

MONTHLY NEWS of the Conservative Women's Reform ASSOCIATION. NEW ISSUE.

President: THE COUNTESS OF SELBORNE.

Chairman of Executive Committee: LADY TRUSTRAM EVE.

Central Office: Room 191, Windsor House, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.1.

Telephone: Victoria 5004.

No. 1.

FEBRUARY, 1924.

Price 2d. Annual Subscription (post free) 2/-

CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE.
OUR WORK	1	WHY WE LOST THE ELECTION	2
		SIR REGINALD MACLEOD, K.C.B.	
POLITICAL NOTES	2	WOMEN IN THE WEST INDIES	3
LADY LLOYD GREAME		MISS N. HAMEL-SMITH	

OUR WORK.

The election has come and gone, having brought in its train a great disillusionment and disappointment for us Conservatives. Sir Reginald MacLeod discusses in an able article the explanations of our defeat, and without doubt the division of the party on the Tariff was a very fundamental cause. That was a question of leadership. For the second and equally important cause each one of us as individuals—forming the rank and file of the party—must share the blame and the responsibility, that is, the failure in very many constituencies adequately to maintain contact with the electorate, and so to meet the persistent lies and misrepresentations of the Labour Party. In far too many cases the organisations which worked enthusiastically during the election of 1922, melted away as soon as it was over, and the electors were left once more to the patient tireless propaganda of the other side. Such a situation cannot be retrieved by a campaign, however zealous and able, operating only at election times.

Every reader should herself join her local Association, if she is not already a member, and tell her friends to do the same. And she should offer her help in money or in personal service to maintain an active propaganda permanently in her constituency.

Lady Cunynghame, of 20, Cheyne Gardens, S.W.3, is organising very successful canvassers' classes at Caxton Hall on Tuesday mornings, with the assistance of the National Unionist Association. Lady Cunynghame will gladly give particulars to any one who will write to her.

We must take our defeat in a sporting spirit now and give the Government the best chance possible to make good on the many important issues on which we stand on common ground. But our team must go into training straightaway and be ready to meet the next battle at the polls with instructed voters who understand what Conservatism stands for.

Annual Meeting and Lunch. Both these functions were most successful, in spite of coming on November 29, in the very heart of the election campaign. Lunch was laid for 90 people at the Hyde Park Hotel, and a number of the guests joined our Association as the result of it. The Rt. Hon. Sir Douglas McGard Hogg contributed in no small measure to the success, and hostesses and guests alike owe him many thanks for the lucidity and power with which he stated the Conservative position.

Council. The Council Meeting on November 27th was abandoned, as so many were unable to attend for political reasons.

Lecture. Mr. Hubert Walter spoke on "What are we to think of Monsieur Poincaré?" at Mrs. Boyd Carpenter's house on December 12th. The question being susceptible of many different answers, a lively and interesting discussion followed.

Dance. The dance held in the Suffolk Galleries on December 4th, was greatly enjoyed by the young people, and resulted in a net profit of £19 13s. Here again we were unfortunate in having chosen a date so close to the General Election.

Meetings. Three drawing-room meetings have been arranged in the near future.

On Friday, February 15, the Rt. Hon. Sir Robert Sandars, Minister for Agriculture in the Conservative Government, will lecture on "The Policy of the Referendum." Mrs. Curtis-Brown, President of the American Women's Club, will tell us how it operates in practice in America.

On February 22nd, the Duchess of Atholl, M.P., has kindly consented to address us. Her subject will be "The Election of 1923."

On Monday, March 3rd, Mrs. Routledge, M.A., F.R.Hist.S., will give us her long-deferred and much looked forward to speech on her "Sojourn in the Islands of the Southern Pacific."

Council. The Council will meet on March 26th.

Study Circle. The Study Circle met for the first time on January 25th, under the skilled leadership of Miss Violet Swaisland, who was recommended to us by the Principal of the London School of Economics. It is hoped to meet six times before Easter. The book selected for discussion is "The Economic Organisation of England," by William James Ashley—publisher Longman, 5s.

* * * * *

POLITICAL NOTES.

After these months of absence from politics my brain and my pen alike feel very rusty. It is a lamentable fact how quickly a woman can lose touch with politics; other neglected interests crowd back which have to be seen to at once, but politics are eternal and they can keep!

I suppose it is true that the women's vote turned the scale against Tariff Reform in the last election; the reason of course being that they were terrified at the thought of dearer food. What then is the conclusion we arrive at? Surely that a campaign must be started at once to teach us what a Tariff means; what Protection and Safeguarding of Industries mean; and to link up the whole with our everyday budget. I would suggest to the C.W.R.A. that this could be done through our meetings, study circles, and our paper. A programme such as I have briefly outlined could be carried on through all these channels, and is valuable enough to be made our main programme till the end of the summer. It is of course difficult to specify exactly the lines upon which we should go, until after a pronouncement of the decision come to by the Party meeting has been made; but we ought not to have long to wait for that.

Come what may, the Labour Party has taken office at a very difficult time. Strikes have occurred and more are threatening; and every strike will deplete the revenues of the Government. Foreign affairs in Europe have assumed a more cheerful aspect, but for that very reason they need the most delicate handling. Mr. MacDonald has said that there is to be a new diplomacy: does he know enough of the old to start safely upon a new dispensation? Presumably he desires to do everything with as much publicity as possible, hence his interview with the "Quotidien." A dangerous precedent to follow when so many of the difficulties of European politics are psychological. The Prime Minister, whose admiration and sympathy for the League of Nations is to be respected, would seem in his desire to support it, to be leaning too heavily upon it. The machinery of the League is not yet fool-proof, nor even complete; and one is a little afraid that if it is overtaxed, serious harm may be done not only to the "new diplomacy" but to the League itself.

At the same time Mr. MacDonald is honestly anxious to act constitutionally, and thereby to

prove that Labour is fit to govern. He has behind him a certain—we hope a large—number of his party; but can he control his wild men? If Mr. Snowden, as is generally reported, can make the Prime Minister weep, how much more will many Glaswegians and Clydesiders do?

The greatest of these is still our own party, united where others have split, with one programme and one spirit, fighting under one leader. Mr. Austen Chamberlain's speech on the 21st was surely intended to shew that we need no longer suffer from divisions in our ranks.

And to the women of the party there remains the crying and insatiable need to educate and to organise.

M. LLOYD-GREAME.

* * * * *

WHY WE LOST THE ELECTION.

Why was the Conservative Party so disastrously defeated at the recent election?

(1) It came as suddenly as an earthquake:—not only was the decision to dissolve a complete surprise to the country at large, to members of Conservative Associations, to delegates from those Associations to the Conference at Plymouth, but even to men who were justly regarded as influential leaders both in the constituencies and at Headquarters itself. There had been no Government defeat and there was an ample and loyal majority behind Ministers. They, however, were shackled by the pledge that no general scheme of Customs reform should be brought forward in the existing Parliament and they were faced by the growing spectre of unemployment. Growing—if not absolutely in numbers—certainly both in burden on the nation and in demoralization of the men who, more and more out of touch with their own trade, were living on doles or on wages for work both artificial and uncongenial. The Prime Minister, deeply impressed and deeply distressed at the persistence of the evil which no policy at his command seemed to cure or even greatly to alleviate, resolved that it was his duty to hazard all in an instant appeal to the Electorate for power to apply the remedy of protection of home industries. "It was magnificent, but it was not war"; perhaps nothing so daring has ever been done by a politician, but the shock was too great, time was too short, prejudice was too strong.

(2) Conservative candidates were nearly everywhere assailed by unscrupulous misrepresentation. Although food-stuffs were expressly excluded from taxation, leaflets by the myriad were showered like snowflakes declaring that food would be dearer, that "poor dad would have less for breakfast," that the poor man's working budget would be still further curtailed.

and it required the most elaborate organisation to follow day by day the misrepresentations sown broadcast. Those who remember the election of 1905 will recall the scandalous invention and misuse by the Liberal Party of the cry of Chinese slavery in the Transvaal and now—women having the vote the bold allegations of higher cost of living had tremendous effect.

(3) There was not unanimous conviction in the Conservative Party itself as to a policy of protection. Loyalty to the Prime Minister gave an appearance of cohesion and support greater than really existed; a few candidates made reservations as to degrees or to time; many others stayed away from the poll. Thousands more voted but without enthusiasm and with a half hope that the majority would be small. In a word, the Conservative Party did not poll its full strength, and some seats have gone to the enemy which were, and still are, Conservative strongholds.

In face of all the disadvantages under which the Election was fought 5½ million votes were cast for Conservative candidates against 4½ for Labour and 3½ for Liberal.

The Government, with a majority of 60 over the Labour, and 110 over the Liberal Party, had no choice but to meet Parliament—Protection for the time eliminated—with an uncontentious programme. The country had indeed rejected Protection, more emphatically Socialism, most emphatically Liberalism, which really had no policy worth mentioning except the negative one of opposition to both Protection and Socialism. What would anyone expect the Liberals to do—vote with the Conservatives? No! Vote with the Socialists? More emphatically No! Stand aside as the weakest Party? Yes, ever ready to help in carrying on the King's Government. But what do they do? Cast their votes with the Socialists, although many have been returned by Conservatives in a single issue against Socialists. Incredible but true. The result is perilous to the country, destructive to the Liberal Party, and, from the party point of view, most advantageous to the Conservatives. Their action will be recognised as most high-minded, most honourable and when another election comes—perhaps very soon—this will have a tremendous effect in the country.

See that it is not forgotten now; see that the organization as it was perfected for contest is fully maintained. See that there is continuous touch from the member or candidate through the Executive Committees, through the Ward or Parish organizations, through those responsible for the canvass, down to the voters themselves. The Socialists will spare no pains; they must be met man to man, woman to woman, house to house. It is not believed this Parliament can last long; all the more reason we should preserve and utilize for instruction the organization so fully developed for the poll.

REGINALD MACLEOD.

WOMEN AND THE WEST INDIES.

Miss NELLIE HAMEL-SMITH.

(Author of "Lucky West Indies," "A Girl Who Grows Coconuts," and "The W. I. Agricultural College," etc. etc.)

I should like to tell your readers about the West Indies as a suitable place for women colonists, it calls for two types of settlers, (1) those who wish to keep a home going, (2) those who want to work.

Let us take the first type. There is no domestic problem out here, servants are easily to be obtained, and consequently living in the home is correspondingly luxurious and easy to manage. I was in England on eight months' leave this year, and was appalled at the terrible domestic conditions prevailing everywhere. For the woman with say £300 a year, who until recently has lived in comparative comfort outside the small country towns, the West Indies make a special appeal. Having to run a home with bad servants in a cold country is no one's idea of happiness and is ruining the health of most British matrons. On that income out here a single woman could live in luxury keeping at least three servants and a horse and trap of her own.

MOTORING.

Motoring has revolutionised social as well as business conditions. Nowadays in these small islands one gets infinitely more social pleasures than in an English countryside. In some there are golf courses, and in all, one gets excellent tennis.

Living in a small bungalow on, say three acres of land, with a little stock, poultry or market gardening as a hobby, a woman could lead a happy, easy existence, and I advisably say easy, for the lives of the majority of women, married or single, in Europe these post-war times are exceedingly strenuous and difficult.

CLIMATE.

The West Indian climate is delightful if one conforms with the tropical way of living, that is rising early and resting during the heat of the day.

Tropical medical science has advanced so rapidly that Europeans can enjoy excellent health; in fact for those suffering from rheumatism, arthritis or the like complaints, the heat of the sun is really beneficial. I have lived out here four years, working in the hot sun, and have so far had no fever whatsoever. It is lovely to live in a place where there is nearly always continued sunshine and a clear atmosphere.

BEAUTY.

The beauty of the West Indies needs no praise, it is too well known. In the island of Tobago where I live there is not an ugly spot; the glorious, blue green of the water, the bright blue of the sky, the deep green of the hills covered with tropical vegetation, and the brilliant

plumage of the birds, form a lovely background for one's life and work.

Here we enjoy good motoring, seabathing, tennis, cricket, shooting, boating, fishing, dancing, picnicing, etc., etc., which makes it an ideal spot for retired business people to make their homes. In many of the larger islands there are theatres and cinemas, but in the smaller ones our pleasures are all outdoor and social, which is a good thing for a small pocket.

TROPICAL AGRICULTURE FOR WOMEN.

Now let us take those women who want to turn over their capital, and let me say at once that it is only people with money that can live out here. Work is supervising and organising, and therefore a woman needs cash to pay her labour. Tropical agriculture is well within the scope of an ordinary intelligent woman; it is a delightful open-air life, and one is making a home as well as a career.

HOW TO LEARN.

My first advice is to learn the work thoroughly. The West Indian Agricultural College, St. Augustin, Trinidad, is open to women students; the fees are moderate, £50 per annum, and there are two courses, one lasting a year giving one a grounding in agriculture and modern estate management, and one of three years leading up to a Degree in Tropical Agriculture. It is a beautifully fitted-up College and fills a long-felt want. After the College course six months practical work on an estate is advisable.

WHERE TO GET INFORMATION.

The West Indian Committee, 14, Trinity Square, E.C.4. will give all information re settling or taking a holiday in these lovely islands. The Secretaries of the different Planter's Associations in each island can supply local details as to size of estate, price, labour, transport facilities, healthiness of situation, etc., etc. The Overseas League, Vernon House, Park Place, St. James' Street, W.1., and the Women's Employment Bureau, 54, Russell Square, W.C. are excellent centres for obtaining information and giving help to would-be colonists. Sir Francis Walls, K.C.M.G. is the Director of the Agricultural College and all details re college work can be obtained from him.

WHAT IS GROWN.

Cocoa, coconuts, sugar, limes, coffee, spices, cotton, rubber, etc., etc., all form goods used every day by the general public all over the world. There are thousands of acres of uncultivated land, so there should be ample scope for the energies of the would-be planter. I do not recommend large estates for women. One to two hundred acres is quite enough for a woman's physique in this hot climate. Properly and scientifically run, with side lines of stock, market gardening, and paying-guests—for these islands are well known tourist centres—a woman will do well.

INTERNATIONAL Women's Franchise Club, FOR MEN AND WOMEN.

President: THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF LYTTON.
Deputy President: THE LADY FRANCES BALFOUR, LL.D., D.Litt.

9, GRAFTON STREET, PICCADILLY, W.

Subs.: London Members, £3/3/0; Country, £1/5; Irish, Scottish and Foreign, 10/6 per annum. Entrance Fee, £1 1s.

WEEKLY LECTURES.

Luncheons, Teas & Dinners.

All particulars from Secretary.

Telephone: - - 3932 Mayfair.

THE BALLACHULISH HOTEL ARGYLESIRE.

For your Spring holiday

TERMS from—Mrs. J. A. Fearnside.

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS. All communications respecting
ADVERTISEMENTS
should be addressed to—

The Manager, **MISS F. L. FULLER,**
99, New Bond Street, W.1.

TELEPHONE: 2421 MAYFAIR

GENERAL REMARKS.

Thus is the West Indies a happy hunting ground for the woman tourist, the woman of leisure, and the woman who wants to turn over her capital.

It is one of our oldest colonies, and modern inventions of wireless, telephones, and quick transport make it perfectly safe for a woman to live alone. The black population is generally speaking lazy but peaceful.

It is essentially a colony where people can lead a quiet, refined life, and carry on their work and pleasures amidst the loveliest scenery imaginable; also tropical hospitality is known all over the world, and given a few necessary introductions, newcomers are soon in the swim of all the social events.

We are asked to state that the "Six Point Group" is organising a White Luncheon at the Hyde Park Hotel on Tuesday, February 19th, at 1.30 p.m., in honour of the eighteen members of their "White List" who were successful at the General Election.

Tickets 10/6 each, from the Organising Secretary, 92, Victoria Street, S.W.1.