

pose the application of justice rather than that of charity. I am bound to say that I think we are not altogether guiltless in this matter, either in the pulpit or in the pew.

I ask the religious press to utilise some of their ablest writers in keeping their readers correctly informed on social subjects, and to throw the weight of their great influence on the side of those changes that will make for the greatest good of their fellowmen.

I ask my fellow-employers to realise the trust that has been committed to us, and use it as stewards of our Lord and Master to whom we must render our account.

I ask my fellow-members to consider how much we can all do to further the right solution of these difficult problems, for in my deliberate judgment upon the right attitude adopted by Christian men and women on social questions will largely depend their gradual and successful solution without the accompaniment of bitter and painful episodes, and may we learn more fully that "whoever would become great among you shall be your minister and whoever would be first among you shall be servant of all."

One other point: Have we, as churches, done what we could in calling forth the personal service of the members of our larger churches for the working class districts of our towns and cities? Some of our churches have done something, and our settlements are also helping nobly, but might there not be groups of churches united for similar purposes? There are many with insufficient strength to do much alone, who, if united with others, might accomplish great things. In this way we should open channels for personal service that would afford an opportunity for many of our members to come into personal touch with those who are feeling the pinch of existing conditions.

I ask only that our churches may not put aside these questions from their thought. I appeal to our ministers to give some portion of their time to the consideration of social reforms, so that when the occasion demands an utterance they may make it with knowledge coupled with sympathy.

#### The Women's National Council.

As it was decided by a unanimous vote of the delegates in council assembled at Auckland last April, that the next annual meeting should be held in

Dunedin, the Executive thought it advisable that one of the officers should visit Dunedin during the year and try and gain the sympathy and co-operation of some of the ladies of that city in furthering the Council's work.

To endeavour to carry out this suggestion, the President, Mrs Sheppard, went to Dunedin on November 21, and spent a few days in calling on some of those who were likely to take an interest in the Council's affairs. On Friday, December 1, Mrs Sheppard held an "At Home" in the Y.M.C.A. Rooms, Moray Place, when about forty were present. Through the kindness of Mrs W. H. Reynolds and other friends the large upstairs room was made to look bright and festive by large bowls of beautiful roses, rhododendrons, poppies and other flowers. At a little after 3 o'clock, Mrs Reynolds (who for many years has been an ardent worker in the Kindergarten Association) said that while she knew very little about the Council, or its work, she was then to hear what the President had to say about it. She knew that the Council had already held four meetings, and had been warmly received in each city in turn, and, as an old resident, she would not like to think that Dunedin would be behind in according to the Council an equally hearty welcome. They had all read in the papers of the doings of the International Council, and she thought that all should take a real interest in everything that aimed for the good of humanity. If the Council was on right lines it would stand, if not, it would come to naught, so that there was nothing to fear in the matter. Mrs Sheppard followed, giving the history of the inception and growth of the National and International Councils from 1888 till now. The "Council Idea" was born in America, and the first National Council was formed in the United States, of which Frances Willard was the president. The idea was to form National Councils in every civilized country in the world, all to be affiliated under one International Council.

The main objects of the International were—

- (1) To promote unity, mutual understanding, and trust between the women workers of all nations.
- (2) To provide a centre where women workers can meet every five years, and hear and see and know each other, and learn about each other's work; and also to provide a medium of

communication between all such workers at all times.

- (3) To give opportunity for the women workers of all nations to unite on certain general lines of work, such as they may decide on from time to time, and which they believe will further the application of the Golden Rule to society, custom, and law all the world over.

The "International" had held its first meeting at the Paris Exhibition in 1889, its second in Chicago at the World's Fair, and the third in June last in London. National Councils had been formed in many countries, the New Zealand Council being organised in April, 1896. Most of the women's societies in the colony had affiliated.

Mrs Sheppard said a little about the subjects taken up by the Council. She hoped the Society for the Protection of Women and Children and the Kindergarten Association would both affiliate as soon as possible, and send their accredited delegates to the Council's meeting. She explained the financial position, and said that if a committee could be formed for making arrangements for the next meeting it would assist the Executive very materially.

Tea and confections were then handed round, after which a number of ladies consented to act on the committee. It was decided that the committee should hold its first meeting and appoint a secretary before the Christmas holidays.

Mrs Reynolds announced that she had waited on the Mayor to ask if the Council would grant the use of the City Council Chamber for the meeting of the Women's Council, and he replied that he saw no difficulty in the matter whatever.

Mrs Sheppard thanked those present for responding to her invitation, and for so kindly acceding to the wishes of the Executive in forming a committee.

Miss Teresa Wilson, the Corresponding Secretary of the International Council, was elected at the recent Congress for the full quinquennial term. Miss Wilson has been for twelve years Lady Aberdeen's private secretary, looking after the details of the many organisations in which the Countess is a leader. Among the latter are the Victorian Order of Nurses, the Women's Social Government Society, the Aberdeen Union of Women Workers, and the Irish Lace Depot in Dublin.