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British Commonwealth League.

ANNUAL REPORT.

JUNE 1928—MAY, 1929.

Conference. Our fourth Annual Conference was held on July 6th, at the Royal Society of Arts. The subject chosen for discussion was, "Some Problems of Government in Relation to Women within the British Empire."

Delegates attended from some 26 Societies and the following countries were represented:—Australia, Canada, Great Britain, India, Rhodesia, Union of South Africa, West Indies.

Our President, Mrs. Corbett-Ashby presided at all the sessions. The Conference was a very successful one and a good deal of interest was aroused. In connection with it the following social functions took place:—

An evening reception at Crosby Hall to meet the Women Members of Parliament. A Dinner at the Criterion at which the Rt. Hon. Lord Sydney Olivier, General George MacMunn, and Lady Heath were the guests, Mrs. Corbett-Ashby presiding. A Garden Party, by kind invitation of Mrs. Percy Bigland, when a visit was paid en route to the beautiful grounds of Cliveden, by kind permission of Viscountess Astor, M.P. Our thanks are due to both these kind friends of the League.

Council Meeting. At the Council Meeting, held on July 7th, it was decided that in order to augment our funds, our overseas affiliated Societies should be asked to hold one money-making function each year in aid of the League.

A scheme for the Interchange of Literature was decided on; the Executive was asked to give consideration to the production of a film bearing upon Women's Status in the Dominions; and it was suggested that in future every third year the Conference should be held in one or other of the Dominions.

Miss Courtney, organiser of the British-American Women's Crusade, laid the Kellogg proposals before the Council and asked for the co-operation of the League in this Peace Crusade. It was agreed to co-operate in this special piece of work.

Miss Royden's Tour. Miss Collisson returned towards the close of the year, after having completed a most successful tour with Miss Royden throughout Australia and New Zealand. In all the big centres Miss Royden was accorded a civic welcome. She addressed audiences ranging from 800 to 3000, and preached in Cathedrals, and also at many churches to large congregations.

Miss Collisson was also able to spend a few weeks in India studying social problems.

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Affiliations and Membership.

We are glad to welcome as new Affiliated Societies:—

The Open Door Council.

The Women's Enfranchisement League, Durban, South Africa.
Barbados Women's Suffrage League.

Our individual membership has steadily increased each month.

General Work. Our League is represented on the following Committees:—

Women in the Service of Hospitals Committee (Dr. Grace Boelke, Australia).

British-American Women's (Peace) Crusade. (Mrs. Sharpe, Mrs. Etheridge).

Consultative Committee (now dissolved), (Miss Solomon, Mrs. Stedman).

Women Peer's Committee (Mrs. Etheridge).

We have also sent representatives to the following Conferences and Meetings:—

Open Door Council.

Conference on Street Offences Committee's Report (Assoc. for Moral and Social Hygiene).

Society for the Overseas Settlement of British Women.

Conference on the Education of the Citizen (N.U.S.E.C.).

Conference on Forced Labour (League of Nations Union).

Conference on Women Police.

The League was represented on the following Deputations.—

Deputation to the Minister of Health *re* Woolwich workers and equal pay, organised by the Open Door Council.

Deputations to the three Party Leaders, organised by the N.U.S.E.C. and the Equal Rights Committee. At these deputations the League supported the following two points only; the Nationality of Married Women, and the Raising of the Marriage Age.

Speakers have been sent to address meetings at the Watford Women's Institute, the Purley Women's Citizens' Association, and St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance.

The B.C.L. participated in the Equal Franchise Celebrations in July, members attending the Victory Breakfast, and the Thanksgiving Services at Westminster Cathedral and St. Martin-in-the-Fields.

Club Room. The Club was formally opened in October by Viscountess Ellibank in the presence of a large gathering and members sent gifts which were sold to augment our funds. Later it was found impossible to carry on the Club as a separate venture, with the result that the League has now taken over the premises. In order to help meet the heavy rent, the small office has been let to Miss Collisson.

Social Gatherings. A Reception was given to welcome Miss Collisson on her return from overseas, when she gave an interesting address on her experiences, and later we had the pleasure of entertaining Miss Royden at the Lyceum Club, when she gave us some account of her tour round the world.

Luncheons. Our Luncheons have been most successful and well attended. The following were our guests and spoke on a variety of subjects.

MRS. SCHWARTZ: "Prof. Schwartz' pioneer work in the Kalahari Desert."

MRS. SARAH GERTRUDE MILLIN, the well-known S. African authoress, was a guest also, but did not speak.

MISS MOSELEY (Bahamas): "Women's Responsibility in a Small Colony."

MRS. JINARAJADASA (India): "Poition of Women in India at the present day."

DR. GRACE BOELKE (Australia): "A Pilgrimage to Macedonia and Gallipoli."

MADAME RIEDER: "Mexico and its Women."

DAME E. LYTTTELTON on her work at Geneva at the 1928 Conference.

MRS. CLEGG: "The Part Women play in the Social and Political Life of New Zealand."

MISS EDITH THOMPSON, O.B.E.: "Impressions of Canada."

MISS BICKNELL: "English Law and the Position of Infants."

DAME MILLICENT FAWCETT: "Impressions of Ceylon."

MISS JENNER: "S. Africa. Its History and Influence on the position of to-day."

A delightful excursion was made to Mr. and Mrs. Powell's lovely home near Guildford, and on the way visits were paid to the Guildford Grammar School, the Watts Gallery at Little Compton, and other places of interest. Our warm thanks are due to Mr. and Mrs. Powell for their kindness and hospitality.

Afternoon at Homes and Lectures. In addition to the usual weekly Wednesday At Homes, at which a member of the Executive acts as Hostess, we have had a number of interesting guests who have spoken on different subjects. Among them have been:—

MRS. CARLILE McDONNELL, "My Experiences at Geneva."

(Alternate Australian delegate to the League of Nations).

DR. STANG: "Public Health and Welfare Work in Australia."

MISS FEDDEN: "Empire Catering."

MRS. DALTON: "Some Race Problems of the British West Indies."

MRS. COUSINS: "Some of India's Social Problems."

MRS. RAMA RAU: "The Aims and Aspirations of Indian Women."

Money Raising Schemes. We have held two Jumble Sales, which were kindly arranged by Miss Hoc to whom our warm thanks are due. Also three Bridge Parties, one held at the Lyceum Club, another at Chesterford Gardens, by kind invitation of Mrs. Sadd Brown, and a third at the Cowdray Club when Mrs. Sharpe was our hostess. We warmly thank Mrs. Sadd Brown and Mrs. Sharpe for their very generous help, and in addition, Mrs. Innes, our energetic Chairman of the Hospitality Committee, for all she did to make these parties a success.

A Sale of Christmas gifts took place in November, kindly

opened by Madame Florence Austral, which was most successful from every point of view. One of the excitements of the afternoon was the announcing of the winner of the opal and diamond ring which was raffled in aid of our funds—given most generously by Miss Ruby Rich, to whom we are most grateful.

Resignations. Our Assistant Treasurer, Mrs. De Righi, has resigned owing to continued residence abroad; our thanks are due to her for past help.

The Luncheon Committee has lost one of its valued members—Mrs. Nuttall—who has returned to Australia. We remember her help with gratitude.

In addition to those already mentioned, our special thanks are due to Mrs. Stedman, our enthusiastic Treasurer, to Miss Collisson, our Hon. Organiser, who has generously given so much of her time to the League's work since her return; to the Luncheon Committee and helpers, who have made our Social Gatherings so successful; to Mrs. Menken, our Hon. Club Secretary, to Mrs. Marshall Hole, Convenor of the Press Sub-Committee, and to all those who have shown their practical interest in the League by helping us on many occasions.

HONORARY TREASURER'S ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT.

I have much pleasure in submitting the following Financial Report for the year May 1928 to April 1929. The total expenses for the League during this period amount to £500 0s. 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. The total receipts £524 3s. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., leaving a credit balance in the bank of £24 2s. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. It will be noticed that this balance is lower than the balance shewn on the previous year (£40 1s. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.) a difference of £16 8s. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ d., the reason for this being the difficulties in subletting the premises held by Mrs. Turner, who unfortunately had to discontinue her tenancy owing to ill-health.

It is gratifying to note that our affiliation fees have increased by nearly £14, owing to the bringing up to date of outstanding fees, and the prompt payments of current ones, also the enrolment of three new Affiliated Societies; the names and details of these societies will be given in the Hon. Secretary's report. Thanks are due to the Non-Party Association of South Australia who have promised to organise a function on our behalf and the Feminist Club, Sydney, who trebled their Affiliation Fee for the current year. This is not shewn on the balance sheet as it was received after the close of the financial year.

Turning to the assets side of the balance sheet, £93 19s. for subscriptions, this is £22 10s. less than last year. This decrease is accounted for by the fact that we have now reached the end of the three year guarantees of three subscribers of large sums. The present membership is however a steadily increasing and active one.

Once again this year we have been generously helped by donations from many of our members and friends, and I would like to take this opportunity of thanking them on behalf of our League. Special thanks should I feel be given to an old and esteemed member, who has most generously donated a sum of £50.

The functions organised by the League this year have realised £90 8s. Thanks are due to members for organising these functions and to others for their generous support in making them the financial success they have been.

Turning to the expenditure side of the balance sheet it will be seen that the item for Printing and Stationery, £54 6s. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. is higher than in 1927/28. This is due to the very extensive report which was printed last year. It is very disappointing in view of this to see that the sum of £8 18s. on the receipts side for reports is £2 16s. less than in 1927/28, shewing that considerably fewer have been disposed of during the current year.

I am pleased to report that last month we were able to sublet the small office to Captain MacMichael of the Dumb and Captive Animals Defence League, for which the League receives £5 per month. It is very helpful to have a steady income of this description coming in, as otherwise the task of raising the necessary funds causes a serious hindrance of constructive office work.

Throughout the year the strictest economy has been exercised wherever possible, enabling me to place this balance sheet before you.

Turning to the Club account, you will see that the expenditure for the year 1928/29 is £164 8s. 11d., and that the total receipts amount to £186 7s. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., leaving a credit balance of £21 18s. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. This balance is due to the loan of £100 given most generously by a Member of Committee to help launch the venture and to the very kind support given by our members.

If you look on the expenditure side of the balance sheet, you will see that the rental is very heavy and also that the initial furnishing and decorating amounted to the sum of £43 6s. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Turning again to the receipts, Miss Collisson has offered to rent the small front room for the annual rental of £30 and in addition we are hoping that the premises may be let for two nights per week regularly in order to help defray the rent and necessary expenses.

MYRA S. STEDMAN,
Honorary Treasurer.

FAWCETT COLLECTION

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH LEAGUE.

Receipts and Expenditure Account for the Year ended 30th April, 1929.

				£	s.	d.					£	s.	d.
Balance, 1st May, 1928:—							Rent and Repairs				88	10	0
At Bank and in Hand				40	11	5½	Coal, Lighting and Cleaning				26	16	11
Subscriptions	..	..	..	93	12	6	Salary and Insurance				162	12	10
Donations	..	..	..	149	2	5	Postage				29	12	5½
Affiliation Fees	..	..	..	31	8	6	Printing and Stationery				51	3	6½
Reports	..	..	..	8	18	6	Audit Fee				3	3	0
Functions	..	..	..	184	9	5	Functions				41	11	7¼
Delegates' Fees and Conference	..	..	..	12	9	6	Conference Functions				52	9	9
Miscellaneous Receipts	..	..	..	3	11	4	Conference				19	8	2
							Telephone				16	0	4
							Miscellaneous Expenses				7	10	1½
							Returned Cheque (Receipt included in 1928 Accounts)				1	2	2
											500	0	10¾
							Balance, 30th April, 1929:—						
							At Bank and in Hand				24	2	8¾
											£524	3	7½
											£524	3	7½

We have examined the above Statement with the Books and Vouchers of the British Commonwealth League and find it to be in accordance therewith.

106, St. Clement's House,
Clement's Lane, E.C.4.
2nd August, 1929.

HOMERSHAM & Co., Auditors,
Incorporated Accountants.

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH LEAGUE.

(CLUB ACCOUNT).

Receipts and Expenditure Account for the Year ended 30th April, 1929.

				£	s.	d.					£	s.	d.
Cash at Bank, 1st May, 1928				13	8	0	Rent				100	0	0
Donations	..	..	..	33	19	0	Furnishing				18	1	11
Furnishing	..	..	..	1	11	6	Decorating				25	4	6
Membership Subscriptions	..	..	..	24	13	6	Postage				3	1	7
Hire of Room	..	..	..	3	11	0	Coal, Lighting and Cleaning				14	8	1
Functions	..	..	..	9	4	3½	Stationery				1	10	8
Loan	..	..	..	100	0	0	Functions				1	1	6
							Miscellaneous Expenses				1	0	8
											164	8	11
							Cash at Bank, 30th April, 1929..				21	18	4½
											£186	7	3½
											£186	7	3½

We have examined the above Statement with the Books and Vouchers of the Club and find it to be in accordance therewith. The Bankers have certified as to the Cash at Bank.

106, St. Clement's House,
Clement's Lane, E.C.4.
2nd August, 1929.

HOMERSHAM & Co., Auditors,
Incorporated Accountants.

CITY OF LONDON POLYTECHNIC
FAWCETT COLLECTION

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