

REPORT

OF THE

PEACEMAKERS' PILGRIMAGE

THROUGH

SCOTLAND ENGLAND and WALES

TO

LONDON



May - June 1926

PEACEMAKERS' PILGRIMAGE

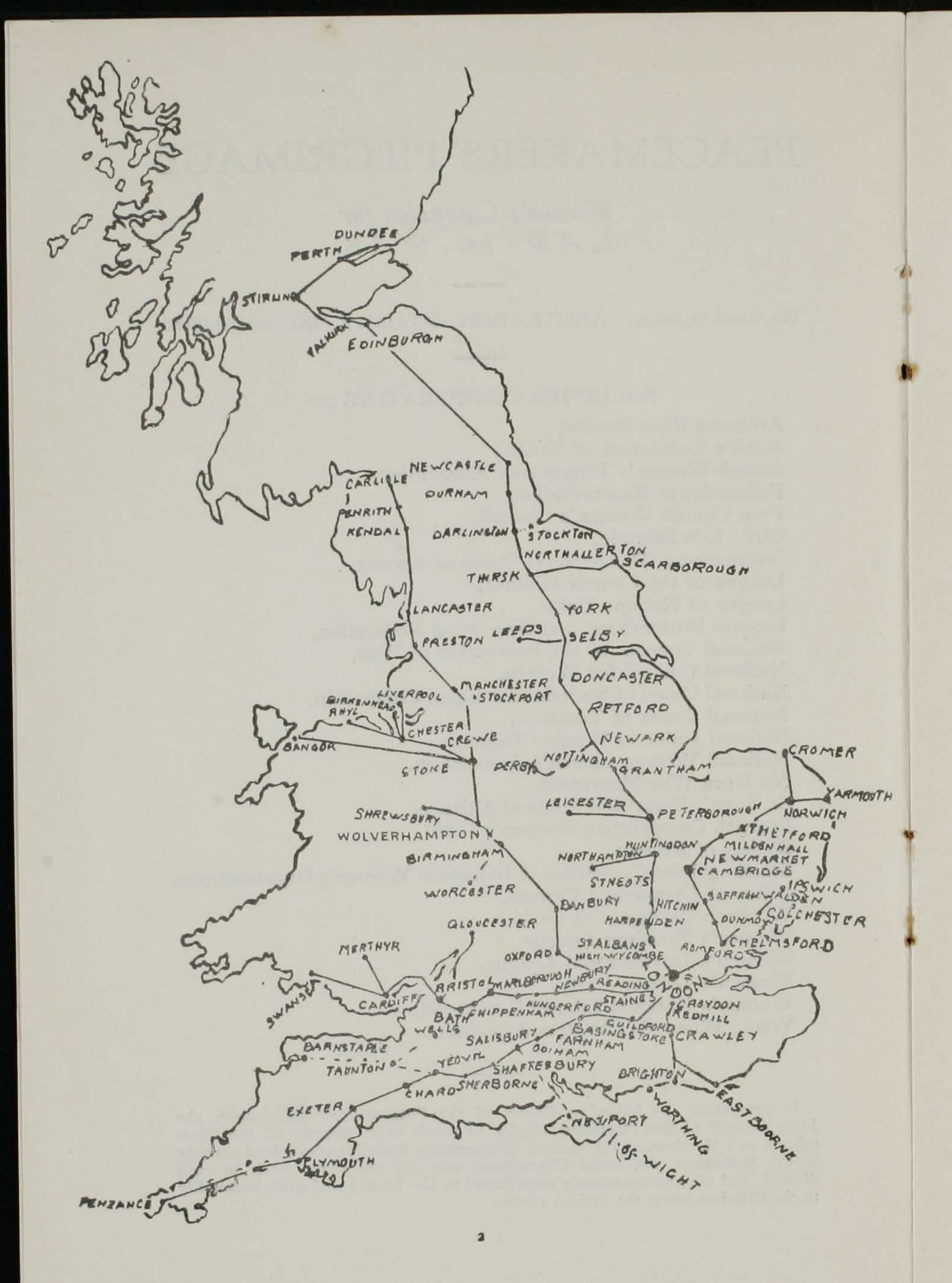
Women's Campaign for LAW not WAR

The Road to Peace: ARBITRATION, SECURITY, DISARMAMENT.

SOCIETIES CO-OPERATING:-

Arbitrate First Bureau, British Federation of Youth, British Women's Temperance Association, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Free Church Women's Council, Girl's Life Brigade, International Theosophical Order of Service, League of the Church Militant, League of Nations Union, London Brotherhood and Sisterhood Federation, National Council for the Prevention of War, National Council for Women, National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, National Union of Teachers, National Union of Women Teachers. National Women Citizen's Association, No More War Movement, St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, Scottish Co-operative Women's Guild, Society of Friends, Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations, Union of Democratic Control, Women's Co-operative Guild, Women's Freedom League, Women's International League, Women's Labour Party, Women's National Liberal Federation, Young Women's Christian Association.

In presenting the following Report of the Peacemakers' Pilgrimage, the Joint Council of the Pilgrimage desire to thank most warmly all the Committees and Members of the various Co-operating Societies who joined actively in the Movement, the Local Committees who did the spade work in each district, and all who generously contributed to the finance and gave hospitality to the Pilgrims along the various routes.



The Peacemakers' Pilgrimage.

In olden times, the object of a Pilgrimage was to do homage to the dead bones of saints. The object of the modern pilgrimage is to do homage to living ideals. Hyde Park has not the glamour of Canterbury or Glastonbury or Iona; yet we modern pilgrims are confident that if the saints themselves look down on

us, they look only with the approval of the change.

The object of this Pilgrimage was to bring home to the minds and hearts of the British people in a vivid and stirring manner, not merely the ideal of World Peace, but the need for definite action in order to attain that ideal. It was a strong belief in the innate good sense and goodwill of the average man and woman that urged our Pilgrims to go out into the highways and byways proclaiming the faith that was in them. Their aim was to put the whole matter simply and clearly and uncompromisingly before the people of the country: to show that, despite the mechanism of the League of Nations for peaceful and open adjustment of all disputes, the statesmen of the World were still pursuing those methods of secret alliance and sanctions which twelve years ago plunged the world in war, and that the only way out for our country was to prove to all the nations once and for all its living faith in reason above force by pledging itself to the settlement of all international disputes without reserve or hedging by conciliation, law or arbitration.

A Joint Council was formed at the suggestion of the Women's International League who, in January last, invited a large number of Women's Organisations (political, social, industrial and religious) and various Peace Societies, which include men and women, to send representatives to a conference in Caxton Hall. The response was most encouraging, and the Joint Council then formed was representative of practically the whole organised Woman's Movement in Great Britain, together with the Peace Societies, including the League of Nations Union. (Although the Conservative Women's Organisations adhered to their working principle not to participate as a body in a non-party movement, many prominent individual Conservative women gave their support, notably members of that distinguished family, the Cecils, to

whom the cause of Peace owes so much.)

This Joint Council at its second meeting unanimously agreed on

the following Resolution:-

"We, members and supporters of the Peacemakers' Pilgrimage, believing that law should take the place of war in the settlement of international disputes, urge His Majesty's Government to agree to settle all such disputes by conciliation or arbitration, and by taking the lead in the proposed Disarmament Conference of the League of Nations, to show that Great Britain does not intend to appeal to force."

This Resolution was carried at over 1,000 meetings held along

the Pilgrimage routes, with but one exception.

The Pilgrimage Committee was conscious from the beginning of its work that time was very short owing to the difficulty of securing Hyde Park on a Saturday during the summer. Then, while the work was being carried on at high pressure, and every day was precious, came the tragic interruption of the General Strike and the deadlock in the Mining Industry, with all the consequent uncertainty, agitation, and misery. It was difficult to know what to do. Some said: "Postpone the whole plan until the Autumn"; but we needed the voice of the British people to be heard before the September Assembly of the League of Nations. We decided, therefore, to carry on as well as we could, despite the fact that all printing was stopped; that travelling was almost impossible for the organisers; that letters sometimes took a week in transit, and that the flow of donations into our funds necessarily dried up. Of course, the Pilgrimage which was due to set out from the more distant places on the routes before the end of the General Strike was somewhat curtailed, but a glance at the list of places (given at the end) where meetings were held on the various routes will show how much work was actually done. This was facilitated by the very favourable reception which the Pilgrimage met with in the Press throughout the campaign. The meetings all over the country were reported and commented on at length by the organs of all parties. Considerably over 1,000 press cuttings were received in all, and publicity was also obtained through the filming of the Pilgrimage by Pathé Frères.

It was decided that Pilgrims should take the road on seven main routes (see map), converging on Hyde Park on Saturday, June 19th. The branches of the Co-operating Societies and places along the routes were circularised, local joint committees sprang into being and organisers were appointed to link up the work.

For any sort of open-air demonstration, and more particularly for anything in the nature of a pilgrimage, a certain amount of pageantry is desirable. Nothing draws the crowd like colour and music, and it was precisely the crowd that the Peace Pilgrims wanted to reach. A simple and inexpensive scheme proved very effective. Blue was chosen as the Pilgrimage colour. An armlet of blue linen, stencilled with a conventional design of a dove, constituted the uniform of the pilgrims. A few wore blue linen tabards. In addition, each route had its distinctive colour, which was blended with blue in the route banner, and in the multitude of pennons which added so much to the gaiety of the processions. When the pilgrims met eventually in Hyde Park, they could tell by a glance at a pennon from which part of the country any particular pilgrim hailed.

But the most effective part of the pageantry was the Name Pole. Wherever the resolution was passed, a little ceremony took place: a small board, painted with the name of the particular town or village, was hammered on to a pole by the Mayor of the town, the chairman of the meeting, the youngest person present, or some other selected member of the audience. Each pole held six name-boards, and these Name Poles were carried in all the processions and finally in the great demonstration in Hyde Park.

Space does not permit of a detailed account of each route, interesting reading as these would make. It was a wonderful experience for all who took part. What do they know of England—who did not go on Pilgrimage? By moving from one end of the country to the other one realised as never before how the various races that go to make up our composite nation have retained their identity throughout the centuries and how London and, in a lesser degree, the provincial cities of England, act as boiling-pots, from which emerges your modern Briton. We saw also not only every type of town and landscape, but were received into every sort of home. Now mine host was a clergyman or Nonconformist minister, now a banker, now a shopkeeper, now a retired army officer, now a board school teacher, now a peer, now a working man;-Peace mission apart, a rare and valuable experience. In brain and character, the Pilgrims met the pick of the country. The other type—the prejudiced, the apathetic—were better known to the organiser; a less pleasant, but an equally valuable experience. Suffice it to say there is enough leaven in Britain to leaven the whole lump.

For the number, size and enthusiasm of its meetings, the palm must be awarded to North Wales. Started by a small group in Bangor, with a few shillings, the North Wales tributary speedily swelled to the proportions of a river, and embraced over fifty towns and villages. To the first meeting at Penygroes in South Carnarvonshire, five streams of pilgrims came winding down the hillsides with blue and white pennons. Over two thousand people gathered in the market square from villages near and far. A wonderful meeting took place in the beautiful historic ruins of Conway Castle, and the audiences at Holywell and Colwyn Bay numbered from three to four thousand. As befits a nation of singers, hymns, Welsh and English, were sung along the route to Chester, where the North Wales and Carlisle routes converged.

The South Wales route had the honour of having Miss Maude Royden, who is partly Welsh, as Leader for the first three days, and she addressed crowded meetings in Cardiff and Bristol.

The Land's End route had to start late, but a most striking Pilgrimage crossed Cornwall, holding enthusiastic meetings. At Truro simultaneous services were held in the Roman Catholic Church, the Synagogue and the Cathedral. The great west doors of the Cathedral, opened only for Royalty or on some memorable occasion, were flung open for the pilgrims, and the Bishop led them up the nave.

From here, pilgrims and banners made a jump to Wiltshire to join their comrades from Devon, Somerset and South Wales on

the great West Road.

Scotland had great plans, but the strike coinciding with the date fixed for the start, these had almost entirely to be abandoned, and owing to the persistence of the Chief Constable's veto on public meetings, the pilgrims were unable to leave Edinburgh until June 13th. Hundreds were turned away that day from the special service in St. Giles. About two thousand attended the send-off in Charlotte Square, and the pilgrims were piped bravely through the old grey streets of Scott's "own romantic town."

The Great Northern and North Western routes embraced the fair green Lake country, the Tyneside coal area, the great commercial and industrial cities of Yorkshire and Lancashire, and the pastoral, agricultural and industrial districts of the Midlands, as well as Oxford, where interest was keen, and where they were received by the Mayor and the Vice-Chancellor of the University. Many of the northern towns were forced to abandon their original plans, but arranged demonstrations and processions more or less simultaneously with the Hyde Park rally.

The Eastern Counties route included the Fen Country, the rich farm lands of the east, and the city of Cambridge, which, like Oxford, responded warmly, the Mayor presiding at the public

meeting.

Large and successul send-off meetings were held at Bourne-mouth, Southampton and Portsmouth, the three points of departure on the Hampshire route. The most striking event on this journey was the demonstration in Aldershot. This centre of military training does not lie on the direct route, but owing to the interest and enthusiasm shown there a detour was made in order to include it. Hundreds came out to see the procession through the streets. Numbers of soldiers attended the meeting. They seemed to realise with shrewd sense that when we denounce war we do not denounce the admirable qualities that are associated with military glory, but that we seek to divorce these qualities from physical force Not a hand was raised against the resolution.

The Brighton route had the honour of providing the first band of pilgrims to enter London on June 18th; a most impressive and picturesque procession, which included women who had walked the whole distance, marched up to the Crystal Palace and held

an excellent open-air meeting.

Each town and village had something individual in its reception of the pilgrims, something by which it could be clearly dis-

tinguished in its crowded recollections.

Here is an example of an impromptu meeting held on a village green, as the pilgrims passed through. The sun shone, a brood of ducks swam placidly on a neighbouring pond; the cows lowed over the hedge; a handful of villagers, some merely curious, some already sympathetic, gathered round the pilgrims; three rustics sat on a bench near by, their backs resolutely turned, their ears obviously craning! Warm handshakes and God-speeds-tea in the vicarage garden and on with the march. Compare this group with the throngs that lined the streets of our great ugly industrial towns to watch, often to join in, the procession half a mile in length, with band and banner and flying pennons, and to listen thoughtfully and sympathetically to the speakers at the great meetings gathered in their midst. Or again, take the lovely pageant at Marlborough where the Land's End and South Wales routes met. It is doubtful if the fine old High Street, with its timbered houses, ever saw a more beautiful and more significant sight than the crowds of young men and women, the pageant of music and colour-why should the devil have all the good tunes and all the gay colours?-our scarlet-coated band, our many impressive banners, our blue tabards, our blue-and-gold pennons and our galaxy of brilliant and convincing speakers who declaimed from the steps of the old Town Hall. Or Maidenhead, the frivolous, the indifferent-so we had been warned !- that greeted the pilgrims with roses and overwhelmed them with the warmth of its welcome.

Throughout the pilgrimage, peace sermons were preached in churches and chapels all over the country. Cathedral services were held in St. Giles', Edinburgh, in Newcastle, Durham, York, Liverpool (where not only the Church of England, but the Roman Catholic Cathedral and the Jewish Synagogue held special services), Peterborough, St. Albans, Chelmsford, and Truro. There were innumerable civic receptions, the Mayoress of Bath (Madame Sarah Grand) driving as far as Keynsham to meet the pilgrims, and heading the procession into the city.

All this is indicative of the strength of the feeling throughout the country for an active peace, and has helped immensely to stimulate thought and discussion in wider circles. Many places report that such scenes of enthusiasm have not been known in the usually sleepy little towns which were taken "en route" by the

pilgrims.

All roads lead to Rome, and the Rome of the modern world is London. For days and weeks processions of the faithful had traversed the historic highways of Britain; the Great North Road, the Bath Road, Watling Street, the Pilgrim's Way that runs from Canterbury; and many an enchanted byway as well. On Friday, June 18th, they entered London simultaneously.

Then came a series of suburban demonstrations: at Fulham, where the Bishop of London had placed the grounds of Fulham Palace at the disposal of the pilgrims, Chelsea, Ealing, Hamp-

stead, East Ham, the Crystal Palace, and Dulwich.

At last on Saturday, June 19th, they assembled at 2.15, at four points, north, south, east, and west of the rallying ground.

From each, a procession set forth with music and banners, and the colour of its own route. As it moved in radiant sunshine through the great London thoroughfares the spectacle attracted

multitudes of spectators.

Here were women of the Guildhouse in blue cassocks and white collars, bearing their banner aloft; behind them walked members of the League of Nations Union, with bannerettes representing the various countries of the world. Here was a carriage filled with women graduates robed in black and scarlet and purple; there was a group of miners' wives. At the head of each of the processions rode a woman in a Madonna-blue cloak on a white horse; a notable figure was Miss Sybil Thorndike, who carried a banner embroidered with doves. Everywhere—in banners and pennons and tabards and armlets—a lovely blue was the predominating colour, the lovelier for the background of green foliage in the halting-place.

One man jeered at a young woman in a blue tabard, "What are you in it for?" he asked, "all dressed up and nowhere to go"? She replied quietly, "My brother was blinded and my husband killed. I've got a little boy of ten. They said it was a war to end war. I'm taking no chances. That's why I'm in it." He muttered, "Sorry, ma'am," and remained on the edge of the little knot of people to whom she was explaining the immediate

purpose of the Peacemakers.

A cynic in Hyde Park took his pipe out of his mouth to remark, "Well, I suppose it pleases them and keeps them quiet. Makes them feel as if they were doing something." A woman standing by, who had tramped many weary miles, retorted, "In the next war you will wish we really could have done something!"

A very dapper young man stopped a small group of women in blue tabards. "Are you by any chance the Peace Pilgrims?" he asked. "Then all I've got to say is: God bless you all!" He smiled, raised his hat and was gone. His was the prevailing spirit.

The processions were met in Hyde Park by a pageant repre-

senting the Coming of Peace.

After this, from twenty-two platforms, each draped with banners, short speeches were delivered by some eighty to ninety speakers, who were as representative of all political parties and schools of thought as the movement itself.

During the same period Professor Gilbert Murray was given by the British Broadcasting Company the opportunity to speak to

the whole country on arbitration.

At six o'clock, the Resolution which had been previously carried all over the country was put from each platform simultaneously and carried with acclamation.

Thus was reached the first stage of the Pilgrimage, which must not end until its final goal has been attained.

The Deputation to the Foreign Secretary.

The Pilgrimage Council requested Sir Austen Chamberlain to allow them to lay before him evidence of the support in the country for the policy of agreeing beforehand to settle all international disputes by conciliation or arbitration. He agreed to receive a deputation, and the interview took place on July 6th at the Foreign Office.

Mrs. Acland introduced 15 members of the Council, and speeches were made by Mrs. Swanwick on the general question of obligatory arbitration, Miss Royden on the feeling in the country as shown by the Pilgrimage, and Mrs. Eleanor Barton on the views of

working women on arbitration and disarmament.

Sir Austen received the deputation with great courtesy, and showed much interest in all that was said. In reply, he first reminded his visitors of the preparatory work that is now going on for the League of Nations Disarmament Conference and said he felt hopeful of its results, though he believed that immediate success could not be looked for. In regard to arbitration, Sir Austen Chamberlain pointed out that there were difficulties, especially for the British Empire, in the acceptance of a general system of arbitration and in the way of signing the optional clause. He dwelt particularly upon the uncertainty of naval international law. He said, however, that a review of the whole question of arbitration in international affairs is now being undertaken by the Government, and, further, that the subject would be discussed by the forthcoming Imperial Conference.

Places at which Meetings were held and at which the Resolution was passed.

In the larger towns several meetings were held, thus bringing the total number up to over 1,000.

The Pilgrimage colour was blue. Each of the six main routes

had also a colour combined with the blue.

SCOTLAND TO LONDON ROUTE. (Blue and Silver.)
Dundee, Coupar, Kirkcaldy, Edinburgh, Portobello, Tranent,
Macmerry, Haddington, East Linton, West Barns, Dunbar,
St. Abbs, Ayton, Cockburnspath, Burnmouth, Eyemouth, Berwickon-Tweed, Tweedmouth, Norham, Thirsk, Malton, Scarborough,
Scalby, York, Fulford, Escrick, Selby, Askern, Bentley,
Doncaster, Rossington, Bawtry, Retford, Tuxford, Newark,
Long Bennington, Bourne, Stamford, Grantham, Peterborough,
Huntingdon, Godmanchester, St. Neots, Baldock, Letchworth,
Hitchin, Stevenage, Welwyn Garden City, St. Albans, Radlett,
Barnet, Hampstead.

MIDLAND ROUTE. (Blue and Silver.)

Bradford, Wakefield, Doncaster, Huddersfield, Penistone, Lockwood, Berry Brow, Hanley, Holmforth, Meltham, Brackholes, Melgreen, Sheffield, Chesterfield, Waterloo, Dogley Lane, Shelby, Shipley, Denby Dale, Scissett, Lanpett, Stocksbridge, Deep Car, Owlerton, Birds Edge, Oughtibridge, Rotherham, Scholes, Canklow, Brinsworth, Treeton, Catcliffe, Attercliffe, Dronfield, Unstone, Whittington Moor, Derby, Crewton, Alvaston, Shardlow, Kegworth, Mansfield, Nottingham, Loughborough, Mountsorrel, Rothley, Leicester, Market Harborough, Kettering, Wellingborough, Luton, Bedford, Harpenden.

CARLISLE TO LONDON ROUTE. (Blue and Yellow.)

Carlisle, Prescot, Preston, Frankby, Upton, High Bentham, Ingleton, Melling, Wray, Hornby, Kendal, Burnside, Skelsmergh, Carnforth, Lancaster, Bolton, Nelson, Swinton, Hyde, Oldham, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Macclesfield, Ashton, Rochdale, Manchester, Wilmslow, Alderley, Liverpool, Wrexham, Birkenhead, Chester, Hale, Runcorn, Widnes, Warrington, Penketh, Nantwich, Crewe, Stoke, Stafford, Wolverhampton, Birmingham, Balsall Common, Kenilworth, Leamington, Stratford-on-Avon, Sibford Gower, Shipston, Banbury, Woodstock, Oxford, Headington, Watlington, High Wycombe, Loudwater, Beaconsfield, Jordans and Seer Green, Uxbridge, Hayes, Hanwell, Southall, Ealing.

SHERINGHAM TO LONDON ROUTE. (Blue and Red.) Sheringham, West Runton, East Runton, Cromer, Holt, Borden, Upper Sheringham, Roughton, Aylsham, Marsham, St. Faith's, Mile Cross, Norwich, Eaton, Altersett, Wymondham, Attleborough, Thetford, Barnham, Ingham, Bury St. Edmunds, Higham, Newmarket, Cambridge, Shelford, Trumpington, Foxton, Sawston, Saffron Walden, Newport, Duxford, Teklington, Great Chesterford, Littlebury, Bishops Stortford, East Ham.

IPSWICH ROUTE. (Blue and Red.)

Ipswich, Woodbridge, Mantham, Cattawade, Manningtree, Hatfield Peverel, Boreham, Springfield, Colchester, Chelmsford, Widford, Margeretting, Ingatestone, Brentwood, Romford, Ilford.

BRIGHTON TO LONDON ROUTE. (Blue and Purple.) Worthing, Lancing, St. Leonards, Hastings.

Brighton, Patcham, Hassocks, Hastings, Burgess Hill, Cuckfield, Crawley, Danehill, Handcross, Horsham, Hookwood, Dovers Green, East Grinstead, Reigate, Redhill, Merstham, Southwick, Porslade, Hollington, Battle, Robertsbridge, Hurst Green, Wadhurst, Tunbridge Wells, Handcross, Haywards Heath, Oxted, Caterham, Whyteleafe, Kenley, Purley, Croydon, Crystal Palace, Fulham.

HAMPSHIRE ROUTE. (Blue and Purple.)

Bournemouth, Poole, Christchurch, Portsmouth, Cosham, Southampton, Eastleigh, Chandlersford, Winchester, Farnham, Aldershot, Godalming, Guildford, Woking, Kingston, Wimbledon.

LAND'S END TO LONDON ROUTE. (Blue and Green.)

Land's End, Penzance, Long Rock, Growlas, Hayle (Fondray and Copperhouse), Camborne, Tuckingmill, Pool, Redruth, St. Austell, Liskeard, Truro, Plymouth, Torpoint, Totnes, Paignton, Torquay, Newton Abbot, Teignmouth, Dawlish, Taunton, Bridgwater, Street, Exeter, Glastonbury, Wells, Shepton Mallet, Frome, Bratton, Trowbridge, Devizes.

At this point the route was joined by the South Wales to London Route (which had come from Cardiff through Bristol, Keynsham, Bath, Corsham, Chippenham, Calne, Wootton Bassett, Purton and Swindon) and they continued:—Marlborough, Lockeridge, Burbage, Hungerford, Newbury, Thatcham, Woolhampton, Theale, Reading, Tilehurst, Calcot, Sonning, Henley, Twyford, Slough, Datchet, Wraysbury, Staines, Fulham, Chelsea.

NORTH WALES FEEDER (forming part of Carlisle Route).

Pen-y-groes, Groeslen, Caernarvon, Portdinorwic, Bangor, Llanfairfechan, Penmaenmawr, Conway, Mochdre, Colwyn Bay, Rhyl, Prestatyn, Holywell, Llangollen, Chester, Hoylake, West Kirby, Birkenhead, Bromburgh, Wilendon, Crewe, Wallasey, Rock Ferry, Port Sunlight, Morfa Bychan, Nevin, Pwlheli, Criccieth, Llanberis, Ebenezer, Pentir, Bethel, Douglas Hill, Capelcurig, Oswen Valley, Tregarth, Bethesda, Penmaduo, Dolwyddelen, Bettws-y-coed, Trefriw, Llanrwst, Llanbedr-y-cumin, Talybont, Roe Wen, Bettws Garman, Rhostryfan, Rhosgadfan, Waenfawr, Llanellharain, Llanllechid Carmel, Carmel a Phisgah, Talysarn, Nantle, Llanllyfni, Baladeulgh, Bontnewydd, Llithfaen, Clynnog, Penrhos Garned, Llandegar, Benllech, Porthaethury, Menai Bridge, Aber, Gyffin, Llandudno, Llandudno Junction, Penrhos.

Financial Statement.

The Committee has received generous and sustained financial support from first to last. In the early days funds came in well, and a steadily increasing balance justified rapid development of the work undertaken. The industrial crisis in May brought difficulties on two sides: on the one hand, the volume of donations decreased and for a short time stopped altogether; on the other, considerable extra expense had to be incurred owing to inevitable changes of plans. This accounts for the specially heavy item in the statement of accounts under the heading of "Postage and Telegrams." The generosity of friends and sympathisers has been one among many encouraging signs of the support for our movement; many have made more than one contribution.

Special thanks are due to 27 local committees which, after defraying their local expenses, have made donations to the Central Fund. Many of these donations have arrived since the final demonstration on June 19th and have helped materially in making possible the satisfactory statement of accounts we are able to present.

It has been decided not to print the list of subscriptions, as such a list would add considerably to the expense of the Report.

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Vouchers in connection with the above I further certify that all my requirements CERTIFY that I have examined the Books and find the same to be a true and correct account.

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FRED WESTON.

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