

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

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
OUR WORK	17	WANTED—NEW METHODS OF NATIVE CONTROL IN EQUATORIAL AFRICA—R. ST. BARBE BAKER	18
THE LESSON OF THE ELECTION— LADY LLOYD-GREAME	18		

OUR WORK.

Owing to the election, the autumn programme of the C.W.R.A. has had to be left in considerable uncertainty. Of course it was out of the question to arrange lectures before the polling day, members were mostly, no doubt, working in their constituencies. It was also not possible to make very definite plans for November. Owing to the large number of engagements that will have had to be postponed from October, the following month will not be a very easy one for arranging meetings.

Lectures.—On 16th October, Sir John Sykes, K.C.B. kindly addressed a well attended meeting upon "Some Difficulties of the Licensing Question."

It is hoped to arrange a meeting at which Sir William Beveridge will speak upon "Family Endowment." It will probably take place in the third week of November, but due notice will be sent to all members as soon as definite arrangements have been made.

Study Circle. It is hoped to organise a study circle after Christmas. The subject will be "Housing." The circle will probably start work some time in January, but a circular letter will be sent to all members as soon as the Leader for the Study Circle has been chosen and a date definitely arranged.

Annual Luncheon. It is still hoped that the date provisionally fixed for the Annual Luncheon viz., 27th of November, will hold good, and that the Rt. Hon. Neville Chamberlain, M.P., will be able to attend it as the guest of the Association. Last year was the first occasion upon which the Association held a luncheon, and it was a very successful experiment. Sir Douglas Hogg was our guest, and he gave an inspiring address, full of useful "tips" to canvassers—we were at the moment in the throes of last year's election—as one of the speakers wittily said, "many members were able to take Sir Douglas Hogg with them

on their afternoon's round of electioneering work, as they repeated some of his extremely apt replies to the stock objections of the other side." This year the luncheon will again be held at the Hyde Park Hotel, and members are reminded that tickets are 10/6 each or 8 for £2/17/6. It is hoped that members of the association will support the scheme and will, if possible, make up parties and bring their friends. It is emphatically an occasion when "the more the merrier."

Election Work. The Executive Committee desires to thank all those members who sent their names to the office as willing to help in the election either as canvassers or by doing clerical work. A good response was made to the appeal for workers, and help was sent to—

North Kensington
North Camberwell
North West Camberwell.

It was much appreciated in all three constituencies.

Our next Speaker. Members of the C.W.R.A. will be especially fortunate in having an opportunity of hearing Sir William Beveridge, K.C.B., C.B., M.A., L.L.D., speak upon Family Endowment. He is the Director of the London School of Economics but his name is best known to the public as the author of "Unemployment, a Problem of Industry," and for his work in connection with the Unemployment Exchanges. In his book Sir William Beveridge made a mass of statistical information about unemployment, available to the general reader for the first time, and his deductions from this information broke entirely new ground in the consideration of the problem. He was first chairman of the Unemployment Exchange Committee, and was subsequently Director of Unemployment Exchanges. He may be said to have founded a new school of thought with regard to the causes and pre-

vention of unemployment, but perhaps it is a greater thing to say that he produced a new attitude of mind to the victims of the problem.

This Month's Article. Monthly Notes is especially fortunate this month in having an article written by Major St. Barbe Baker, who knows Africa from Cape to Cairo and has spent some time in East Africa, where he organised the Forest Scout Movement, locally known as the Watu wa Miti—the musical African equivalent for "The Men of the Trees." The story of how this remarkable movement came into being is one of the most unostentatiously romantic and splendid achievements in the whole history of Britain's relations with the strange dark continent of Africa, and Major St. Barke Baker has most kindly promised to give *Monthly Notes* a full account of it.

THE LESSON OF THE ELECTION.

The overwhelming victory just achieved by our party has been attained on an appeal for a broad national policy. The success of that appeal has proved that such a broad policy is indeed at once the need and the desire of the country. That Imperial interests should be safeguarded, that trade should be stabilized, and that all danger of interference from other countries should be excluded is undoubtedly the wish of the electors of this country.

At the same time, the Conservative Party has always shown a tendency to slacken its effort after a struggle crowned with success. That danger must be faced and resolutely fought. The country's need for action and for statesmanship is greater now than at any time since the war. The Government must have the backing of all members of the Conservative faith. They must not slacken in their work, but continue to give their active and intelligent support.

The Conservative Women's Reform Association has long made its aim, the education in matters political, of the women of the so-called leisured classes. I venture to think that this work is a work of great value, which must continue. It is a real help to the nation, that the units comprising it, should understand the form of Government they have chosen, and the action it is necessary for that Government to take for the national safety.

MOLLIE LLOYD-GREAME.

WANTED — NEW METHODS OF NATIVE CONTROL IN EQUATORIAL AFRICA

By RICHARD ST. BARBE BAKER

(late Assistant Conservator of Forests, Kenya Colony, and Founder of the Men of the Trees.)

Never has there been such an opportunity as presents itself to-day to Administrators in our African Colonies to utilize the goodwill established by our early Explorers in these parts.

One has only to travel through Central Africa to realise that even though a generation or two has passed, men of the calibre of Livingstone, Speke and Baker have left in the minds of the African natives a lasting impression.

The natives are naturally highly susceptible, and their first impressions of British administration was good. It is true that every effort has been made by those in authority to maintain those high traditions, although at times this may not always have been found easy. However, if we are to retain our influence amongst the native tribes, we must emulate those early pioneers and constantly aim at the high standards of native control.

To-day Central Africa is no longer inaccessible. Improved means of transportation, and the advance of medical science have opened up vast opportunities for development. The old-time conception that all natives were essentially savages has been exploded, and to those of us who have taken pains to study local dialects and native customs, it is plain that these people possess a civilisation of their own. Cut off from the rest of the world these native tribes have evolved a social system and moral code which is more or less suited to their requirements.

We must at once get away from the idea that it is necessary to impose our civilisation upon these people. By all means assist them to introduce better methods of agriculture and encourage anything which tends towards permanency of improvement. Roads must be constructed, wells be sunk and trees planted.

It is true that in the past, inter-tribal warfare and disease kept down the natural increase, but under British administration, these scourges are diminishing, and it would seem certain that so long as white control continues the native population will increase enormously. This tendency to increase is one of the great assets of Africa, promising in conjunction with white settlement the intensive development of the Continent's rich resources.

Already in the equatorial highlands of Kenya the white race is rooted immovably, and by reason of the exceptional quality of her soil and

climate can absorb a white population a hundred times as numerous as her present one.

In future it will be seen that white racial settlement is the foundation of progress in Africa.

It is said the export and import trade of a typical settled area with a population of not more than six hundred colonists, aided by their native farm-hands, equals that of a typical area populated by over one million of the best native tribe in the Colony.

To-day, this our youngest Colony, is urgently calling for settlers; men who will be prepared to make Africa their home.

As in all new Colonies the life of the pioneer is not an easy one; often he is called on to go ahead of the railway, and in many cases is dependent upon ox-transport for his supplies.

Coffee planting is one of the most popular and remunerative of occupations, and can be carried on in the most healthy parts of the Colony, but it would be well to bear in mind that this profession always demands a time of waiting. Returns cannot be expected for at least three or four years, and it would be a mistake to mislead a would-be settler into imagining otherwise.

Generally speaking, the relation between the white settler and the native is a happy one. The white men who have made Africa their home, realise that their sphere and that of the native is complimentary, not competitive; the prospects of the one are largely dependent upon the other, and the success of both depend upon harmonious relations. The settler thus becomes the best friend of the African.

The African, for his part, looks up to the settler, because he feels that he can learn much by so doing. He copies the white settler and his methods, and to a greater or lesser degree each homestead becomes a school both mental and technical.

It is encouraging to recognise that those tribes who have come most closely in contact with white settlement have made marked progress in contrast to those who are more remote.

Fifteen years ago, it was rare to find a farm-hand capable of being entrusted with responsible duties; now every farm possess several.

Imagine what a change has come over the lives of these people where white settlement has taken place. It would appear that their evolution had been speeded up in a phenomenal way. Thousands of Europeans have settled in their midst; civilisation was not a gradual process; there was no half-light as it dawned upon them. These peoples came right into the glare of the mid-day sun. They were invaded at once by the various means of transportation and communication. Bicycles became an ordinary means of transport, and even motor-cars are to-day understood by them.

Admittedly, most of this is merely superficial. Side by side with this new state of affairs, old tribal customs and beliefs hold sway.

Conditions which should have taken centuries to arrive at and obtain must therefore be essentially somewhat superficial. Actually the natives are slow to change their methods, but evidence of superior results which the settler's farms keep before them, is beginning to produce an all-round marked improvement. As in the fields they grow crops better in quality and greater in quantity and variety, so in their lives the same progress is going on. Farm-hands of some years standing are beginning to build better huts, use more clothes, and are more sanitary. Above all, it has been found that the native is anxious to follow the man who holds out for him an ideal to be attained. Let the ideal be that every tribe should live so as to render its own environment more, rather than less, suitable for its future existence. The native in his old tribal village looks across to the neat dwelling of his brother, or the highly developed estate of the white settler and becomes discontented with his surroundings, until he is prompted to throw in his lot and find freedom in service under the tutelage of the white man.

The day has passed when old methods of administration will any longer be effective, but on the other hand it will be found that the native of Central Africa will invariably respond to wise leadership that tends towards moral development, increased production and local prosperity.

Taught by nature to be wary of that which he does not understand, the aborigine of any country cannot but hesitate before accepting the manners and methods of those who seek to alter his whole outlook. It may be conceived that such acceptance does usually lead to an increased degree of material prosperity, but it has too often happened that the consequence of white colonisation has been the demoralisation of the native, who is called on to pass in a few years through the stages which the ancestors of his tutors had spent many generations in mastering. The rapid methods of thought, travel and communication which are now necessities in the West, cannot be safely planted as a ready-made whole on a comparatively primitive population. Wonderful though the advances of science have been, an egg still requires 21 days' incubation before the chicken is hatched, and modern methods can do little more than provide for the safe upbringing of the fledgling, after it has broken free from its shell. It is our duty to see to it that our Protectorates are guided in the way they should go, but it is equally our duty to see that they are neither forced nor encouraged to try to run before they can walk.

It is even open to argument whether all the vaunted privileges of the higher civilisation are in themselves sufficient to justify the replacement of simplicity by complexity, or the substitution or hurry and bustle for a regime of comparatively passive content: but these things must come whether we will it or no, and the most and the least we can do is to use our best endeavour to see that those whom we have made dependent on us for their advancement are successively made ready to meet the oncoming waves of progress.

Before our advent the races and tribes of Africa were separate entities, each with their own laws and their hereditary customs. On this structure we have of necessity superimposed a common law, and our endeavour is now to encourage a common respect for this law and for those who live under it irrespective of tribe or district. Appeals to justice as represented by law now take the place of the more elementary appeals to force of arms, and tribal Councils settle matters in Conference which in former days would have involved fierce fight and much bloodshed. Inter-tribal distrust and suspicion cannot, however, be overcome by such methods alone, and to combat these effectively it is necessary to provide some absorbing distraction in which the rivalry of the past may find friendly vent without disturbing the ashes of ancient feuds.

Our own country and the rest of the so-called civilised world finds relief in International games and the like, but games (as apart from tests of individual skill and prowess) are themselves a product of an advanced civilisation and do not readily provide a common meeting ground for peoples to whom they are unfamiliar. The appeal must be to the imagination in the first instance at least, and it was with this idea that the Forest Scout movement was inaugurated in East Africa. This organisation is without distinction of class, tribe, or religion, and has for its main object the encouragement of friendly relations amongst all dwellers in East Africa and its Hinterland. The uneducated must be shown a definite object before they can be expected to devote themselves to any good purpose; and, as I have previously explained, the accredited and ostensible duty of the Forest Scouts is to guard and protect their native woods and trees, and to ensure that whenever a tree is cut down or destroyed a young one is planted in its stead. This idea is sufficiently valuable in itself, but beneath it lie the foundations of a much wider ideal, embodying the gradual uplifting of the public mind to the standards which are set for our own Boy Scouts, and leading ultimately to the high level of citizenship which is essential to the well-being of an Empire comprehensive of every nationality on earth.

Judged from our point of view the Africans of whom I write present a very curious mingling of qualities, both good and bad, but unhappily it must be admitted that hitherto contact with the white man has tended more to develop the weak points than to strengthen the good ones of their character. Physically brave but mentally fearful they are easy to lead but hard to drive, as they dread the unknown unless faced under the immediate guidance of one whom they trust. Self-indulgent by custom, habit and the nature of their surroundings, they are liable to hanker after the flesh-pots rather than the higher things of civilisation. Moral through fear of tribal customs and use, they are prone to be anything but moral when brought under the comparatively mild jurisdiction of Western law. Physically well built and powerful, they (in common with most tropical and semi-tropical races) have little stamina and succumb easily to epidemics which we might consider slight. Superstitious and credulous but eager to learn and quick to understand they are readily imbued with a wish to advance, though their instability of temperament often causes them to lose interest before the goal is reached. With vivid imaginations as regards things supernatural, they are slow to visualise the possibilities of material change and reforms can only come about by ocular demonstration of improved results. Naturally slovenly and idle they can only be made to improve their condition by having the consequences of steady and systematised labour brought directly before them.

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