CHAPTER IV

THE ROLE OF THE CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Until the 1870's the women of New South Wales gave every appearance of almost total uninvolve ment in any particular issue. It is impossible to estimate how much private support they gave, or to what extent subjects concerning them were discussed, but it is equally evident that by 1880 relevant legislation had created a more definite awareness among women of their importance and had nourished a movement which could be described as a Women's Rights Movement. Its main avenue of expression was the Women's Organisations through one or more of which nearly all the interests and campaigns of the movement were directed. What now made this movement unusual in New South Wales was its almost total lack of highly ambitious goals, its lack of militant methods and its marked concern for ideals to which none but a highly prejudiced anti-feminist could take any real exception.

The movement gained its supporters from all sections of the population, but its active workers from a very limited quarter only. A high proportion of the women who worked for a living in New South Wales were not actively associated with any women's organisation at all and only those who later became spokesmen for these women had extensive personal contacts with them. There were a number of reasons why working women were not
associated with organisations which were predominantly middle-class, but their absence from them had the effect of creating a movement which in its early stages particularly, was directed by the same leisured and educated class as it was in England.

Not all women who joined the new women's organisations became active feminists, but the organisations did give their members the opportunity of entering public life for the first time. As a result many began by associating with some charitable organisation and often found they were, or had become feminist in their outlook.

CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS.

The roles played by the organisations these women joined are of considerable importance. The earliest were the charitable organisations whose influence pre-dated the women's rights movements by more than half a century, but had already by the 60's and 70's begun to provide a highly respectable, non-violent means of entry into public life for many women. In so far as these organisations also provided virtually the only entry in New South Wales, the role of the charitable organisations in the feminist movement was greater there than in either the United States or England and in many ways much more important.

In a state without poor laws, the charitable organisations were both essential and influential. Most of them received some measure of government support, generally insufficient, for their constantly increasing activities, and they consistently
relieved the government of a number of social responsibilities. In spite of attacks from time to time over maladministration they generally enjoyed considerable prestige and a gratifying share of the social spotlight. The vice-regal patronage they invariably asked for was generally given. They attracted the membership and contributions of the richest and most public spirited citizens, most of whom were motivated by a sincere and 1 strong sense of duty towards the less fortunate. The names of more than one generation of a family were associated with a number of these organisations and women who became actively associated with a public cause in New South Wales frequently 2 had a history of family charity work behind them.

This very concentration of administrative functions and financial support in the hands of a select few, enjoying official backing, tended to equate charity work with social prestige— a not uncommon association but one which was particularly pronounced in New South Wales with its small population and its social life confined in any case to those with the time and the means to follow causes.

1. They were often accused of following an empty round of charitable functions and of being misguided in their efforts to help. Nevertheless the sincerity of the majority is striking and religious motivation very strong. Families of the clergy were very strongly represented on committees.

2. The Scott family, to which Rose Scott, later Secretary of the Women's Suffrage League and her cousin David Scott Mitchell belonged, was well represented on the early lists of Beneficent Society subscribers.
Even with a changing population and social conditions this early association, with its overtones of social prestige has continued important in New South Wales.

For these reasons it is not surprising to find that in the early 19th century the same names re-appear on a number of committees and that these names are almost invariably those of the wives of the colony's judges, Parliamentarians and leading clergymen. Very often too, the families represented were closely connected by marriage or on intimate visiting terms.

As more New South Wales women were encouraged to extend their activities, they extended them first in these organisations coming, as their range of duties increased, into working contact with men they frequently met socially and who were very often in high legal and political circles.

Women's charitable work by 1900 was extraordinarily varied and active and the names of those taking part less and less familiar as more were drawn into it. But their combined influence was sufficiently impressive to have contributed quite materially to the lack of real opposition to the suffrage from men in high positions.

3. See for example the social connections of the family of Sir James Stephen in Think of Stephen, Ruth Bedford, Sydney, 1954, in which she outlines the background of social visiting between families in this period. The Stephens were connected by marriage with the Cox's, Campbells and Tooth, names often associated with Lady Stephen's on committees.
THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES CHARITY WORK

Participation by women in charity work in New South Wales began in the early years of the colony and until the 1870's was almost wholly concerned with the welfare of children and the protection and reclamation of women. Well meaning colonists tried their hands at reforming female convicts, rescuing the homeless and providing refuges for free settlers, but their work was limited, and until the time of Caroline Chisholm, uninspired. Mrs. Chisholm's work is not included in this thesis, but it may be noted that among the women reported to have briefly worked on a committee with her was Mrs. Windeyer, whose own family became one ardently committed to women's rights. Mrs. Chisholm tackled the problem of settling unmarried women migrants- a more ambitious scheme than any attempted before her time or a great many afterwards.

Much earlier, in 1800 Mrs. King, the wife of the Governor, had moved to have an orphanage provided and in 1820 the Benevolent Society called a women's committee into being with far more limited aims. It was needed in the words of the Second Annual Report to

attend to the cases of poor unmarried women during their confinement ... so that the deserving and virtuous poor in their hour of trial may experience all the sympathy and relief which female tenderness and commiseration can administer.

4. Report of the Committee of the Benevolent Society for 1820
Mitchell Library, Sydney.
The Committee and the Society benefitted from the enthusiasm of Lady Darling, who also organised the Committee of the Parramatta Female Convict Factory in 1826, but neither committee was very long lived.

In the case of the Benevolent Society it was probably not its fault. Their charter was narrow and the Society itself virtuously hoped that "these attentions of the ladies tend to encourage better moral habits which will render more cases eligible to be relieved by this committee". The hope was hardly borne out. In its first year the Ladies' Committee could only find six women who met the Society's requirements. Almost sixty years later the Society, facing exactly the same problem on a much larger scale, had to consider the question of providing much larger lying-in hospitals and training institutions to care for both married and unmarried women, and in 1879 it called a much more influential women's committee into existence to help.

Women were also associated with the Foundling Hospital at Ashfield, established in 1874, and later Crown Street, founded in 1898. The earlier hospital at Ashfield, known later as the Infant's Home became one of the best known and best supported charitable institutions in the colony.

5. Ibid.
Somewhat different goals, namely the employment and teaching of women, were behind the formation in 1824 of the Female School of Industry, with which Mrs. Stephen, mother of Sir Alfred Stephen, later Chief Justice and Lieutenant Governor and her charitably minded family, was connected. Also sharing the same aims and duties as the earlier Benevolent Society Committee were the much lesser known The Sydney Dorcas and Strangers' Friend Societies and the Jewish societies, the Hebrew Ladies' Dorcas Society and the Hebrew Ladies' Maternity Society. These Jewish groups were probably the first wholly managed by women in New South Wales. More in the public eye was the Female Refuge Society, founded in 1849, by men. By 1852 it had a ladies' committee in operation, called the "mainstay and prop of the whole society".

Almost identical in object was the Sydney Female Mission Home, founded twentytwo years later with the backing of Bishop Barker of Sydney and with Mary Cowper, wife of Charles Cowper, Member of the Legislative Assembly, as Secretary. The home was to be a "place of shelter for women who had fallen, or were in danger of falling from virtue; to guard them against temptations and to rescue them from proceeding further in the downward course of ruin."

6. Ibid. 1852
7. SYDNEY MORNING HERALD. 3 August, 1874.
In 1880, the Young Women's Christian Association, in which the Fairfax family played a prominent part, came into existence as the largest and most influential society in New South Wales for the protection of women and girls. Its inaugural meeting was chaired by John Fairfax, Member of the Legislative Council and attended by the Bishop of Sydney.

Originally founded in 1855 in England both as a home for nurses passing to and from the Crimean War, and as a prayer circle, the Young Women's Christian Association gradually extended its activities outside the British Isles. The first Australian Branch was founded in Geelong in 1872, but shortly afterwards disbanded. Branches were more successful in New Zealand and in 1880, Lady Archibald of Putney wrote to Mrs. Henry Moore in Sydney urging her to form a Branch. With the support of the Bishop of Sydney this was done.

Like other organisations of the time, the Young Women's Christian Association was both a home from home for working girls, conducted on Christian principles, and a religious organisation. It followed the programme common to many organisations both in Australia and overseas of dividing its activities into Departments and in time had circles operating under a number of titles.

8. These included Social and Industrial, Religious Work, Literature, Immigration, Travellers' Aid, a Factory Helpers' Union (non-unionists but a visiting group), a Total Abstainers' League, Foreign Missions and various social groups. The Association also conducted an Employment Agency, mainly for governesses and domestics.
There were a number of lesser known, but similar societies also founded in the period. A ladies' committee, headed by Lady Young, wife of the New South Wales Governor, working for the Sailors Home, was set up in 1865. Ladies were also appointed to the committee of the Deaf, Dumb and Blind Institute formed the same year, and in the late 70's they became associated with the Prisoners' Aid Society. The 1861 Home Visiting and Relief Society was more missionary in its goals, as was the later Sydney Ladies' Evangelistic Association. Formed in 1879 this association had branches in all parts of the colony and like the Young Women's Christian Association, shortly formed a set of internal departments concerned with missions to hospitals, emigrants, bus and cab drivers, soup kitchens and Christmas cards for hospitals. The range of these internal departments was probably best illustrated by the remarkable cross section of activities carried on within the Women's Christian Temperance Union during the next twenty years.

The invaluable work these committees and societies performed was always hampered by inadequate financial support, in spite of their enthusiastic debuts and the general public sympathy they aroused. In fact, the charitable organisation was assured of the latter from an early date and in 1858 an organisation to work for a Home for Respectable Female Emigrants and Servants was launched typically and successfully, at a public meeting chaired by the Governor-General. On this particular occasion the meeting
was addressed by Mrs. Foster and her speech, which may be the first women's speech reported so fully in a Sydney newspaper, is an illuminating expression of the quality of interest women took in this and similar causes, and the limits of their interest. More important the essence of her speech with only minor alterations, was being repeated on the eve of the securing of the franchise and for a number of years later. Mrs. Foster hoped that

the Australian ladies [will] be a pattern for all nations but especially to the daughters of America; may their minds be led away from the bondage of luxury and self-advancement, may their eyes be opened to the great want of the nation, to live for others and more so their husband's happiness, to secure themselves and their fellow sisters from utter ruin...

By 1900 women were no longer prophesying utter ruin for their sisters, but they were still subscribing to the other sections of Mrs. Foster's speech. And this attitude was so universally shared and admitted by the members of every women's organisation in New South Wales, whatever its sympathies, that it is almost impossible to envisage a militant suffrage movement emerging or the belief taking hold of any New South Wales man that an enfranchised woman was any great threat to the established order.

9. SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, 22 March, 1858.
As the number of charitable organisations increased, and as women joined them in greater numbers, so did they identify themselves more closely with women's traditional interests, at the same time greatly expanding their influence and testing and strengthening their abilities. But the supporters of women's rights who developed in, or alongside these organisations never really saw themselves outside this familiar framework, though they certainly wished to dominate it. Their activities otherwise were still directed to becoming men's helpmate, albeit in time his enfranchised helpmate. 10

**THE BOARDING-OUT SYSTEM**

Women did best when they moved early into a new field, covering what they considered their traditional interests, and this is well illustrated by the foundation of the Destitute Children's Society and the operation of the Boarding-Out System.

The question of providing adequately for destitute children was another of the colony's foundation problems. Cared for in the Government's foundling home, by the Benevolent Society and by individuals, 11 more definite steps for the welfare of these children were needed by 1856. Four years previously a predominantly men's committee had formed a Society for the Relief of Destitute

10. See Norman McKenzie, _Women in Australia_, Melbourne, 1962. He points out, probably for the first time, the extreme feminist bias of the workers for women's rights in Australia. Although in essence he is correct, women were not quite so alarmingly feminist as he suggests and certainly not so antagonistic because of their sex. Most of their utterances were attempts to prove how womanly they were and their attitudes date from a period somewhat earlier than he suggests.

11. In the early 50's a Mrs. Reid, wife of a Presbyterian Minister, had opened a private school in Sydney for destitute children.
Children and an act in support was passed in the New South Wales Parliament in 1857. In 1856 the Government began work on a Children’s Asylum at Randwick and almost immediately Lady Denison, wife of the Governor, and Lady Stephen, wife of the Chief Justice, were appointed lady visitors.

This early connection with the Randwick Children’s Asylum was the prologue to a growing, and in the end extensive, involvement by women in the affairs of children in general. Within the next twenty years, the question was raised by them often and eventually government hopes came to rest on the success of the Boarding-Out System in which women were very considerably involved. This was the scheme under which children were placed in foster homes and the government contributed to their support.

In this particular field as in the case of so much other social legislation South Australia led the way. The southern colony, almost from its foundation, had been faced with a grave problem concerned with the abandonment of women and children. In 1856 an anonymous letter to an Adelaide paper had suggested that housekeepers in the country take in and care for destitute children— a suggestion which may not have been original as it already being mooted in Scotland and was officially introduced there two years later.

Nevertheless in South Australia the Destitute Board, created by the 1842 Destitute Persons Relief Act, almost immediately placed thirty children in various homes and the system was apparently unofficially in operation for the next ten years. In 1866 a Mrs. Caroline Clark in a letter to the South Australian REGISTER suggested separation of ages and classes in an asylum, and the extension of the boarding out of children, financed by the Destitute Board. The suggestion received greater support in the following six years as the Government industrial school and reformatory came in for repeated criticism. In 1872 permission to try the new plan under different administration, was given, and a Children's Relief Act passed removing control of the children from the Destitute Board and giving it instead to the State Children's Council. The Council at the time contained six women, including the organiser of the scheme, Mrs. Clarke and the remarkable Miss Catherine Spence whose views on a number of subjects were to influence women in other Australian states for many years to come.

The new Council had been brought into existence because of a number of defects in the administration of the Destitute Board, but despite this the Boarding Out System had been a success and its operations were watched closely in New South Wales. It also had some influential supporters among Sydney women, who, between them wielded some indirect political influence. Least influential in this regard, but one of the most active workers
was Mrs. Marion Jefferis, wife of the Congregational Minister for Sydney. She and her husband had recently arrived from South Australia and consequently were well informed on the workings of the system. The Jefferis' became in the next few years extremely well known personalities in Sydney and the Rev. Jefferis an indefatigable lecturer on a bewildering variety of topics from socialism to correct behaviour for young ladies.

In 1879 Mrs. Jefferis outlined the benefits of the Boarding Out System in letters to the paper and when support appeared to be slack, organised the purchase, through the Permanent Mutual Society, of a four-roomed cottage in which to start her own asylum and Boarding Out System. Less precipitate, but rather more influential, was Mrs. (afterwards Lady) Windeyer, whose entry into public life dates from the 1870's. She remained a leading figure for the next 40 years and in many ways, an indispensable one, becoming one of the dozen best known and most influential members of the New South Wales women's movement. Her involvement in charitable causes, and later the suffrage movement, was the direct result of her own excellent private education, followed by marriage to a man of liberal views with a successful public career. Her husband's general support of

13. Her husband's prominent position in the colony gave her considerable standing on the many organisations to which she belonged and to the causes she favoured. She became Lady Windeyer when her husband was knighted in 1891.

14. A sister gained one of the first B.A's from the University of New Zealand.
women's rights which may have stemmed from admiration of his own mother's successful managing of their Hunter River property, continued all his life. As a rising young barrister and politician, as Attorney-General, Judge of the Supreme Court and Chancellor of the University of Sydney, he supported over the years a succession of Acts concerning the improved position of women. From his surviving correspondence it is also clear that his wife enjoyed his full confidence and support.
There is little doubt that Lady Windeyer was sought as much for her husband's social and civic position as her own merits. She was held in considerable affection, but combined the added advantage of making an excellent natural president with the ability to make a cause more respectable. She exactly fulfilled the requirements of Mrs. Marion English who wrote to her in September 1893 impressing upon her the fact that she must not resign from the Women's Suffrage League because it required "a lady of title and of good social standing to give it importance." 15

Indeed it is important to remember that with the support of Lady Windeyer and her peers, any movement in New South Wales concerning women could gain no higher approval. In time such a movement would face the danger of being thought not liberal at all, but select and conservative and this is exactly what did happen ten years later in the case of the Women's Suffrage League.

In the meantime Lady Windeyer was of the utmost importance, Her only real superior was the Governor's wife, and she was above controversial causes.

Lady Windeyer's connection with the Foundling Home in 1874 and later the Ashfield Infants Home appears to have been her first major involvement in charity work and her interest in the Boarding Out System, shared by her husband, dated from the same period.

16. SYDNEY MORNING HERALD. 10 December, 1875.
In February 1875 she was being urged by Emily Clark of Adelaide to introduce the system in New South Wales, and she appears to have been in close contact with her over the whole period. She also had the support in the venture of Henry Parkes with whom the Windeyer family had personal associations.

Lady Windeyer and Henry Parkes had travelled to Australia on the same ship, though not in the same class, in 1839 but Lady Windeyer afterwards claimed to have remembered their first meeting. Parkes' association with the Windeyer family grew over the years, and in 1893 he asked Sir William to be executor of his will, claiming he was "about the oldest personal friend I have living .."

In 1873 Parkes had created a Charities Commission largely to investigate the Boarding Out System which had also been recommended to him by the South Australian Chief Secretary. The Committee's report had been largely favourable. It was 1879 before any definite steps were taken, however, to introduce the system and then it became largely an extension of the system Mrs. Jefferis was already operating. The South Australian Act was used as a model, and Lady Windeyer's hand is reported in the actual framing of the Bill. Her daughters claimed that her requests to Parkes for action had finally resulted in his

17. The Windeyer Papers, Uncatalogued MS, D159, Item 7.
request to "draw up a little Bill, Mrs. Windeyer", and when she did so, said it "was well drafted and altered very little".

Whatever the extent of her influence, there is no doubt that her connection was sufficiently close to warrant her appointment with the Honourable Arthur Renwick, a member of the Legislative Council, Miss Mary Stuart, (the first Lady Visitor), and Mrs. Carran, Lady Jennings, and Lady Allen, all wives of men prominent in Parliamentary circles, to the State Children's Relief Board. The preponderance of ladies on the Board and the ease with which they were appointed, demonstrated very effectively the extent to which they were now accepted in the organisation of an important charitable and government supported organisation. Equally interesting is the fact that almost immediately lady visitors with suitable qualifications were appointed in both city and country areas to oversee the system.

With the passing of the State Children's Relief Bill, Parkes said—
everything will depend, therefore, upon our being able to obtain the devoted services of ladies, to keep a constant supervision over the children who are boarded out.


20. There were thirteen Board Inspectors and 283 Lady Visitors by the end of the century. Figures are given in the article "Homes with Small Aitches" in Progress, Vol.4,1965 the quarterly publication of the Public Service Board of New South Wales.

The ten years between 1880 and 1890 were not, on the whole, prolific of new charitable organisations and those that were formed, the women's branch of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Girls' Friendly Society for example, either were not connected with new societies or did not break any new ground. After 1890, however, a number of organisations very largely dependent on women, did come into existence. Some, such as the Fresh Air League and the Kindergarten Union quite definitely represented an advance in the social work of the earlier period. Others, including the multitude of Benevolent Societies which were formed in the Sydney suburbs and the large country towns, absorbed the energies of a great many more women, while hospital boards at Crown Street and Paddington automatically included women as a social right and as organisational assets. Later, they employed them on the staff. Women played a large part on hospital boards, though they were not for some time longer, accepted at Sydney Hospital or the Royal Prince Alfred.

The 1890's also marked the beginning of a curious little period when middle class ladies and gentlemen held out somewhat self-conscious helping hands to working class men and women through the medium of institutes, clubs and labour bureaux. Vice-Regal support usually meant, for some of the members, entertainment at special Government House garden parties.
Included in these experiments were the Working Men's Club at Balmain, the Newtown Workman's Institute, Enmore Young Men's Institute, the Working Boys' Club at Woolloomooloo, which concentrated heavily on social activities to keep boys off the streets, and the Newsboys' Brigade. All these organisations aimed at providing clubs where, through a combination of education, entertainment and lectures all dispensed in a generally high moral atmosphere, the off-duty welfare of members could be supervised by groups which feared the rival attractions of gambling shops and hotels. In some organisers there was a genuine sense of the intellectual and social barrenness in the lives of many of the club members and this they hoped to remedy. In the case of the Factory Girls' Club, board and lodgings were also provided. This club had its counterparts in England and the United States in bodies organised firstly for social life and intellectual discussion, and secondly as boarding houses. The Factory Girls' Club became a semi-charitable organisation, very well supported by a Board of Governors on which the Stephens family were well represented.

22. This little club was largely the inspiration of Dr. Jefferis and the Rev. and Mrs. Potter who were connected with the Women's Christian Temperance Union.

23. The Club closed down in 1906.
Its affairs were kept in the public eye by frequent garden parties and by an annual ball attended by the Governor. The Club itself catered primarily for the country girl in the city, and was under the genuinely interested patronage of Lady Darley, wife of Sir Frederick Darley, later Chief Justice of New South Wales. The Club included instruction in sewing, physical culture and simple entertaining.

In 1891 the Women's Industrial Guild was formed, with the support of the Countess of Jersey, as a labour bureau, particularly a bureau for distressed gentlewomen. It absorbed a similar organisation, the Ladies Needlework Institute. The Guild was short lived and during its existence was frequently attacked, notably by the BULLETIN and THE WOMAN. These papers saw the Guild as a threat to women workers in general because of the smallness of the wages it secured its clients.

In this respect the Guild had entered a touchy field. It could, under no circumstances, be considered a labour organisation, but it, and the Factory Girls' Club, did offer as much assistance to the women worker at this time, if not more, than the trade union movement did.


25. It held a number of Committee Meetings at Government House which made it particularly suspect in Labour eyes.
In the early 90's women took up other causes, among which was kindergarten training. Here they had almost the complete field to themselves although it was a number of years before their work was wholeheartedly adopted and copied by the Department of Public Instruction.

Theories on child education, formulated by Pestalozzi in the late 18th century and extended by Froebel between 1840 and 1870, were probably better known by some of Sydney's private school teachers than by the Department. Free kindergartens had been introduced first in Europe and introduced to the United States in the 1850's and 60's. It was from the United States that the New South Wales organisers gained their inspiration and their original college staff.

Following a private meeting in the home of Professor and Mrs. MacCallum, strong supporters of kindergarten training, a town hall meeting and a public meeting at the Young Men's Christian Association, presided over by the Governor, Lord Hampden, the New South Wales Kindergarten Movement was officially launched. The first kindergarten was opened at Woollomooloo in 1897, the second at Newtown in 1899. Others at Bowral and Newcastle followed shortly afterwards. A training college for teachers was also

26. Report of the Minister for Public Instruction 1894, p.28

Departmental teachers received training in kindergarten methods in the 1890's, and the Froebel method had been introduced on a limited scale in at least two state schools. But on the whole the Department was suspicious of the whole scheme and showed very little indication of going further with it.
established in 1897 and by 1898 it had adopted a three-year teacher training programme and a special nine months' course for children's nurses. It also acted as adviser for the setting up of similar kindergarten unions in other states. With Dr. Alan Carroll the Union contributed in 1899 to the founding of the Child Study Association of Australia which worked for the needs of mentally deficient children.

In more traditional charitable fields, as visitors and social workers, women's activities were constantly expanding. Benevolent Societies in the Sydney suburbs were multiplying, largely because the central society could not handle all cases, and because the depression was having a marked effect on the number of charity cases needing assistance. There were Benevolent Societies in many Sydney suburbs in the 90's, usually under the patronage of the Mayor or his wife, and women were either appointed as councillors or served on the committees. In a number of cases they were specially appointed visitors as well.

The grand gesture of achievement made by women before the end of the century in New South Wales was the Women's Exhibition. Called into existence by Lady Carrington and the Lady Mayoress of Sydney in 1888, the Exhibition purported to show women's work in all its detail. It relied heavily on needlework and oil colour exhibits and produced little connected with money-making occupations. But it was successful and much admired and raised £6,000 for the Queen's Fund in England.
CONCLUSION

With the close of the 1870's, one of the most noteworthy eras in what can be called the genesis of the New South Wales Women's Movement can be said to have come to an end. By 1880 the movement had chartered its course and consolidated its character. Sufficient organisations had come into existence to bring women, some of them of considerable capacity, into active participation in their management, and their positions on Boards and Committees had become, in a surprisingly short time, a matter of course.

In the next two decades a much greater variety of organisations in which women figured prominently came into existence establishing an important tradition of women's interest in large organisations, and emphasising the fact that many women concerned with non-feminist causes took the additional steps that led them to take up causes more vitally affecting them. There were many who did not, and many who wished to be disassociated with these movements, but the important fact remains that the two groups overlapped socially and in their work. Sydney society remained for the whole of the period a closely knit one, composed of small factions, none of which was the pace-setter, and its leaders, titled and otherwise though they might favour pet causes, also had causes in common. Within their admittedly limited social context, at no time does support for women's movement, as represented by these charitable organisations, seem to have been confined to one group which could
be declared socially unacceptable by any other group or groups. Nor, when the movement widened its scope did the social background and general activities of its leading members alter appreciably.