

Demand for Penny Postage

ACTION BY ALL CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE.

The need for reduced taxation and an early return to penny postage as a practical step to help industry was emphasised at a conference at the Hotel Victoria, Northumberland-avenue, W.C., of the Association of British Chambers of Commerce, which repre-

sents business interests throughout the country.

The association's executive council was authorised to take every possible step to bring about a penny postage immediately. In his presidential address Mr. Stanley Machin said that one of the chief causes of unemployment was excessive taxation. When they realised that today we were paying Imperial taxation of more than £16 a head of the population, as against £4 5s. 6d. before the war, the extent of the burden could be appreciated.

It was alarming to see that while in 1913 the total expenditure on national services amounted to £263,000,000, in 1922 the figure had reached above £371,000,000, of which only £89,000,000 was spent in war pensions.

More Taxes, Less Income. Local expenditure amounted to £79,000,000 in 1913, and £161,000,000 in 1923. The enormously increased expenditure had to be met out of an income which was shown to be 20 per cent. less in 1923 than it was in 1913. No step that Mr. Churchill could take

would tend more to improve trade and develop confidence and enterprise than a substantial reduction in the income tax.

The Sheffield and Leicester Chambers put forward a composite resolution urging the restoration of the penny postage in this country and in the British Empire and the removal of the restrictions on the transmission of the halfpenny post, and requesting the Executive Council to take every possible step to achieve these ends.

Mr. Winston Churchill in his election campaign, said Mr. T. G. Jameson (Sheffield), had expressed himself in favour of the penny postage, and they ought to hold him to it now that he was Chancellor of the Exchequer.

We had six Postmasters-Generals in about five years and no business could be properly run where the directing head was changed so frequently.

Lord Southwark said we could easily have the penny postage before Christmas if the Postmaster-General and the Chancellor of the Exchequer got together and agreed that the matter was ripe for settlement. They could then go to the Cabinet and ask permission to put it into immediate operation.

Sir Arthur Balfour (Sheffield) said the need for penny postage was past argument, and on his suggestion, the association authorised the Executive Council to take every step possible to bring it about immediately.

Mr. Walter Raine, M.P., proposed a resolution, which was carried, urging the restoration of such pre-war postal and telegraphic facilities as might be practicable. Large centres, he said, were much perplexed by this question and were suffering seriously from the continued curtailment of facilities.

Mr. Doncaster (Sheffield) moved a resolution, which was carried, drawing attention to the enormous increase in the cost of civil administration and urging the necessity of further reductions in expenditure. He said the Civil Service alone now cost nearly the whole of the national expenditure of the country in 1913.

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Families and Children

Mrs. Asquith writes in the London Magazine:

"Families may quarrel like cats, but if any of your relations turn up in any quarter of the globe, you feel a sort of happiness difficult to account for; at least, we Scotch do."

You can say clever things about almost anything but home, and to describe this there is no language. Its structure is laid on sure and early foundations, and depends upon the mother for its success more than upon the view or the elevation. You may see it in slums, cottages or castles, but, in spite of the fashionable science of eugenics or birth-control, you are most likely to find it after struggle and separation—in the large families.

When people say there are too many children born, I reply that the joy and the hope of life lie at the feet of the children. If the population of countries depended on the rich, every country would be clamorous—like France is—for Security, and I think it safe to say the selfishness of the rich can be depended upon not to produce the large families of past generations. It is through children, and children alone, that man and woman are enabled to fight every inch of the way to despair.

If, instead of birth-control, everyone could preach drink-control, you would have less poverty, less crime and fewer illegitimate children. It is not crimes of fraud so much as crimes of violence that fill the prisons. I speak feelingly; for as my brother, Harold John Tennant, and I were the last of twelve children, it is more than probable we should never have existed had the fashion of birth-control been prevalent in the eighties. Sickly children bring out the best qualities in love and science, and, if it is a question of poverty, let anyone out of kindness of heart (and belief in birth-control) offer to take a child from an overburdened mother and see what the mother will say. It may be bad for many reasons to have too many children, but it is worse to have too few, and only children have nothing like the same chance in life as those who have brothers and sisters.

The Empire an Economic Unit

Ottawa Citizen: Col. N. W. Ponton, of Belleville, spoke with broad vision at the meeting of the Ontario Associated Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce in Toronto. In urging a national policy of preference, for trade between the nations within the British Commonwealth, he asked why Canada should lie down under the high tariff walls which foreign countries had built against it. "Are we afraid of being great?" he inquired. "Let us link up with the Motherland and try to make the Empire an economic unit."

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