

Woman's Club of Pittsburgh

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April Third

The Women's Club met in regular session in the assembly room of the Central Board of Education on the afternoon of April third. The meeting was called to order shortly after two thirty o. clock by the president Mrs. Kathleen Hussey Watson. Minutes of the previous meeting were read by Miss Grace Henderson, recording secretary, and were approved. The first order of business was the reading of the report of the executive committee through the secretary, Miss Grace Henderson. This report embodied the statement that "For flagrant violation of the constitution of the Club Miss Cara Reese has been dismissed from membership in the Club.

Mrs. C.I. Wade moved that the report of the committee be disapproved, as no complaint of any kind had been preferred against Miss Reese, and noted the action of the committee as arbitrary and uncalled for. This motion of disapproval was seconded by Miss Lide Armstrong. The chair put the motion and announced discussion. Confusion was immediate. Miss Reese made her way to the front and demanded an explanation of the act of the execution committee and stated that she has received an anonymous communication purporting to come from the executive committee and libelous in nature, also that a communication of similar importance had been sent to a business associate of hers, calculated to injure Miss Reese, in character, in reputation and livelihood, and that she proposed to hold the Women's Club responsible for the same, unless by some decided action such communication be declared unauthorized.

From that time on confusion indescribable reigned and personalities were indulged. The chair was unable to preserve order and definite action in any direction could not be sustained. Miss Reese repeatedly called the attention of the Club to the fact that it was not a question of personality that is was not the question of the right of the executive committee, but the more important question, "Who authorized the sending of such letters to herself and employer." Each time Miss Reese took the floor she was called to order by the chair, "You are no longer a member." To a query put by the club as to where in Miss Reese has violated the constitution of the Club, the 'reports'. Mrs. C.I. Wade here gave notice that she would propose at the next meeting, an amendment to the clause referring to the rights of the executive committee.

Another query was put to the effect, had the attention of Miss Reese been previously called to any violation? The secretary replied that the reading of the paragraph in question at the previous meeting was deemed sufficient. Two members of the executive committee of seven, the chairmen Mrs. C.C. Huff; and the corresponding secretary Miss Walmen repudiated the action of the executive committee and declared personal absence from any meetings held bearing on the expulsion of Miss Reese. Remaining members of the executive committee accepted all responsibility and when the letters were produced they were read by the secretary, Miss Henderson, without repudiation, Miss Reese holding the letters in her own hand while the secretary read therefrom.

A query put by Mrs. Dr. Winslow, as to whether the ex. com. would also be willing to assume financial responsibility in case Miss Reese entered suit before the Club against their action in sending to her employee, such a letter as submitted was met with the reply from the secretary that the Ex. Com. stood ready to assume all responsibilities financial and otherwise. A query put by Mrs. James as to how the communication could be called anonymous when the Ex. Com. accepted their authorship brought out no repudiations from four members of the executive committee. Confusion continuing with no sign of decided action, at last, an motion of Mrs. Hugo Rosenberg, properly seconded, a committee of arbitrations was selected. This committee retired about five o'clock to another apartment with instruction to define a course of action and report the same afternoon. When the committee, left the room, the ex. com., without official sanction followed. The chair and secretary also, ex office members of the Ex. Com. added themselves to the committee of arbitrations. Miss Reese remained in the Club room during the retirement of the committee, recess was informally declared.

(Record kept by Miss Cara Reese and declared official by the Club.)

Minutes of the continued meeting of the Women's Club of Pittsburg, held on Tuesday afternoon April third 1894.

Shortly after five o'clock the committee of arbitration of which Mrs. C.I. Wade was chairman, entered the club room in confusion. The chairman of the committee called out. "We can reach no conclusion" The President of the Club, Mrs. Kathleen Hussey Watson therefor immediately announced the meetin adjourned by Constitutional limitation of time and then left the club room, the recording secretary, miss Grace Henderson and a few members following her. The majority of the members remaining continued the session to receive the report of the committee. Upon motion of Mrs. C.I. Wade, Mrs. Hugo Rosenberg was called to the chair, and Clara M. Walmen the corresponding secretary of the Club authorized to continue the minutes. A question was raised as to the legality of adjournment on limitation of time and with business before the Club. Miss. L. Armstrong moved to suspend the rules and continue the session beyond the time of constitutional limitation. The motion was seconded by Mrs. J. Hall, Mrs. C.C. Huff, Mrs. M.D. Lichliter and carried unanimously.

The secretary was instructed by the chair to call the roll of members present. The following members responded: 1. Miss L. Armstrong, 2. Mrs. J.P. James, 3. Mrs. Sarah Archer, 4. Mrs. C.C. Huff, 5. Mrs. M. E. Dinwiddie, 6. Mrs. M.D. Lichleter, 7. Mrs. Henry Bailey, 8. Mrs. C.W. Gerwig, 9. Mrs. W.H. Winslow, 10. Mrs. C.I.Wade, 11. Mrs. W.J. Prentice, 12. Mrs. J.A. Hall, 13. Mrs. Hugo Rosenberg, 14. Mrs. W.P. Price, 15. Mrs. E.A. Powers, 16. Miss Janie M. Coard, 17. Miss Cara Reese, 18. Miss. C.M. Walmer.

Shortly after roll call Mrs. J.P. James retired.

The chair said "We will now receive the report of the committee through its chairmen Mrs. C.I. Wade."

Mrs. C.I. Wade arose and said "We could reach no conclusion." The chair put the question "what shall we do with the report?" Mrs. Henry Bailey moved that the report be accepted and the committee discharged. Mrs. Sarah Archer, Mrs. C.W. Gerwig, Mrs. W.H. Winslow, Mrs. W.J. Prentice and others seconded the motion and when put by the chair was unanimously carried.

Mrs. C.I. Wade here gave notice that at the next regular meeting she would move for an amendment to the by-laws relating to that section which refers to reports.

Miss Cara Reese here asked privilege of addressing the meeting which was granted.

The tenor of her remarked was to the effect that the club decided action concerning the communications received by herself and a business associate purporting to be authorized by the executive committee of the Women's Club of Pittsburg. Miss L. Armstrong moved that this action purporting to come from the Ex. Com. of the Women's Club of Pittsburgh be declared unauthorized and that the corresponding secretary be instructed to notify Miss Cara Reese and her business associate that such action was unauthorized by the Club.

The motion was seconded by Mrs. Henry Bailey, Mrs. W.H. Winslow, Mrs. C.M. Gerwig, Miss Janie M. Coard and Mrs. J.A. Hall, the latter adding that she wished to go on record. The motion when put by the chair was unanimously carried.

Adjourned.

Clara M. Walmer

Cor. Sec.

*Women's Club Meeting Notes From April 3<sup>rd</sup> 1894, Heinz History Center Library Archives*