

of many shades of opinion, who however all agree in the desire to do some useful work. If this is to be done, some further steps are needed to ensure the continuance of the conferences, and to combine together in closer fellowship those who are interested in them and their objects.

For this purpose a central body is to be formed, representative of the work done by women, and to form a link between the various local unions of workers, associations for the care of girls and other organizations of women workers. Miss Janes has been appointed secretary to the society, as it is greatly owing to her energy and devotion that it has in the past made such satisfactory progress.

The National Union of Women Workers does not impose any political or religious test upon its members, it only asks that those who join it should feel that life has been given them as an opportunity for service, and that they should be willing to use every means in their power to make the most of their opportunity.

From an Occasional Paper issued by the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage we learn:

At the opening of the Session an unusually large number of members of Parliament balloted for a day for a Women's Suffrage Bill. But in face of the fact that 277 members had set down their names to ballot for various Bills, it is not surprising that the best places drawn by any of the twenty members who were balloting for Women's Suffrage should have been 16th (that drawn by Mr. Macdona) and 21st (that drawn by Professor Jebb).

To have a choice after fifteen or twenty others have selected the best places for their several Bills leaves but a forlorn hope, and when it was known that Mr. Macdona had set down his Bill for the second place on Wednesday, May 1st, immediately following a Bill on Corrupt Practices, introduced by Mr. T. H. Bolton and Sir Henry James, it was the general conviction that there was no real chance of the Women's Suffrage Bill coming on.

Under these circumstances Mr. McLaren resolved to ballot for a resolution. He did this on February 19th, and had the remarkable good fortune to secure the earliest possible opportunity, viz., Friday, February 22nd. The time for preparation was short, nevertheless it was long enough to allow of the Women's Suffrage Committees giving intimation to their friends throughout the kingdom, in time to work for a division, and also to make arrangements for the presentation of the Women's Suffrage Appeal.

But before a resolution can be brought before the House of Commons any Bill dealing with the same subject must be first withdrawn. In consideration of the favourable circumstances attending Mr. McLaren's resolution, and the unfavourable circumstances attending Mr. Macdona's Bill, it was hoped that the latter would consent to withdraw his Bill. However, he did not judge this opportune, and as he stated it in the House of Commons, "determined to stick to it." The grounds for this course were explained in a correspondence which ensued in the *Times* between Mr.

McLaren, Mr. Macdona, and Miss Cozens, the hon. secretary of a recently formed Committee, calling itself the "Parliamentary Committee for Women's Suffrage," which carries on its operations without reference to any of the already existing organisations.

Mr. Macdona's grounds for not withdrawing his Bill were, as stated in that correspondence, first, that he believed it would yet come on; second, that a resolution served no practical object; third, a doubt whether Mr. McLaren would press his resolution. With regard to the first of these reasons, it is contrary to the judgment of all the most experienced Parliamentary advisers of the movement; the second undervalues the importance of a resolution which, if carried in favour of Women's Suffrage, would render it difficult for any Government in the future to deal with the question of the franchise without taking into practical consideration the claims of women, and also of the importance of a division in the House in helping on the work in the country. The third reason does not commend itself to those who know Mr. McLaren's unvarying activity on behalf of Women's Suffrage.

It is feared that the result will prove to be that during this Session it will be impossible to advance the Women's Suffrage cause either by Bill or resolution. There yet remains a possibility of framing some Women's Suffrage instruction or amendment to a Government Bill. The Committee and their friends will carefully watch for an opportunity of this kind, and will not fail to press it should it be possible.

The second reading of the Bill for Improving the Housing of Farm Servants in Scotland has passed successfully through the House of Commons, in spite of some sturdy opposition from two Scotch Tories. These gentlemen could hardly have been aware of the shocking manner in which the farm servants of Scotland are huddled together in the "bothies"—men and women, boys and girls. An attempt at moral reform under such conditions as prevail would be a mere farce, and any legislation which tends to betterment of these conditions will have a moral and a hygienic effect at the same time. It is only a bare statement of fact, that most humane persons would hesitate to place their pigs under the same conditions of uncleanness and general want of sanitation, as is considered in rural Scotland to be quite good enough for "farm hands." These "bothies," with their accompanying horrors of drink and depravity, are the notorious scandals of Scotch agricultural life.

An interesting sketch of Sherborne Prison for Women, U.S.A., is given in the *Woman's Signal* by Lady Henry Somerset, who describes her interview with the warden during her recent visit to America. The wise and humanising discipline by which the prisoners are governed has had surprising results in the moral elevation of the inmates; a spirit of emulation, self-respect, and obedience has been aroused in some of the worst classes of women who have entered the prison. A perusal of these articles on Sherborne Prison will give the ordinary thinker a new glimpse of the great possibilities which at present are barely considered in the reformation of our criminal classes.

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