

—who could not be accused of favouring the women's cause—when, in answer to interrogation, he had replied that women must prove themselves capable of organisation if they wanted the vote. This was true, and co-operation was the basis on which a truly National Council of Women must be built. Women must demand the right to work without limitations; competition was so keen that unless they had ability they would not go far; and women must realise their deficiencies and not blame men for their present anomalous position in the body politic; that their position was anomalous simply proved that in the past they had not possessed the courage, conscience and conviction to claim justice, and obtain it. They were now making calm, steady, determined progress in their claims for human rights, and with co-operation and organisation every line of life which they were worthy to fill would be open to them. In the formation of a National Council of Women the sex question must be studiously avoided; if we had grievances against men we must remember they were our fathers, husbands, sons, and if we were dissatisfied with them, we mothers were largely to blame for not moulding them into a higher type. Let the mothers teach their sons the beauty and goodness of justice, truth and honour, and the equality of the sexes before the law would soon be obtained. Until such time woman must recognise that it was her duty to be *loyal to her sex*.

Mrs. Fenwick then stated the objects of the Council:—

(1) To unite all organised Societies of Women for Mutual Counsel and Co-operation, and in the attainment of Justice and Freedom for Women, and for all that makes for the good of humanity.

(2) To encourage the formation of Societies of Women engaged in Trades, Professions, and in Social and Political Work, in connection with which no organised Union at present exists.

(3) To affiliate with other National Councils of Women for the purpose of facilitating International Conference and Co-operation.

Membership would be open to women under the following Regulations:—

(1) All organised Societies of Women in sympathy with the National Policy, and which shall be invited by the Executive Committee to send representatives.

(2) Distinguished women who shall be termed Councillors. The honour of life membership to be conferred upon these by the Council.

(3) Representative women workers, who may be invited to take a seat on Sectional Committees by the Executive Committee.

It is proposed that the Council shall be organized in four chief DIVISIONS:—

- (1) Industrial.
- (2) Professional.
- (3) Social.
- (4) Political.

Each Division would be divided into as many SECTIONS as might appear desirable.

Each Section would be composed of Delegates from the Societies engaged in the special department of work represented by the Section.

The Sections would meet as often as might be necessary to consider matters relating to their special work, and pass such resolutions or take such other action in relation thereto as might appear to be advisable.

As each Section would in time doubtless represent all the chief workers in its department, any resolution which it passed after due deliberation would certainly have the greatest effect and influence, both with the public and with everyone engaged in its sphere of action.

The Section, then, would represent the unit of the Council. It would, so to speak, *focus* and concentrate all the efforts of all the Societies engaged in its department of women's work, and thus not only would intensify the effects of those efforts, but would render the work which is accomplished by each Society more practical and less diffuse. The present overlapping of effort, which is futile and wasteful, would be at once prevented if each Society were acquainted with the work performed by all cognate bodies; and on the other hand, the efforts now wasted would most advantageously be directed into channels of usefulness, hitherto unproductive. There can be no doubt that the proposed drawing together of all the existing workers would speedily reveal the fact that many important branches of women's work are at present totally undeveloped. And it would then be the duty of the section in which such an undeveloped branch would naturally be included to take steps for its due organisation. For example, the Industrial Sections would deal with the better organisation of Women's Labour, and the greater development of many important industries, such as dairy farming, flower growing, and poultry rearing. The Professional Sections would find much to do in securing legal status, and a greater measure of equality than is at present granted to women engaged in various skilled vocations. It would be the first duty of the Political Section to form a Parliamentary Bills Committee, whose object should be to watch and influence all legislation involving the interests of women and children, and to obtain for women the Parliamentary franchise. The Social Sections would include all matters of social reform and progress, civic, domestic and hygienic.

The work of all the Sections would be centred in offices in London, which being also in touch with the National Councils of Women in all other countries, would be able to receive, collect, and disseminate invaluable information respecting any and every branch of women's work throughout the United Kingdom, and in every part of the world.

Mrs. Fenwick showed, therefore, that every woman in the nation, without regard to class or creed, would thus find representation and a voice on the National Council, and through affiliation with the International Council, would at the quinquennial Congress be able to express, in no uncertain voice, an opinion concerning any matter which affected her interests.

Mrs. AMIE HICKS, speaking in the interest of the industrial classes, highly commended the formation of the Council, especially laying stress on the advantages to be gained from International communication, which tended to bring about the highest and best interests of humanity. She said that if women wished to share in the blessings of progressive movements

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