

MONTHLY NEWS  
of the  
**CONSERVATIVE & UNIONIST**  
WOMEN'S FRANCHISE ASSOCIATION.

*President:* THE COUNTESS OF SELBORNE.

*Chairman of Executive Committee:* WINIFRED, COUNTESS OF ARRAN.

*Hon. Sec.:* MRS. GILBERT SAMUEL.

*Hon. Treasurer:* MRS. FABIAN WARE.

*Central Office:* 48, Dover Street, Piccadilly, W. 1. *Telegraphic Address:* "Cufranchis London." *Telephone:* 886 Mayfair.

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FEBRUARY, 1918.

**The Qualifications of Women for the  
Parliamentary Vote.**

We are being asked what are the qualifications for women voters under the new Act.

The following information will therefore be useful to many of our readers:—

A woman, if thirty years of age, can qualify for a vote in nine different ways—five in her own right, whether she be married or single, and four through her husband.

(1) If she owns or occupies any land or building, but not if her property is let to or occupied by a tenant.

(2) If she is a tenant or occupies any land or building, whatever its rental.

(3) If she rents unfurnished premises as a lodger, and provides furniture.

(4) If she lives with friends, and pays rent and provides furniture for a room.

(5) As a graduate of any University in the United Kingdom. She is also qualified to vote for a University which does not admit women to degrees, if she has fulfilled the conditions for the admission of a man to a degree.

As a married woman:—

If a married woman has none of the above qualifications herself, she is entitled to be registered and to vote in a Parliamentary election if her husband has any of the above (1 to 4) qualifications, but the wife of a University graduate cannot vote in virtue of her husband's degree.

**Letter from Mrs. Fawcett.**

We know our readers will appreciate this tribute to our work from Mrs. Fawcett, who has been for so many years the leader of the Suffrage movement:—

2, Gower Street, W.C. 1,  
January 22nd, 1918.

Dear Mrs. Gilbert Samuel,

I am most grateful to you and your Society for your kind letter. It has been a wonderful time, and I find myself wondering if it can be really true that women will be voting at the next General Election.

Your Society has been the very greatest help to the whole movement, and I feel that the part the Conservative Suffragists have played in the Woman Suffrage movement is not only immensely to their credit, but differentiates the position of Suffrage in this country from its position in any other. Foreigners are always greatly astonished by it

**Women's Suffrage Celebration.**

A Women Suffragists' celebration to welcome the extension of the franchise to women will be held at the Queen's Hall, Langham Place, on Wednesday, March 13th, at 8 p.m. The speakers will be Mrs. Henry Fawcett, LL.D., in the chair, the Right Hon. Arthur Henderson, the Earl of Lytton, the Right Hon. Sir John Simon, and Miss Maude Royden. A programme of music will be performed by the London Symphony Orchestra with full Choir, conducted by Sir Hubert Parry.

Tickets, which may be obtained from our offices, 48, Dover Street, are (including entertainment tax) 24/-, 12/-, 5/9, 3/-, and 1/3. There will be also a few unreserved seats free.

**Thanksgiving Service.**

On Saturday, February 9th, a Service of Thanksgiving for the new powers and responsibilities conferred on women was held at the Church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, Charing Cross. The address was given by the Bishop of Willesden. The service was attended by representatives of the majority of suffrage societies, among whom were many members of our Executive Committee. Banners of the principal suffrage societies were borne in procession up the aisle of the church, and placed in the chancel during the service. Our own beautiful banner, carried by a Member of Council and Miss Raiker, was conspicuous among them.

**Meeting in Plymouth.**

The Primrose Habitation at Plymouth devoted its meeting on January 29th to considering Citizenship for Women. The Hon. Mrs. Astor who presided, had asked our Association to provide a speaker. Mrs. Scoresby Routledge, M.A., a member of our Executive Committee, said that at this momentous time the nation, by giving votes to women, was asking not only for their time and work, but also for their brains and intelligence. They had a special contribution to make to the common life: beginning with the Home, the training ground of civil virtues, through municipal and now national life, up to Imperial citizenship, which was itself the best step towards Universal Federation. It was therefore the duty of all to obtain knowledge of the problems of the day through reading and personal observation; for progress was made by well ordered change, by mutual unselfishness.

### Executive Committee Notes.

The following resolution, on the composition of the Consumers' Council, was sent by the Executive Committee to the Minister of Food:—

The Executive Committee of the Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association has noted with much concern that the women appointed to the Consumers' Council represent one section only of the women of the country. As the questions of Food Control and Food Consumption are matters of vital importance to all, it is essential that all sections and classes should be represented. The Committee trust that you will appoint additional women-members immediately, in order that women, other than those of the Labour Party, may feel that their interests are safeguarded.

The Executive Committee has recently given its support to the following resolutions:—

(1) National Union of Women Workers:—

The Executive Committee of the National Union of Women Workers having specially in view that the Solicitors (Qualification of Women) Bill, has already passed the House of Lords without a division, and would require probably not more than one day for the completion of all its stages in the House of Commons, urges the Government to grant sufficient time for its consideration to enable this urgently needed reform to be placed on the Statute Book this Session.

(2) Memorial to the Right Hon. Christopher Addison, M.P., Minister for Reconstruction:

We, the undersigned, wish to bring to your notice a feature of the instructions given for the guidance of the recently appointed Committee on new industries for British engineering which, in our opinion, will be detrimental to the interests of the women employed in these trades.

As reported in the press, the duties of the Committee will include the compiling of a list of articles suitable for manufacture by British Engineering firms. This list is to be classified as follows:—

- Articles which can be made—
1. By women.
  2. By men and women.
  3. By skilled men.

The adoption of this classification rules out in advance any possibility of the inclusion of women in what are to be defined as the "skilled" branches of the trade, and will have the effect of restricting them arbitrarily to its lower and less remunerative sections. We therefore respectfully urge that the terms of reference of the Committee should be so extended as to leave the question of the inclusion of women in the skilled branches of the trade open to their consideration.

### Food Committees.

There has been a great deal of discussion with regard to the representation of women upon local Food Committees. Although we realized the unsatisfactory nature of these Committees as at present constituted, we could not ourselves speak from actual knowledge.

As recently as the end of October, however, the Editor of *Weekly Notes* of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies investigated the exact composition of a sufficient number of Committees to give an unprejudiced idea of the success of the Food Control scheme.

By the Food regulations, each Food Committee may not consist of more than twelve members, and on each there must be one woman and one representative of labour. "There must be one woman"—not "there must be *only* one woman." The idea was to fix a minimum, not a maximum.

We have received particulars of the constitution of 164 Food Committees. On ninety-four of these there is only one woman; on sixty-one there are two, on eleven there are three, and on one there are actually eight—that is to say, in over 57 per cent. of the cases investigated, the minimum woman representation fixed by Lord Rhondda has been treated as a maximum.

Obviously women's experience of food prices and food consumption must be of the greatest value to every Local Committee. Where there is only one woman on a Committee of twelve, she will have no means of enforcing her views, and there must be a tendency to disregard her opinion. What is wanted is to get a proper and effective representation of women's domestic knowledge on every Committee.

### The Women's Labour League Conference.

We think our members will be interested in the subjects discussed at the Annual Conference of the Women's Labour League. We need hardly say that, as Conservatives, we hold widely divergent views on several of the points raised.

The Women's Labour League was the first political body of organized women to hold its annual meeting since that morning in January when we women "woke up and found ourselves" free. For this reason, if for no other, the League's opinions will command the attention and consideration of women in all ranks of society, and especially of the women members of the Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association, who, long before the war became our schoolmaster, had educated themselves to appreciate the horrors of sweating and underpayment in the industrial world, and who have fought so successfully to provide women with a weapon of defence. The Conference met on January 21st and 22nd at Nottingham. The Women's Labour League (which was founded in 1906 by the late Mrs. Margaret Macdonald and Mrs. Mary Middleton), decided to merge itself in the Labour Party.

A study of the resolutions carried at the Conference shows where the interests of the labour women, like those of most other women lie—in the home and round the children. True, the agenda was framed some weeks before the historic final woman's suffrage debate in the House of Lords, but I doubt whether, for some years to come at least, women will take a wider field for debate at such a conference than did the Annual Meeting of the Women's Labour League.

The meeting demanded unanimously that the Government should open negotiations "at the earliest possible moment with the Central Powers, so that the universal suffering of this disastrous war may be ended." It desired "a permanent people's peace," and with that end in view asked that "there shall be no forcible annexations and no penal indemnities." This carried, Food Supplies, Housing, a Ministry of Health, Education, Social Reconstruction after the war, were the chief subjects under discussion.

The Annual Report contains a statement that "one of the most valuable parts of the League's work is the representation of working women on local government bodies of various kinds." To mention a few only, I understand that the League has five members sitting on Municipal and County Councils, twenty-one on Boards of Guardians, four on Education Committees, forty-seven on Local Pensions Committees, sixty-four on National Relief Fund Committees, twenty-seven on Food Control Committees and twenty-two on Sub-Committees dealing with that matter, and thirty-one on Maternity Committees. Speaking of the Food Supply, Dr. Marion Phillips stated that "it was no use making the wrong kind of fuss about the shortage . . . She and other representatives had been elected on the Food Consumers' Council in London, and she was satisfied to know that Lord Rhondda was doing his best under difficult circumstances, in any case he was not on the side of the profiteers."

The provision of free milk for babies and nursing mothers was discussed, and a resolution in favour carried.

The League has issued a pamphlet, "The Working Woman's House," which contains a plan for two "model" homes, which the members are invited to criticise. Everyone will answer in the negative, the League's question, "Is there any reason why the children should not have the best homes that the Nation can provide?" and will agree that on the question of housing accommodation it is woman's duty as well as her right to state the opinion she has formed from the experience which she has bought too dearly in the past.

The Conference put on record the importance of the establishment without delay of a Ministry of Health "based upon Public Health Services and entirely dissociated from any Poor Law taint." The resolution, which was moved by the Executive Committee, was framed in comprehensive terms and repeatedly emphasized the importance of staffing departments dealing with matters affecting women, largely by women.

The Conference declared that the Education Bill, "while representing a considerable advance on pre-war conditions, falls far short of the minimum that is adequate and the needs of the country and the opportunities before it." The compulsory establishment of nursery schools, the supply of adequate medical and dental treatment for all scholars up to the age of eighteen, the reduction in the size of classes, the prohibition of the employment of children for profit and wages outside school hours, the raising of the compulsory

attendance age to fifteen and part-time education of not less than twenty hours per week with a limitation of the hours of labour for young persons under eighteen to a weekly maximum of twenty-five, were all demanded. With regard to the education of girls, the Conference was of opinion that it should be planned on broad general lines, "and should not be directed only to the formation of skill in domestic duties."

A motion dealing with the Conscription of Wealth and calling on the Government to raise revenue for present expenditure "by taxation rather than by loan" was carried.

Amongst other matters, Mothers' Pensions, "adequate for health and useful living," were asked for, as was also the release of all conscientious objectors "now in prison in contradiction of the terms of the Military Service Act, and against all the truest ideas of British freedom of conscience." RUTH YOUNG.

### Recent Publication.

*Madame Curie—the Story of Radium.* By Marion Cunningham. The St. Catherine Press, Stamford Street, S.E. 1, 1s. nett.

This sketch of the life and work of the great scientist will be read with appreciation by all who are interested in the advancement of women in the regions of scientific research. It is distressing reading for Englishwomen, however; and we blush with shame as we learn how Poland's greatest daughter—a woman whom the learned societies of the world delighted to honour—was received by the foremost scientific societies in England, when, accompanied by her husband, she visited our country in 1903 on the anniversary of the Royal Society. The place of honour was accorded, not to Madame Curie, who discovered radium, but to her husband, who was greeted with thunders of applause as he bowed his acknowledgments. At the banquet held by the Royal Society the same evening, Monsieur Curie expressed his high sense of the honour done him "in association with his wife." We read that in the speeches which followed, the Institut de France was criticized as being antiquated in its limitations, and pleasure was expressed at the flexibility and power of adaptiveness of the Royal Society. It was said at the time that Madame Curie was a spectator of the proceedings from a gallery. A few days after the Royal Society banquet, Monsieur Curie was asked to read a paper on radium to the Royal Institution. He replied it was his wife who had discovered it; he had merely taken part in the researches after the discovery. She would read them a paper if they desired one; but they replied they could not have her, would *he* oblige, etc.

Mrs. Cunningham says with truth that these facts should not be suppressed; and it is for this reason that we have called special attention to them, instead of devoting the space at our disposal to the interesting chapters on Madame Curie as Teacher and her life at the Sorbonne; for these we must refer our readers to the book itself.

### Branch Work for 1917.

Owing to pressure on our space, the year's branch work has been held over. We should be glad if our Hon. Secretaries would send us any further information regarding their future plans.

**Edinburgh.**—The Edinburgh Branch held its Annual Meeting in January, which was addressed by the Rev. A. E. Lawrie. The activities of the Branch were necessarily curtailed during the spring and summer of 1917 owing to the absence of the Hon. Secretary, but the Office was kept open. The political work during the year has consisted in the holding of two open air meetings in co-operation with other suffrage societies, from both of which resolutions were sent to the Heads of the Government and to the local members of Parliament; and also in a good deal of correspondence in connection with the Representation of the People Bill, chiefly directed to bringing pressure to bear on Scottish Conservative members of Parliament.

The war relief work of the Edinburgh Branch has consisted in collecting comforts, etc., for Sailors, Soldiers, and Red Cross Hospitals, in sending subscriptions from its funds to local war relief schemes, and in keeping up its Prisoners of War Fund, by which it is sending parcels regularly to six prisoners of War (two Ulster men, one Australian, and three of Scottish regiments—and to men of other regiments occasionally).

ROSALINE MASSON, *Hon. Secretary.*

**Leamington.**—The Leamington Branch is carrying on, and still holding the War Working Party, etc. The joint Suffrage Societies are organizing the collection of woollen and cotton waste (at the request of the Mayoress). This has now been going on since last June, and is very successful. The Suffrage Societies War Savings Association still continues to grow and flourish, and the National Service Poultry Club (Captain Pierson Webber) now has its Leamington Headquarters at our offices. We are now working (in conjunction with the War Agricultural Committee) to get Women's Institutes started in Leamington and the surrounding villages, but it is too soon yet to tell of this work.

M. L. HULBERT, *Hon. Secretary.*

**Liverpool.**—All our members have been fully occupied with their various war works. A great quantity of writing was done earlier in the year, the Home Secretary and all our local Members of Parliament having been approached in the interests of Women's Suffrage. A deputation to the local Members of Parliament at the House of Commons was also organized. We have so far kept up our subscriptions to the C.U.W.F.A. bed at Royaumont, and hope to continue to do so until the end of the war.

EMILY BRASSEY, *Hon. Secretary.*

**Woking.**—During the past three years the Branch has maintained a fund for Prisoners of War belonging to the West Surrey Regiment.

It is a matter for congratulation that the Member of Parliament for the division—who was an extreme anti-Suffragist before the war—supported Clause IV. of the Representation of the People Bill through all its stages.

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Feb. 20.—Miss Normanton. "The Worst Despotism—Dress."

Feb. 27.—Mrs. Aldridge on "Serbia."

Mar. 6.—Miss Lind-Af-Hageby. "Marriage and Divorce Reform."

For further particulars see *The Vote*.

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