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AL/2864

WOMAN'S CORNER.

All communications intended for this Page should be addressed to the Editor of the "Woman's Corner,"
"Co-operative News" Office, Long Millgate, Manchester.

The Larger Co-operation.

As the Guild increases, Congress has more and more to talk about, and it becomes harder and harder to find time for all the subjects on which a mandate is wanted for next year's work. This year there were several resolutions of the first class, such as co-operative minimum wage for women and girls, adult suffrage (for women especially), and the abolition of half-time work for children. On these, all—or nearly all—of us had made up our minds long ago. We had only to notice the fresh support won, and the minority's gradual disappearance.

But the second day's principal subject, "Co-operation and the Labour Unrest," was new, and it was what we all wanted to be thinking of. For co-operative women have been deeply stirred by the great strikes of the last few months. A great awakening of labour is going on, and co-operators want to have their share in it. So the great success of this year's Congress was Mrs. Eddie's paper. It was worthy of the occasion. Mrs. Eddie gave a most interesting view of what the stores have done, especially during the coal strike. They have bought coal in order to sell it at the usual prices to their members; they have refused to raise their prices of bread, coal, and other things; or, in some cases, have actually lowered prices to meet the members' exceptional needs; and most remarkable of all, they have sometimes, by refusing to raise their prices, succeeded in defeating an attempt to form a ring and raise prices for a district. This has been an immense help to the members, and it is no wonder that as Mrs. Eddie tells, committeemen were stopped in the street to be thanked for these and other benefits of co-operation. But, besides that, it was a lesson in economics. How many crude generalisations about supply and demand, and the price of individual self-interest, have been, and still are, brought up against working people's attempts to adapt industry to their human needs! And here is one of the cases that shows how the will of certain people, acting in public-spirited defence of those needs, can conquer the purely economic and commercial forces which, after all, are only the wills of other human beings, and not natural forces like gravity.

It was only done in a scattered way, and on a small scale. Next time it ought to be done with more foresight, and by a common understanding—both between the co-operative societies themselves, and between them and the trade unions.

There is still a strong feeling abroad that trade unionism alone is the "labour movement," and that the stores are stick-in-the-mud trading concerns that do nothing but make the more quietly disposed workers into little capitalists. Such ideas ought to be destroyed once for all by the part played by the stores in the coal strike. The secretary of a society, in sending some of the information from which Mrs. Eddie's paper was prepared, made the interesting suggestion that the C.W.S. should be the bank for all the workmen's associations, with a view to developing forms of mutual credit. And is not the time ripe for such a move? As a first step, let all the Guilds and stores circulate Mrs. Eddie's paper as widely as possible, especially among trade unionists, and let discussion and joint action take place at the meetings of working class organisations of all kinds. After all, there is no single way towards freedom and well-being. We get too fond of one method, one way of uniting or co-operating. The trade union

and the store together will have a force which is greater than the sum of their two strengths.

Indeed, co-operation can be carried much further than the union and the store. At some points, for instance, we want the help of the State, as in the raising of the age of child labour. The main thing is the motive. We want to raise the people, and to take every way of doing so that fits some part of their many-sided needs.

Congress Impressions.

BUSINESS-LIKE indeed were the delegates to the Guild Congress at Hull; each woman, almost without exception, carried notebook and pencil.

Immediately business was started all talking ceased. There was none of that soft-toned chit-chat so noticeable and irritating in meetings or concerts, where it would seem as if certain people went to talk, and might have done so with more comfort, both for others and themselves, in their own homes.

There was a living interest in the proceedings which permitted of no interruption.

Naïve touches of humour were constantly coming out. Mrs. Blair, when presenting a "Guild History" to Mrs. Feldman (the wife of the Deputy-Mayor, who welcomed the delegates on the Monday evening), hoped that lady would read the book carefully, and afterwards become a member of the Hull branch.

One delegate, on being told that her time for speaking was limited to three minutes, said, "Well, if I talk sharp, I shall happen do it." Another, hearing the gong sounded, cried out, "Eh, dear, and I've only just begun."

There were all kinds of speakers at the Congress. There were the discursive ones, who touched on more subjects during the short time allotted than would seem possible without supernatural aid. There were persuasive speakers, those who blustered, and there were the timid and the bold ones.

Of course, faults there were, or else the Congress would not have been held on earth; but the deepest feeling one who has never been to a Guild Congress before came away with was that of thankfulness that England can produce a band of women like those heard at Hull. And, better still, members of the Women's Co-operative Guild not only talk, they work.

Delegates' Decorations.—Nearly all the delegates were decorated either with a Guild badge or a flower, the colour of which represented the section to which they belonged. This decoration is a useful idea, and helped to smarten the gathering.

The Mayor was very flattering in his remarks at the opening of Congress on Tuesday. He said so many nice things about the women that one felt inclined to remark "cum grano salis," especially when he said the women were "a lovely lot."

New Guild Officers.—The new officials of the Guild are: President, Mrs. Wimbush (Woolwich); vice-president, Mrs. Essery (Plymouth); treasurer, Mrs. Barton; and assistant-secretary, Miss Lilian Harris. Mrs. Blair was also re-elected the Guild representative on the Union Education Committee.

There were at least five women members of management committees present at the Hull Congress—Mrs. Found (Bristol), Mrs. Slater (Hull), Miss Gratton (Leeds), Mrs. Billinge (Toxteth), and Mrs. Morrissey, who has just been returned at the head of the poll of the Toxteth Society.

Mrs. Forest (Earlsheaton) earned her reputation at the Hull Congress, and will be known in future as "twenty-one." Mrs. Forest is quite elderly in appearance, but she has a young heart, is earnest and vigorous, and with a remarkably clear voice she impressed Congress with her quaint remarks. The name "Forest" is singularly appropriate for her. She is "evergreen." "More power to her elbow," as the saying goes, and may "twenty-one" live to attain her jubilee.

A Complaint.—Of course, there are always grievances to be heard, some real and some imagined. This year the great complaint—a very real one—was that the hall did not lend itself to good hearing, especially at the back. The room was large and not too full, and this, coupled with the fact that some did not speak out, made it impossible for those at the back to hear. As one member said, "It makes one feel tired when you can't hear what is going on." Had each one speaking from the centre been provided with a rostrum for the purpose, and placed a little below the level of the platform, the audience would have had a better chance of hearing the speakers.

DELEGATES TO CONFERENCES.

Members as well as Committee Representatives Should be Appointed.

That this Congress urges that in all delegations to the C.W.S. quarterly meetings, Co-operative Congress, and district conferences, where more than one delegate is sent, the members should appoint at least the same number of delegates as are appointed by the management committee; and further urges that the delegates to the C.W.S. quarterly meeting should be appointed for a year, and that these delegates should meet and discuss the agenda for the quarterly meetings beforehand, and should decide on how they will vote, subject to any directions from the quarterly meetings of their society on any special questions.

Mrs. Scurlock (Northern Sectional secretary), in moving the above resolution, said that, generally speaking, delegates to conferences, Congresses, and Co-operative Wholesale Society's meetings were appointed in a very haphazard way. It would be better for the sake of the business if they were appointed for one year. She thought members should send representatives as well as committees. But up to now the appointment of delegates to the Union conferences were, in her society, kept to the committee.

Mrs. Yates (Oldham Industrial), seconding, said it was essential members as well as committee members should attend the C.W.S. meetings. This would increase loyalty and interest in the movement. How could delegates have a real grasp of the subject, say, on the question of the C.W.S. and the C.I.S. if they were only appointed for one quarter? A meeting should always be arranged beforehand, so that the appointed delegates could discuss and agree how to vote on the business.

Mrs. Booth (Derby) said she came from a society which did elect its representatives on democratic lines. They were elected by ballot.

Mrs. Keen (Coventry) said they had sent in a resolution in favour of delegates being sent from the members, but the committee said they were wanting to deprive them of their privileges. (Laughter.) But the question came up again, with the result that success was won, and they sent a guildswoman to the Union Congress, and the instruction was that delegates must bring back reports. (Hear, hear.)

Miss Allen (Reigate) supported, and said they had worked for this reform and got it carried that delegates should be appointed for one year, and be sent from the members as well as from the committee. The educational committee were not granted a ticket, because it was feared their vote would nullify that of the management committee on the minimum wage. (Shame.)

Mrs. Shaw (Levenshulme, Manchester) said her society did call a meeting of the delegates, but only three turned up out of the thirty-six appointed.

Mrs. Barnes (Plumstead) opposed the resolution. She asked why they could not trust their management committees after having elected them. They should get women elected on the committees. Committees were elected for business, and not for education. (Cries of "Oh, oh.") Surely committees knew more about business than did the ordinary member. (Question, question.) Standing orders would have to be altered in her society to meet the needs of the resolution.

Mrs. Clarke (Cleator Moor) supported the resolution, and Mrs. Brodie (Bristol) told how this appointment of delegations was kept in the committee-room of her society, and how the guild tried to get women sent as delegates to the C.W.S. meetings. Meanwhile, the president turned the vote against them at the quarterly meeting. She asked where were their women, those who had pledged themselves to support the resolution. They should not have allowed themselves to be turned aside; women must be true and loyal to one another. (Applause.)

Mrs. Forest (Earlsheaton) told how their delegates to Congress were elected from the management and educational committees and from the body of the hall. And she was proud Mrs. Forest was the delegate to be sent from the members. (Loud applause and laughter.) It was the proudest day of her life when she went to Congress.

The resolution was afterwards carried unanimously.

TOUCHING SCENES.

The White Slave Traffic, and the Closing of Congress.

QUITE the most touching scenes of this year's Congress came at the close of the discussion on "The White Slave Traffic," and when the retiring President (Mrs. Blair) handed over the chain of office—so much admired by the Mayor of Hull—to the incoming President (Mrs. Wimhurst).

Moving the resolution on "The White Slave Traffic" as follows:—

That this Congress calls on the Government to pass the Criminal Law Amendment Bill (White Slave Traffic), and pass it into law this session, and further urges that the Bill should be amended so that the age of consent is raised to eighteen years. (This Bill makes solicitation an offence for men as well as for women, and increases the penalties on disorderly houses.)

Mrs. Scott (Stockport) asked why, if a man could be arrested on suspicion of being a pickpocket, he could not be arrested for accosting a woman in the street. (Hear, hear.) If they raised the age of consent to eighteen, as suggested in the resolution, even then some girls could not be a match for what they had to contend against. She was glad the Government had accepted the Bill since their resolution was drawn up.

Mrs. Billinge (Toxteth) said they would have to take Parliamentary action in this matter of preventing young girls from going astray. They must have equal laws for men and women. And they must not put women into Holloway or put them to the wash-tub in penitentiaries with the idea of reforming them. (Hear, hear.) She believed in raising the age to twenty-one. (Loud applause.)

Mrs. Faulkner (Reigate) said if women could not remain innocent, they could remain pure. The moral standard of the people must be raised if education was to give them the best results.

Mrs. Webb (Central Hull) said the resolution did not go far enough. She would give the man the "cat" there and then. It was money which led women astray. It was scandalous the low wages that were paid to women.

Mrs. Daymond (Plymouth) said they should go in for women magistrates for the hearing of women's cases. (Applause.) Men thought they could look after women's interests, but they could not understand women's personal feelings. She was a Poor-Law Guardian, and knew a girl who was ruined by a well-to-do man. This girl was described as wicked by another man, and when she investigated the case, she found the man who had betrayed the girl was a friend of the one who made the accusation. So pathetic were the circumstances of the case told by Mrs. Daymond that nearly all the delegates were found in tears when she sat down.

Mrs. Nobel (Keighley Jubilee) also knew of girls ruined at eighteen years of age, one of whom was arrested at a massage institution, the proprietor of which was dressed in nurse's uniform.

The resolution was carried without one dissentient.

1913 IN NEWCASTLE.

On the invitation of two Newcastle delegates, it was agreed to accept the invitation of Newcastle for next year's Congress. Then followed the omnibus vote of thanks, moved by Mrs. Wilkin (C.C.), and seconded by Mrs. Booth (also of the Central Committee). Once more an appeal was made for all to take the "Co-operative News" and to read "our own paper."

Mrs. Rae and Mrs. Slater replied, and Miss Ll. Davies, in responding to the expression of thanks given to her, said that in any vote of thanks given to her, Miss Harris must be included, for during the past year much of the work, both in connection with the Guild and the Insurance Act, had devolved upon her.

Mrs. Blair then handed over the chain of office to this year's president (Mrs. Wimhurst), wishing her health, joy, and happiness in her work.

Replying, Mrs. Wimhurst, who was touched with the ceremony, told how the 19th was one of her lucky days. She appealed for unity and a closing up of the ranks, and with "Love" as our watchword, "let us," she said, "On, or with the fight."

vantage to the Labour Party. Women were excluded on the ground of sex; they were only thought to be concerned with clothes and food. Co-operative women must prove that women were fit to take their place in the life of the nation. Women of other countries were watching the women of England. Let them all do something this autumn by sending deputations to their members, and by working with their Labour organisations, so that the Bill might become law.

Mrs. Keen (Coventry) said the Bill heaped injustice on to women. The greatest obstacle was that women were contented, and thought men should vote for them. They must be persistent and enthusiastic. She was glad to say their member had withdrawn his support from the Bill because the women were not included.

Mrs. Close (South Durham) complained because what women had fought for was now to be given to the men. When they got the vote, she hoped all their young working women would vote for Labour. Her girls were as intelligent as her boys; she had seen to that. (Hear, hear.) The statement that husband and wife would disagree was a bogey. It would be a happy time when husband and wife had nothing to quarrel about but politics. The present labour troubles would never have arisen if women had had the vote. (Applause.)

Mrs. Gasson (Southern Sectional secretary) urged the women to get their men voters to bombard their M.P.'s with postcards. If cards came from men voters, they would have more influence.

Mrs. Hancock (Altrincham) said her advice was to do nothing, and do it well.

A Delegate from Litchfield told how their members had had a discussion on adult suffrage, with a good speaker, and were now converted.

Mrs. Campbell (Walthamstow) asked what would be the attitude if women were not included, or if included only in a small way.

Mrs. Blair (chairman) said they were not anticipating not being in the Bill; they must be in.

The resolution was put and carried, with about five against, and the Chairman then asked for an "Aye" that would reach Westminster, to which a hearty response was made.

SCHOOL CLINICS.

Miss Freeman (Holloway) moved the resolution on the above in the name of the Central Committee:—

That this Congress welcomes the recognition of the importance of school clinics by the allocation to them of a grant of £60,000 from the National Exchequer, but seeing that the amount of this grant is entirely inadequate, this Congress calls on the Government to increase the national grant to at least half-a-million, in order that the local authorities may be enabled to establish fully-equipped school clinics in all districts where they are required.

"The children," said the speaker, "are the hope of the nation's future. And school clinics are too few," said Miss Freeman; "but those in existence have done magnificent work in caring for ailments unsuitable for home and hospital treatment. These ailments were small at first, but if allowed to go neglected, they would interfere with the physical and mental capacity of the children. The revelations of the medical inspectors' report for 1907 were most serious. It was found that 63 per cent. of the suffering in elementary schools was due to lack of treatment and nursing attention. It was usual in England for work of this kind to be taken up privately before the Government would take the matter up. And the grant which the Government had now given for the work was hopelessly inadequate. It was better to spend half-a-million on raising up the nation's citizens rather than in destruction. (Applause.) The power of 27,000 working women's voices in a matter of this kind would do wonders in helping to make the conditions of the poor of our country less hard.

Mrs. Calvert (Blackburn) seconded the resolution. There was nothing to fear, she said, from a well-developed and well-educated democracy. They had asked for a clinic to be established in Blackburn, and had only failed in getting the scheme carried through the town council by one vote. (Applause.)

Mrs. Butler (Leeds) supported the resolution. Medical inspection was a farce unless followed up by treatment.

Mrs. Holden (Dewsbury) also supported, stating that £60,000 was totally inadequate for a nation's needs. Some of the children in Dewsbury could not get treatment, and had to be sent to Bradford Infirmary.

Mrs. Holdsworth (Great Horton, Bradford) was proud that Bradford led the way in having a clinic and an open-air school.

Mrs. Harris (Guildford) supported, and told how, after discussing the question at their Guild meetings, they had allowed the matter to be taken out of their hands, with the result that they had not got what they wanted.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

QUALIFICATION FOR COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS.

Mrs. Boyd (Hull) formally moved the following resolution—

That this Congress urges the Government to bring in the Local Government Qualification (England and Wales) Bill as a Government measure, in order that the law may provide the same residential qualification for men and women candidates for county and borough councils as is required for candidates for district and parish councils and boards of guardians.

—which Mrs. Parvin (Middlesbrough) seconded, and which was carried unanimously.

GUILD FINANCES.

Miss Harris (assistant-secretary) moved the following resolution on behalf of the Central Committee:—

In view of the continuous development of the Guild, and of the fact that no increase of grant will have been made for nine years, this Congress earnestly requests the United Board, in allotting its increased income, to increase the annual grant to the Guild by £200, making a total grant of £500.

She said that for two or three years past the state of the Guild finances had not been satisfactory. For special work they had been obliged to start special funds. But this year's Congress at Portsmouth had decided to increase the funds of the Union, and it was nine years since the Guild had received any increase. The Union had not grown on its poverty, as Mr. Goodenough seemed to suggest was the better way. To-day the Guild comprised 143 branches, with a membership of nearly 80,000. And because so long had elapsed since the last increase, it was felt they were justified in making a larger demand. More office assistance was needed, and the work generally needed more money.

Mrs. Jacques (Guild treasurer) seconded the resolution. Mr. Goodenough had said it was good to live in poverty, but the Guild could not do without money. (Laughter and applause.)

Mrs. Booth (C.O.) supported. She thought the Guild was justified in the request, as did also Mrs. Bury (Darwen), who pointed out that women were paid for in the subscriptions to the Union.

The resolution was carried unanimously, and the delegates adjourned for the day.

Officials at Congress.

A GATHERING of sectional and district officials was held in the Owen Hall of the Educational Institute, on Tuesday, June 18th. Mrs. Blair presided, supported by Miss Harris and the Central Committee members. The meeting was informal, and was intended to oil the wheels of the inner machinery of the Guild organisation, and to plan out the work of officials for the coming year. These meetings are of immense value to those officials, and help to clear away many difficulties and to regularise the work.

Convalescent Fund.

WE are glad to report that the Congress contributions to the Mrs. Jones Guild Convalescent Fund, which this year was taken in the form of a sixpenny contribution from each delegate on arrival, reached the satisfactory sum of £16 0s. 6d.

Miss Webb, who was unanimously re-appointed secretary to the Fund, tells us that since the inauguration of the Fund in March, 1895, in memory of Mrs. Benjamin Jones, up to December 31st, 1911, the following totals have been reached:—Branch subscriptions, £668 4s.; donations for present use, £910 12s. 10d.—total, £1,578 16s. 10d. Donations for investment (original donations and donations received since in memory of deceased members), £315 3s. 10d.; collections at Congress, £67 2s. 9d.; interest and sundry receipts, £199 8s. 9d.; number of members helped, 1,154; grants, £1,701 14s. 8d.; amount invested with the Co-operative Union, £300.

Congress Favours.—The effective purple blossom worn by the Reception Committee and local Guild members at Hull were made by the inmates of the workhouse under the Brabazon scheme of work.

"THE PRESENT DISCONTENT."

Congress Welcomes the Workers' Awakening.

THE POWER OF THE PRESS AND THE DUTY OF TRADE UNIONISTS.

Earnest Appeals on Behalf of the "Co-operative News."

DELEGATES were early in their attendance on the Wednesday morning, when Mrs. Blair again took the chair, and the sun shone brightly, making all the difference to the proceedings inside the Assembly Hall. The chief discussion of the morning centred round Mrs. Eddie's paper on "Co-operation and Labour Uprisings." Before this was taken, however, there came the election of the Convalescent Fund secretary, and immediately Miss Webb's name was moved and seconded, the nominations were closed.

Rising to return thanks, Miss Webb, who was greeted with applause, said the subscriptions were not quite up to the level of last year's, but the demands had been heavy. The labour uprising had affected their Fund, and there had been more applications from consumptives than ever before. This was due to the disease having become notifiable. As yet, the Convalescent Fund could not touch these cases, and it would be some time before relief was given under the Insurance Act. Even when this did come into force, the home-mother would be the last to be helped—(shame)—and they must help in bridging over the time when the Insurance Act did come into operation. Her warmest thanks would be found in the little receipts. (Laughter and applause.)

Mrs. Haworth (Accrington, and the oldest member of the Fund committee) said Miss Webb was the right woman in the right place.

Before the report was adopted, Mrs. Collins (Small Heath) asked what had been done with the Coming-of-Age Fund (£88 10s. 8½d.), to which Miss L. Davies that this money was held in suspense. It was given for the extension of co-operation in poor neighbourhoods, but at present it was being held back till some society was willing to take up work like that undertaken at Sunderland.

Mrs. Blair then formally moved the adoption of the report, which was seconded, and carried unanimously.

LABOUR UPRISINGS.

Rising to read her paper, Mrs. Eddie explained that they were indebted for the information about the action of societies during the coal war contained in the paper to the secretaries of societies mentioned, to whom the Central Committee expressed their warmest thanks.

Immediately following the reading, Mrs. Cottrell (Ten Acres and Stirchley) moved the following resolution:—

That this Congress enthusiastically welcomes the awakening of the workers, as shown in the labour uprisings of the past year, and urges every trade unionist to become a co-operator, seeing how valuable co-operation has proved in labour struggles (1) by building up large money reserves through the stores and the C.W.S. bank, and (2) in controlling prices in the interests of the workers. Further, this Congress considers that the co-operative movement should support all Parliamentary action for the extension of the Minimum Wage Act, and for obtaining reforms in the ownership and control of land, mines, and railways, so that the workers' position may be permanently improved and a more equitable distribution of wealth brought about; and also recommends all workers to support the "Co-operative News," and welcomes the establishment of the new Labour daily press, because it will help to secure the unity of the workers' movements and the true expression of facts concerning them.

This resolution, said the speaker, links up what we have so often discussed. Although they saw the necessity of strikes, that did not mean they wanted their continuation. Could not the unrest be remedied by other means? The people now realised that help was to be got through combination, and every trade unionist should be a co-operator—a point which ought not to be necessary to urge. Trade unionism was a part of co-operation, and every trade unionist should help to extend the work of co-operation by spending his money through co-operative channels. (Hear, hear.) Co-operation had helped trade unionism. Nor was trade unionism for men only. The co-operative movement should support Parli-

mentary action, for politics meant the science of good government. They must see to it that Parliamentary action was on co-operative lines, and get rid of the idea that such action meant helping one party or the other. Newspapers were run by political parties, and the true facts concerning labour did not get into those papers. From the "Co-operative News," their own paper, they got co-operative knowledge; and though she urged all to support their own paper, she also thought co-operators should support the new Labour press.

Mrs. Paul Campbell (Walthamstow), seconding, said trade unionists should come into the movement; it was to their and to our disadvantage that they stood aloof. The two bodies could do a great work in altering the principles on which society was based to-day. Amongst co-operators there was some horror at the idea of using the Parliamentary machine, but by entering the Parliamentary arena they were only extending their co-operative work. The workers must co-operate nationally as well as co-operatively. And let them make their own "News" and the new Labour press a greater power. They were at present at the mercy of the party and capitalistic press. From reading the newspapers about the bye-election at Holmfirth, they would never know there was a third candidate in the field.

Mrs. Barton (Sheffield) supported the resolution, but she said in merely passing resolutions there was not much hope. The Northumberland bankers thought they could break the back of the coal strike by refusing to lend the miners money, and when once the workers realised that they could do this work for themselves and be their own bankers, there was some hope.

Mrs. Moss (Darlington, and Northern District) spoke as the wife of a worker who had gone through the struggle, and said that until they could get better weapons, they must use the strike. In her town the leaders of trade unionism were against co-operation. They stayed outside and criticised the movement, whereas they should come inside and help to alter what needed amending and altering in the movement. At present they were on the fence.

THE "NEWS" FIRST AND FOREMOST.

Mrs. Scott (Stockport) said she was asked by her branch to say something on this subject. She had heard the C.W.S. directors say they never asked their employes whether they were trade unionists or not. This was a great mistake. (Applause.) It was no use building up great reserve funds unless they helped starving women and children. (Hear, hear.) It was true many workers did not welcome the strike. They asked where the benefit came in when the prices went up. Here was the remedy: The people must get hold of the means of production. (Loud applause.) Too long had the workers been too dull and blind. And so much depended on the women.

Mrs. Wilmhurst (C.C.) thought the labour unrest would be eased by the bringing in of the present Parliament Bill, then by giving women the vote, and after that the gaining of social and economic freedom. Then they must free themselves from greed, and when they had gained their freedom, let them not copy the habits and ways of those now in power. Let them guard against the selfish spirit. In her opinion, no press would be better than any at present existing if it were not impartial.

Mrs. Bury (Darwen), while finding it hard work to disagree, and with all due deference to the new Labour paper, urged them not to forget their own paper, the "News." The "News" was well worthy of their support—(hear, hear)—and should be first and foremost with them. (Hear, hear.) During later years in the Guild there was just that tendency to forget the things distinctly co-operative. She was all at one with them in hoping trade unionists would become co-operators, and it was true that in the past trade unionists had not supported the movement. They wanted an extension of the co-operative principle to the land and railways. (Hear, hear.) But if they went too far in Parliamentary action, she saw rocks ahead. After all, this appeal to join the Labour party was an appeal to come over to one particular side. (Loud applause.) Let them steer clear of all parties. (Applause.)

Mrs. Hardstaff (West Hull) said that the increase in the dockers' wages of ¼d. an hour had practically left them as they were before, because Saturday had been given as a holiday, and rates and prices had gone up. What benefit was ¼d. when they had to pay 2d. in the shilling more to someone else? (Hear, hear.) All along it was the strugglers who were the hardest hit. The best thing was to bring co-opera-

vantage to the Labour Party. Women were excluded on the ground of sex; they were only thought to be concerned with clothes and food. Co-operative women must prove that women were fit to take their place in the life of the nation. Women of other countries were watching the women of England. Let them all do something this autumn by sending deputations to their members, and by working with their Labour organisations, so that the Bill might become law.

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Miss Freeman (Holloway) moved the resolution on the above in the name of the Central Committee:—

That this Congress welcomes the recognition of the importance of school clinics by the allocation to them of a grant of £60,000 from the National Exchequer, but seeing that the amount of this grant is entirely inadequate, this Congress calls on the Government to increase the national grant to at least half-a-million, in order that the local authorities may be enabled to establish fully-equipped school clinics in all districts where they are required.

"The children," said the speaker, "are the hope of the nation's future. And school clinics are too few," said Miss Freeman; "but those in existence have done magnificent work in caring for ailments unsuitable for home and hospital treatment. These ailments were small at first, but if allowed to go neglected, they would interfere with the physical and mental capacity of the children. The revelations of the medical inspectors' report for 1907 were most serious. It was found that 63 per cent. of the suffering in elementary schools was due to lack of treatment and nursing attention. It was usual in England for work of this kind to be taken up privately before the Government would take the matter up. And the grant which the Government had now given for the work was hopelessly inadequate. It was better to spend half-a-million on raising up the nation's citizens rather than in destruction. (Applause.) The power of 27,000 working women's voices in a matter of this kind would do wonders in helping to make the conditions of the poor of our country less hard.

Mrs. Calvert (Blackburn) seconded the resolution. There was nothing to fear, she said, from a well-developed and well-educated democracy. They had asked for a clinic to be established in Blackburn, and had only failed in getting the scheme carried through the town council by one vote. (Applause.)

Mrs. Butler (Leeds) supported the resolution. Medical inspection was a farce unless followed up by treatment.

Mrs. Holden (Dewsbury) also supported, stating that £60,000 was totally inadequate for a nation's needs. Some of the children in Dewsbury could not get treatment, and had to be sent to Bradford Infirmary.

Mrs. Holdsworth (Great Horton, Bradford) was proud that Bradford led the way in having a clinic and an open-air school.

Mrs. Harris (Guildford) supported, and told how, after discussing the question at their Guild meetings, they had allowed the matter to be taken out of their hands, with the result that they had not got what they wanted.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

QUALIFICATION FOR COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS.

Mrs. Boyd (Hull) formally moved the following resolution—

That this Congress urges the Government to bring in the Local Government Qualification (England and Wales) Bill as a Government measure, in order that the law may provide the same residential qualification for men and women candidates for county and borough councils as is required for candidates for district and parish councils and boards of guardians.

—which Mrs. Parvin (Middlesbrough) seconded, and which was carried unanimously.

GUILD FINANCES.

Miss Harris (assistant-secretary) moved the following resolution on behalf of the Central Committee:—

In view of the continuous development of the Guild, and of the fact that no increase of grant will have been made for nine years, this Congress earnestly requests the United Board, in allotting its increased income, to increase the annual grant to the Guild by £200, making a total grant of £500.

She said that for two or three years past the state of the Guild finances had not been satisfactory. For special work they had been obliged to start special funds. But this year's Congress at Portsmouth had decided to increase the funds of the Union, and it was nine years since the Guild had received any increase. The Union had not grown on its poverty, as Mr. Goodenough seemed to suggest was the better way. To-day the Guild comprised 143 branches, with a membership of nearly 80,000. And because so long had elapsed since the last increase, it was felt they were justified in making a larger demand. More office assistance was needed, and the work generally needed more money.

Mrs. Jacques (Guild treasurer) seconded the resolution. Mr. Goodenough had said it was good to live in poverty, but the Guild could not do without money. (Laughter and applause.)

Mrs. Booth (C.C.) supported. She thought the Guild was justified in the request, as did also Mrs. Bury (Darwen), who pointed out that women were paid for in the subscriptions to the Union.

The resolution was carried unanimously, and the delegates adjourned for the day.

Officials at Congress.

A GATHERING of sectional and district officials was held in the Owen Hall of the Educational Institute, on Tuesday, June 18th. Mrs. Blair presided, supported by Miss Harris and the Central Committee members. The meeting was informal, and was intended to oil the wheels of the inner machinery of the Guild organisation, and to plan out the work of officials for the coming year. These meetings are of immense value to those officials, and help to clear away many difficulties and to regularise the work.

Convalescent Fund.

WE are glad to report that the Congress contributions to the Mrs. Jones Guild Convalescent Fund, which this year was taken in the form of a sixpenny contribution from each delegate on arrival, reached the satisfactory sum of £16 0s. 6d.

Miss Webb, who was unanimously re-appointed secretary to the Fund, tells us that since the inauguration of the Fund in March, 1895, in memory of Mrs. Benjamin Jones, up to December 31st, 1911, the following totals have been reached:—Branch subscriptions, £668 4s.; donations for present use, £910 12s. 10d.—total, £1,578 16s. 10d. Donations for investment (original donations and donations received since in memory of deceased members), £315 3s. 10d.; collections at Congress, £67 2s. 9d.; interest and sundry receipts, £199 8s. 9d.; number of members helped, 1,154; grants, £1,701 14s. 8d.; amount invested with the Co-operative Union, £300.

Congress Favours.—The effective purple blossom worn by the Reception Committee and local Guild members at Hull were made by the inmates of the workhouse under the Brabazon scheme of work.

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 804.]

WOMEN WORKERS AND TRADE UNIONISM.

What was described as the new resolution standing in the name of the Toxteth Guild, read as follows:—

Seeing that all wage-earners, women as well as men, will be compelled to join an approved society in order to secure full benefits under the Insurance Act, this Congress urges the necessity for all women workers to become members of a trade union, and make it their approved society, because they will have a better chance of resisting injustices, remedying grievances, and securing improved conditions of labour.

This was moved by Mrs. Hines (Toxteth), who advocated co-operators and trade unionists working together. If the contributions were paid through a trade union, the workers would be better able to fight for better benefits from the Act.

Another Delegate from Toxteth seconded the resolution, stating that she believed in women standing side by side with the men. Women did their work too cheaply. She was proud to be a co-operator and a Labour woman, and she thought all co-operative women could join the Labour movement as well as the Guild, and thus help to get improved conditions of labour. (Hear, hear.)

Miss Allen (Reigate) asked how this resolution would affect those joining the Co-operative National Insurance Society.

Mrs. Billinge, supporting, said she knew of "union" girls being suspended from work for refusing to sign the paper sent round by the companies for whom they worked. (Shame.) It would take workgirls all their time to pay their insurance money, and if they did not join through a union to start with, they would not be able to join the union after.

Mrs. Haworth (Accrington) complained that they did not know where they stood on this matter.

Mrs. Campbell (Walthamstow) told how to-day there were appeals for a closer alliance between trade unionism and co-operation. Did they think more of the C.W.S. than women combining together to get better conditions? Every woman should be inside her trade union. (Applause.)

Miss Harris (Assistant-Secretary) said the question was very important. The Guild had taken an active part in getting women to become trade unionists. They had advised their workers to join the A.U.C.E. as a continuance of a long-established policy, and now they felt they must not allow the question of joining a co-operative approved society to weaken their trade unionism. There were women for whom there would be no trade union, and for these it would be valuable to have a co-operative approved society. The married women who became voluntary contributors under the Act might come in through the co-operative society. But if young women accepted any other society than their trade union, trade unionism, which stood for the upkeep of the workers' wages, would be weakened. The action advocated was not in antagonism to the co-operative societies, but a continuance of the policy always advocated by the Guild that women workers should become trade unionists. The A.U.C.E. was the society for the co-operative workers. (Applause.)

A Plumstead delegate asked how they were to get hold of those women who went out for the day, to which the answer was through the trade union of charwomen under the National Federation of Women Workers.

The resolution was afterwards carried unanimously.

CREDIT TRADING.

Mrs. Morissey (Toxteth) moved:—

That this Congress recommends the sectional councils to endeavour, through the branches, to arrange round-table conferences in those societies where credit is allowed, and that representatives of the sectional board and guild sectional council should be invited to attend, and also urges every guild district to ask the sectional board to send their Anti-Credit Committee representative to address a conference on the subject.

She maintained that a fight ought to be made against credit wherever it existed. Women went into debt who could well afford to keep out. At Toxteth they did not know what credit was. They even ordered their bread, milk, and coal, and paid down there and then on the counter; and if one society could work on those lines for twenty-one years, others could do the same. But they must do something more than talk, and in future those guild branches which felt nervous about tackling this subject would have the backing of the sectional councils to help them to go forward.

Mrs. Morris (Stockton) seconded the resolution. They had had cash trading for over twenty-six years, and it was the greatest blessing. When they adopted this policy it took the whole of the reserve fund to wipe out the debt. Instead of failure, they had had success all round, with a big reduction in working expenses.

Mrs. Johnson (West Stanley) asked how about fortnightly payments.

A delegate from Bristol said they were told to vote against the resolution, not because they were against cash trading, but their members thought a week's credit was not debt. There were people desirous of joining the movement who could not pay every week. The movement had become middle-class, and did not touch the poorest. (Applause.)

Miss Ll. Davies explained that the resolution did not say anything about supporting credit as against cash trading. The Bristol people should seize this opportunity of putting their views before the conferences suggested.

Mrs. Kemp (Nuneaton) supported the resolution. The credit and anti-credit people should be brought together.

Mrs. Stein (Midland sectional secretary) said through these conferences each section could bring out its difficulties, and they would be made to realise they could do collectively what they could not do individually. If only for one hour, deferred payment was credit.

The resolution was carried, a few voting against.

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION.

Mrs. Paul Campbell (Walthamstow) referred to the matter of co-operative productions, stating that her branch had asked that no other soaps but C.W.S. should be stocked. They had done an enormous trade in an outside soap. But the management committee refused to allow a resolution to go on the agenda, having said it was interference with management. She would like to know where management ended and policy began. The chairman had stated the resolution was not allowed to be put on the agenda because they knew it would be carried. (Shame.)

Mrs. Blair (chairman) said she thought the guild was right, and the committee wrong.

THE NEW REFORM BILL.

Mrs. Daymond moved the resolution on adult suffrage, on behalf of the Central Committee, which read:—

That this Congress urges every M.P. and all friends of labour and progress to do their utmost to secure that the Government's Reform Bill, introduced last Monday, becomes an Act, giving the vote to all adult women, as well as men, on a short residential qualification.

She was ashamed to think the Government had brought in a resolution for manhood suffrage, for which there was no demand. It was disgraceful that women were not included. Without this weapon of the vote they, as women, could do nothing. She advocated working women striking against any political work until the vote was granted. There was plenty of work for men to do, and plenty for women. Even in the Insurance Act the women had to be brought in to help.

Mrs. Holderness (Midland Council), seconding the resolution, said she was a woman who had worked in factories, and had gone through the rough and the smooth of life. But until the vote was granted to women they could not do good work for the nation. Many laws in connection with the workshops needed altering. Men had no interest except for the money-making side.

Miss Freeman (Holloway) said the Reform Bill brought them nearer to adult suffrage than ever before, and they must strain every nerve during the next few months to get women included in the Bill. They must extend their view from the co-operative sphere to the national life. Politics touched women just as much as men.

Mrs. Nash (Wood Green) said the Bill was unsatisfactory, because women were not included in it, but they must be grateful for the removal of the property qualification. If the Bill became law, a six months' occupation or residence would qualify a man for a vote; that was, if a man lived in a house for six months he would get a vote, and would keep his vote if he moved in the same constituency. The duty of keeping the registers would devolve on the town and county clerks. On the present register the lowest could get a vote, and now they were going lower still, and the peers would get a vote. (Laughter.) When this was the case, it was time women had a vote. There would be opportunities for amending the Bill, under which it was estimated that 2½ million more men would become enfranchised, and 10½ million women. This was only an estimate. The Bill would be a tremendous ad-

OUR LETTER BOX.

To the Editor of the "Co-operative News."

C.W.S. AND THE TRANSPORT WORKERS' STRIKE.

SIR.—We notice by the current issue of the "Co-operative News" that Mr. Alcock wishes us to discuss more fully the action of the C.W.S. during the transport workers' strike in London. The intention of our letter was to draw the attention of all co-operators to what had occurred. We have nothing to add to our previous letter which could help to make this clearer, and we do not propose to burden the "News" with our opinions.—We are, sir, yours faithfully, on behalf of the committee of the London C.W.S. branch of the A.U.C.E.,

A. O. STEWART, Vice-President.
J. A. COLEMAN, Secretary.

Wadham House, Toynebee Hall, Commercial-street, London, E.,
June 24th, 1912.

PRODUCTIVE CO-OPERATION IN ITALY.

SIR.—The "English Review" has an exceedingly interesting article describing the great success of co-operative associations carried on by workers, and although its title is "Syndicalism," it seems to be an account of the progress of voluntary co-operation in Italy. For many years co-operative associations have been entrusted with large public works. The glass bottle makers, owing to disputes with their employers, started on their own account, and now employ more labour than the masters' trust, whilst the moral and intellectual effect on the workers has been simply marvellous. Some 200,000 acres of land are already worked by co-operative associations and many other trades seem ready to be run in the same way by the workers, without the need of expensive supervision. It would be well for British co-operators to study this subject more closely, and follow the Italian co-operators so far as they are working on right lines.—Yours truly,
Cambridge, June 24th, 1912.

R. BINNS.

THE BOURNEMOUTH SOCIETY AND THE "DAILY HERALD."

SIR.—May I say, on behalf of the "opposition," that Mr. Utton's letter is not altogether accurate? It was I who put the question to the chairman, "How many shares does our society hold in the Co-operative Newspaper Society?" The reply was, "None." Then followed the suggestion that before taking up shares in an outside paper (however good this might be), the claims of our own press should be first considered.

This is not saying "do not trouble about one outside," but rather trouble first about your own household before supplying the wants of others.

I have been a reader of the "News" since the early 'seventies; have noted its faults as well as its progress; have read and heard appeals for loyalty to it year by year; and have grieved to think how many members of the co-operative movement are apathetic, and do not trouble to avail themselves of the facilities afforded by our own literature (and by the Education Committee of the Central Board) towards more complete co-operative education.

One great need is the provision of methods by which indifferent members may be won—may be converted into true co-operators. The C.W.S. I hold representative of the commercial rather than the educational power of the movement. With pleasure one reads how this power was effectively used for the benefit of workers in the recent coal war. The Women's Guild has compiled a list of societies which in various ways have helped, as only co-operators could have helped, those in need.—Yours faithfully,

M. LAWRENSEN.

"Old Mead," Herberton-road, Bournemouth, June 17th, 1912.

THE BIRMINGHAM MOTION.

SIR.—The recent voting at meetings of the C.W.S. shows a considerable amount of dissatisfaction with the present system of voting. Although the majority is not sufficient to carry the alteration of rules desired, it indicates that some other method should be welcomed that would ensure a correct statement of the views of the electorate.

Might I suggest that there are few occasions when the exact opinion is needed; also that the system of voting by ballot sent out to societies would give the best and most satisfactory results. We have this in operation in the election of directors, and it could be worked with equal results on other questions.

I would suggest that meetings and voting in future take place as at present, but that after the voting is declared any society could be at liberty, within a reasonable time, to demand a vote, as in the case of voting for directors. This would be of special advantage in cases where societies were moving for alterations in the rules of the C.W.S. I shall be glad to have the opinion of readers on the suggestion.—Yours, &c.,
Newbiggin-by-Sea.

TOM WELSH.

SIR.—At the nine meetings which formed the recent quarterly meeting of the C.W.S. there were 2,736 delegates present, each of whom was entitled to give one vote. According to the table which you give on page 748 of the "Co-operative News" for June 15th, there were 4,766 votes that could have been given for any one candidate, so that I suppose that 4,766 delegates could have been present and voted at these meetings. Where were the remaining 2,030 delegates? A large number of them were no doubt the surplus of delegates which the large societies were entitled to send and

did not; the remainder were doubtless the delegates of small societies, scores of which never send a delegate to the C.W.S. meetings. The main reasons why these 2,030 delegates were absent was owing to the expense incurred, and when we find that nearly one-half of the voters are disenfranchised for this reason, one cannot help thinking that the time has arrived for some alteration in our system of voting.

But I do not think that the system of voting by cards, as suggested by the Birmingham resolution, would solve the difficulty as it affects the small societies; no doubt it would meet the case of large societies, but I think that any alteration which is made should meet the case of all societies.

Mr. Blair (City of Liverpool), speaking at the Lancashire meeting, said "that what was good enough for the election of directors should be the same for the voting on other questions." That is the real solution of the difficulty, and nothing more nor less than that will solve the matter.

Mr. James Hey (Bradford) put the matter plain enough at the Yorkshire meeting when he said "that, in his opinion, all important matters should be discussed at the meetings, but the voting should be done afterwards in the various board-rooms, and the results forwarded to Manchester for tabulation, as was done in the case of the election of the directors. By a system of that kind a more correct result would be obtained as to the views of the various societies."

I advocated this system of voting in your columns some years ago, and I am still confident that it is the most satisfactory solution. This system might be slower than the old one, but it would at least be a real democratic way of conducting our business, which would be fair to all societies, either large or small.—Yours faithfully,

F. HEATON.

Park-road, Churwell, June 24th, 1912.

THE SOAP QUESTION.

SIR.—I quite agree with Mr. Lander in describing the remarks of the Preston delegate as regrettable at the Wholesale meeting in regard to the C.W.S. As one who has sold C.W.S. soaps for a number of years, I believe they are quite as good value as any other make. I quite agree it is difficult to induce some people to give them a trial. They get used to one particular kind, and think there is none as good. Many a time, though, they can be persuaded to try the C.W.S. make by the shopman's tactful recommendation. At least, that has been my experience.

Mr. Wallwork, speaking further on in the meeting, said the word "can't" should not be in our vocabulary. I quite agree. I hope he will see the error of his ways, and not act on the assumption that C.W.S. soaps cannot be sold. It is rather poor encouragement to those salesmen who are doing their best to push C.W.S. productions to find a reputed leader making remarks like Mr. Wallwork did at Manchester.—Yours, &c.,

LOYALTY.

CANVASSING CONDEMNED.

SIR.—Your excellent leader on "Canvassing Condemned" is, I hope, not the last to be said or done on this subject. Our Warrington and Liverpool friends are to be commended in drawing attention to what is universally objected to, and is a standing disgrace to a movement like ours, that should at least have for one of its ideals purity in the selection and election of its officials. May I suggest, with a view to discussion, first, that societies have, as now, the right to selection of a candidate if they think him a fit and capable person; but before he is allowed to be nominated, his name shall have received the approval not only of the district conference to which his society belongs, but, further, I would recommend that it should require the approval of the section also. If these suggestions (which I don't claim as original) are found to be worthy of support, I feel sure the delegates at Failsworth would only be too pleased to put them forward at our C.W.S. meetings. A seat on the C.W.S. is far too important to be made subject to wire-pulling and to those prepared to spend the most money. Above all, my suggestions would at least prevent, or at least render useless, secret arrangements on behalf of any candidate. In my humble opinion, neither our friend Mr. Jarman nor the other speakers against the present methods were one whit too strong in reference to the regrettable way matters are being done at present.—Yours truly,

JOHN FITZGERALD.

Failsworth, June 24th, 1912.

Answers to Correspondents.

THE WRONG HAT.—Mr. Jas. Pearce (42, Church-street, Clayton-le-Moors, Accrington) writes to say he got a wrong hat at the educational conference at Runcorn on Saturday last. The label in his own was Banks (Accrington).

A notice of motion, placed on the agenda by the Seaton Burn branch, to the effect that a special meeting should be held to consider ways and means whereby each branch should manage its own affairs and pay its own dividend, was defeated by a large majority at the Cramlington Society's quarterly meeting.

C.W.S. PELAW CAKE FLOURS make delicious cakes.