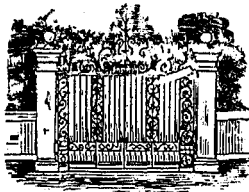


## Outside the Gates.

### THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.



The National Council of Women held its Annual Meeting on Tuesday, 23rd, and Wednesday, 24th, at Tunbridge Wells, when a large number of delegates from the branches and various societies affiliated attended.

Mrs. George Cadbury, the President, was in the Chair, and she was supported by the Dowager Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, Lady Knightley of Fawsley, Mrs. Creighton, Mrs. Percy Bunting, Mrs. Edwin Grey, Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon (Hon. Secretary of the International Council of Women), Mrs. Pollard, and many old friends of the Union. Miss Clifford, Lady Battersea, and Lady Laura Ridding, all unable to be present, were greatly missed from the platform.

The Chairman on Tuesday read telegrams of greeting from the National Councils of Women of Sweden and Switzerland—to which telegrams of appreciation were sent in reply.

Interesting reports of the year's work and finance were submitted, that of the Legislative Sectional Committee being of most interest to nurses—to quote:—

#### STATE REGISTRATION OF NURSES.

"The Committee expressed its opinion that State Registration of Nurses was desirable, and decided that copies of the Report of the Select Committee on the Registration of Nurses which states "that it is desirable that a Register of Nurses should be kept, by a Central Body appointed by the State," should be sent to the branches, with a suggestion that they should watch the Stansfeld Trust Papers for the terms of the two Bills to be introduced on the subject, and that they should petition in favour of the principle of the Bills."

This is the first action taken by the National Union of Women Workers on this most important question, and it is to be hoped much support will through its influence, be given to the matter termed by the Lord President of the Privy Council, "one of national importance."

#### INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN.

Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon presented a most interesting report of the International Council's work and progress. Its officers are to assemble in Switzerland next summer to make the preliminary arrangements for the next Quinquennial Meeting to be held in Canada in 1909, the year, by-the-bye, when this great organisation attains its majority—as it was inaugurated by Mrs. May Wright Sewall, at Washington, in 1888.

#### RESOLUTIONS.

On Wednesday morning several important resolutions down on the Agenda Paper were considered, with not altogether satisfactory results.

1. The following was proposed by Miss Constance H. Smith, on behalf of the Industrial Sectional Committee of the N.U.W.W., and of the Christian Social Union. It was seconded by Miss A. Lemon.

That the National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland, having in view the present

uncertain state of the law regulating fines and deductions under the Truck Acts, and the hardships which this uncertainty imposes upon working women, respectfully urges upon His Majesty's Government the need for amendment of these Acts; such amendment to include prohibition of fines and deductions, and of all payments by work-people to their employers.

After much discussion the resolution was passed omitting the end after the word "Acts"—so that, as the proposer remarked, "all the pith and marrow" was taken out of it.

2. The next resolution, proposed by Mrs. Creighton and seconded by Mrs. Percy Bunting, was passed unanimously:

"That the National Council of Women wishes to express its deep sense of the need for the amendment of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, especially with a view of:—

- (1) Raising the age of consent (to 18);
- (2) Extending the time limit for bringing a charge in court.
- (3) Abolishing the clause (section 5, Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1885) known as "the reasonable cause to believe" a girl is over 16; and
- (4) Having incest made a penal offence.

Mrs. Creighton introduced this subject with great force and discretion. She stated that this was the only civilised country where incest is not a criminal offence, and Mrs. Percy Bunting carried the meeting with her to a woman when she pleaded that "this abomination should be made a crime, and have the force of law against it." In the Sister Kingdom of Scotland such a law exists.

3. The third resolution, which in the following words appeared on the Agenda, was proposed by Mrs. Marvin, and seconded by Mrs. Edwin Grey, in a somewhat different form:—

"That the National Council of Women urges the Board of Education to appoint more women inspectors, not only for general inspection, but with a special view to their qualifications to report upon questions of health and sanitation."

Ultimately after much discussion an amendment proposed by Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon, was substituted:—

"That the National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland records its appreciation of the appointment of Women Inspectors by the Board of Education in England, and urges the Scottish Education Department to add women to their staff of inspectors of the ordinary school curriculum."

The acceptance of this resolution wiped out the original suggestion that England should have an increase of women inspectors of the highest attainments, and proposed instead that Scotland should be brought into line with what has already been done in England.

4. The following Urgency Resolution, proposed from the Chair, was passed unanimously:—

"That, in view of the supposed intention of the Government to bring in a Local Government Bill next session, and also in view of the Triennial Elections to County Councils to be held next March, the National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland re-affirms the principle of the resolutions already passed at previous meetings (as given below), and calls upon the Government to adopt as a Government Measure the Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill; with a view to its being passed in the Autumn Session."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)