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Society for the Ministry of Women
(Interdenominational)



Annual Report
1937

Pamphlet

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SOCIETY FOR
THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN
(INTERDENOMINATIONAL)

President: REV. CANON C. E. RAVEN, D.D.

Vice-Presidents:

MISS HATTY BAKER. REV. A. H. GRAY, M.A., D.D.
REV. CONSTANCE COLTMAN, M.A., B.D. REV. W. RUSSELL MALTBY, D.D.
REV. HENRY GOW, M.A., D.D. DR. MAUDE ROYDEN, C.H., LL.D.
REV. W. B. SELBIE, M.A., D.D.

Hon. Secretary:

MISS V. ROSALIND WATTS, White House, 40 Harcourt Avenue, Southend-on-Sea.

Hon. Treasurer:

MISS M. E. J. TAYLOR, M.A., Settrington, Bakeham Lane, Englefield Green.

Chairman of Exec. Committee:

DR. EVA MORTON.

Organ of the Society:

"THE COMING MINISTRY."

AIM.—To attain the ideal that in the ministry of the Church of Christ no distinction should be made between men and women.

With this object to work for—

- (1) Equal opportunity in training and service for women ministers in those Churches in which the principle of equality is already recognised;
- (2) The full ordination of women in those Churches which do not at present grant it: or in the case of those Churches which do not use the word "ordination," its exact equivalent.

MEMBERSHIP.—All persons of 18 years of age and upwards calling themselves Christians, who are in agreement with the above object and who pay an annual subscription of 1s. or more, are eligible for membership of the Society.

Members are asked to subscribe according to their means, it being understood that 2s. 6d. is the minimum subscription that really covers the cost of their membership of the Society. All members receive the quarterly news-sheet, *The Coming Ministry*.

Affiliated Societies:

Edinburgh Equal Citizenship Society.
Fellowship of Equal Service in the Church (Church of Scotland).

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Eighth Annual Report.

The record of the past year has been one of slow but steady progress for the Ministry of Women. There have been signs of awakening interest in many parts of the country and in all denominations. References to the subject in the religious and secular press have greatly increased in number and it has been more frequently discussed by other societies concerned with women's work. The whole question is being transferred from the sphere of academic discussion to the more vigorous field of practical politics, and though there is much prejudice and opposition to be overcome, there is also much ground for hope. An indication of the changing attitude of the general public was afforded last March by the broadcast, for the first time, of a service conducted by a woman minister, the Rev. Violet Hedger, B.D., L.L.A., of North Parade Baptist Church, Halifax. Members of the Society will join in the congratulations which have reached Miss Hedger from nearly 500 listeners both at home and abroad.

From overseas we have the welcome news of the overwhelming support which has been given in the United Church of Canada to the admission of women to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. The action of the General Synod, following the voting in 114 Presbyteries, has been followed by the ordination of the first woman minister of the United Church of Canada in November last.

In the life of the Society this has been a year of change. To the deep regret of all its members, Dr. Maude Royden has felt herself obliged by the pressure of other work to relinquish the office of President which she has held so long and with such notable success. It is good to know that she will continue her connection with the Society as one of its Vice-Presidents. We rejoice to welcome the Rev. Canon C. E. Raven as her successor, recalling gratefully his many services to the cause in the past and looking forward with hope and confidence to his leadership in the future. The Society has suffered another loss in the resignation of Miss Pryke, for whose devoted labours, as Honorary Secretary, it owes such a debt of gratitude. The hearty good wishes of all will be with Miss Rosalind Watts who succeeds her.

ANNUAL MEETING, MAY 20TH, 1936.

The Annual Meeting of members was held in the Caxton Hall on May 20th and was presided over by Dr. Maude Royden. It was followed by a General Meeting at which the speakers were the Rev. Canon Guy Rogers, the Rev. Joyce Rutherford, and the Rev. Hugh

Lister. Canon Rogers is a tried friend whom we are always glad to hear, and Miss Rutherford gave an illuminating address on the Report of the Archbishops' Commission from the Free Church point of view, while Mr. Lister, who spoke as a convinced Anglo-Catholic, gave heartening proof that we have new friends as well as old ones among us.

MEETINGS ADDRESSED ON BEHALF OF THE SOCIETY.

Sheffield, National Council of Women. Rev. D. Belfield.
 Herne Hill, Women's Freedom League. Rev. D. Belfield.
 Dulwich, Women Citizens' Assoc. Mrs. Joyce Pollard.
 "Status of Women" Conference, W.F.L. Rev. D. Belfield and
 Miss M. E. J. Taylor.
 Sutton Coldfield, W.C.A. Mrs. Joyce Pollard.
 British Commonwealth League. Rev. D. Belfield.
 Halifax, N.C.W. Mrs. Ursula Roberts.
 London, N.C.W. Rev. D. Belfield.
 Norwich, N.C.W. Rev. D. Belfield.
 Stockton-on-Tees, N.C.W. Miss Sybil Wragge.
 Maidenhead, W.C.A. Rev. Irene Robins.
 Canning Town Women's Settlement. Rev. D. Belfield.

PRESENT POSITION.

Anglican Church.

The Anglican situation shows little material change. The Report of the Archbishops' Commission has been discussed in the Upper Houses of Convocation but it has not yet come before the Lower Houses. The Resolutions which have received the assent of the Upper Houses are as follows:—

(1) "The deaconess ought for all religious and ecclesiastical purposes to be regarded and described as a person in Holy Orders; she should have a special seat in church; be addressed as "reverend"; wear a special dress; be regarded as a member of the ordained staff of the parish; and be eligible for membership of the P.C.C. under the same rules as applied to licensed assistant curates."

(2) "The functions of the deaconess should include the following, subject to the authorisation of the Bishop: (a) To read the service of Morning and Evening Prayer, and the Litany, except those portions reserved for the priest, and to lead in prayer; (b) to instruct and preach, except in the service of Holy Communion; (c) to officiate at

the Churching of Women; (d) in the absence of the priest to baptise infants." "This House desires further consideration of the possibility of the Bishop giving permission, where there may be special need, as, for instance, in girls' schools and women's colleges, to administer the chalice."

It is essential that it should be realised that these Resolutions are not intended to confer equality of status and opportunity upon women, even within the limited sphere of the diaconate. The deaconess is not to be the equivalent of the male deacon: she will have no legal status and restrictions are placed upon her ecclesiastically which are not imposed upon him. To assign a place among the clergy to members of a "Parallel Order" constitutes a breach with Catholic tradition, and the creation of such an Order is a breach of the understanding, explicitly or implicitly given to deaconesses in the past, that they were members of the third Order of the Ministry.

The Anglican Group for the Ordination of Women to the Historic Ministry of the Church held a very successful Conference in Birmingham in September. It was attended by men and women who represented a variety of callings and every school of thought in the Anglican Church and also by delegates from the Free Churches and from the Church of Scotland.

Baptist Church.

The principle of equality is accepted, but in practice there are still few opportunities for women in the Ministry. One College is open to women for training, however, and there are three women ministers in charge of churches.

Congregational Church.

The Congregational Ministry is open equally to men and women, and in the United Kingdom there are about a score of women ministers, officially ordained and recognised. These are well received and are carrying on a helpful ministry in all parts of the country including Arundel, Chelsea, Hillhead, Hungerford, Leeds, Liverpool, Lowestoft, Newhaven, Poplar, Shaw, and Wolverton. A woman minister has also been Secretary of the London Missionary Society since 1931.

Methodist Church.

At the Methodist Conference in July, 1934, the vote against the admission of women to the ordained ministry was carried by a small majority. The Pastoral Conference were not satisfied with the posi-

tion and provided for the subject to be raised again. This, however, has not yet been done. It is believed that it will take time to pass through the various courts against a considerable amount of opposition, and it is not considered wise to raise the question afresh until there are those who are prepared to spend much time upon it and see it through to a successful issue.

The Church of Scotland (Presbyterian).

Women are not yet accepted as ministers or as elders. They may be appointed as managers, but such appointment carries with it influence in the business affairs of the church only. The Theological Colleges are open to women, who may study for the degree of B.D. and who seem to be well received among the students. Those wishing to take up missionary work may study in these Colleges, and there are bursaries.

Presbyterian Church—England.

The matter is held over for the present.

United Free Church of Scotland (Presbyterian).

The principle of the equality of men and women in the ministry is fully recognised. Two women ministers have been appointed to churches and another is preparing to be ordained. There are also women Elders, including the General Secretary of the United Free Church.

Unitarian and Free Christian Churches.

There are twelve women ministers on the roll and one woman lay-worker in charge of a small church. Nine are in sole charge of churches; one is co-pastor with her husband and one helps her husband unofficially. Two fully trained women ministers from Transylvania are visiting England to study conditions here. One woman student has just started her training at Manchester College, Oxford. This year (1937), for the first time, a woman minister is conducting the Service in connection with the Annual Assembly Meetings, and another has given one of a series of week-day addresses at Headquarters.

**SOCIETY FOR THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN
(INTERDENOMINATIONAL).**

Dr. Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31st March, 1937. Cr.

	RECEIPTS.					PAYMENTS.			
1936 £		£	s.	d.	1936 £		£	s.	d.
	To Cash at Bank and in Hand at					By Printing and Stationery:—			
	1st April, 1936:—				15	The Coming Ministry	7	10	0
	At Bank	26	9	4	28	General	26	1	8
	In Hand—Unbanked	2	16	0			33	11	8
	Treasurer	8	4		2	„ Hire of Hall		4	17
	Secretary	5	7		24	„ Postage		15	14
25				29	8	„ Sundry Expenses		3	6
77	„ Donations and Subscriptions			19	1	„ Literature for Sale		1	11
5	„ Sale of Literature			3	2	„ Press Cuttings		2	2
1	„ Affiliation Fees			73	2	„ Audit Fee		2	2
5	„ Collections			12	1	„ Affiliation Fee		1	1
—	„ Propaganda Fund			6		„ Cash at Bank and in Hand at			
				10		31st March, 1937:—			
				4		At Bank	53	0	10
				14		In Hand—Unbanked... ..	16	0	
				0	30	Treasurer	7	1	
				11		Secretary	2	16	1
				11			57	0	0
113		£121	4	11	113		£121	4	11

We have prepared the above Receipts and Payments Account from the Books and Vouchers of the Society for the Ministry of Women, and certify it to be in accordance therewith. We have verified the Balance of Cash at Bank 31st March, 1937, by means of a certificate.

13/14 Dartmouth Street,
Westminster, S.W.1.

(Sgd.) E. WATTS & CO., *Chartered Accountants,
Auditors.*

15th April, 1937.

Society for the Ministry of Women

(Interdenominational)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE :

PRESIDENT, VICE-PRESIDENTS, HON. SECRETARY,
HON. TREASURER (*ex officio*).

(See page 2 for names.)

DENOMINATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES.

(Representing members of the Society who are members of the respective denominations.)

Anglican :

Mrs. Roberts, B.A.

Baptist :

Miss A. M. Duncan.

Congregational :

Rev. Joyce Rutherford, B.Sc. Rev. Doreen Hopewell, B.A., B.D.

Methodist :

Miss A. E. Slack. Mrs. McNeal.

Presbyterian :

Miss R. Clark.

Scottish Episcopal :

Miss A. McD. Teacher. Mrs. Williams.

Unitarian :

Miss H. E. Hargrove. Rev. Rosalind Lee.

ELECTED MEMBERS.

Rev. D. Belfield.

Miss Margaret Gordon.

Rev. Ethel Kay.

Mrs. Howard Lewis.

Miss Carol Morrison, M.A.

Dr. Eva Morton.

Mrs. Joyce Pollard.

Dr. Sybil Pratt.

Miss M. Shotter.

CO-OPTED MEMBERS.

Miss Margaret Graham.

Miss Ivy L. Pryke.