

# MONTHLY NEWS

of the

# Conservative Women's Reform

## ASSOCIATION.

NEW ISSUE.

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*Chairman of Executive Committee* : LADY TRUSTRAM EVE.

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### OUR WORK.

It is now two months since our last number was published, but much of that time was taken up with Easter holidays, when many of our associates were in the country, and the faithful Londoners were, no doubt, equally glad to have a reprieve from political meetings. Now, however, our members are once more home, and we feel sure that they will be eager to attend, and we hope, to bring their friends, to the interesting lectures arranged for the summer.

**Our President.**—It is with great pleasure that we can announce that Lady Selborne has accepted the office of President, which she vacated to the universal regret of both Executive Committee and Associates when she went to West Africa. It was justly felt that after the eleven years of invaluable service she rendered to the Association as President between 1910 and 1921, she was irreplaceable, and we are sure that all the friends of the C.W.R.A. will rejoice that Lady Selborne agreed to resume office on her return to this country.

**Council Meeting.**—The Quarterly Council Meeting took place on March 22nd, by kind invitation of Miss Balfour, at 4, Carlton Gardens. Lady Trustram Eve presided. A resolution was passed in favour of the retention of the Women Police Patrols; and it was agreed to circularise the London M.P.'s asking them to sign the Memorial to the Prime Minister requesting that disbandment be deferred until after a full discussion in the House of Commons. The Hon. Ethel Akers Douglas then gave a most interesting address about her political work amongst working women, and the best means of carrying on effective educational propaganda.

**Lectures.**—While this number is in the printer's hands, on May 12th, by kind permission of Lady St. Helier, Professor Arnold Toynbee will speak at 52, Portland Place, on his experiences with the Greeks and Turks in the Graeco-Turkish War. Major the Hon. W. G. A. Ormsby Gore, M.P. has consented to preside. On May 26th, Dr. R. Worth will lecture on the Reform of the Lunacy Laws. Dr. Worth is Med-

ical Superintendent of Springfield Mental Hospital, Tooting, and it will be of very great interest to hear his views on a subject which is of such widespread interest at the present time. It is a subject in which women feel themselves bound to collaborate in order that a just, humane, and practical solution may be found.

On March 28th, Mr. Alfred Spender gave a most illuminating address on the Washington Conference at 2, South Eaton Place, by kind permission of Mrs. S. P. B. Bucknill. The room was crowded.

**Monthly News.**—The Executive Committee have decided with very great regret to suspend the publication of our little paper during the holiday months of the year—i.e. April, July, August, September, and December. It is entirely a question of finance, for *Monthly News*, published as at present eleven months out of the twelve, is a heavy burden on our budget. Cost of printing and postage is high, and the Committee felt that their choice lay between reducing the number of issues, and increasing the price. They believe they have chosen the course which will be most widely approved by the members.

*Monthly News* is self-supporting at 2s. for seven numbers; and as soon as circumstances permit, which means when charges of publication and postage fall (and Mr. Kellaway's postal reforms are a substantial help) the old service will be restored. The Committee feel it most important to preserve a close contact with the widely scattered Associates, and *Monthly News* supplies that link.

**Cinderella Dances.**—The series of three dances from 9 till 12, in aid of the funds of the Association will have been completed ere *Monthly News* is in the hands of our readers. The first two have been most successful, and the editor can testify to the enthusiasm of the young lady who came to buy more tickets for the third and last, on May 13th, while she was in the office. Lady Worthington-Evans was hostess at 6, Eaton Place, on April 29th; Mrs. Kenyon-Slaney at the Forum Club on May 6th; and Miss Gilstrap will receive the guests at the Lyceum Club on May 13th.

Our very grateful thanks are due to those ladies who have taken so much trouble to help our funds at a time when political education is so urgently necessary.

**The late Miss Emily Davies.** Miss Raiker represented this Association at the Commemoration Service for Miss Emily Davies held on Thursday, May 4th, at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. After a short service of Praise and Thanksgiving, the Bishop of Birmingham spoke on Miss Davies' life and work. Her service to the cause of Women's Education will never be forgotten. She founded Girton, which was the first to be established of all the Women's Colleges. It may interest our readers to be reminded that she was a Vice-President of this Association.

#### Degrees for Women at Cambridge.

Members of Parliament are being asked to make the enlarged financial grant recommended by the Royal Commission to the University of Cambridge conditional on the granting of full membership to women under the restrictions as to numbers, etc. laid down in the report. It will be remembered that at the poll last autumn this was carried by a majority of the resident members of the University, and was only defeated by the non-resident members, who flocked in to vote "against the women." Some, no doubt, were influenced by the highest motives of loyalty to what they believed to be in the best interests of Cambridge; but there is equally no doubt that the motive of many was nothing nobler than the dread of the competition of women in the learned professions. It may reasonably be claimed that the votes of those actually residing in Cambridge should be considered to represent the true interests of the University, and of education generally.

#### POLITICAL NOTES.

To the ordinary student of politics it would seem that the present political situation is difficult to read because it is of necessity somewhat veiled in obscurity. What is really happening at Genoa? Are we returning to a system of party politics? How much strength lies behind the threats of the Republicans in Ireland? All this, and much more we would like to know, not as the newspapers tell us, but dispassionately, so that we could form our own judgment aided solely by cold facts.

**Genoa.**—Certain of these facts do undoubtedly emerge if our study of politics is based on logic and not on prejudice. With regard to Genoa, every one must agree that the industrial reconstruction of Europe is the paramount need of the world. If the war taught us nothing else, we have at least learned by hard experience that the interdependence of countries is no empty phrase and that Europe is the great market for all the other continents. Take India as an example of the truth of this. Before the war India sold her goods to European countries, and with the money

she obtained from these sales, she bought cotton from Lancashire. But no longer can Europe afford to buy from her: and unemployment in Lancashire is the result. It is therefore proved that Europe must be helped to regain her pre-war prosperity, which was based on the credit of her nationals, that credit answering always to the confidence of the investors who create it. But confidence has been destroyed, wars and rumours of wars, heavy taxation, debts, depreciated exchanges, all these burdens have utterly disorganised the delicate machinery of trade, and though the necessity for the free exchange of commodities is greater than ever before, the channels are blocked and world-wide unemployment is the result. That being so, undoubtedly it is the duty of statesmen to meet together and devise some concerted action by which European trade can again circulate freely in its accustomed way.

The Washington Conference was an honest and successful attempt to secure peace: the Genoa Conference, no less needed, is an honest attempt to secure prosperity, and I would appeal to all that vast congregation of spectators in all the countries of the world to give it a fair chance. The task the plenipotentiaries of Genoa have set themselves is Herculean: and the public can ease that task by confidence and patience, or intensify it by impatience and suspicion at their will. Crises are bound to arise: achievement would not be worthy the name, if all were plain sailing. But if the right spirit is there, it will win through in the end; and that it is there is shewn by the work done. Out of the four Commissions appointed under the Conference, one—the Transport—has finished its work, while the work of the Economic and Finance Commissions should be finished by the time this paper appears. That leaves No. 1 Political Commission still in session, and there are signs to shew that even its chequered career may not be as black as it is painted.

**Ireland.**—Political mist still hangs thick over Ireland, which the coming June election should dispel. Matters in the distressful country may not be as bad as they seem. She has weathered Easter week comparatively peacefully, and although the Dublin negotiations have broken down, De Valera has been made to shew his hand and it does not appear that that hand is being very warmly grasped. Various points of vantage have been seized in Dublin by the I.R.A., but the seizures have been unattended by any subsequent action, and it has been suggested that these movements are a bluff to hearten some of the more doubtful spirits of the Republican army. Trouble is distinctly lessened on the border between the North and South, and once again during the last few days Sir James Craig has shewn a true spirit of statesmanship.

**Lord Robert Cecil.**—A very remarkable letter written by Lord Robert Cecil appeared recently in the *Times* and has aroused great interest. This letter is a plea and an accusation. A plea for political freedom under the spiritual direction of the League of Nations, and an accusation that

the electorate while endeavouring to make up its mind between the rival—and according to Lord Robert—not dissimilar, claims of reaction or revolution, is being governed by opportunism. I think that while admiring Lord Robert's honesty of purpose in writing this letter, many of us who read it will find ourselves in disagreement with the opinions which it expresses. His desire that we should find an ideal government under the League of Nations, because political divisions as we have hitherto known them now mean so little, is surely somewhat unfair on the League. Its functions are advisory, extra-political, and not governmental. The great successes which have undoubtedly attended its work have always been achieved when the governments of certain countries have gone to it for advice over difficult questions. It cannot act alone: and we seem to remember a plea by one of its most ardent supporters not to cast too heavy burdens upon a body which is as yet only in its infancy. To give the League of Nations the affairs of our great Empire to manage as they arise point by point, every day bringing its fresh complications, would be as unwise as to set a child of nine to do a public school entrance examination. And there we touch upon one of the weaknesses of this letter: except in a passing allusion to Egypt and India, Lord Robert, in his zeal for the better government of the country, entirely neglects the Imperial aspect. So that if we are to recognise him as the man we are seeking, we shall be entirely in the dark as to his policy in regard to Imperial affairs: a policy which to Conservatives is the most important of all.

The letter ends with the remarkable statement that politics in the future do not depend as much on principles, as upon attitude of mind. Surely, Lord Robert, professedly a Conservative, cannot mean this? The principles of our party have always been devotedly and loyally upheld: and they are consistent and clear. The King and Empire first: no legislation between class and class, but all to work together for the good of the whole: the maintenance of law and order, and the upholding of ancient traditions. But although I am the wife of a Minister in this "opportunist" Government—and what Government is not opportunist?—and share his views, no doubt Lord Robert would class me as a reactionary. Every party has its principles and is proud of them. As for "attitudes of mind" they are apt to prove both illusory and expensive.

**The Budget.**—The Budget containing as it does a certain amount of relief from taxation has caused undoubted satisfaction. A shilling off the income-tax is a help in these hard times, the more so as it has been achieved without any fresh borrowing: while remission of part of the duties on tea, coffee, and cocoa is also a boon. Popular belief that sugar would be equally favoured has proved wrong, and though we think this is a pity let us be thankful for the blessings we have received.

Postal rates are to be lowered, though only six million of the eight million Post Office savings have been allotted for this purpose. We hope the

Chancellor will allow the other 2 millions to go to the extension of the new Post Office buildings, without which the G.P.O. says it cannot prevent the continuous overtime worked by the women-clerks in the Savings Departments. This system is expensive both in health and money, and should be attended to without delay.

**Private Members' Bills.**—On May 26th the Bills which have been widely discussed, and with which our Association is in sympathy will appear for their second reading, though it is very doubtful if any but the first will have time to be heard. They are the Separation and Maintenance Orders Bill, introduced last year as the "Summary Jurisdiction" (Married Persons) Bill, which has first place, and Illegitimate Children and Guardianship of Infants Bills. With regard to the first Bill it is well to state for the benefit of those who were not present at the very interesting discussion we had on it lately, that by its two main points it provides for maintenance being given without the break-up of the family, and it enables men to claim an order on the same grounds as women. Adultery has been removed as a ground for application of an order as being outside the competence of the Police Courts, and suffering from Venereal Disease in a communicable form is now recognised as cruelty.

M. LLOYD-GREAME

#### "LABOUR: The Giant with the feet of clay."

By SHAW DESMOND.

Mr. Shaw Desmond has written a searching analysis of the power and influence of the Labour Party, which has communism as its goal, with the abolition of the principle of private property together with the system of trading for profit. With the enthusiasm of an idealist, who never doubts that all intellectual and spiritual problems would be solved automatically if property ceased to exist. Mr. Desmond worked for many years with the Social Democratic Federation and the Independent Labour Party. (The former had little influence because it appealed to the brain, the success of the latter was immediate and overwhelming because it appealed to the heart). The result was the formation of the Labour Party, which has so deeply disappointed Mr. Desmond since 1906, when its representatives were first returned in force to Westminster. In his judgment the party has deteriorated into a political machine in which wealth as represented by the bigger Trade Unions is the dominant influence, and no place is found for young men of ideals.

The idea of international brotherhood has always been behind the Labour movement, and in all countries the leaders preached the doctrine of international working-class solidarity, which would prevent the capitalist governments from entering upon a European war. The characteristic of the majority of the British working-men who supported the Labour movement was that they did not think, but trusted

their leaders; the war shook their faith in the infallibility of leaders, and a new dogmatic belief in the success of the Russian revolution fostered the growth of anarchy among them. Threats of strikes gave them an immediate increase in wages and a status which they had never attained by years of constitutional action. Since the war the men have continued to strike, not from any sympathy with the idea of revolution or with the Socialist state, but for the practical issue of more money for less work. The great majority of the leaders in Parliament and in the Unions were secretly against the policy of Ca'canny, as reprisals on the employers for sweating and underpayment in the past, but they had not the courage to denounce it as wrong in principle and harmful to the workers. Again they knew that direct action was a two-edged sword, yet they acquiesced in the formation of the Council of Action in 1920 to resist war with Soviet Russia by means of the General Strike. Mr. Desmond upbraids the labour leaders for going with the tide, and points out that with a few honorable exceptions, they are out first and foremost to keep their jobs; whether in Parliament or in trade unions the leaders are now really the led. They dare not tell the rank and file that the price of privilege is responsibility.

If a Labour Government came into power, it would speedily be swept out of existence by the men who had voted for it, because it could not build the new Jerusalem in a day. Mr. Desmond warns those who believe that education is a magic key which will open all the doors of the world to Demos, that it will be of no avail without a change of spirit. He looks forward to the slow and difficult growth of a real democracy, which will drop the false ideal of an impossible equality and become a spiritual force.

ROSE GRAHAM.

#### Guardians' Elections.

The Guardians' Elections have shown once more the objection of the ordinary rate-paying public, the man in street, to the extravagant reckless policy of giving proclaimed by the Socialists.

Certain London boroughs have failed to return a single "Labour" guardian, but probably it would be found that in many cases this reaction was due to the extremely revolutionary beliefs professed by the individuals standing, and for which non-pauperised communities have no use. It remains deplorable that even in wards where contests took place, and there were many uncontested returns, the number of abstentions should have been so large. Apathy remains the most dangerous enemy. "Because I don't quite approve of A's opinions on Ireland—or Genoa—or whatever it may be—therefore I won't vote, even though my not voting may mean the election of B, who is a Communist and ardent believer in the 'Red Flag.'" People, and this applies especially to recently enfranchised women, must sink their differences in order to co-operate with a party. Principles are different, fight for them you must, but unless people are prepared to make concessions in order to belong to a great organization, they must remain independents and free lances, and find their influence largely stultified. Every biography of a great statesman shows this. Over and over again they have to concede important points after stubbornly battling for them, in order to preserve cabinet solidarity. If they cannot do this a political career is impossible. This is admirably exemplified in Lady Gwendolen Cecil's life of Lord Salisbury.

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### WEEKLY LECTURES.

Wed., 24th May. 8.15 p.m.	"Municipal Work for Women" ... .. Mrs. MUSTARD Chairman ... Councillor Mrs. CRAWFORD.
Wed., 31st May. 8.15 p.m.	Chairman ... Mr. ST. JOHN LUCAS. ... Miss REBECCA WEST
Wed., 7th June. 8.15 p.m.	"Women and Religion" ... The Rev CANON E. W. BARNES Chairman ... Dr. LETITIA FAIRFIELD.
Wed., 14th June. 8.15 p.m.	"The future of British Agriculture" ... Mr. GERALD HOWARD Chairman ... Miss ESPLIN.
Wed., 21st June. 8.15 p.m.	Recital: "Pompilia" ... Miss MARGARET OMAR from "The Ring and the Book."
Wed., 28th June. 8.15 p.m.	Announced later.

Invitations to Lectures given to Non-Members on application to the Secretary.

### Luncheons, Teas & Dinners.

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