Human beings* first, playing our part in the welfare of the world. I remember that when I went to South Africa my host at one of the houses I stayed at asked me " Well, what is your fad ?" It was Education at that precise moment, but I could not tell him so, and said "Everything interests me ;" and surely, if we are to play our part as women in the world, we ask to be allowed to help, and we are helping ; let us not become Faddists, but Thinkers. Let us keep our hearts and minds open and not bring to the discussion of any question ready-made minds, pre-judging the question of necessity from the " feminist " point of view. If we are to be workers in the widest sense, we must care for art, music, nature, literature, and all that is beautiful, true and good ; everything that feeds our imagination. What is imagination but the greatest gift in the world—that sympathy with and understanding of other people, whether they differ from you in race, colour or class ; that power of putting yourself in another's place. It is not enough to be sorry for one child or one unemployed man we meet, we must be able to stretch our imagination to the 1,000 unfortunates whom we cannot meet.

You may say " we want practical things." One has only to remember the great practical reformers of the past to discover that they were *visionaries*. Catherine of Siena, Florence Nightingale, both were mystics, too. They came out from their study into the world.

It is good to begin our meetings with prayer , it is symbolic of our attitude. None of us can do our work in the world unless we have learned to be alone with the Alone, and thus become ready to work and serve.

SUMMARY OF THE REPORT ON FINANCE.

Given by Lady Trustram Eve, Hon. Treasurer.

The Hon. Treasurer : This year the N.C.W. is faced with a deficit instead of last year's balance, and has had to withdraw £100 from deposit in order to meet current expenses. The reason of this is partly owing to the greater expenditure due to the rise in salaries in the Office (a long-needed reform), but perhaps even more to the fact that last year's Conference only brought into our coffers £30 instead of the average £100 which we look forward to and hope for. The uncertainty of our receipts is one reason for the difficulty of making our budget, a difficulty common to all associations, but accentuated in our case because of the dependence we must place upon the money

raised by the Conference, which of necessity varies greatly from all sorts of reasons outside our control.

A resolution was passed by the Council "That Branches, Societies, and individual members shall make a special effort to raise a sum of not less than £5,000 to form a Capital Fund, the interest on which shall be available to cover the rent of larger offices, including an adequate Committee room and waiting room." We have always had to hire a hall for our Executive meetings, and many of our large Committees also have to hire a room for their meetings. We have long felt that this was inadequate to the dignity as well as to the convenience of the N.C.W. After the resolution was passed certain sums were promised in the room, and promises of more to come in the course of the winter and spring; but I should like to point out that we can make no move towards finding new Headquarters until we have at least two or three thousand of the sum actually needed, with a good prospect of more to come. Therefore the matter is one of great urgency if anything is to be done quickly.

It is always very difficult to find offices containing one really large room, and if such are heard of it will be necessary to close at once, because property in the Victoria District, in which we are and in which we wish to remain, is very much sought after, and is never long on the market.

A resolution to change the method of payment towards the Central Office, by deleting the £5 and giving an entire percentage subscription, was defeated by an overwhelming majority of the Council.

A third resolution proposed by the Finance and Executive Committees, that those defaulting branches who refuse year by year to pay their quota, should not receive full representation at the Council (special circumstances being always considered carefully by the Finance Committee), was passed by a very large majority.

OPENINGS FOR WOMEN IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION.

Miss Sybil Campbell (An Hon. Secretary of the British Federation of University Women) said: Before I begin to speak on Openings for Women in the Legal Profession, I want to say a few words about prospects in both branches of the legal profession open alike to men and (since 1920) to women also.

The first choice that those who desire to enter the legal profession have to make is the choice whether they should become Barristers or Solicitors. The Solicitor's profession, as

you probably know, is more expensive to enter; the time necessary for qualification, unless you already have a University degree, is longer; the Examination is harder, but the prospects of making a living within a reasonable time are very much more certain, if the prizes are not so great. For the Bar the examination is comparatively easy. It is certainly easier than the Solicitor's Examination, and compared with an Honours Examination at a University, it is very much easier. The Examination can also be taken in parts. It can be spread out over a longer time than the necessary three years, and in this way it is possible for many people to take their Bar Examinations while they are doing other work. The time of waiting at the Bar is a very serious factor to be reckoned with. Normally when a man goes to the Bar, he knows that without amazing luck or very great influence, he will have to wait five, seven, very likely ten years before he can make a living, if then. And the number of those who succeed is very small compared with the total number of those who enter the profession. It is an old joke, but a very true one, that a life at the Bar is not a bed of roses. It is either all roses and no bed, or all bed and no roses!

As to the prospects of women, it is impossible at this point to say anything at all about the prospects of women who enter the profession. Any woman who enters either branch has still to be prepared to take the risks that all pioneers in new professions take. There are in England 42 Solicitors, of whom 36 have taken out practising Certificates, and there are also 60 women Barristers qualified, a number of whom, however, have taken the Examination simply to have the qualification, with no intention of practising.

I hope that any woman thinking of coming to the Bar will consider very seriously the question of taking a good University degree. She should be prepared to wait for years as men do before she can hope to make a living.

It is true Advocates are born, not made, but even the born advocate requires a long and careful training in the technique of the profession, and the whole of a Barrister's real training begins when he or she goes into Chambers.

To any young woman who is thinking of entering the profession, I would say this: It is of the utmost importance that you should not enter this profession lightly, or leave it unless it be to take a post so good that no one can say you have left because you have failed. You must be prepared to work hard in Chambers and listen in Court day after day for not only months but years, waiting for your opportunity when it may

come ; learning your work ; and if need be content to do no more than beat out the path over which the next generation of Women Barristers may walk to success.

First Public Meeting.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE COUNCIL'S WORK.

Chairman : The Lady Emmott, J.P.

WOMEN UNDER ENGLISH LAW.

(Brief Summary by Mrs. CROFTS, LL.B. (Cantab.), a solicitor of the Supreme Court).

When I first learned that I was expected to cram into twenty minutes or so an address to this distinguished audience on the vast subject of "Women under English Law," I must confess I was appalled. The result of such an effort on my hearers I felt would be only one degree more disastrous than on myself. I therefore consulted those in authority and received permission to confine my remarks to a brief summary of the more important legislation especially affecting women which had been passed in this country during the last twelve months—a sufficiently difficult task in the short time at my disposal.

Before passing, however, to the consideration of this subject, I would like to preface my remarks with the most cursory bird's-eye view of the salient points of some of the most important English legislation with regard to women as Citizens, Wives, Mothers, and Professional Workers passed during the last half century or so, as I think that without some such hasty survey it is impossible to get the right perspective of the result achieved by the most recent legislation.

With regard to Women as Citizens, it was in 1869 that practically the first step was taken when certain very carefully selected women (but note only unmarried women), were given some very limited rights in certain local Government elections. Of course this carried with it no right whatever to become members of such locally elected bodies. It is true that in 1834 a few unmarried women had become eligible to serve as Poor Law Guardians, but over forty years elapsed before any woman was found daring enough to avail herself of this privilege. Piecemeal reforms took place gradually from the seventies onwards, extending women's rights in Local Government affairs, but it was only as recently

as 1907 (Qualification of Women [County and Borough Councils] Act, 1907) that all restrictions were swept away, and since that date women are eligible both to vote for and to become members of all local Government bodies.

With regard to Imperial Politics it is of course common knowledge that women had no rights until the passing in 1918 of the Representation of the People Act, and that even now the position of the male Parliamentary voter is infinitely superior to the woman voter both as regards the age at which voting may begin and in many other respects. Curiously enough while no woman may as yet take her seat in the House of Lords (Viscountess Rhondda's Petition, 1922), a woman may become a Member of Parliament as soon as she reaches the age of 21, just like a man (The Parliament [Qualification of Women] Act, 1918), though she cannot vote in a Parliamentary election until she has reached the age of thirty.

When we turn to a consideration of the position of women as wives, we shall find in the Married Women's Property Acts, 1870 to 1908, the Great Charter of their freedom as regards their property. By the immensely important Act of 1882 married women we may say, speaking generally, were, for purposes of owning and disposing of property, put in practically the same position as unmarried women and men. I believe it is almost impossible to overstress the importance of this great Act.

With regard to divorce it is only since 1923 (Matrimonial Causes Act, 1923) that the grounds of divorce have been made equal between the sexes, though for nearly seventy years before this date the Courts had been granting divorces without resort to the clumsy and expensive Private Act of Parliament which was the only way to sever the marriage tie before 1857. The fact that at last Parliament has made men and women equal in this respect must surely make for a higher moral standard as it can no longer be said that the Law regards immorality in men as more excusable than in women.

Women as Mothers have had little cause to be grateful to Parliament until last year, but the Guardianship of Infants Act, 1925, which came into force last October, has removed a great deal of hardship, though perfect equality between parents has not yet been attained. I shall hope later to deal in some detail with this very important Act.

Lastly we can conclude our very brief survey by way of preface by referring to women as **Professional Workers**, and the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919, imperfect as it is in many respects, has at least resulted in most of the so-called

learned professions (with the exception of the Church, the Diplomatic Service and the Colonial and Indian Civil Services) being thrown open to women. Women also as a result of it are now Justices of the Peace and members of juries.

So much by way of preface, now I will try and give you a summary of the principal legislation of the last twelve months or so affecting women. There has been quite a prolific crop of useful legislation, notably The Summary Jurisdiction (Separation and Maintenance) Act, 1925, the Guardianship of Infants Act, 1925, the Widows', Orphans' and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act, 1925, the Administration of Estates Act, 1925, the Criminal Justice Act, 1925, and the Adoption of Children Act, 1926.

First then **The Summary Jurisdiction (Separation and Maintenance) Act, 1925.**

Parliament ever since 1895 (Summary Jurisdiction [Married Women] Act, 1895), has been giving increasing powers to Courts of Summary Jurisdiction (*e.g.*, Police Courts) to grant married women separation and maintenance orders from their husbands. Up to October, 1925, such orders were granted chiefly where the husband had been convicted of aggravated or serious assault on his wife or had been cruel to her or had deserted her or had neglected to maintain her and her children.

The Act of 1925 has increased the grounds on which both husbands and wives can obtain what is popularly known as a "police court" separation. Thus a woman can now obtain an order, in addition to the above grounds, if her husband has been convicted as an habitual drunkard or drug taker, or has been persistently cruel or neglectful of either her or her children, or has knowingly communicated a venereal disease to her, or has compelled her to submit herself to prostitution. A married man can only obtain a separation order if his wife has been convicted as an habitual drunkard or drug taker, or has been guilty of persistent cruelty to his children. A new provision in the Act of 1925, which may prove useful, permits a wife to get an order even while living with her husband (formerly she had first to leave him before she could apply for one), but such an order is not enforceable until she leaves him, and in any case ceases to have effect if for three months after it is made she continues to live with him.

The Court can also order the husband to pay the wife a sum not exceeding £2 a week for her maintenance and 10s. weekly for the maintenance of each child under 16. The wife may also be given the custody of any such children, and even

where the separation order is subsequently discharged on the ground of her misconduct, the Court may in its discretion still continue the maintenance order granting the wife custody and maintenance of the children.

When we turn to a consideration of the **Guardianship of Infants Act, 1925**, which came into force on October 1st of last year, we cannot fail to be struck with the radical change of principle effected by it. Before that date, except in cases of separation or divorce, the father was rarely deprived of the custody of his infant children. The new Act in its preamble expressly states that "it is expedient that the principle of equality in law between the sexes shall obtain with respect to the Guardianship of Infants," and goes on to provide that, in questions concerning the custody or upbringing of infants or the administration of their property, the mother shall have the like powers as are possessed by the father to apply to the Court, and that the welfare of the child shall in each case be the first and paramount consideration. Even where the parents are residing together the Court can make at its discretion orders as to custody and access, and may order the Father to pay to the Mother such maintenance as it thinks reasonable, though no such order, as to custody or maintenance, is enforceable while the parents are residing together, and ceases to have effect if the Mother continues to live with the Father for three months after the order has been made.

The Act furthermore gives the Mother equal rights with the Father to appoint a Guardian to act after her death jointly with the Father, and also states that the Mother's consent as well as the Father's is usually necessary to the marriage of their legitimate infant child. Elaborate rules in this connection have been laid down if the parents are separated, divorced, or have been guilty of desertion, but the principle of equality prevails throughout, and in such cases, generally speaking, the consent is required of the innocent parent, whether Father or Mother. Formerly, no consent was necessary in the case of the marriage of an illegitimate infant, but the Act now usually requires the consent of the Mother of such a child.

A very important new provision of the Act is that by which all disputes (with certain exceptions principally concerning property or payments of maintenance over the sum of 20s. weekly, or concerning children over 16 years of age) between parents concerning their infant children can be dealt with by Courts of Summary Jurisdiction (*e.g.* Police Courts) instead of as formerly only by the High Court or County Court. This

change in the law enables women of small means to take advantage of the provisions of the Act.

By the Widows', Orphans' and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act, 1925, the widow of an insured man who dies after 4th January, 1926, receives a pension (10s. a week widow, 5s. a week eldest child, and 3s. a week each subsequent child), with an additional allowance in respect of children up to 14½ years of age, or up to 16 years where the children are in full time attendance at school. The widow of an insured man who died before the commencement of the Act who has at least one child under 14, receives a widow's pension together with an allowance for each child on the terms I have just stated.

A widow who remarries or is guilty of immorality loses her pension, but the child's allowance is not withdrawn and may in certain circumstances be administered by the Local Authority for the benefit of the child.

The Administration of Estates Act, 1925, which came into force on January 1st, 1926, though part of a greater general scheme for altering the laws of property, contains a number of provisions directly affecting women whose relatives die intestate (*i.e.*, without making a will). Before New Year's day, 1926, the widow of an intestate, unless, as was very rarely the case, she had rights of Dower, was not entitled in the vast majority of cases to any share in her husband's *real* estate (*i.e.*, his landed property, other than leaseholds), though if a married woman died intestate her husband nearly always had a life interest in all the real property belonging to his wife.

Furthermore, the widow of an intestate only received a share of her husband's *personal* property, unless it was very small and there were no children; while if a married woman died intestate her husband received *all* her personal property absolutely to the total exclusion of her children or other relatives.

Similarly mothers had no rights as against fathers on the death, unmarried and intestate, of any of their children, and we are all familiar, in romances at least, with the manner in which the eldest son succeeded as heir to his father's real estate on an intestacy, to the total exclusion of his brothers and sisters.

The Administration of Estates Act, 1925, has done away with all this legal partiality in favour of the male sex. The heir-at-law, to the lasting sorrow doubtless of our novelists, as from last January, has ceased to exist. On an intestacy perfect equality exists between husbands and wives, fathers and

mothers, and brothers and sisters. So that for those to whom sex equality is abhorrent it is essential nowadays to make a Will!

The Criminal Justice Act, 1925, has a long overdue provision concerning women which came into force on June 1st of this year. Before this date a wife who committed a crime (except one of extreme gravity, *e.g.*, treason or murder, or a minor offence, or an offence directly concerning the domestic sphere, *e.g.*, keeping a brothel), in her husband's actual presence was presumed, without any proof of intimidation by him, to have committed the crime under his compulsion, and was entitled to be acquitted unless it was proved that she was the instigator or the more active party in the matter. The Criminal Justice Act has abolished this mediæval presumption of coercion—a doctrine based on the fact that "benefit of clergy" (the right of any man who could read to escape capital punishment) was denied to women. It should be noted, however, that it is still open to a wife as a successful defence to advance proof of actual coercion by her husband.

Lastly, the present year has seen the passing of a very important Act, which though it concerns men and women equally, is primarily concerned with children, and for that reason I have thought it necessary to refer to it briefly here.

Contrary to popular belief, *Adoption* is at the present date and will so remain till January 1st, 1927, unrecognised by the Law of England. **The Adoption Act, 1926**, comes into force on next New Year's Day, and, with many provisos for safeguarding any improper use of the Act, provides that if the conditions laid down in the Act are observed the Law will recognise cases of adoption.

I have not time to deal with the Act in any detail and it is so recent that I do not think you will find it fully dealt with in any text book now published, as it only received the Royal Assent last August. Those who are interested in the subject would do well to spend 3d. and buy a King's Printers copy of the Act and study it at their leisure. I should, however, like to refer very briefly to some of the salient points of the Act.

Adoption Orders can be made by Courts of Summary Jurisdiction (*e.g.* Police Courts), as well as by Higher Courts. Only Infants (*i.e.* persons under 21) who have never been married, are eligible for adoption, and only one person, except in the case of a husband and wife, can adopt an infant. No adopter can be less than 25 years of age, or as a rule less than 21 years older than the adopted child, though the latter

restriction may be dispensed with where the parties are within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity. As a rule a sole adopter who is a male, cannot adopt a female infant, and no order in general can be made without the consent of the parents or guardians of the child (exceptions to this rule are allowed where parents, etc., have deserted the child or cannot be found or have refused to support it). An adoption order as a rule cannot be made on the application of one of two spouses, without the consent of the other. The adopter must be resident and domiciled in England or Wales, and the infant must be a British subject and resident in England or Wales. The welfare of the child is to be the paramount consideration and regard must be paid to the child's own wishes so far as possible, and no payment or reward can be made to the adopter, except with the sanction of the Court.

Effect of Adoption.

The adopter gets a transfer from the natural parents of all rights and liabilities in relation to the child's custody, maintenance and education, but adoption has no effect whatever on intestate succession. Thus an adopted child has no claim on the death of an adopter intestate under The Administration of Estates Act. But an adopted child may still benefit under the intestacy of its natural parents.

Where *de facto* adoption has existed before January 1st, 1927, for not less than two years, even where the adopter is a male and the infant a female, the Court may sanction an adoption order, even if without the consent of the parents, if it is for the welfare of the child.

There is a humane provison in the Adoption Act whereby the Registrar-General is to keep an "Adopted Children's Register." A certified copy of the entry on the "Adopted Children's Register" will without further proof be receivable as evidence of the adoption, and where the date of birth is included also, of the date of birth in the same manner as if it were a birth certificate. The idea is that the "Adopted Children's Register" will, as regards adopted children, replace the register of births. The Registrar will, of course, keep records making clear the connection between the register of births entry and the "adopted children register," but these records will not be open to the public. The result will be that in the many cases where the adopted child is illegitimate, the adoption will enable this unfortunate circumstance to be put "behind the curtain" as it is called.

THE WORK OF MARRIED WOMEN.

Mrs. Layton (N.U.S.E.C.) : This subject must be taken from three points of view :

(1) That of the married woman.
(2) That of the employer of the married woman.
(3) That of the community.

With regard to (1), each married woman must decide for herself whether or not she takes paid work. Many a married woman has been in a profession before marriage and spent much time in training for it. She knows she can give something to the community which is badly needed, i.e., efficiency and knowledge in her particular profession, and if a husband cannot provide his children with adequate education a mother may help in this respect. A married woman who is without children or whose children are out in the world, may feel it a tragedy, both for the community and herself, if she is prevented from working.

With regard to the employer's point of view, much controversy has been aroused lately over the case of the married woman teacher. A definite barrier has been erected against her by nearly all the local authorities in the country, who may indeed employ a married teacher temporarily for convenience sake, but not because she is the best person for the job. Too often local education authorities are influenced by considerations regarding the distribution of wealth when discriminating against married women, instead of considering only if the married woman is the person best fitted for the work. Taxation, insurance schemes, etc., are intended to deal with that problem, and it is indefensible to probe into the circumstances of those who apply for particular jobs. Marriage should not be made the pretext for debarring a woman from choosing how to spend her life. At Poole Mrs. Shaw has been dismissed because (1) there was unemployment among unmarried women teachers and (2) on the plea that married women have not time to do their work effectively. Yet many married women give just as much of their time in voluntary and social work ; and surely a capable woman worker could organise her home as efficiently and happily as if she spent her whole time in the house. There is no discrimination between the childless married man and the one with a family.

Children in the homes of women who have outside interests have a wider outlook, are often more contented and have a more interesting prospect in the future than the children of mothers who spend their whole time in their homes. A woman

can be a good mother without doing all the domestic duties of her house. Domestic work should be put on a higher plane and not all women should do it. To many married industrial women cleaning and looking after children is repugnant and they are incapable of doing it properly. It would be far better for them to take their children to a good crêche, and return fresh to the children when their work was over. The majority of women have no wish to take paid work or to go outside the home, but those whose past training, experience and capacity fits them for work outside should be free to take it and pay others to do the work at home. For example, more married women doctors are urgently needed for welfare work, and who is likely to be more competent and interested in teaching the young people of the country than married women who have had children themselves and understand them

The antagonism to married women working has a thread of past prejudice running through it which arises from the old idea that in marriage a woman was handed over to the man to be " kept." Women should not marry in order to be " kept " ; and if men and women felt that they attained fulfilment of their ideals by working after marriage that would not make for a bad marriage. From the point of view of the mothers women should have the same freedom as the fathers, for it must react on the rising generation if women have not the freedom to take the line they think best.

Finally, education authorities should be urged to withdraw resolutions discriminating against married women teachers. In every trade or profession the number who enter it is ruled by the numbers needed, and if a certain proportion of married workers did stay at work, that would automatically regulate the numbers who enter the teaching profession. In many cases experienced married women teachers have been dismissed for untrained unmarried teachers. Any discrimination which does not take efficiency into account is dangerous. It is remarkable that, although married women teachers are prevented from continuing their work, charwomen are encouraged to do so after marriage. It is therefore only in certain trades that there is discrimination against married women.

THE PREVENTION OF MATERNAL MORTALITY.

Dr. T. Watts-Eden, M.D., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.P. :— In England and Wales about one out of every 300 mothers died in childbirth in 1924, amounting in all to 2,500 deaths. These were nearly all cases of quite young women, so that, in addition to the break-up of family life and the sorrow and

distress occasioned by such events, they were also an enormous moral and economic loss to the nation.

Maternal mortality has not fallen appreciably of recent years, which is a matter of grave concern, and little, if any progress has been made in the last 20 years. In comparison with other countries there is nothing much to be proud of, for Italy, Sweden and Holland are all better than Great Britain.

With regard to the causes of mortality : childbearing is a natural process, but the reproductive process is attended by heavy wastage of life all through nature, and the higher in the animal kingdom the greater the wastage, until it reaches its climax in the human race. The reasons for this are difficult to explain without entering into technical considerations. The birth process itself is really a very complex affair which requires the nicest adjustment of an intricate mechanism if it is to be successful and end without surgical interference. This natural mechanism is equal to the occasion in 95 out of 100 cases, which is a tribute to its great efficiency ; but there are many possibilities of trouble about it owing to faults of adjustment, some of which are serious.

In this country, nearly half of the mortality is due to a single cause,—blood-poisoning or sepsis. Sepsis is always more prevalent in crowded centres of population ; it only needs a wound and a germ ; but a natural barrier is erected during the last few months of pregnancy to prevent germs getting into the blood stream from the wound. Sepsis often occurs when no assistance is given by doctor or nurse. Then there are certain diseases which only occur during pregnancy. These conditions are inseparable from child-bearing, and it is the business of each generation to make a contribution to the solution of the problem of prevention.

The lines upon which the present generation is contributing to the solution of the problem are :—

(1) To establish the principle of ante-natal supervision. There are ante-natal centres now in connection with all large hospitals.

Many of the most serious diseases which may occur during pregnancy give warning signs of their approach and, if taken in time, the condition can be averted, e.g., convulsions. Errors of adjustment can also be discovered before the birth process. Another advantage of ante-natal work is that it gives an opportunity for the establishment of confidence between the doctor and patient. One great disturbing factor is the mental anxiety and distress which the fear of pain produces in the mind of the mother, and this might be got rid of by the establishment of confidential relations between the mother and the doctor.

(2) To improve the training of medical students and nurses. Midwives are now more efficient than in the past.

(3) To increase the provision of beds for maternity cases all over the country ; a national means of transport for such cases is needed and must be demanded. We have the bed and the patient, but often 20 miles of country lie in addition between the two.

Needless to say, a woman should not be under the necessity of engaging in hard industrial work for a living during the last weeks of her time. It increases the maternal risk and makes the children weakly when born. An increase in maternity benefit would help here.

The most important question, however, is ante-natal supervision, and for this the co-operation of women is needed. The National Council of Women can do a really missionary work in advocating ante-natal supervision.

Second Public Meeting.

HOUSING.

Chairman : THE COUNTESS OF SELBORNE, J.P.

THE COUNTESS OF SELBORNE, J.P., in opening the meeting, said : " I feel that the problem of Housing is purely a financial one ; the houses people are wanting cannot be produced at a price they are able to give. I think the problem is being solved to some extent by people who can afford the price asked for new houses, moving from the older houses to the new ones, and that prices will gradually fall when there are sufficient houses to meet all demands. They are being built at a rate corresponding to the increase of the population. A larger number of houses were built last year than in any previous year since a record was kept. One more point, as to the taxation levied on houses. As houses are as absolute a necessity as bread, and certainly a much greater necessity than clothing, the amount of taxation has always seemed to me wonderful in a country which professes to leave the necessaries of life untaxed. Houses not only pay rates, but are also charged with income tax ; a house carries more taxation than any other form of property, and I do not think that is a desirable thing."

COUNCILLOR MRS. PRICE WHITE (Hon. Secretary Bangor Branch) : " I want to draw your attention to the name of this address—it is ' Electricity in the Home from the Housewife's

point of view"—I want to emphasise that point of view. I have no technical experience, but I speak from the point of view of the British middle-class housewife who is the manager of an eight-roomed middle-class home, catering for the well-being of the average family of ordinary tastes and needs ; a family rubbing along as cheerfully as may be between excessive taxation and limited means. You will all have noticed the extraordinary advance there has been during the last twenty-five years in the application of science to housecraft. In the very plan and structure of houses to-day the architect and builder build, not only to produce a comfortable house for the family, but a comfortable workshop for the housewife. Electricity, above all, is a very important agent as a labour-saving factor. Electricity has been used for lighting for a good many years, but we have not developed in using it in many other directions. Sir Oliver Lodge said at the British Association Meeting, that at one time the quantity of soap used was the test of civilisation, but in the future it would be the quantity of electricity demanded that would be the test of our civilisation.

Think of the advances since the days of our grandmothers, who were most intrepid women, considering their large families. Our nearest neighbours were 13 in family; we were 11. Our homes, according to modern ideas, had practically no conveniences at all ; but our tastes were simpler. Think of the procession of work : blackleading, washing, dish-washing. Their's was the age of coal and gas ; our's the age of electricity. A critic recently said the British housewife was too conservative to apply electricity in the same way as her American sisters have done. If we can show the British housewife a better way at a reasonable price, I am sure she will adopt it. At the Exhibition in Glasgow, the electric houses were visited by 9,000 people a week, a large proportion being women. I like to think of this movement as having released women from the drudgery of housekeeping ; that the co-operation of women as scientists and engineers with men has brought about a better state of things. There has been a great forward movement in the trade, and now there is an Electric Association for women also. There is an Electricity Bill before the House for Third Reading. Owing to our recent experiences with the General Strike and coal stoppages we have been forced to turn more and more to electric contrivances within our homes. But we want to know from the housewife's point of view, what are the benefits of electricity in the home? What does it cost to instal? What does it cost to run? Is there any saving effected?

How far is an electricity service available? Under what conditions, and in what types of homes? In our eight-roomed house, we have light, heat and power; the house is also wired for radio and it is a great convenience to be able to charge your batteries at home. There is a great saving of labour in the saving of laundry work.

To turn to heating: no one who has had experience of radiators would ever, except for sentimental reasons, revert to the coal fire. It is the coal fire that makes so much work in the house. The day the housewife dreads most is the day the sweep is coming. Spring-cleaning and the sweep's visit are really very trying. You can carry your radiator up to your bedroom, and properly used, it is economical.

With regard to cooking, my experience is limited to the smaller apparatus; electric kettles, irons, etc., are extraordinary useful. There is no waste. You switch on, and as soon as you have finished, you switch off. The same with water heating. The best way is to have a proper electric range fixed up in the kitchen. An electric range is much better than a coal range. It is very clean and convenient. The cost of cooking a three-course dinner in an electric range runs to about 4d., less than half the cost of a pint of beer. Then there are dish-washing machines. The dishes are stationary; the boiling water circulates round them. Is not that a burden lifted off the woman? Again, washing machines are a wonderful convenience for people who do their own laundry at home.

The question of wiring and installation is the chief prohibitive factor; but it is not really excessive. In an eight-roomed house, wiring for twelve lights and heating for seven rooms came to a total of £21. As to appliances, with two radiators, electric vacuum-cleaner, electric iron, electric washing machine, motor, and small appliances, such as a hair-drier, etc., the total cost was £24, or £45 in all. With ordinary use and care these appliances last for many years. A new model cooker would cost £15, water heater, £5.

As to the cost if running, our Municipality have adopted the basis of a fixed charge, plus so much a unit. We pay an annual fixed charge of £5 4s. 0d., the current is charged at 1½d. The whole running works out at about £9 11s 6d. for current. If you allow 10% for repairs, you can run it for about £10 10s. a year, light and power and repairs. With a great demand and mass production, the price might be lowered. Washing machines are about £32, refrigerators £39. To keep costs down you must watch your meter. You can keep the cost down by legitimate means. The men must not leave the

radiator and the passage lights on when they go to bed. Care and attention in saving makes a great difference in the amount of current you consume. We must learn to do various small repairs ourselves. The electric supply, unlike the water and gas, has to be on tap all the time, and whatever the demand in a municipality or town, there must be the machinery and the staff and all the expense so that it may be ready to meet the maximum load on their works. If we adopted electric appliances more generally, manufacturers could use mass production and then they could sell the current at a lower rate.

There is a great saving in building costs if a house is equipped with electric light, range and so on. You get more floor space in a bedroom if you have no space taken up for fireplace. Artisan houses planned in this way are already in existence at Woolwich (600 houses). The cost is 1/1 to 1/6 a day for light, heating and cooking. In Glasgow there are 300 electrically equipped houses for lighting, cooking and water heating. There it works out at about 6/4; with one coal fire, 7/1; an all-gas house is 10/6 a week; with electric lighting and gas-cooker and coal heating, 6/11 a week; so really, an all-electric house is the cheapest to run. If we want this cheaper and easier means of running our houses, we must combine to get it. Members of Branches might work first of all to get more women on to Town Councils and Electricity Committees; keep in touch with your Local Supply Engineer; tell him what you want; try to arrange Electric Demonstrations in the use of electric apparatus; work through various women's associations by spreading the knowledge of this particular commodity and the labour-saving appliances. Women citizens here could do a great deal to bring about, as in Canada and America, the electric age for women."

Mrs. George Morgan (Vice-President N.C.W.), spoke on "The Housing Problem and the N.C.W." She said: "We have a Sectional Committee for gathering information about all the various housing schemes. It is a very useful Committee, because there are different problems in different districts, solved in different ways. I know of two or three places where members have been helped by the Housing schemes brought before them in the Sectional Committee. Secondly, different Branches collect evidence as to existing conditions in their own districts. We cannot help to solve any problem if we go to the work blindly without understanding what it is we are trying to solve. Let us find out the condition of things in the town in which we live; rouse the sympathy of the women and bind them together

to change the awful slum conditions that obtain to-day ; then we shall have done a very great thing in solving the housing problem. Derby has done this ; they held large public meetings and created a public opinion on the question, so that the Local Authorities were bound to press forward the Housing schemes brought before them. Derby has to-day a larger percentage of houses than any other district, though they have not solved the slum problem yet. When you are trying to solve the housing problem in any disrict, organise your N.C.W. forces, go into the slum districts yourselves and see the conditions in which the people live.

Thirdly, our Branches introduce schemes of housing themselves. I am very proud to be able to put before you some of the schemes which have been carried out by the various Branches of the N.C.W. Women have proved excellent house builders, and have made the schemes a financial success.

Statistics tell us that 317,417 people are living in one room; 617,958 families in two rooms. Think what your life would be like if you had birth, death and sickness all in one or two rooms. Our Malvern Branch were the pioneers in a rural housing scheme. Their aim was to erect houses for women workers and we are glad to know that at Malvern women workers have been the first class to receive the attention of the N.C.W. They built 18 flats for 24 tenants ; now they are building 24 flats to house 36 tenants. These flats are self-contained ; they have a kitchen, living-room, bath-room and lavatory, and a small garden plot. The cost is £300 to £360 per flat to build ; the capital for building was raised by loan-stock at 6% ; they are now wanting more loan-stock to be raised in amounts of £5 to £200 at 4%. They had an issue of share-capital paying 6% ; the rest was raised by loan-stock from Local Authorities, amounting to 80% of the total value. Immediately the flats were ready they were occupied and they have never been without a succession of tenants, and these tenants realise that the work of the National Council of Women is a vital thing in their lives.

Then there is Bromley Tenants, Ltd., carried out by the Bromley Branch (for artisans) ; they collect tenants in their own district and also go out and seek help and co-operation with anyone who will join. They have built 12 cottages ; 8 of them have a delightful living-room, a scullery opening out, and in that a most splendid arrangement of a copper for washing day ; for the bath the copper is filled, and as soon as it boils it siphons into the bath. The tenant told me the whole of the heating of the water for one week only cost her 1/- in gas.

The whole cost of these houses, with the land, was £7,700, raised by getting a Public Works Loan of two-thirds of the cost, the subsidy from the Government and private loans bearing 4% interest (£4,500) ; of this, £3,885 came from N.C.W. members and their husbands, which speaks well for the final success of " Bromley Tenants." There are gardens back and front and land for a recreation ground, which cannot be built upon. The larger houses, at 13/6 rent, have a parlour, splendid living-room, with one of the stoves which look like a family fireplace, scullery, bathroom, three bedrooms, and ample cupboard accommodation. One woman showed me her wardrobe with great pride.

At Cambridge the Branch has a scheme for educated women. A large house has been converted into flats, which were occupied the moment they were ready.

At Bath there is the " Tenants Venture " scheme—I like the name. So long as we are content to go on with slums, we shall have slum-minded people ; we must put these people into decent surroundings ; treat them with loving sympathy and comradeship and show them the use of sinks and drains and dustbins. A large old house on a lease, which only had nine years to run, was taken over and re-conditioned ; in each flat was put a lavatory. They arranged two wash-houses, so that each family could leave their little rooms tidy and carry out their washing in a properly arranged wash-house. The three top rooms were let at 6/- ; the lower larger rooms, which had a little entrance, at 9/-. In Bath a small room costs 8/- ; therefore these people had three rooms for the price of one, and the scheme was able to pay up to 6% on the money outlay. That proved the 8/- was a wicked charge. They now have two houses (costing £1,000, the reconditioning £800) ; these were converted into six flats ; there were two staircases, one was removed ; and a wash-house was made on each floor for every two flats, with heated water and a decent washing sink ; a lavatory for each flat and a fire-escape, which was compulsory. The rent for three rooms is 10/-, and 12/- for four rooms, as against 8/- charged formerly for one room ! The tenants are chosen, not because they are desirable, but because they are the least desirable, those with young children in overcrowded areas, or with many children in a bad environment for children, or in too highly rented rooms. In all these cases the rent collector is a woman. It is no use sending a man round to teach a woman how to use the dustbin or the sink. But if you send a woman with the spirit of comradeship and help, who when she goes to collect the rent, will inspect the dustbin

and sink and the lavatory, and then get the tenants to understand how to deal with these things, you get progress.

Another scheme has been carried out in Birmingham under "Copec," but in two or three cases the Copec scheme has been helped by the local Branch of the N.C.W. Copec got a freehold property of 19 houses, no repairs had been done since 1914; there was no water supply except three taps in a wash-house in a yard; windows were broken; floors cracked; roofs leaking; but the houses still had tenants. They are being reconditioned; sinks and a lavatory are being put in and water laid on. The estimated cost is £2,700, but the rents will amount to £280, and it may even be a financial success, though even if not it would be well worth while.

Another scheme concerns 31 houses, freehold; three old courts are to be opened up and made into an open space, water laid on and sinks put in, and they hope to include a Welfare Scheme. That will be an object lesson for many of us to follow.

These schemes are but the beginning of what we might do. This great National Council has an opportunity of making a tremendous move forward in regard to the housing problem. If every Branch would undertake to investigate the real conditions and bring those conditions before the Executive we should be able to bring much pressure to bear on Local Authorities, we should be able to show that what we are asking for will not come upon the rates, but is financially sound."

THE REV. J. B. L. JELLICOE (Magdalen College, Oxford) spoke on "The Slum Tragedy—and a Solution." He said: "The only reason why this very young male has dared to face so formidable and so distinguished an audience to-night is because it is my privilege to be Chairman of a little body of enthusiasts in one of the worst slums of this district who have started to build houses. In dealing with slum questions and the problem of the slums, I am reminded of a little verse I was fond of:—

"There was a man who had a clock,
His name was Mr. Mears;
He wound it every single night,
For twenty-seven years.
And when at last he found it
An eight-day clock to be,
A madder man than Mr. Mears
You wouldn't wish to see."

I suspect that the slum problem, like so many problems which are human, is really profoundly simple. It has almost entirely to do with the human heart; and it is therefore not surprising to me that when persons like our humble selves go in the name of Our Lord to a place like that, we find there precisely the response which He found. So I would say the slum problem is pre-eminently a most tremendous call to the Christian Church to go to those places and to behave in them as He did. The situation with which we are faced in Somers Town, Euston, is one you can acquaint yourselves with by taking a walk in that district if you are looking for a London slum. You will find row upon row of little old cottages built to house one family, and now in street after street, they are housing one family in one room without any structural alteration. The situation that exists is rather well described by this letter from one of my people who was in hospital:—

"I live in a basement with my mother, husband and three children. I am in deadly fear of going back there when I get better. I get so depressed when I wake in the morning to find black beetles moving about that I have to take my breakfast and sit out in the yard to have it. I had a little boy died last year; I have another two years old, he suffers with his chest caused by the dampness of the place, so I am afraid of having more, as the place is not suitable to bring them up in. My husband works for the Borough Council, and so I could afford to pay from 12/- to 15/- a week."

You cannot get a room for less than 10/- in that district. The other day in the Council Schools one of the teachers brought a child to me, saying the child had told her she had been bitten by a mouse. The child: "It is a mouse, they are running over us all night." The child went to the hospital, and the doctor said it was a mouse bite and poisonous. The teacher went to see the mother, who said "Oh yes, that's right; it was a mouse—look here," and drawing down a pillow from the bed, four mice ran out! We have worked in that district for years; run camps, played billiards and smoked pipes and played the fool on the stage—those are most admirable things—but then we send the people back to these homes in Tibbington Street. I said one day to my people, "We will proceed to build houses in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." Some said to me: "People are not interested." I replied: "I must go and interest them, and so must you." It

is nonsense to talk about the bath being used for the coals. My people might have used the bath to put the coals in, it is true, but why? Because they had never seen a bath before! When I put in a bath I go and show my people how to use the bath! And that is why, if you come to see us on a Saturday, you will find the baths steaming away.

Then people said, "Clergymen are always rather sentimental, you will never get your rents after a week or two," but when we had built our first block of houses a deputation waited upon us and said, "What we have been paying is not right for these new houses; we ought to pay more rent now." Only one family did not offer to pay more rent for better accommodation. Now, what about the rich? We had to face the landlords, too. I am not strong enough, unfortunately, to face the landlords. I have a most carefully prepared report on the whole situation in that district, giving the names of the speculators who are responsible, but I dare not publish it at present. I understand there is a very subtle way of shifting us and we had much better not risk it. We had a gigantic battle to get possession of a freehold property. We were offered a considerable block of houses for £7,000. We got our friends to pray; in five months we had £8,000 in £1 shares. Again we tried for another site; we were offered the Dragon Crescent site for £25,000—what a sum to be found by a little slum Mission in five months! Again we got people to have a day of prayer; we rushed about, speaking and preaching; by July we had the whole £25,000. I think I can say for certain we are going to pay 3% dividend on the whole amount without any difficulty. The houses are in such a terrible state that they need a tremendous amount of work; now we must raise another £25,000 to renovate that Dragon Crescent property.

Out of 300 tenants, we have had to evict two only; simply and solely due to the management. It is no use giving former slum-dwellers houses unless you manage them by humane, sensible means. To my mind more important even than the houses we have built is the Octavia Hill system of management. Our Estates Manager would tell you she has been very greatly assisted by the fact that we clergy have been backing and helping her all the time. One day a policeman said to my colleague, "A wonderful thing how this place has changed; five years ago we could not walk down here except four deep; now we go along one by one. I am not much of a Churchman myself, but it is that place (pointing to our Mission) has done it." By doing what one can it is possible to alter the whole face of the district. It is good to think some of my audience to-night will go and show these people the love and sympathy which never fail to win them.

MEETING FOR GIRLS.

Chairman: The President (The Hon. Mrs. Franklin).

The President: We are glad to feel that young, old and middle-aged are interested in hearing about opportunities of service for themselves and those they care for. I want you all to find out for yourselves more of what we are doing. You will read about it in the newspapers; you will find leaflets and papers in the Book Room, which you can take home and look at; and I hope you will determine when you know more about it to help us as soon as you can. We want you very badly. No organisation is worth anything unless it is growing all the time, unless the young come in and help us, who are growing tired and old, to do what they can to make a better world.

You are all going to be something; I daresay the youngest girl has made up her mind that she means to play her part nobly in the world and to do some piece of good work. I think most of you will want to help things forward as well as earn your own living. I know that some of you will be determined to make use of opportunities which might not have been there for you if it had not been for the great pioneer women of the N.C.W. The medical profession, the higher branches of teaching, the Bar, the Solicitor's office, and so on, nearly everything is open to you girls now. There was a time when children were told that they were too young to know anything about such and such things, or too young to understand. We do not say that now; on the contrary, youth sometimes says to us, "I don't think you will be interested in that; it is something we young people care about." It is because we want to share that we have asked you to come to this meeting to-day. When I was in South Africa, I saw the great skies, the hills and the mountains, the wonderful winter flora, the little native children with their beautiful mahogany bodies; but the thing I have remembered most often is just one ordinary old lady; she was 84, and she told me she had learned Spanish the year before and could read Don Quixote in the original, and that she was now learning Italian! That is the kind of ideal we would set before you. That is the spirit that actuates all of us in the National Council of Women. We do

not come to our discussions having made up our minds beforehand ; we want to learn all the time and from one another and from Youth, and Youth wants to learn from Age. You have been invited to hear speakers who will tell you of what Possibilities are before you ; who will tell you what Life really is."

POSSIBILITIES.

Miss Picton-Turbervill, O.B.E., said : I want to speak on the subject of Possibilities. I do not know if there are many here who are learned enough to explain Einstein's Theory of Relativity ; but I have learned a great deal of Relativity by experience of life ; and there is nothing more sensitive to relative values than what is and what is not possible. It is a truism to say the Impossibilities of one generation are the commonplace achievements of the next generation ; but simply because truisms need illustration, so that we can realise the truth of them, I am going to give you some illustrations of what was possible and impossible in past years.

Not long ago I was writing a little book, and I had to study the writers of about fifty or sixty years ago in favour of women trying to do what were then considered impossible things ; going to Universities, and so on. I came across this, laid down as an unfortunate fact from which there was no escape : that the unmarried woman must necessarily live a confined and inactive life ; it was impossible for her to live an active one. It was impossible for a woman to think of becoming a doctor. One educationalist in writing to teachers, urged them to prepare all girls for the trials of delicate life.

Now I must tell you the story of one Impossibility turned into a Possibility : the story of Miss Sophia Jex Blake, who went to Edinburgh—she had already studied in America—and wanted to be a doctor in 1869. She had to fight the whole of the University of Edinburgh, and after the University was won over, another difficulty arose. Women might study, but they must not walk the Hospitals : then again they might study, but no woman would be allowed an Examination paper. But at last Miss Jex Blake conquered ; she fought ; she overcame the great opposition and since her day hundreds of women have been free to follow the vocation they felt called to ; and it has brought nothing but happiness, joy and well-being to England and the whole world. There was a village in India called the " Village of Despair "—it was fever-stricken, full of malarial trouble, people going blind when the slightest knowledge could have saved them. I saw that village transformed to the

" Village of Hope " because two women doctors from Edinburgh came and planted a hospital there. That is one example of the spreading of the spirit of liberty and freedom through one woman's being faithful to the vocation within her.

Having spoken of the past and how by following the gleam, other women have opened to you the doors of possibilities, let us think of the Possibilities and Impossibilities of to-day. Women can become Magistrates, Members of Parliament, Barristers, and you are free to say " Which shall I be and what calling shall I follow?" Look at our great cities, foul, smoke-laden, unhealthy, overcrowded, black and grimy. Look at the housing conditions. Even within a hundred yards of here I have found people living under conditions quite unfit for any human being. I found a man, wife and five children living in one room—eating, sleeping, dressing, cooking—a whole family in one room ! People seem to think things will be changed by singing "Jerusalem." People must put their backs into changing the whole conditions of life in this country. This ugliness of our cities and the grimness of the conditions leads to spiritual starvation. There are hundreds of thousands hungering for beauty, which they never see. I suggest the whole of the cities of England should be transformed into beautiful cities of which we may be proud. The early Greeks had a fine estimate of what cities should be. To the Greek, his city, his town, was the beautiful thing ; he gloried in making it perfect. Can we not transform these great black grimy cities of ours? It will be difficult : there are vested interests to overcome : lack of imagination. As our Chairman said, everybody has compassion for one hungry person, but it is difficult to pity the hundred you don't see. In the first work I did, it was a revelation to me to see the lines of miserable houses in Shoreditch and Bethnal Green. I said to my friend " Surely the day will come when we shall have a better conception of cities." He said " Never, while human nature is what it is, as impossible as it is for men to fly." If every boy and girl is determined to give their best to mankind, I believe it is possible that in your generation this impossibility of transforming our cities and making them beautiful, in harmony with Christian feeling, should come to pass.

Never had women so much power as to-day. Swiftly, silently, surely, this great power is falling into your hands ; and I do not believe that at this moment in the history of the world,

when every country is in unrest, with difficult problems to face, it is by mere chance that women have every day more power than they have ever had before.

I believe it is in your power to make the aims of to-day Possibilities for the future, and then you will hand on the torch to the coming generation, who will rise up and call you blessed.

" ADVENTURE."

Miss Bewley (Girl Guides Association) said : I think when we start off on the road of life, we all try to see what is ahead of us. All of us in our hearts hope that on that road we will meet Adventure. I think it is true that some people who have started longing for high Adventure have never come on Adventure at all. One reason is that Adventure is a profession ; and you do not start off on a profession without any kind of training. If you wanted to be a violinst, you would not start by hiring the Albert Hall and then go to a shop and buy a fiddle. You would first start learning how to play. So you folk, who, I hope, do want to be Adventurers, have to start to train for the profession. How? That everybody has to think out for themselves ; but there are some things you know an Adventurer has to have. You must make the very best of yourself. Try and make your mind as quick as it should be ; if you have let yourself go slack and dull, you won't be able to take the Adventure which may come by way of your mind. I heard of a girl who snatched a child from under a runaway horse's feet. She must have practised thinking quickly.

I think Guiding is a good way of training for Adventuring. It is only one way—there are other good ways—but Guiding does train you all rornd, and gives special opportunities, such as camping. Anyone who has spent a wet night in a tent and is still there and has got breakfast ready in time, has had a training in the early part of Adventuring ! But there is more in Adventuring than that ! Who ever heard of an Adventurer who lacked imagination, who was not able to see things from the point of view of others ; who put himself or herself first and other people second ?

I will tell you of one woman Adventurer—a Polish friend, who was doing Red Cross work with the Polish Army. She was attending a wounded man right up in the front. Some soldiers said to her " We have to retreat, you must come." As the soldiers said this, the wounded man said to my friend " Do not leave me," he could not bear the thought. She

looked up and said " I cannot go," and the Polish soldiers again said " You must ; we cannot leave you." But they did leave her, and she stayed behind with the wounded man in a little thicket. The Russian Army passed them by. In the night the man died and she was left quite alone. She stayed in the thicket all day and the next night she started out to find her way back to the Polish lines. They were tremendously impressed by her courage and gave her the award of Valour, equivalent to the Victoria Cross. She said : " I did not do anything that anybody would not have done." But I think few of us would have taken that as a matter of course ; behind the deed there were long years of training in putting self last.

Sometimes we miss Adventures because we don't see them. We look far off to a burning house or sinking ship, and under our noses are passing Adventures which we might be doing all the time !

We must learn to focus our eyes on the small Adventures and do them as part of our training for the great Adventure !

That is what I feel about adventure : it takes training ; and learning to see. Perhaps you think that rather spoils it all. Perhaps you feel after all it is better to sit at home and leave Adventure to other people, but, as Miss Picton Turbervill told you, if you have thought at all about the world to-day, it is not the sort of place in which to sit by the fire and leave other people to adventure ! I think the only hope is for the young people to have a try at doing something. What is the matter with the World ? It is trying very hard for happiness ; but it does not seem to be getting there. Why ? Is it not partly because we cling to the old idea that we get happiness by grabbing it ; by getting what we can for ourselves ? What is needed is service for others to make a happy world. The older folk have a great many fine and splendid things to give : wisdom, judgment and patience ; but youth has power and it is only youth, I think, that can change things as they are ; not by talking, but by doing ; showing people that service is the road to take. Service will lead to happiness, and that seems to me a very big Adventure.

Mrs. George Morgan (National Council of Women, Vice-President) : My desire to-day has been that I could roll back the years and start on the great work which is open to you now. Our day has had to be spent in opening closed doors. We had to band ourselves together in this great Union of Women voluntary workers, in order that you might be able to enter on the various forms of service you have chosen, on whatever path

in life you like to take to earn your living. There still remains, however, a tremendous call for voluntary workers. I have found the great need of to-day is for the girl to realise that her opportunity lies in giving service for the joy of service. The work of this Council has been to make pathways for you to walk in. The most glorious era in woman's life is now opening before girls ; you can earn your own living ; and at the same time have the privilege, in the hours of recreation which are being safeguarded for you by this Council of Women, of being able to give service to pioneer work. We have some Junior Branches of the National Council of Women. These comprise girls from about the ages of 18 to 30. They are working side by side with the Branches of older women, receiving help and encouragement from those who have called them into being, and giving the inspiration of youth and enthusiasm. There are endless opportunities for the girl of to-day in this great London, for helping girls, for helping children, for getting information, which is most valuable, so that further reforms can come into being. We ask you to hand in your names so that a Junior Branch of the London National Council of Women may be formed. There you will be able to discuss for yourselves what are the problems your generation is going to face and the calls your generation is going to respond to. If you had heard the speeches last night on the need of re-housing aamongst some of our people, you would have felt the appeal in your heart and the hope that the day may come when there shall not remain any slum life in our country. That is not an impossible thing to achieve. If you who are going to be the inspiration of to-morrow will educate yourselves to understand the conditions round you ; there are women who are over-burdened with the heat of the day needing your help—go to the welfare worker or the clinic, build up a ring of helpers and see that the working woman has some assistance and recreation in her life. Or go to the various Clubs, essential in a City, for the recreation of the working girl ; and bring all your youth and inspiration, all the knowledge you have had poured into you, and share it with those who have had no chance of it ; not working for cash payment but glorying in the privilege of giving your services. Then in the days to come there will be joy in your hearts because you will have sown "Jerusalem" by your labours and some reforms will have come that we are longing for to-day. It means work, but it means intense interest. It means you are gathering together to do something worth while, and inevitably there will come into your lives greater interest and a feeling of joy and

happiness ; and you will grow into stronger and better examples of what a woman should be.

As to what you can do in helping the National Council of Women, I want to suggest to you to-night to hand in your names, those who are at all interested in the work being carried on by this Council. Then we will call you together : a Branch of the London Council can be formed. We want a Sub-Sectional Committee of the girls. We want the girls to see for themselves the things in which their help is needed for getting bad conditions changed. It is our most earnest wish that the girl life of this country should have the opportunity of expressing itself. It will be a progressive force going on until men and women together shall walk in the Light of God, desiring above all things to have His Will done upon earth and to sweep away anything which stands in the way of man, woman or child having the fullest opportunity for the development of their own individual life.

Third Public Meeting.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE COUNCIL'S WORK.

Chairman : Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon, D.Sc., Ph.D., F.L.S., J.P.

OXFORD LIQUOR (POPULAR CONTROL BILL.)

Lady Frances Balfour : Local Option has entered another phase owing to prohibition, for many people think it is a stepping-stone to prohibition. I myself feel it is a way to avoid prohibition, for which this country so far has no desire, though everyone watches with interest its progress in America. Americans always look out for the paying thing, and they found that output and efficiency were increased by prohibition. (New York is a problem by itself.)

The question of prohibition, however, is not before this country now, though in future ages Great Britain may feel it is the only way to meet the gigantic evils of drink. The Council hope, with the goodwill of women behind them, to promote the Oxford Bill, their support being expressed in the following resolution :—

> "That the National Council of Women, believing that the drink problem constitutes a grave menace to the welfare of the nation, urges His Majesty's Government to introduce a democratic measure of temperance legislation on the lines

of the 'Oxford' Liquor (Popular Control) Bill, giving the three options: no change, reorganisation, and no licence."

Scotland for some time has had the advantage of local option on the Statute Book, and you must remember that it is one thing not to be able to use drink and another thing not to use it when it is there. Carlisle has gone dry under a Government measure, but in one or two districts of Scotland they have voted it themselves. One enthusiastic supporter speaking to the General Assembly said that there was a region of slums where, since local option had obtained, the inhabitants had risen against the slums, which had been enormously improved: also, that the infant death rate had decreased perceptibly every year. Those who object to the evils of drink but object more strongly to the evils of prohibition can at any rate agree that reorganisation of the trade would be a good thing. There is no real objection to the Bill, which cannot be met. Reorganisation does not prevent the moderate man from drinking and it eases the consciences of those who wish liquor to be on tap for the general community. Excessive drink affects the individual first and is practically incurable, but the drinker is not alone affected, for the drinking man is not a competent wage-earner, the drinking woman not a competent housewife, and it means disease in the homes. The problem is less acute in England where men drink a beverage which does little harm beyond fuddling their already not too bright brains. But in Scotland the problem is that of drinking adulterated spirits, and, as a Judge has said, "But for whiskey Scotland would be practically crimeless." The prisons of Scotland are filled by the intemperate habit.

The greatest hindrance to women getting the vote was caused by the fear that we should go mad on temperance, and voting women must remember their responsibilities in this matter. An enormous amount of money is spent in advertising and influencing politics at the time of a general election. In one particular constituency the trade declared themselves ready to spend £20,000 to keep the temperance candidate out. No other trade has so much money at its disposal, is so untrammelled or uses its power so remorselessly.

Each area should have a free choice of the three alternatives. The House of Commons has passed the Bill, but the House of Lords threw it out on an occasion when the Conservative Benches were crowded with peers, and at least 20 took the oath in order to vote against the measure. Their cry was

the "liberty of the subject," but in the Oxford Bill no one interferes with the liberty of the subject. It is no step towards the compulsory introduction of prohibition. The Bill is framed simply to promote a free expression of the people's desire, and should be helped by the mass of thinking people, and notably by women. It cannot be denied that the Drink Bill of the country is increased by the habits of both young and old women, and is far above what the country can afford. It is higher than the expenditure on the Army, Navy and Air Service combined. Without drink, there would be greater efficiency, happier homes, and better lives.

WOMEN AND INTERNATIONALISM.

Mrs. Forbes-Robertson Hale: This is a slightly camouflaged title, as I really want to speak on the League of Nations and the League of Nations Union. I shall begin by asking the question—What is internationalism?—because much harm is done to the real cause of internationalism by loose using of that word. Many people are so busy loving the Germans, the Russians, the Chinese and so forth, that they cannot love their own country. That kind of person does not come under my definition of internationalist. Everyone should love their own family and country best. The act of love begins with the centre of life, *i.e.*, the home, and spreads out in ever widening ripples towards the ultimate circumference. Our capacity and intelligence ought to be big enough to widen out from our own home and country and take in the entire race of men, white, red, brown and black. That is Internationalism. Women are Internationalists, because they know enough about world economics to realise that their own country needs the co-operation of all other countries in the world.

Moreover, women are different from men. Many convictions women hold in common with men on matters in which they are like them; but when it comes to the joy of life opened up by internationalism, women must have a slightly different point of view, because by nature they give life and nurture it at its feeblest and youngest, valuing it at the bottom of their hearts more than men do.

The most intense physical, moral and spiritual experience existing on this earth falls to the lot of women, with which no

experience falling to the lot of men can be compared. This experience is shared by white, black, brown and yellow women. Women of all races who have borne children have in common an experience which is more intense than any common experience animating the hearts of any two men even of the same race or class. This common bond among women might be a great force in the world, a force which ought to be used, because there the solidarity of women is greater than the solidarity of men. That is why the title of " Women and Internationalism " has been chosen—internationalism of the type just defined based on the common bond of experience which ought to unite all women in sympathy and understanding of others.

Since the war there has been a movement for high tariff barriers and a piling up of armaments. If the money spent on armaments by Europe could be put into the pursuits of peace and economic progress Europe might be as prosperous as the United States is to-day.

The best hope for the future lies with the League of Nations. It is true that the League of Nations is still a puny infant ; that the United States is not in it ; that Brazil and Spain are both sulking ; that there exist weaknesses, difficulties, misunderstandings, jealousies, bickerings and back-stair politics. I admit that ; but, before serving the League in a half-hearted way, let its detractors show one single world-organisation which has tried to do the work that the League of Nations is endeavouring to do. I urge you, as women, to back up the League of Nations and those who work for it, for the sake of womanhood, patriotism, future generations, and the prosperity and wellbeing of the world.

I am proud to believe that there is no country which has worked harder for the League and for the ideals of the League than England. The League of Nations Union is the only non-sectarian, non-political organisation to educate the general public in the work of the League itself.

In conclusion I will quote a recent phrase of Lord Cecil's : " Christianity destroyed slavery in the Western world. War is not less certainly than slavery the work of the devil and, as Christians, we must pursue this last and greatest crusade to the end."

Fourth Public Meeting.

Chairman: The Hon. Mrs. Franklin, *President.*

THE POLITICAL DUTY OF WOMEN.

Rt. Hon. Sir Willoughby Dickinson, K.B.E.: It was with great pleasure that I accepted the summons by telephone yesterday to come and address you. It is now some time since I have been, so far as concerns the Women's Movement, out of harness; I feel like one of the old chargers who are turned out to grass and occasionally brought out to draw the mowing-machine, when the pony is sent off to meet somebody at the station. I would not suggest that Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland has any resemblance to that humble member of a rural establishment! I know the work he has done for Women's Suffrage; he was one of the first in his Party to work for the cause of Women's Surffage—you have missed a great deal.

"What is the duty of women in Politics?" I am going to tell you what you ought to do! You women must now look after yourselves; we men have washed our hands of you altogether. I daresay many of you will say "That is what we have been doing all our lives, and everybody else." It is quite true; you have done it a great deal too much at home. You have mothered us men; you have cooked for us men; you have seen that collars and shirts and undergarments have come back clean from the wash and still untorn for us—if you had not done all that, you might have turned out a very different class of men. But, outside in public work, you failed because you thought that men would do everything for you in politics. Of course they did not. The House of Commons, as a few of you know, is a very comfortable place full of delightful armchairs, and the ordinary Member of Parliament does not care particularly to be disturbed out of his armchair. It was not until the women starting wanting the vote that they did stir him out of his armchair.

As to what is now your duty in Politics? I say, "Go on doing the same thing." It is probably just as necessary. It would be probably necessary even if the House of Commons consisted of women and nobody else: members would still sit in the same armchairs and require to be picked out of them, and it is your responsible duty to the State to see that they are picked out of those armchairs! You are in a much better position than you were before. The great engineer Archimedes, when he was discussing the problem of the lever and the fulcrum,

said: ''Only give me a place to stand upon and I will move the world''; and that is your position to-day. You have now a place to stand upon—the vote. Do not despise it. When I was fighting for Women's Suffrage, my chief reason for being a suffragist was not only to give a woman the opportunity of placing a cross against some possibly unknown politician's name, but to obtain for her the indirect results of political equality. So long as she was outside the roll of citizenship, woman was regarded as something inferior. If not inferior, at any rate as something apart. There were serious sides to this question. I remember when the lawyers argued that a woman was not a person. I remember later when they had to argue also that a mother was not a parent. Those times, I am glad to say, are gone. The vote has put an end to them. Lawyers meet and argue such points, but the ordinary citizen won't listen to it. He accepts the fact that woman is a citizen, a voter, one of us; and that is a very great gain. This change in the political position of women has had an immense importance. In the House of Commons, the whole sentiment and way of looking at the question has altered. Women have not yet much power in the House of Commons. There are a few women in it; they do magnificent work. No one can admire more than I do the great and constant efforts made by Lady Astor and her other colleagues in order to hold up the flag of womanhood in the House of Commons. It is a pity there are not more—it is rather your fault that there are not—but I am sure they would be the first to admit that it is not their presence that has changed the sentiment of the House. What is it? It is the fact that outside the House there are 10,000,000 voters, to every one of whom some Member of the House is responsible, and it is this silent 10,000,000 who tell. It is in those 10,000,000 that your power over the Government and the vote of this country lies. Since the introduction of Woman Suffrage there have been a constant series of Acts of Parliament dealing with matters in which women are specially interested. 1918 even, a Bill was passed by the House of Commons unanimously to authorise women to stand as candidates for Parliament. In 1919 a Sex Disqualification Act, by which women were ad-admitted to all kinds of functions they could not have occupied before—Justices of the Peace (there are now more than a thousand) to serve on juries; to act as Policewomen, unknown in old days; in legal and other professions. In the next year there was another Act making it obligatory that there should be one woman Magistrate in Juvenile Courts. In 1919 a Nurses Registration Bill; in 1920 a Maintenance Order Bill of great benefit to poor women; the next year, Maintenance for Married Women under Separation

Orders. In 1922 the Criminal Law Amendment Act, and so on. More Acts were passed than in the whole of the previous century. I assure you it would not have been so if the vote had not been given. Then I remember moving an Amendment that the Metropolitan Police should have women attached to it, I think the present Lord Chancellor objected to it, and successfully resisted it on some technical ground. I have no doubt he would be the warmest adherent of that practice now. It shows the change that has come about in the minds of the politicians due to the fact that they knew not only that women had the vote, but were willing to exercise that right to vote. There was a Deputation to Geneva the other day from Germany to find out about the working of Women Police. These ten million women voters are already doing their work, but it will rest with you to guide them into the right path; do not let them become too tame; a watchdog is not much use unless he can occasionally be savage. Don't let the House of Commons begin to imagine that the woman-voter will vote exactly as she is wanted to. You have not yet entirely won the day. A man may vote at 21 and a woman only at 30. It lies with you to see that justice is done to the rest of your sex. It is a clear duty to press with all your power for an all-embracing measure of adult woman suffrage.

There are other places where you cannot say the spirit of the place has changed. The Civil Service has not yet settled down to the new system. In the House of Lords, what will you see there? Not very long ago on the occasion when Lady Rhondda put forward her claim to vote as a Peeress in her own right based on the Act of Parliament, Lord Birkenhead delivered himself of the statement that a villain could not receive a right when he was in prison, but only when he was discharged. But a Peeress is a female and must remain a female until she dies. So poor Lady Rhondda must wait either until she dies or until you women with your ten million votes behind you can convert Lord Birkenhead to your views. He is convertible. I know it, because when I had the honour of telling in the House of Commons when the House agreed to give the vote to women, I saw many faces that astonished me, for I had never seen them in any similar lobby, and amongst others none astonished me more than when I saw the Right Honourable Sir Frederick Smith in the crowd! So I say ''Take courage, go on working, and in time you will have your way even with the House of Lords.'' If the present Government keep their pledges to their own party, they are bound to introduce a measure to reform the House of Lords. It is a measure which will have great consequences to women and to the Empire. The reformed House of Lords will be

modelled on Senates, like the Senate of the United States of America. It will be a body having great powers. Will it, or will it not be made answerable to the people, and amongst others, answerable to women? Are women to have the same chance as they have in the Commons? One of your duties in Politics to-day is to give your serious attention to this subject, not only from the women's point of view, but in the general interest of the nation. If the British Constitution is to be placed in the melting-pot, it will not come out strengthened or purified unless the electors of Great Britain, and possible the electors beyond the Seas insist upon their rights to a complete representative Government maintained in their entirety. I should say the duties are to serve God, honour the King, and hold fast the faith of Democracy for now you have your votes you depend on the efficiency of Democracy. It is passing through a severe trial in every country of the world. Some of the most enlightened nations have lost faith in it and have given it up. But Democracy will only fail if Demos fails—and you ladies are part of Demos. Democracy we are told is Government of the people, for the people, by the people; and it is on this little word "by" that everything depends If the people. do not vote or study political problems, it is they themselves who will have undermined Democracy. Women are new to it, are willing to learn and most of them are in dead earnest. Tell them what England expects of them, 'Every woman to do her duty.'

Dr. Baumann (Chief Commissioner of the Home Office of Baden, National Council of Women of Germany): I am very glad to speak to you in the name of the German Council of Women, of which I have the honour to be a Vice-President. I have followed with great interest your Conference from the beginning to the end, finding that the subjects do not differ largely from what we are doing in Germany. We have made progress in the last years. I remember twenty years ago when coming from Switzerland to Berlin, I had to leave a large meeting at which our famous Socialist Bebel presided, as women, apprentices and madmen were not allowed to assist at political meetings; now we have in Germany equal franchise given to both sexes at the voting age of 20 years. We have equal pay for equal work in the Civil Service, in the teaching profession; family allowances are given in the Civil Service, so we have realised several wishes. The Constitution of Weimar yields full equality to women as citizens. But in Germany as in England women's influence is not sufficiently secured in public

life. We regret this fact, not only on account ot women themselves who want to give their energy to their nation, but also because we are convinced that many of the social diseases must disappear as soon as women are allowed to help. It is these social diseases you are occupied with: the Housing problem worst of all. There is the education problem, the economic problem, the dangers of alcoholism—prohibition is not allowed to be spoken of in Germany. We believe that fighting for women's rights is selfishness, but we call it a pious selfishness. We are agreed to devote our energies to public welfare. We hope that the community of ideas will give us the feeling of full sympathy—that I may go home with that idea.

Miss Freda Bage (Principal of the Women's College of the University of Brisbane in New S. Wales): I am very glad to be here this evening to give my greetings on behalf of Australia and to tell you how much I have enjoyed the very wonderful talk given by Sir Willoughby Dickinson. As a woman who has had a vote since she was 21, I think when we take our privileges for granted. My students in the University of Queensland receive on their twenty-first birthday a card of enrolment which they fill in for the Federal enrolment and for the State. We have two sets of elections to consider, and it is not very long before an intelligent woman finds out which State she is voting for and decides to learn all about it. Now we have a great experiment—compulsory voting. This compulsory voting is for men and women at 21; under that system we find that the number of voters has increased from 50 or 60% up to 95%. Whether that is good or bad remains to be seen. If people have to vote they learn to do it intelligently; they begin to like it after a year or two.

I was sent this year from Australia as one of the seven women who attended the League of Nations. It is very difficult to realise that only seven countries out of fifty-five have sent women to the League. The Scandinavian countries, Roumania, Germany, Australia and England are the only countries who have sent women. Yet the League is entirely open to women. There is no theoretical reason why women should not be employed; but few women are sent and very few women are in important positions on the Secretariat. That there are some is due to the International Council of Women and the International Suffrage Alliance; but it should be the duty of every woman to see that women are sent as well as men to this wonderful League of Nations.

"THE BUILDING UP OF A BETTER WORLD."

MADAME DREYFUS BARNEY (International Council of Women): What I wish to tell you particularly to-night is this: I think you British women have understood the greatest truth, which is to combine practical effort with idealism. Yesterday one of your speakers said "Don't be afraid of idealism, it is the idealists who show the road." You have a practical way of going down to the root of things: for instance, better housing. You heard from our German colleague that this problem exists in her great land. It is one of the greatest problems in France, and although here I stand as a Frenchwoman, I feel we have had very little in the way of representation, at least on the official Commission of Housing; though one very brilliant woman of the French Council, also a Vice-Convener in the International Council of Women, has been appointed—Marie Verrod.

I feel the immensity of the possibilities of the British women. It is not only Great Britain I am thinking of, it is of the British Empire. Is there another people that has to understand other religions more than you? Other races more than you? Other civilisations more than you? I do not think so. And when I realise what you can do with those kindred continents—continents where you already are living—it seems to me you are going to be the great stronghold of peace throughout the world. You are working so diligently about social reforms—better living conditions, better moral conditions—where will all this be if we permit War to come back again? If we of the actual generation stop an instant before we feel secure, I think our reason for living in this particular moment is void; we have not done our duty. We see how Science and Education have killed some of the greatest and most deadly enemies of man; but we see this same Science, this same Education, making War more and more terrible—what does that mean? It means that the mind of man is not convinced that Peace is necessary. Still I think we cannot but be optimistic. In September at the Assembly of the League of Nations, with nearly all the countries of the World standing there as witnesses, Briand stretched out a welcoming hand to Germany. Does that not seem a wonderful promise?

In this same gathering at Geneva great questions are being studied. We know it is not only the peace of Europe we have to think about; we have the problems of the whole world about us, and some of these great problems are economic questions. For years the International Council of Women and special Councils have been interested in the questions that are the root causes of War. It is no longer a question of chivalry; rarely the question of religion; it is the practical economic basis of life; and now the countries have understood, do let us do what we can to make it easier. It seems to me that perhaps the great saving principle of our age is consultation and conferences. Now, what organisation understands that power better than the International Council of Women? When the pioneers of our movement founded the Council, the whole principle of the Council was consultation. They realised that the fireside could not be a peaceful place unless the community was at rest; that the community could not be a peaceful place unless the country was at rest; that the country could not be a peaceful place unless the whole World were at rest; so they had this broad vision built on consultation, on bringing the representatives of different countries together to get their point of view. It is very rare that a person or an Association has the vision of a promised land and enters into that promised land. The International Council of Women has had the vision of that promised land; and I am glad to say they are entering into it. And they are finding this promised land perhaps even something beyond their hopes; they are finding the Parliament of Nations with which they can work; they are finding this League of Nations that appreciates the effort of Associations. In this last Assembly there was one thing that Lord Robert Cecil said that I thought we can apply directly to our activities. He was regretting that many of these admirable Conventions that had been drawn up by experts, and signed by the Delegates of Governments, had not been ratified by the countries. When I heard that I wondered if this great International Council of Women, with its splendid living National Councils could not assist in that question?

One of the countries brought before the Assembly the question of obscene literature. There was a very interesting Convention drawn up, sent by a great list of educationists; but four years have passed since then and the country that brought it up has not ratified it! Might not that be an interesting piece of work for the Council of Women in that country?

At these meetings in Geneva in June, I wish the British Delegates would see Lord Robert Cecil and ask him which of the ratifications we might put most of our energies into. There are a number of most interesting documents with regard to these Conventions: all the Conventions that have been prepared by the League, and the names of the countries which have signed and ratified.

Then we come to the great question of public opinion. We all know that disarmament is a question of moral disarmament. What can we do to teach the public mind, the masses? The Churches have done a great deal. The Press might do much

more. And there is also another great thing—the radio. When we realise how we can reach isolated villages and countries, with the radio, the possibilities that are opening before us seem most encouraging. I would be interested to see the Council use some of its influence on the programmes of the radio, in countries where it is just beginning. I think the British women would come to us well documented with regard to the radio, and might be of great assistance to us. We are an International Council of Women, and no chain is stronger than its weakest link. As we are considering the education of the masses and of the public, I have been asked to speak specially with regard to the Cinema. You probably know there has been an International Conference of the Cinematograph in Paris a few weeks ago: the first International Congress of the kind. The various branches of the Cinematograph industry were represented: the actors and Associations interested and so forth. As a beginning it was very successful, meeting under the auspices of the League of Nations, at the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation. There were about thirty countries represented. Their Resolutions will help you best to understand the ground that has been covered. One is that "A great effort must be made to reach the public that you cannot reach in any other way by the right kind of films and by a programme of the right kind of films." It is essential to have a whole programme worked out. Another Resolution related to programmes fit for the rural and working classes. They can be moral, but they must be interesting. With regard to international films, countries have promised not always to make the villain the foreigner; sometimes to have the villain the man at home—though that may take from his picturesqueness! There is some question of having an international censorship. Historical productions must be done really seriously, and you must not hand down the man and woman of history in some fantastic way that may suit the scenario.

With regard to the practical arrangement of all this, a very interesting Resolution was passed, that there should be a Clearing House for all films, and a detailed film catalogue. There is only a very restricted public for scientific films; but if a scientist knows a certain operation has been performed and learns from the catalogue it has been filmed, he need not then have it done for his class. With regard to this aspect of the Cinematograph, I should think antivivisectionists will rejoice. It saves much suffering, for you can show the film of an operation to the class. Think of what it means in the lessening of animal suffering.

The next Cinematograph Congress will be held in Germany. As the International Council of Women has decided to put the Cinematograph question actively on its programme, I hope all

the Councils will know what they can do. The Greek Council has done splendid work. They had a law passed that children could not go to the Cinema until they were 12; so they thought they would make an attractive programme for them. They went to the Ministry of Instruction; got the patronage of one of the best halls; started a splendid programme; the Boy Scouts put the people in the seats; the Choral Association sang and there was a grouping together of youthful organisations. Now they are carrying the programme into the different towns of Greece. We can see in our particular countries what we can work out. With regard to the question of age it is a National question. In certain countries children cannot be brought till 16 and in some they can be brought at six.

Then there is the work of the League for Intellectual Co-operation. One of the things the International Council is doing is to study scientific and intellectual conditions; another aspect of its work is the interchange of University degrees. Again in the realm of Art, the International Council can be very useful. A Central Office of Museums has been created; and over 600 Museums have entered into contract with it. One advantage of this is that we know what the new Museums need and what one country is willing to send to another country.

We all realise the upbuilding of a better world is a very tedious thing. I remember in Java being shown some wonderful tiles: wonderful carvings: the Guide told me one had sprung up in the night. That was his idea of what was worth while. What you and I think worth while is a thing that has come down from the ages, this great onward force of secret civilisation that is working its way out through these endless difficulties; it is everybody's interest and everybody can do something.

I will close by a simple word said by a very great philosopher "It is only in understanding one another we can accomplish it; we are all leaves of one tree; flowers of one meadow and drops of one sea."

THE PRESIDENT: I believe you are very grateful to the speakers of to-night and I dare hope that you are a little bit grateful to the National Council of Women who have given you this treat. When I began my duties as President I felt frightened as I thought of the long line of eminent women who had been in this place, beginning with that great woman Mrs. Creighton, but I have been able to get through these days because of the many helpers who have been with me. Their list is so long. I want to thank you, my fellow workers, the delegates of the Affiliated Societies; we have 147 Affiliated Societies and 87 Branches and they have sent up very full delegations. I want to thank you for

(*Continued on page* 48.)

NATIONAL COUNCIL

Statement of Receipts and Payments from

RECEIPTS.

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
To Balance :—		
At Bank, 1st September, 1925		300 4 4
Petty Cash		1 0 3
,, Subscriptions :—		
Members	442 6 9	
Branches (25%)	251 10 7	
Branches (£5)	391 17 0	
Societies	109 2 6	
		1194 16 10
,, Donations :—		
Birmingham Branch (Conf.)	50 0 0	
Miss H. Gladstone (Legacy)	5 0 0	
General	8 11 0	
President's Travelling Expenses (refunded)	10 17 0	
		74 8 0
,, Sale of Badges		2 13 2
,, Drawn from Deposit Account		48 0 0
,, *Sale of N.C.W. Literature		
Pamphlets	24 8 5½	
Reports	39 9 0	
N.C.W. News (including advertisements)	352 7 8½	
		416 5 2
,, Interest :—		
National War Bonds	10 0 0	
Co-partnership Tenants, Ltd... ..	3 19 4	
Deposit Account	4 5 7	
		18 4 11
		£2055 12 8

SPECIAL FUND

Balance on Deposit Account, 1st September, 1925 ..	200 0 0
	£200 0 0

**This does not include the Receipts from the Book and Pamphlets Department.*

OF WOMEN.

1st September, 1925, to 31st August, 1926.

PAYMENTS.

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Salaries		832 6 6
Printing (general)		128 5 7
N.C.W. News—Salary	60 0 0	
Printing	237 12 0	
		297 12 0
Stationery		85 18 0½
Postage		105 9 6½
Rent		193 15 0
Office Expenses		73 13 7½
Repairs		15 3 8
Telegraphic Address		2 0 0
Telephone		16 1 1
Press Cuttings		4 4 0
Committee Expenses		56 11 11
Hire of Halls		8 3 8
Insurance		13 10 8
Organiser		48 0 0
Refund to "Women under English Law" account		27 10 6
Travelling Expenses		14 3 7
Pamphlets and Newspapers		4 6 11
Audit Fee		4 4 0
Bank Charges and cheques		1 7 9
Subscriptions :—		
International Council of Women ..	4 0 0	
International Officers' Travelling Fund	2 0 0	
Consultative Committee	3 0 0	
Council for Representation of Women in the League of Nations	3 3 0	
Equal Franchise Demonstration ..	3 3 0	
		15 6 0
		1947 14 0½
Balance—Petty Cash	0 16 5½	
,, At Bank	107 2 2	
		107 18 7½
		£2055 12 8

ON DEPOSIT.

	£ s. d.
Drawn for expenses of Organiser	48 0 0
Balance on 31st August, 1926	152 0 0
	£200 0 0

Examined and found correct,
PRIDEAUX, FRERE, BROWN AND CO.,
Chartered Accountants.

12 Old Square, Lincoln's Inn, W.C.2.
9th September, 1926.

your kindness in bearing with many difficulties, not least the difficult acoustics of the Hall, and to thank the general public and the Press who helped us to have so full a public and the full reports they have given; and the authorities of many places who have helped us. Our gratitude is equal to the long list—the Dean of Westminster for the Abbey Service and the Bishop for his delightful address; Mrs. Field for helping with the Devotional Meetings and the Mother's Union for holding them in their beautiful Chapel: the private and public bodies: the Mayor for his delightful welcome in this City of Westminster; the Pioneer and Forum Clubs for hospitality; Dr. Walker and Dr. Martindale for their receptions; the many hostesses who will be helping us to "play" to-morrow; the Viscount and Viscountess Burnham who will be taking a large party to see the production of the *Daily Telegraph*; those who have put up delegates; and then ourselves: The Countess of Clarendon, Mrs. Noel Watkins, Miss Louisa Macdonald and the Hon. Joyce Montagu for arranging excursions; Miss Sharples, Mrs. Maurice Bear and her helpers who have acted as Stewards; Miss Martin and the tellers for arranging the Ballot; Miss K. Eaton for helping with the Luncheon; Miss Zimmern once again for undertaking the Book-room. Last, Lady Emmott for her invaluable help. It was she who arranged that delightful Reception at the Wharncliffe Rooms; thought of the Luncheon and managed it. It was she who sat next me and helped me through the intricacies of Amendments and Riders, and all I can wish for her is that when she becomes your President she may have as a right-hand-man someone as good as herself. Now lastly, Miss Green and Miss Ridley. We always thank Miss Green at all our Annual Council Meetings—this year she has been two people in one: herself, and also the local Honorary Secretary. She has had wonderful help from her staff, both permanent and temporary; but she—is Miss Green. We only hope she will survive this week, and not be forced to take a rest-cure because we have so much work to do to follow up all these instructions you have given us. Now it is Good-bye. I hope to see many of you in your local Branches. I have a big programme of visits, so I say "Au Revoir" till our Council Meetings—where I don't know. We have become so big, people are frightened, but we want invitations and I hope we may meet somewhere next year.

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