

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

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OUR WORK.

We have little to tell our members in the way of work done since our last number published in December, for the intervening weeks have been occupied by the Christmas recess. But there is more to say in regard to the future.

Lecture. Mr. Harold Williams' lecture on December 12th was most valuable, and the large audience listened with great interest to his views on the burning questions of taxation in regard to the next budget.

Spring Programme. Miss S. Margery Fry, J.P. has kindly consented to speak on "Probation," on Friday, February 3rd; and Sir Robert Newman, Bart., M.P. on Thursday, February 23rd, on "Summary Jurisdiction (Married Persons) Bill."

Speakers' Classes. A series of six classes will be held by Miss Elsie Fogerty at the C.W.R.A. Office, 48, Dover Street, on Thursdays at 11.30, beginning on February 9th. The fee is 4s. for a single lesson, and 21s. for the course. As only 20 persons can be admitted, it is well to apply early.

Monthly News. It has been suggested that small advertisements of things for sale and things wanted to buy might make the paper more interesting to our readers. The charge will be 2s. for 3 lines, about 24 words (not including address). The articles advertised to-day are hunting accessories, and a grey Persian cat.

M. R. WOMEN L.C.C. CANDIDATES.

The coming year, 1922, will be of very unusual interest from a political point of view, as it must inevitably include the L.C.C. and Metropolitan Borough Councils Elections, and a dissolution of Parliament may at any moment be announced, though the omens now seem to point to a later period in its life of a possible five years. But in any case there will be plenty of work for us all to

do, and the sooner we begin organising ourselves the better for our cause. The attack upon it this year will be more dangerous than it has ever been before, and the need for supporting constitutional evolution as against socialistic experiment is the duty of every one of us. Applications are constantly reaching the office for assistance in speaking, canvassing, and other sorts of work in connection with the L.C.C. elections in March, and we should be very glad to receive the names of volunteers. We ask our members as far as possible to offer help themselves, and to make it their business to persuade their friends to do the same. The Labour Party, from whom the most dangerous attack will come, is highly organised—all honour to them—and it is always said that they can rely on polling every one of their supporters. The story on the Municipal Reform side is very different. It tells of slackness, indifference, and a most deplorable failure to bring voters to the poll. In 1919 the number of qualified electors who recorded their votes in the L.C.C. election was only 17 per cent. This apathy is almost criminal, and it exists mainly on one side. Voting is a habit which people have to be taught to acquire, and they must be brought to see that it is their duty as citizens to use the power which is entrusted to them. I have heard a Conservative whip complain bitterly that his party do not take the trouble to vote, though they grumble afterwards if the other side scores; and he compared this attitude of mind to that shown by the Labour Party, who have responsible, of course unpaid, organisers for every group of houses in every street where their influence is strong, and these men and women undertake to see that every one of their sympathisers actually goes to the poll, and records his vote. If the same enthusiasm were shown by Municipal Reformers they would sweep the constituencies.

We appeal, therefore, most earnestly, to all our readers to make it their business to talk about the importance of the County Council elections now upon us; and so, very powerfully,

to help to create that enlightened public opinion which should prevail in this important matter. The County Councils have large interests to administer and great powers for good and ill. Let us see to it that the best men and women are chosen.

Women Candidates. Ten women have been adopted by the Municipal Reform Party as their candidates, seven of whom are new, and three—Lady Trustram Eve, Mrs. Hopkinson, and Mrs. Hudson Lyall—are sitting members. It is believed that in some of the constituencies they will be opposed by Labour Women, but the programme of that Party has not yet been officially announced.

The total number of women elected in March 1919 was 8, made up as follows: 3 Municipal Reformers, 2 Progressives, 2 Labour, and 1 Independent. There were in addition 3 co-opted women aldermen.

Two Municipal Reform candidates were defeated.

Up to the present it is believed that 16 women candidates are formally adopted and in the field, but there will probably be more, for Labour is usually late in announcing its full ticket.

It is not likely there will be many Independents. Independence sounds attractive, but it is accompanied by many disadvantages besides the expense. Very often it results in a split vote which admits the extremist candidate; and in the comparatively rare cases in which the Independent gets elected in the teeth of the party machines, a free-lance vote carries little power. It is only by working with an organised majority that the Reformer can achieve his purpose.

More is usually accomplished by going slowly than by acting as a forlorn hope and storming entrenched opinion almost single-handed.

It is a curious fact that there are no men Independents. It will be interesting to see whether, as women gain in practical experience, they, also, will tend to become absorbed into the party machines. For, after all, the machine is not a mill in which all initiation and individual judgment is ground into an artificial agreement; cross-voting is a common feature of all elected assemblies and surely all must agree that the less party politics are carried into Municipal affairs the better.

The following is the list of our candidates and their constituencies:—

*Lady Trustram Eve	...	N. Hackney.
Mrs. Dann Gardner, J.P.	...	Norwood.
Professor		
Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, D.B.E.		
		N. Camberwell.
		S.E. St. Pancras.
*Mrs. Hopkinson	...	
*Mrs. Hudson Lyall, J.P.	...	E. Fulham.
Dr. Barrie Lambert, C.B.E.		Bow & Bromley
Mrs. Lankester	...	Limehouse.
Miss Rachel Parsons	...	Finsbury.
Dr. Adeline Roberts, O.B.E.	...	Marylebone.
Miss Rosamond Smith	...	N. Islington.

* Sitting Members.

We hope to publish next month more particulars of the Candidates, and of the position in the constituencies.

In the meanwhile it may be of interest to mention that Mrs. Lankester, (Limehouse) is the wife of a tailor residing in the district. She will have a hard fight, and help is very much wanted if she is to carry the seat.

Miss Rosamond Smith stood last time in Shoreditch, and was defeated after a gallant fight. In N. Islington she will have a hard struggle before her.

Mrs. Dunn-Gardner, J.P. was only defeated by 248 votes in N.W. Camberwell last time, and we wish her every success in Norwood, where she is opposed by two strong Labour candidates, one of who is Mr. Edgar Lansbury, nephew of Mr. George Lansbury.

THE CASE FOR DAY CONTINUATION SCHOOLS.

It is commonly said that compulsory national education is a failure; that the elementary school leaves no lasting impression on the boys and girls who pass through it, or a bad one. We should not all accept this pessimistic view, perceiving that it is largely a case of the wish being father to the thought. No one is sorry to see a thing failing in which he does not believe; naturally, therefore, he is not at all slow to accept any evidence, or even suggestion, that it has failed. Thus the pessimist critic seizes on shortcomings in elementary education (confessed to by all who know anything about it and let themselves see things as they are) and promptly infers that the whole matter is in the same case and claims that failure is demonstrated. But it is true that those who would dissent from this conclusion and have unbounded faith in education do, indeed must, none the less recognise that elementary education has not produced anything like the good results hoped for and quite reasonably expected of it. It has been noticed above all that the impression made by the elementary school wears off extremely soon. The boy or girl leaving school at fourteen has only too often, probably more often than not, forgotten most of what he has learnt by the time he is sixteen. The effect too of school discipline and school manners wears off almost as quickly. Why is the influence of school on these children so transient?—is the question that all who take an intelligent interest in the welfare of the people have been insistently putting to themselves for many years. Clearly there was a very weak spot somewhere—so weak that, unless it could be discovered and removed, we should be merely marking time in popular education.

Many and serious as might be the defects in the elementary schools themselves, there was nothing we could show as sufficient to explain

the rapid falling away after leaving school. It was easy to say that better teaching, a higher standard, or a more "practical" course would leave a more lasting impression: but every one felt there was something more than all this involved; there was more behind.

After all, what was the dominant fact about these boys and girls as school children? Obviously that they gave up school at fourteen (or younger). What would happen if all the boys and girls at the Public and Higher schools left at fourteen? What would have happened to all of us if we had left school before an intellectual notion had dawned or a moral ideal been conceived? Should we not most of us, unless precocious prigs, at least have been in very great danger of suffering precisely the fate of the elementary school child? Surely it is pretty certain that nearly all of us would by sixteen have shed school influence as effectively as he. Yet we should have been going back to a refined home atmosphere and a more or less intellectual environment. The primary school child comes from surroundings rough and wholly unintellectual and on leaving school returns to them. To him leaving school is an emancipation: he is usually very keen to leave school, not only because he wants to earn money but still more because he wants to be a man and independent. To himself as soon as he has left school and got a job he is a man; he puts away school as a childish thing, with more ease, unfortunately, than that with which he puts away many other childish things. Not only has he no desire to keep up school things but he has active reason for forgetting them. They savour of childhood and he wants to be a man. Also we know that there are all sorts of vastly important—physical, spiritual, and intellectual—changes and developments going on in this most critical of all stages for boys and girls. There is no time of life in which girls and boys alike so much need a supporting environment and guidance. After all, then, is it so very strange that the influence of the elementary school is transient? The fact is that in those schools the child does not stay long enough to reach the age when school begins to grip. The experience of Secondary Schools, where the average leaving age is sixteen or older, bears this out. The Secondary schoolboy and even more the Secondary schoolgirl is sorry to leave school and cherishes its impression on passing into other spheres of life. Yet these boys and girls largely come from the elementary school class.

What shall we do then? It will hardly mend matters to scrap Primary Schools because they are not more successful. That they largely fail is, it is fairly clear, due mainly to the amount of "school" given being too little. Surely the remedy must be to give more. At any rate even anti-educationalists should agree that it is a case either of giving more or dropping what we do give. No one proposes to abandon education altogether, though some would like to if they had the courage, so there is no alternative but to prolong

school-life, so far as circumstances allow, by means of Day Continuation Schools. They do secure for eight hours in the week and in a rarer atmosphere than that of the house of business or the home a higher intellectual and moral environment. The processes begun at the elementary school are more or less continued and an antidote to the weaknesses of adolescence or rather "young personhood" is provided. The obvious criticism of these schools is, of course, that eight hours a week for forty weeks in the year is too little to produce much effect, especially if even this is to be dropped at the age of sixteen. But it is not an honest criticism on the part of those who demur to Continuation Schools altogether; though it is a perfectly honest attitude to demand either much more continuative education or none at all. But while it is very often true that to do a little is in itself no better, or even worse, than doing nothing, it is very seldom that there can be any other beginning to doing much than doing little. He would be a very short-sighted supporter of Continuation Schools on a much larger and more ambitious scale than is now even proposed, who decried Mr. Fisher's scheme or the schools as actually in being in London.

In this paper we have not been concerned with the qualities or defects of the London Continuation Schools or even with what the scheme of a Continuation School should be, but only with the case for setting up Continuation Schools at all.

HAROLD HODGE, L.C.C.

There are two criticisms made by many people to Day Continuation Schools: 1. As at present, they are only run in London and therefore part of a scheme which cannot be harmonious except as a whole. This difficulty is most apparent in the border constituencies, where children come in from the neighbouring counties and get the jobs, while the London children are not taken because they have to go to school.

There is a great deal of truth in this criticism but it has been exaggerated, as in my own district, a border one, the rate of employed children in the Day Continuation Schools is 78 per cent., and this is very largely helped by the fact that the Juvenile Branch of the Labour Exchange is in close touch with the Schools and a large number of boys and girls are suited by their help. It is notable that the number of unemployed is not very much greater than before Continuation Schools existed, as a census was taken the year after the war, and it was found that very few boys and girls were employed between 14 and 15.

The 2nd criticism is in the curriculum of the Day Continuation Schools. In reply to this it is best to say that the whole scheme is an experiment and it was felt that it would be an advantage to make the boys and girls interested by having a time table which was different from school and which contains some subjects which would attract as not so strictly scholastic.

I think the financial position should be clearly divided, from the educational point of view, and it is probable that no one would now advocate starting such a costly experiment, but equally no one two years ago anticipated the present tightness of money and the Fisher Act was hailed with acclamation by almost every one.

We are now faced with the fact of the fast expenditure of large sums of money to get ready for the Day Continuation School—hiring buildings and the necessary cleaning and repairing and extra sanitary accommodation absolutely necessary for large numbers of children,—is this to be wasted or are we to be allowed time to prove the venture a success? The school at present is far from a perfect one, but those who believe in it think it can be made an asset in the world if finance will permit its continuance.

F. JEAN TRUSTRAM EVE, L.C.C.

POLITICAL NOTES.

It is a little difficult, when writing of politics this month, to express any opinion of the trend of current events and an expression of pious hopes is always dull. We are all thankful that the Dail has at length got through most of its talk, and proceeded to ratify the Treaty. But the birth of the Irish Free State is the only achievement of the past weeks. The meeting first of the business men from European countries and then of the Supreme Council, has so far produced nothing tangible; while Washington, after disappointments with regard to France's attitude on the Naval question, has lapsed into a series of delays and difficulties which were no doubt bound to occur sooner or later.

On the question of a General Election I have nothing to say. Only, as Sir George Younger writes, it would be a pity to break up the Coalition while it still has so large a measure of its work unfinished.

M. LLOYD-GREAME.

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WEEKLY LECTURES.

Sat., 21st Jan. 5.30 p.m.	Violin and Pianoforte Recital ...	Miss ELSIE OWEN and Mr. VIVIAN LANGRISH.
Wed. 25th Jan. 8.15 p.m.	"The Aims and Aspirations of the National Citizens' Union" (Middle Classes' Union.) Chairman ...	LADY ASKWITH. MISS GORING-THOMAS.
Wed., 1st Feb. 8.15 p.m.	"The Composing and Solving of Double Acrostics" Chairman ...	Mr. HERBERT JACOBS, (Barrister-at-Law). Mr. J. WELLS THATCHER. (Barrister-at-Law).
Wed. 8th Feb., 7.15 p.m.	House Dinner ... (To commemorate the 4th Anniversary of the Woman's Victory) Chairman ...	Mrs. FAWCETT, LL.D. Mr. J. Y. KENNEDY.
Sat., 11th Feb., 5.30 p.m.	Concert ... (Details to be announced later.)	
Wed., 15th Feb., 8.15 p.m.	"Poland, 1919-21." Chairman ...	Mrs. CECIL CHESTERTON. Miss C. NINA BOYLE.
Wed., 22nd Feb., 8.15 p.m.	"Women as Parliamentary Candidates" Chairman ...	Professor WINIFRED CULLIS, O.B.E., D.Sc. Miss M. P. GRANT.

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

Luncheons, Teas & Dinners.

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