

## THE QUEST FOR PEACE

action. He said he enjoyed the cartoons himself, and considered that they added to the gaiety of nations. Such touches of grace connote something of high value in spiritual freedom. To allow his people to go on laughing at him, and to join with them in the laugh against himself, was one of the wisest things "Billy" ever did.

As conscription is inseparably bound up with war and opposition to it is an article of all pacifist policy, it is germane to the quest for peace to study the history of this strange and inhuman practice. Undoubtedly, through the many centuries of the Christian era—to go no further back—serfs and slaves and sometimes captives and prisoners have been forced to take part in war, as they have been forced to every kind of menial and dangerous labour. But the imposing of military service on free citizens is of more modern date. It has operated conspicuously in countries which took the lead in proclaiming principles of liberty, equality and fraternity. Napoleon fixed it on France in 1798. It was used in the American Civil War of the mid-nineteenth century, when large numbers of boys as young as seventeen were drafted into the fighting forces. Democratic Switzerland has been and is a conscriptionist country. So is Soviet Russia. Germany copied the system from France, and Japan copied it from them both. Great Britain has always disliked it, but succumbed to it during the war of 1914-1918, and now (1949) seems inclined to adopt it as a permanency.

It is truly remarkable how cults, otherwise bitterly antagonistic to one another, the high financier and the socialist, the capitalist and the communist, the Catholic and the Rationalist, agree in believing it necessary to train young men to be soldiers by legal compulsion. All such groups have their own concepts of certain desirable forms of community life, and each insists on the benefits mankind would enjoy, here and hereafter, by adopting some one particular plan. But none seems to have faith that the plan, once established, would be sufficiently self-justifying to dispense with conscript soldiers to maintain it. For some strange reason it is assumed that the happier and more contented men are at home, and the more just and friendly their dealings with their neighbours, the greater the danger of internal revolution and foreign invasion.

No doubt, in course of time this obsession with trained killing, forcibly imposed upon the young, will become obsolete, perhaps from technical developments that will make army operations superfluous, or perhaps merely in response to the inexorable law of change. Once discarded, the system cannot fail to take its place on the long list of deadly errors whereby man has impeded his own advance, rushing upon doom by the very means which he is blindly employing to ward it off.

E. M. Moore  
The Quest For Peace A31  
HAVE KNOWN IT IN AUSTRALIA  
(Melbourne)  
1949?

## CHAPTER 5

### THE SISTERHOOD OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AT WORK

THE Sisterhood met once a fortnight in the ever-hospitable premises of the Society of Friends, whose large front room, on the ground floor at 20 Russell Street, Melbourne, was usually well filled. There were also committee meetings once a month.

It is pleasant to record the charm of working with this exceptional group, most of whom were then in the full beauty and intelligence of fresh young womanhood. Nearly all of them were already leading busy lives, either running households without assistance or engaged in some kind of salaried work, yet they managed to give an amazing amount of time and energy to their self-chosen cause.

At the outset their aim had been thus stated:—

"To promote mutual knowledge of each other by the women of different nations, goodwill and friendship; to study the causes, economic and moral, of war, and by every means in their power to bring the humanizing influence of women to bear on the abolition of war, and the substitution of international justice and arbitration for irrational methods of violence."

Enfranchisement of women was then a comparatively new thing, even in Australia, and in most other countries it had not yet arrived. Advocates of womanhood suffrage had long pleaded, and believed, that woman's voice in politics would be a tremendous influence against war. We soon found, however, that under stress of test "the humanizing influence of women" must not be too readily taken for granted. Both our general secretary and myself, who had been officers in the National Council of Women, found that views like ours were not tolerated there, and we were obliged to withdraw. We approached all the well-known societies of women in Melbourne, seeking to interest them in the educational side of our movement. All but one declared it to be "most inopportune." The exception was the Women Teachers' Association, who consented to receive a speaker, and afterwards supported us in deputations to the Education Department. Shocked at the militaristic tone of the school-papers, and at a certain "Hymn of Hate" which

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was being taught in some of the State schools, we more than once joined with others in approaching the Minister for Education, the Director of Education, and the editor of the school paper with the request that reading matter of a higher kind should be provided, which would be of cultural value to the children in later years. These deputations were so far successful that we were invited to send in articles, stories and poems of the kind we desired to see published, with the promise that, if judged suitable, space would be found for them. In seeking to take advantage of this offer we were amazed to find how lacking our literature is in such matter as we had in mind. Nationally, it seems, we have made but few experiments in magnanimous treatment of other peoples, and the sense of the beauty and glory of such behaviour is quite undeveloped. The Socialist Party, the Australian Church, the Free Religious Fellowship, and the Women Teachers' Association, who supported the demand, were all in the same difficulty as ourselves. For material we had to fall back on the Society of Friends, one of whose peace stories, rather oddly named "Fierce Feathers," was submitted and printed in the school paper of July, 1917.

Thus made aware of a gap which needed to be filled, we took up the study of "A Course in Citizenship," an American publication specially prepared for children. Interest was also aroused in the use of Esperanto as a means of enabling children of different countries to write to one another. Further, a beginning was made in the compilation of a Peace Catechism for the Young. (Appendix 3.) The work remained uncompleted, and the need of it is still as great as it was a generation ago.

In connection with the Education Department, a memory lingers of Mr. Frank Tate, perhaps the most famous of Directors of Education in Victoria, smiling his sardonic smile over a jingoistic song, "Australia Will Be There," which a member of one of the deputations had mentioned. "That song certainly won't be sung in any school where I can stop it," said he; "not because I object to the sentiment, but because as a musical and literary composition it is detestable."

At the landing on Gallipoli, April 25, 1915, the elder son of our vice-president, Mrs. Warren Kerr, was one of the first to be killed. The effect on the mother was to inspire her with a still stronger determination to devote her life to work for the abolition of war. She scandalized some who talked of "avenging" their dead by declaring that she was at least thankful that her boy had died before he had had time to hurt anyone else. Hanging on the walls of her home were some valuable engravings which depicted scenes of old-time battles. She had these all taken down and disposed of, saying that the use of such things for decoration was unbearable.

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About that time Mr. Winston Churchill made this public utterance:—

"No operations in history are more worthy of being pushed on with the utmost vigour and an utter disregard for life than those at Gallipoli. I regard it as a legitimate war gamble for a prize of inestimable value."

On reading this, Mrs. Kerr wrote and published in leaflet form an Appeal to Women, beginning:—

"I think it was then that the iron entered my soul and I finally decided what my life's work should be. Was it *my* loved one's life they gambled with? What a degradation to motherhood! 'Australia makes no complaint,' I read elsewhere. Women, have you no hearts, who can 'utterly disregard' this?"

No, it was true enough that Australia, in general, made no complaints, even though the lads of Australia and New Zealand, who had enlisted in all good faith to deliver Belgium from the invader, were thus thrown away on an invasion of Turkey. The "gamble" was not even justified by success, and it is deeply unfortunate that an incident in which there is nothing to be proud of from any point of view should, by some strange error of evaluation, be held in sacrosanct remembrance every Anzac Day.

Half of the Sisterhood meetings took the form of study circles, beginning with a book recommended by Professor W. Harrison Moore, entitled "An Introduction to the Study of International Relations." This series of essays on international law, economic relations, historical surveys of advanced and backward peoples, and of the causes of wars for a century past, opened up for us a new world of thought. Our hearts had told us that the war business was all wrong; now we began to see it with the understanding also. It came as something of a shock to realize that there was nothing new in our movement, as in our simplicity we had imagined, but that we were walking on lines that had long since been laid down by thinkers and humanitarians among all civilized peoples. We perceived the deficiencies of our own education and were eager to learn what had been withheld from us. Urgent, indeed, was our need of all the knowledge we could gather, for at every utterance on this subject, whether in public or in private, we were pelted with indignant objections and derisive questions. As a member once aptly remarked: "Pacifists are expected to be trained logicians, but anyone can be a militarist."

Our syllabus for 1917-1918 (Appendix 4) is typical of the courses

of study undertaken during those first few years, and shows the names of some of the eminent men and women who were generous with their help and encouragement. In speaking of "The Development of the International Difficulties of Modern Europe," Mr. Maurice Blackburn, LL.B., M.P., "without a single note, gave his audience a full account of happenings in Europe from early times, with details of dates and battles and political events and pedigrees of kings and queens, until a feeling of awe settled on his listeners, and they wondered how generation after generation had lived through it all, while most of them had a feeling of gratitude that they inhabited a country with more space, fewer people, fewer languages and fewer complications of all kinds." (Extract from minute book, March 20, 1918.)

Another member of Parliament, Mr. Frank Brennan, M.H.R., addressed us on "The Ethics of War" and explained the point of view of advocates of peace by force.

Mr. George Higgins, a well-known engineer, spoke to us on "Methods of Preventing War." His recommendation of a League of Nations was, of course, based on projects of that nature which had been put forward repeatedly in earlier times and anticipated President Wilson's scheme of 1919. For most of us the information he gave broke new ground, and in the discussion which followed Mr. Higgins was good enough to say that he was much impressed by the clear minds and intellectual status of the circle.

Mr. John A. Brailsford, B.A., who had been for many years resident in China and Japan, and who became assistant editor of *Stead's Review*, addressed us on "Sword and Ploughshare in the Far East." Discussing the so-called "Yellow Peril," he gave it as his opinion that an alliance between Japan and China was not probable. In regard to the Chinese, he thought we had more to fear from industrial aggression than through war. In his view, the greatest danger we had to face was a clash with Japan, not on account of our White Australia policy, but because of the wish of Western financiers to exploit China and not to allow Japan to do so. In the light of later events, these opinions are of interest.

Rev. F. Sinclair, M.A., Professor H. Woodruff, M.A., Mr. E. E. Dillon and Mr. J. B. Howie were among others who encouraged our work and willingly accepted invitations to address our meetings. We had a circle of artistic supporters, too. Mrs. Nettie Palmer (née Higgins), in speaking of the attitude of living poets towards war, said that poets were "defenders of their country's thoughts, and spiritual soldiers, as it were, holding the trenches against attacks of materialistic gases." She regarded Furnley Maurice's poem, "To God, from the Weary Nations," as one of the finest efforts during the war. Mr. Bernard O'Dowd, when himself addressing the Sisterhood, declared that no great poet would ever again glorify

war. Mr. J. Le Gay Brereton, whom we did not personally meet, in his writings took the same view. A play by Miss Mary Fullerton, "Punch and Judy Modernised," was performed by the Women's Peace Army at a joint celebration of the first Hague Conference. The Misses Clara and Dora Baker, professional musicians, were enthusiastic members of the Sisterhood, and so was Miss S. Slater (later Mrs. H. Winston Rhodes), a soprano singer. Miss Goodyear and Mr. Vincent Goodman made willing and welcome appearances on our concert platform.

In response to our letters to other countries printed matter relevant to our work soon began to arrive by post from kindred groups abroad. These, added to local publications, gave us the beginnings of a Peace Library. The Misses Baker took charge of this. At their own cost they bound scores of booklets in neat blue cardboard covers, and made a practice of carrying the whole collection to and fro in a huge suitcase for the convenience of members at meetings. Our own booklet, "About the Sisterhood," was the first of our publications and had a considerable sale.

Drawing-room meetings in the suburbs were a feature of our work in those days. Active in promoting these were Mrs. E. M. Nimmo, Mrs. S. Slater, Mrs. B. Bryning and Mrs. Dearie. Our speakers were also in request to give luncheon-hour lecturettes at factories, workrooms and Trade Union meetings. One public debate was arranged at the Guildhall, when I was called upon to meet on the platform Mr. W. J. Miles, of Sydney. Mr. Miles was a journalist of extremely unconventional views, and with such a passion for freedom of speech that he would uphold, at his own cost, the right of anyone to express even opinions with which he entirely disagreed. He later became editor of *The Publicist*, and was identified with the "Australia First" movement, in conjunction with Mr. P. R. Stephenson. What was said at the Guildhall debate is gone with the wind, but many years afterwards Mr. Miles published in his journal his conviction that all the pacifists he ever met were either fools or humbugs! This persuasive remark formed part of an invitation to pacifists (among others) to become subscribers to his paper, which I, for my part, had much pleasure in doing, for it was a well-written monthly and had never a dull page in it.

Membership in the Sisterhood had been fixed at the sum of one shilling per year, so that no one who wished to join might be debarred on the score of expense. But such was the spontaneous generosity of members that a new project had only to be mentioned to elicit an immediate response in cash. This liberality has been characteristic of the group all through its long existence. A fund was needed to help meet the expense of publishing *Peacewards*, and that was added to our liabilities. An International Committee of

Women for Permanent Peace had been established in Amsterdam. As international secretary of the Sisterhood, I was enrolled as a member of this Committee and a suitable subscription was sent. But, above all, it became necessary to inaugurate a travelling fund.

The Sisterhood had determined that one of its members should attend the International Congress to be held (as was then thought) in Holland as soon as the war should cease. This meant a considerable outlay. A device for gathering subscriptions, as well as for increasing interest, took the form of a memorial printed inside a large folder, with extra sheets for signature. It ran thus:—

"We, women citizens of the Australian Commonwealth, affirm our sympathy with thoughtful men and women everywhere who are earnestly seeking a way whereby, at the close of the present war, all nations may be led to consider the adoption of other means than armed force in the settlement of international differences. It is our desire that the enfranchised nation of Australia should be represented at the International Women's Congress to be held, in furtherance of this ideal, at The Hague as soon as the present war ends, and we subscribe our names as well-wishers to the cause and supporters of the delegates who shall in person present this document, with names attached, at the said International Congress."

Each signatory to this was asked to contribute one shilling, and the response was unexpectedly good.

The question of who should go to Europe to attend the Congress naturally aroused intense interest and some competition. About the middle of 1916 it was decided to make a choice. A special meeting was held, in which the names of several candidates were submitted to the vote of members by secret ballot. The Sisterhood did me the honour of choosing me to be their representative. No one then thought that years were still to elapse before the call came.

Towards the end of 1917 a sale of gifts was held at my home, 40 Evelina Road, Toorak, to augment the funds. This was a great success, owing in great part to the generosity of Mr. Royden Powell, who contributed many uncommon and beautiful articles for sale from his stock of travellers' samples. A year later this effort was repeated, this time at "Coniston," 117 George Street, East Melbourne, the home of Mrs. M. L. Drummond. So was established a popular event, which has been an annual feature for over thirty years.

About this time the Free Religious Fellowship formed a speakers' class for training their members and others in public speaking for the peace cause. The Fellowship circle, being as quick-witted as it was free-spoken, these budding orators had to meet sharper heckling

from their own intimates and (at heart) sympathizers, than they were ever called on to face on public platforms.

Relief from the pressure of controversy, and at the same time encouragement to continue it, sprang from the reading, in parts, of Bernard Shaw's plays. "Arms and the Man" and "Press Cuttings" were among the favourites. Another anti-war play used in the same way was "The War God," by Israel Zangwill—a drama well worth revival. It is a tragedy of great dignity and strong in its indictment of militarism, but perhaps not a deeper condemnation than was pronounced by G.B.S. through the medium of his own inimitable fun.

The fortnightly meetings which the Sisterhood had maintained for two and a half years began to make too great a demand on the time and strength of the officers, and a decision was reached to settle down to meetings once a month, but to broaden out in another direction by issuing a monthly news-letter for the special benefit of country members. We also undertook a little publishing. One leaflet, entitled "To Fathers and Mothers," drawn up by Mr. T. J. Miller, Mr. Roth and myself, pointed out the dangers of giving militaristic teaching to children. It was distributed in thousands. The same committee of three compiled a letter specially addressed to workers. Of this every industrial union in Victoria received copies.

In April, 1917, the United States of America decided to enter the European war, with only one dissentient voice in Congress—that of Miss Jeanette Rankin, its one woman member. It is noteworthy that in this instance, when a woman did what orators and preachers had so often declared it incumbent upon womanhood to do, namely, to take a firm stand against war, not one of her male colleagues supported her. We wrote from Australia in praise of her action, congratulating her on her courage. She replied in terms of gratitude for the appreciation and also some surprise that her motive had been understood. Her desire, she said, was to establish a precedent which the women of the world might follow.

Then came the great revolution in Russia, and with it Russian withdrawal from the war. The word "Bolshevik" was now for the first time heard in our land. It became a new term of reference in all discussions on internationalism and lent a new shade of meaning to the word "economics," as used in controversy.

On November 11, 1918, the war in Europe came to an end with dramatic suddenness. All combatants on both sides instantaneously obeyed the order, "Cease firing!" thus proving once again how completely the operation of war is within the control of its directors and how perfectly able men are to stop it whenever they will. The terms of armistice were the famous "Fourteen Points" of the President of the United States of America, Dr. Woodrow Wilson. Among the influences which shaped these "points" was the statement

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which had been drawn up by the International Committee of Women for Permanent Peace, which met at The Hague early in 1915. President Wilson told Miss Jane Addams, whom he knew well, that he had carefully studied this statement and had found it the best formulation of international principles which he had met with. (Appendix 5.)

Immediately following the armistice, the plan made four years earlier for holding a second International Women's Congress as soon as possible after the war should end became active. We had asked for a cable message naming the place and date of the Congress, and while awaiting this information made ready in a general way. Miss Goldstein and Miss John, who also intended to be present at the Congress, were in the same position.

It so happened that on February 28, 1919, the Sisterhood had called a committee meeting. While making ready to attend this meeting a cablegram reached me stating that the Congress would open on May 19 in Holland. I hurried to town and to the shipping department of Dalgety & Co., where I had previously been a secretary for eight years. Being well known to the management and staff, I found a ready sympathy with my application for a passage to Europe. Yes, there was a steamer, the *Themistocles*, sailing on March 5. Yes, she could be expected to reach England in time. Yes, there was a vacant berth which I could have. "But," said the manager, "you haven't an hour to lose. Run at once and get some photos taken, and then straight to the Passport Office with this application." He gave me a form, with names and addresses and I sped away. An hour later, arriving at the committee meeting, I met a group of wondering faces, questioning what could have befallen their secretary. Breathlessly I told the news. The summons had come and my one chance of appearing in answer to it was to sail in five days' time. "Could I be ready?" they asked. I said I could, and from all came the mandate, as with one voice: "Then go!" I went. £180 had been collected and was available for expenses. To make up what was further needed, two members generously lent £20 and £50 respectively. These sums were afterwards fully repaid.

Miss Goldstein and Miss John left by the *Orsova* on March 24, intending to save time by disembarking at Naples and going overland.

## CHAPTER 6

### INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF WOMEN, ZURICH, SWITZERLAND, 1919

THIS was not my first journey to Europe. Years before, when movement about the world was easy, unhampered and inexpensive to a degree that is now almost incredible, my sister Alice and I had been able to save enough out of the small salaries paid to girl workers in those days to take a trip abroad. In 1905 we set off to see the land of our ancestors, and visited not only London, but Devonshire and the Isle of Wight, Liverpool and Wales, the Lake District, Edinburgh, Glasgow and the Trossachs. We also spent a week in Paris. Beneath all the beauty and interest and enjoyment and the many kindnesses met with at every turn, there had run two undercurrents of horror—one at the appalling poverty evident in the streets of the large cities, where people walked about in such rags, dirt and misery as had never before met our eyes; the other, at the all-pervading militarism in a land where abbeys and cathedrals served as museums of war relics, their walls being hung with tattered flags brought back from centuries of battle or encrusted with tablets to the memory, not of Christian saints, but of generals and admirals. This identification of State religion with war operations struck us very forcibly. So did the evidences of what seemed to us unjustifiable class privilege. For the first time we discovered that open stretches of green grass were not common property which any foot might press, and that there were mountains, the climbing of which would be a trespass. Withal, life was so orderly and so serene, the people so docile, so good-humoured, the domestic servants so unnecessarily humble, the shop assistants so pathetically respectful! No one knew then that the settled life of centuries was drawing to a close. It was a quiet time. There was still no radio and no cinema. Only one electric train was to be seen on the open rails. Buses were still horse-drawn, and the roads and lanes, unencumbered with motor cars, were a delight alike to the pedestrian and the cyclist. After six months of moving gently about the country sight-seeing, Alice took a passage to New York, making a second stage of what was to be a tour round the world, and I returned to Australia. Keeping careful account of every penny of outlay, the total cost of my ten months away from home, including return steamer fares, was just under one hundred pounds. During the whole of that time no official permission was

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Mr. J. B. Howie that a letter be sent to about a thousand people and newspapers in various countries, suggesting that in all civilized States the people be asked simultaneously if they would favour complete disarmament, provided that other specified States disarmed also. A list was carefully compiled, the letters were duly sent, and the response was widespread and encouraging, but nothing more was done, and the only practical outcome known to me was a somewhat amusing local incident.

Among the many foreign letters which this proposal elicited, and which were addressed to me as secretary, was one from the King of Siam. This, of course, was mentioned at the Peace Alliance meeting as part of correspondence received. Somehow the word went round the city and late that night I was rung up by an excited pressman who understood that I was in receipt of a communication from royalty. He spoke from one of the Melbourne daily papers. Could this letter be made available for exclusive publication? It could be, and was, with, of course, the references to the Peace Alliance and its work that were required to make it intelligible. When the report appeared it was so very much King of Siam and so very little Peace Alliance that I thought it fair to send in a bill for an exclusive item furnished by request. Though aggrieved by the demand, the paper, under pressure, sent a cheque. This probably stands alone in Australian history as an instance of a metropolitan daily paying for a short report of a meeting of a peace society.

With this crowning achievement the Peace Alliance in 1922 went into recess, and, though never formally disbanded, did not again meet. About the same time the Alliance in Sydney also quietly lapsed, while the small group in Bendigo continued to carry on its useful work for many years.

## CHAPTER 9

### EDUCATING PUBLIC OPINION

DURING the war years workers for peace had been repeatedly told that their efforts were inopportune; the time for all that would come after the war had been won. When the war was over these objectors did not flock to the peace cause, but in many quarters a certain willingness was shown to listen to what advocates of non-military methods had to say. The Women's International League set to work to use this willingness to the utmost, as also did the Peace Society in the various capitals. Melbourne remained the headquarters of the W.I.L.P.F., but branches were formed in New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania and Western Australia.

The methods used in what is called "educating public opinion" are well known to all would-be reformers. You assert, as openly, as persuasively and as forcibly as you can, that you believe certain accepted habits of life should be, and can be, changed. You state your reasons, you recommend your methods. You do this in speech, in writing and in print. Within the limits of what newspaper editors will accept, you use their columns for articles and letters. Outside these limits you resort to pamphlets and leaflets, and, if possible, run a small journal of your own. To make such a paper a success you need a sufficiently able unpaid editor, contributors who will supply readable matter gratis, enough donors and subscribers to meet the expenses of publication, and enough voluntary distributors to circulate the paper when issued. You send out speakers to other groups who are willing to give them a hearing, and, if of a hardy type, you also harangue the public from platforms in the open air. You invite speakers from other organizations to address your own meetings. The accepted practice is that all such work should be done without recompense of any kind. The speakers do not ask for a fee, nor are they offered one. It has not yet occurred to the average Australian that a man or woman who puts time, knowledge and brain-power into preparation and delivery of a lecture is doing something that has money-value. There is not only no basic wage for the proletariat of the brain; there is no wage at all for that class, except when working at the behest of some institution with endowments.

Rooms or halls used for gatherings devoted to any kind of "uplift" are, as a rule, austere places, equipped with a small amount of the plainest of necessary furniture. They are usually ill-ventilated;

stifling in summer, freezing in winter. As resorts they are not alluring, and the enthusiasts who frequent them make little attempt at adding to them any charm of colour or any sort of pictorial attraction, either in mural decoration or personal costume. A bowl of flowers may sometimes brighten the platform, and, if there are women members willing to do the preparatory work and to wash up afterwards, the audience may sometimes be cheered with a cup of tea and a piece of cake. But these touches of luxury are reserved for exceptional occasions. Music is rare; chorus singing is almost unknown. Even where there is a piano it is seldom used, unless to give a lead to the National Anthem. The performance of that is, of course, purely a political ceremony, quite unconnected with any sense of beauty. Proceedings are conducted according to strict rules of order, with complete deference to the authority of the chair. Formality has the first and the last word.

From this outline—and I think all participants in “movements” will recognize it as correct—the fact stands out that Australian reformers are models of restraint. By common consent, in their public appearances they avoid the dramatic, the humorous and the passionate. It would, for instance, be impossible for Australian women to organize and carry out such a programme of social revolt as Englishwomen did in their campaign for suffrage prior to 1914. A member of the Pankhurst family once tried something of the kind in Melbourne, but her expected backing all melted away and the attempt was never renewed. A minister of religion from the United States of America suggested to me once that women pacifists (following an American precedent, which he quoted) might go to public places where preparations for war were being made, and there should kneel down and pray for deliverance from these evils. My reply was that for us this was out of the question. We could not do such a thing simply and spontaneously. If we attempted it we should be acting a part. Moreover, no one who saw us would take us seriously; their only concern would be to push us somehow into privacy and put us under medical care. The American, a keen student of human nature and in some ways a great admirer of the Australian temperament, said that on reflection he thought this was true.

Thus, in peace movements, the “education of public opinion” proceeded along decorous lines. Its strength was in its persistency, its breadth of sympathy and its internal harmony. The speakers from my own organization addressed so many meetings that the count of them has been lost. We had slides prepared containing short sentences about peace and disarmament. These were exhibited in metropolitan picture theatres. We had reprints made of peace posters sent us by the National Council for Prevention of War, U.S.A., and engaged space for showing them on 200 country and

suburban railway stations. Such enterprises were, of course, expensive, and generous donations to defray the cost came to us from Hon. J. P. Jones, M.L.C.; from the Trades Hall, and from the Peace Society. We industriously circulated our peace papers, both through the post and by personal delivery at large public gatherings, such as the Agricultural Show.

In 1923 the Peace Society in Sydney invited me to pay a lecturing visit, when I renewed acquaintance both with the secretary, Miss Lessing, and with Mrs. Septimus Harwood, the doyen of peace movements in New South Wales. I used the occasion to visit the W.I.L.P.F. Branch at Newcastle. The president, Mrs. Amy F. Wilkins, received me as her guest at her home in Port Macquarie, and I also stayed a few days at the historic Elizabeth Farm House near Parramatta, which had long since become the home of the Swann family. Miss Isabel Swann (afterwards Mrs. Longworth) was for years a prominent figure in Sydney peace circles, and some of her sisters, through their connection with the Society of Friends, were deeply interested in the peace cause.

In 1924 we inaugurated a peace scholarship in Victorian State Schools. Mr. Gilbert M. Wallace then editor of the *School Paper*, helped us with the formalities. The scholarship was open to all children under the age of fourteen and a half years who had been in regular attendance at a State school for one year. In October of each year every candidate was required to write an essay on some such topic as “Why War is Wrong” or “Why Nations Should Live at Peace with One Another.” (We supplied the title.) Children who gained 60 per cent. of possible marks entered for a competitive examination, and upon the results the Director of Education awarded the scholarship. The winner was entitled to a four years’ course at a district high school, a school of domestic arts or a technical school. After examination the essays were forwarded to us. Their number and quality delighted us. We had a certificate form printed on a large card, with space for the name of the candidate and for signatures of our president and secretary; also the following lines, sent by an American correspondent, Mr. C. W. Johnson:—

“No nobler words could mortal pen  
Than Peace on Earth, Goodwill to men’;  
No nobler work for us to do  
Than help to make these words come true.”

Printed in deep purple on pale green, with a floral border, the certificate had a handsome appearance. One was sent to every boy and girl who competed for the scholarship. The children were much pleased with them.

The scholarship cost us £16 per year and it called for special

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efforts in the collection of contributions. One particularly successful undertaking was a public performance of "Hiawatha," by S. Coleridge-Taylor, which was produced and conducted by Miss Dora Baker in aid of the fund. At a later date Miss Baker produced "The Golden Legend" (Longfellow's poem; music by Sir Arthur Sullivan). In this our minute secretary, Miss Sophie Slater, took the leading soprano part. Members of the chorus all either belonged to peace groups or were friends to the movement, as also were the instrumentalists. Miss Baker's enthusiasm and genius were equal to the double task of conducting the work and at the same time playing the exceedingly complex pianoforte accompaniment. The concert was so great a success that a repetition of it was called for and given.

Annual award of the peace scholarship continued for about ten years. It finally lapsed, not through any lack of interest on our part, but because the teachers failed to bring it under the notice of the children. Without announcement of the subject and invitation to their classes to compete, naturally very few essays were written. Finally their number became so small that the scholarship was withdrawn.

As members of a world-wide organization, we were called on to put money and work also into causes outside our own boundaries. From the date of the signing of the Treaty of Versailles (1919) it had been generally recognized that the successful warmakers were not equally successful peacemakers. We joined with others in pressing for revision of the unsatisfactory clauses of the treaty, and also in opposing the principle that payment for the war should be exacted from the defeated peoples. The Treaty of Versailles was never revised, but in the course of years the attempt to make Germany pay enormous reparations had to be abandoned. Allied economists could devise no scheme which in practice was not detrimental to the victors and advantageous to the defeated. Much light was thrown on the whole question by J. M. Keynes' book, "The Economic Consequences of the Peace." This treatise was introduced to us by Professor Meredith Atkinson, and after study of it we wrote in appreciation to the author (afterwards Lord Keynes) and received his courteous acknowledgment from King's College, Cambridge.

In 1924 a call went out from the International Bureau of the Women's International League for a statement of opinion from all sections as to what should be the specific aim of peace groups, making for improvement of human relationships within the State and also as between States. Members of the Australian Church, the Free Religious Fellowship and the Peace Society helped us in compiling a charter. So far as I know, it was the first of its kind to be drafted in this country. It set forth twelve points under four

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main heads. (Appendix 10.) The paragraph on "The First Duty of Statesmen" sets forth a truth which has been singularly ignored in the many more elaborate plans for a new world order that have since appeared. It says:—

"The civilized life of our era is founded on the implied contract that, while women bear and rear children, men will provide for them the necessary food, warmth and shelter. This contract has not been carried out. Therefore, there can be no new order unless statesmen and administrators return to their duty as *husbandmen* and place the performance of that duty above all considerations of patriotism, national prestige, pride of possessions and need of revenue."

A footnote adds that the actual deaths of women and children in Europe, years 1914 to 1923, from starvation and from diseases arising from want were estimated at fifteen millions.

In comment on a current criticism of the League of Nations that it should be a League, not of Government, but of free peoples, the following questions were put:—

Are there any free peoples? If so, which are they?

How can free peoples take part in a World Council, except through elected representatives?

If free peoples can elect satisfactory representatives to a World Council, why can they not elect satisfactory representatives to their own Governments?

These questions still remain unanswered, and they are now apposite to the United Nations' Organization and to projects for world government.

The same is true of the sections, "Safeguards Against Tyranny" and "Some Basic Principles of Government." (Appendix II.)

The Charter was presented at the Fourth International Congress of the Women's International League, held at Washington, U.S.A., in 1924, by Mrs. Edith Waterworth, of our Tasmanian Branch, who was visiting America at that time and was thus able to act as our representative. The good fortune of having an Australian member on the spot was repeated two years later, when Miss A. Lambrick represented us at the Congress held in Dublin, and again in 1929, when Mrs. Waterworth was present on our behalf at the Sixth International Congress held in Prague.

A society called The War Resisters' International, formed in England under the leadership of Mr. H. Runham Brown, early engaged our interest and we decided to affiliate with it. Its adherents were and are men and women whose attitude is absolutely pacifist and who pledge themselves not to undertake military service in any form. The group has to its credit a truly remarkable record of

humane and helpful service, both at home and abroad, and by sheer quality of character, consistency and ability it has won unique respect from a succession of British Governments. At the time of its inauguration conscription of women for war was an unheard-of thing in English-speaking countries. So little did we anticipate the possibility of such a thing that we thought a formal pledge on the part of Australian women not to accept war service would simply make us look ridiculous. We were glad, however, to give the English group our monetary support, to write for their paper and to give publicity to their publications. Later they were to be more explicitly represented in Australia by the Peace Pledge Union.

Despite the great distance between this country and others, several of our members besides those already mentioned took trips abroad during this decade. Such were Mrs. W. Warren Kerr, Miss M. McMahan, Miss S. Pinckney, Misses C. and D. Baker, Miss Mary Fullerton, Mrs. Heath, Miss Dillon. While in England the Misses Baker attended the silver wedding celebration of Mr. and Mrs. Runham Brown and conveyed to them our gift. We had previously welcomed an opportunity to contribute to the memorial of the late Edmund D. Morel, from the proceeds of a special meeting addressed by Miss Alice Henry.

Visitors from other countries whom we had the pleasure of welcoming included Miss Emily Horscroft (W.I.L.P.F., London), Miss Lucy Morland (England), Dr. Maude Royden (England), Mrs. Frankel (Germany) and Miss Martha Root (U.S.A.). We were also able to assist with the travelling expenses of two delegates from the W.I.L.P.F. to China: Miss Edith Pye (England) and Mlle. Camille Drevet (France).

With others, we continued to press for arbitration in all international disputes, making requests both by letter and cable, on opportune occasions, to the Governments of Australia and Great Britain; also to the League of Nations and the Australian delegates to the League Assembly.

Requests reached us for exhibits to be shown at Peace Exhibitions at Paris, Munich, Washington, Vancouver and Lyons. To all we sent letters, printed matter, picture postcards and an Australian flag. To Vancouver went some of the peace essays written in connection with our scholarship, and to Lyons, five large dolls which, through the interest of Miss Helen Strong, were dressed by five girls' schools in typical school costume. The dolls were presented to us at "Fintona" School, on the occasion of my giving an address there to the scholars. A letter of warm thanks was received from France, where the dolls were much admired.

A short history of the peace movement in Australia, which we were asked to draw up specially for this purpose, was broadcast

from Debs Radio Station, New York, and the greater part of it was afterwards published in *The War Resister*, an international journal then issued (by the War Resisters' International) in English, German, French and Esperanto. At this time communication with groups abroad was so frequent that we found it worth while to register an address for cabled messages. The word "Interleag" served this purpose.

In 1927 a disturbance took place in the Solomon Islands, arising from the murder of certain tax gatherers by some of the natives. Authorities announced their intention of sending a punitive expedition to the islands. We protested that the proposed attack on the men, women and children of a whole village was an outrage against justice and humanity, and that the policy of mass punishment for individual offences should be wholly abandoned. Leading Australian newspapers took up this point and questions were asked in the House of Representatives, Canberra. Further, our resolution went to England, with a letter protesting against the use of the Australian cruiser, *Adelaide*, for such a purpose. The British W.I.L.P.F. had the matter brought up in the House of Commons. As a result, the punitive expedition was not sent, and a Commissioner was appointed to inquire into the whole question of taxation and administration of the Solomon Islands.

The unsatisfactory social and political condition of the Australian aborigines was a standing concern to the W.I.L.P.F., and we did what we could to support societies formed for the purpose of bettering their lot. Miss Helen Baillie and Miss Amy N. Brown are two outstanding names among the workers in this cause.

Forecasts began to appear of what the coming aerial warfare would be like, with its indiscriminate massacre of citizens. Phrases like "Another great war will destroy civilization" and "Unless we can stop war, nothing else matters," became commonplace remarks. On the occasion of a pageant of fighting aeroplanes held locally, we pointed out, in making our protest against such shows, that men could never again plead, in justification of going to war, that they did so in defence of women and children. It is curious to recall that during the war of 1914-18 this was one of the chief arguments used to induce young men to enlist.

On the occasion of the Naval Conference, which sat in London in 1930, Women's Peace Day was celebrated by the presentation of a giant petition from women for abandonment of the war method. The most striking incident on this occasion was the arrival of a deputation of Japanese women, with a prayer for peace signed by 180,000 of their countrywomen.

Readers of this brief sketch may wonder how a comparatively small body of women met the expense of an unremitting programme of work extending over so many years. We never had more than

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a few hundred members, and were without subsidies. Yet by the steady generosity and loyalty of our own circle we managed not only to pay our own working costs, but also to send affiliation fees and donations to many other groups, both at home and abroad. The means to meet our commitments were always forthcoming and the Society was never in debt. The annual event of a social reunion and sale of gifts, held shortly before Christmas, enabled us to begin each New Year with a good credit balance. For some years these fêtes were held at the homes of members and several in succession took place in the spacious garden of "Trenant," the residence of Mrs. Warren Kerr, at Kew. Others followed at the Kiosk, in Fawkner Park, South Yarra, and after that at the Australian Hall, Russell Street, Melbourne. In order to make these events as profitable as possible, Mrs. W. J. Drummond held a series of sewing meetings at her home, where articles for sale were made from material given or bought from the funds. These sewing meetings began in 1925 and were continued and enjoyed for many years.

We were also fortunate in having a group of steadfast men friends who could always be depended on to lend a helping hand when needed, whether in carrying heavy weights and arranging furniture or auditing accounts. This last was a procedure always considered indispensable as a factor in a satisfactory financial position.

## CHAPTER 10

### NEXT BIDS FOR PEACE:

#### THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS—THE LABOUR MOVEMENT—THE WORLD DISARMAMENT MOVEMENT.

MEANWHILE other search parties were out looking for peace. Some travelled in company, some set forth alone. Their chief directions are shown by the following titles:—

The League of Nations,  
The Labour Movement,  
The Pan-Pacific Movement,  
Disarmament,  
The Churches,  
Other Organizations for Social Improvement.

Of these, the League of Nations would seem at the outset to have held the greatest promise of success. The League of Nations' Union was formed with high hopes of bringing that promise to fulfilment. This was no rebel society. It took its stand on an allegiance to which the Government was already committed, and was able to begin its work on the strength of a subsidy. Thus it was in a position to engage permanent quarters in a good building, centrally placed, and to employ a paid secretary and all necessary clerical help. This was its position in all the capital cities of the Commonwealth. Further, the principles and aims of the League were such as to recommend themselves to citizens of high status, and many such took seats on its councils. No shadow of reproach, such as the less orthodox groups had to bear, rested upon advocates of the League. It might fairly have been expected that the general public, with so much to gain and so little to concede, would have responded willingly and in large numbers to the overtures of the League of Nations' Union. But this did not happen. The activities of the Union in Australia would fill volumes, and it has, of course, its own full records. Its presidents, secretaries and council members were able and prominent men and women, and its work was of high quality. Yet somehow it never succeeded in capturing popular imagination. Early in its history we of the Women's International League accepted an invitation to affiliate with it and thus were in close touch with its doings.