





170.) Intern. rätt

FREDRIKA BREMER'S

APPEAL TO THE WOMEN OF THE WORLD
TO FORM A PEACE ALLIANCE

REPRINTED FROM THE TIMES OF AUG. 28TH 1854
AND ISSUED BY
THE SWEDISH NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN



STOCKHOLM
AFTONBLADETS TRYCKERI
1915

Lo: 35
1838.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

500 N. 5TH ST. N. Y. C.

1891

1892

1893

1894

1895

1896

1897

1898

1899

1900

1901

1902

1903

1904

1905

THE International Council of Women was founded at the first international Women Congress in Washington 1888. At the opening of the Congress the president Mrs Elizabeth Cady Stanton mentioned the Swedish authoress, Fredrika Bremer, as one of the women, from whom »long ago were heard the deep yearnings of their souls for freedom responsive to our own». On uttering these words Mrs Stanton probably as little as any of the other members of the Congress, knew that Fredrika Bremer more than three decennaries earlier had presented a plan for the founding of a union between all the women of the world for the promotion of peace, prosperity and happiness and for the sake of fighting against ignorance and unrighteousness.

And when later the International Council of Women became an accomplished fact and Sweden ranked among the other countries, there was probably no one in the country of the renowned authoress who remembered that Fredrika Bremer about 1850 had sent out a complete program for a women's world alliance. Only this year, fifty years after the death of the Swedish authoress, a Swedish scholar of literature, Klara Johansson, B. A., succeeded in finding this interesting document which has later been published in »Hertha», the principal organ of the Swedish Women movement, edited by the very society that carries the name of Fredrika Bremer, »the Fredrika Bremer Society».

It was in the summer of 1854 when the thundering of the Crimean war made Europe shiver that Fredrika Bremer inspired by the thought of the peacemaking mission of women carried out her idea of a women's world alliance. In an appeal inserted in the Times of Aug. 28th 1854 she developed this thought of hers and presented a complete program for the organization



tion of such an alliance between the women of the various countries for the promotion of peace. The summons of the warmhearted authoress, however, sounded in vain and it became the privilege of the women of later years to carry out the plan.

The appeal is, however, an interesting historical document at the same time as it is a fine monument to the noble and foresighted Swedish authoress. According to our opinion it ought thus to be known within the Council that has later realized her grand idea and we are hoping that its members will receive it with sympathy and admiration.

Stockholm, March 1915.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF SWEDEN.

INVITATION TO A PEACE ALLIANCE.

At a time like this, when the Powers of the West arm themselves against those of the East, and enter into a struggle threatening to spread over several of the countries of Europe like a large bleeding wound, tearing men from their homes, leaving thousands of widows and fatherless children, destroying harvests, burning cities, filling hospitals, calling up bitter and hateful passions, laying shackles on commerce, embittering life in many thousand quiet, industrious families, a struggle, — the sorrowful effects of which possibly may be felt by most of the nations of the earth, — at such a time we have ventured a thought, a hope, that through woman a peaceful alliance might be concluded, embracing the whole earth — an alliance opposing the direful effects of war, and contributing by united and well-directed efforts, under the blessing of God, to the development of a state of peace, love, and well-being, to come forth when once the terrors of war shall be over, and the time of devastation has passed away.

Since the beginning of this century charitable associations of women have been formed in the larger cities of most Christian countries, perhaps in all, though we do not know of their existence. They have worked, jointly or individually, for Christian purposes. Their aim has been to relieve, partially at least, the misery prevailing in the world, and to promote the coming of better times, especially by spreading the Word of God, by teaching and caring for children, by trying to call forth the energies of the poorer classes. Hitherto these associations have acted mostly without connexion with each other, scarcely, knowing of each other's existence. We know, however, by daily experience the power of association. United exertions to promote a common acknowledged aim strengthens the individual and increases the

general amount of energy. It exercises a powerful attraction on those who stand indifferent, or otherwise isolated from the general movement, which thus grows in power and influence to an extent not to be calculated. Drops of water united have formed the ocean, — atoms united the universe.

We wish, therefore, to propose that the associations of Christian women formed in various places of the earth, humbly aiming to fulfil the law of love laid down by Christ himself, may hereafter enter into connexion with each other, and strengthen and extend their activity by united exertion and consciousness of a mutual aim. This aim we consider to be:

Care of the destitute, under the following leading heads;

Caring for children by means of a Christian education, for families by exercising Christian influence, by the distribution of work and its just reward;

For the sick and the aged, by affording them protection and help;

For prisoners and other fallen fellow-creatures, by compassionate exertions to raise them from their sunk condition;

And, finally, by encouraging all institutions and means aiming to promote such purposes.

We believe that, by a connexion between the many different associations all having these and similar aims, much more could be done than what is done at present. We believe and feel that we want the encouragement which would thus be afforded by reaping the fruit of each other's experience and example.

To be able to realize such an alliance we would propose:

1. That there should be a committee in the capital of each country, which should enter into communication with all the different female societies of that land, gather all particulars relating to them and their work, and thus be able to take a survey of the whole.

2. That each central committee, being the organ of circulation for all other societies in that land, should, through its secretary, or some other corresponding member, communicate to the central committees of other countries the principal details of the work

of female societies in its own, together with accounts of such industrial efforts or good institutions standing in connexion with the aim of the society that have arisen in their country.

3. That a printed circular containing these details may be sent, free of postage, at the end of every year, from every central committee to all those of other countries with whom they stand in communication.

Without enumerating various countries, we venture to express our belief that there are not many on the earth incapable of taking part in such an alliance, partly because they profess to be wholly Christian countries, partly because in them Christian communities have risen here and there, and continue to arise more and more, beautiful green spots in the middle of the desert. We venture to hope that in the regions near the Pole, as well as in those under the burning sun of the tropics, in the old as well as in the new world, wheresoever one living spark of Christian love is glowing, there Christian women will unite with each other to alleviate the miseries of the earth, and plant seeds for the kingdom of God; and we hope and believe that these will not refuse us the hand of fellowship.

We propose an alliance in the name of the Prince of Peace, extending its healing, regenerating influence over the whole earth — an alliance in which diversities of language, of national character, of climate, of custom, of Christian denominations, may be regarded as of little import in comparison with the aim, the language, the heavenly hope, the Lord and master we have in common. In these we propose to consider ourselves as having the same native country, as belonging to the same family, and, whatever diversity of opinion there may be among us, yet to join hands of sisters, and recognize as our children and relatives all those, of whatever nation or denomination they may be, who are bereft and unhappy, and whom our care possibly can reach.

Sisters, then, whom we do not know as yet, but in whose existence we believe and hope, here and there among the ancient kingdoms of Asia, the steppes of Siberia, or in the Imperial cities of Russia; sisters of the western countries of Europe, who have

lighted and guided us a long time by your bright example; and you, sisters in that vast new land beyond the Atlantic Ocean, whose homes we have just learnt to know as nurseries of all Christian virtues; and you, Christian women among the nations of Africa; Christian women in the isles of the South Sea; mild, loving sisters, all over the earth, in whose existence we believe, though we have not seen you, whom we love without even knowing you — give us your hands! May the earth thus become encircled by a chain of healing, loving energies, which neither ocean nor event, neither discord nor time, can interrupt! Let us unite to form an alliance eternal as God's own being; for ~~we~~ shall */war* come to an end, and tongues shall cease, and knowledge shall vanish away, but charity shall not fail; charity abideth for ever.»

We ought now to tell you who they are who thus address you. We are Swedish women, united for the care of poor orphans and destitute families in Stockholm, the capital of Sweden. We can rejoice in the co-operation of our Queen, and the humblest woman can join us, and, taking care of a family or a single child, rise to the dignity of its guardian angel on earth. We have recently entered into connexion with the societies of women, daily becoming more numerous, in different parts of this country, in order thereby to strengthen and encourage each other.

We are a little flock, and belong to a small nation, but we rejoice that from this nation have risen great men and benefactors to humanity. We are a little flock, but we rely on His word who has said — »Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good will to give you the kingdom».

It will be ours, if we believe in Him, follow Him, and obey His injunction, »If thou lovest me, feed my lambs».

There are times and circumstances which call upon us to follow the divine prescription, »Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in Heaven». We obey this to-day. The not less divine, »Take heed that you do not your alms before men, to be seen of them», we would take for our rule during our daily exertions for the good of the whole.

Sisters, who acknowledge the same Lord, let us unite in His name; let us call forth every good gift and healing power He has given us; call them forth prayerfully, diligently to do His work more fervently than ever before. As far as the sun sends his rays and the free winds blow over earth may our peaceful messages fly like doves from land to land, from city to city, undisturbed by the bitterness of strife, so that the world may know that the God of Peace and Love is more powerful than the spirit of war, and that He calls us to be His servants.

Each separately we are weak, and can do very little, but if, in the name of Christ, we unite our hands all around the earth and take it in our arms as a child, we may pray and hope that He will allow us at the end of time to come before our Heavenly Father, saying — »Here we are with the children Thou hast given us.«

We close here with the desire and entreaty that the female societies of foreign lands who wish to reach us the hand of fellowship would, before the end of this year, let us know it, by sending letters (postfree) to the Ladies' Association at Stockholm for the Care of Children, addressed to the Lady Superintendent,

Fredrika Bremer.

Stockholm, Midsummer-day, 1854.









