

THE

Catholic Citizen

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Daughter of the ancient Eve,
We know the gifts ye gave and give;
Who knows the gifts which you shall give,
Daughter of the Newer Eve?

—Francis Thompson

The English Women Martyrs.

BY JOSEPH CLAYTON.

They are four, the women martyrs in the centuries of persecution in England. Three are named Margaret—Blessed Margaret Pole, the Venerable Margaret Clitherow, the Venerable Margaret Ward—the fourth is the Venerable Anne Line.

Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, was an old lady when Henry VIII decided on her death. Too old to join the general chorus of Lords spiritual and temporal in approval of the royal policy. (Few were they of bishops, abbots and notables who withstood the king in his desire for the divorce of Katharine, his repudiation of the Pope's supremacy, his destruction of the religious orders and their houses). A worse offence than silent disapproval was that the Countess of Salisbury was the mother of Reginald Pole—Cardinal Pole—upon whom Henry counted for support in his quarrel with the papacy. When the son published his treatise on the Unity of the Church, contraverting the claim of the king to be head of a separate Anglo-Catholic Church, Henry took it for an act of war. Reginald Pole was beyond his reach and declined to return to England to be beheaded. Therefore the rest of the family must be put to death. By act of attainder was the Countess condemned. There was a pretence that she had sympathised with the Pilgrimage of Grace—that militant protest of the north against the royal tyranny. A tunic was produced embroidered with the emblem

of the Sacred Heart. The resolute old lady denied all treason, but could not deny that she was the mother of her son. Neither could she deny her faith, nor consent to declare the king's marriage void, his supremacy of the Church a truth.

So on May 28, 1541, in the precincts of the Tower of London, Margaret, Countess of Salisbury was beheaded.

(Years afterwards a story was spread that the old lady was chased round the scaffold by the headsman, because she would not die quietly. Contemporary records know nothing of this legend; at least I can find no authority for it).

Forty-five years after, Margaret Clitherow, "Pearl of York," was pressed to death because she refused to plead in court. A convert from Elizabeth's Church of England, was Mistress Clitherow, Margaret Middleton before her marriage. Faithful and untiring in her service to the "old religion," her house in York was a safe refuge for priests. To harbour priests was felony and treason; no less was it felony and treason to become a Catholic in those spacious days of Queen Elizabeth. The arrest of Margaret Clitherow was bound to happen sooner or later; her devotion to the old faith of England was well-known. But plead guilty or not guilty in court Margaret would not. Only by silence could her husband and children remain outside the case. The penalty for this contempt of court was to be pressed

to death. "This way to heaven is as short as any other" was the comment of the prisoner when she heard the sentence.

In a dungeon at York on March 25, 1586, was the martyrdom of Margaret Clitherow accomplished; and now every year in that ancient city it is celebrated by prayer and pilgrimage.

The persecution was very bitter after the defeat of the Armada, and in the thick of the persecution in London, Margaret Ward, a young Catholic gentlewoman from Congleton, in Cheshire, went daily to visit the prisons where the priests were so closely confined. She was allowed to carry food with her, and in the basket of provisions she succeeded in hiding a rope. This rope was for a secular priest, one Father Watson, whose constancy was badly shaken by imprisonment. The priest escaped, but he left the rope hanging from the window of his cell, and that was evidence enough to convict Margaret Ward. Nor indeed when brought to trial did she deny what she had done, but said quite frankly that she rejoiced "in having delivered an innocent lamb from the hands of bloody wolfs." They tortured her and they offered her pardon if she would but attend the Anglican service; but Margaret Ward with her great charity and fearless courage was not to be moved.

Four laymen and one secular priest died on Tyburn tree, fellow martyrs with Margaret Ward on August 30, 1588. One of these laymen was John Roche, a gallant young Irish waterman who had helped to procure the escape of Father Watson, and so was apprehended.

The fourth of the women martyrs, the Venerable Anne Line, was a widow and a convert. Her house in London was central and convenient for the faithful to hear Mass and she was long suspect. On Candlemas day, 1601, a priest was actually saying Mass when the pursuivants arrived to search the house. Fortunately Mistress Line's house was so stoutly barred against intruders that the priest escaped before an entrance was forced. The widowed lady was an invalid, they carried her in a chair to the Old Bailey, but she was of strong mind and great good will. Just over three weeks after her arrest she was sent to Tyburn for harbouring priests, and with the rope round her neck

her last words to the assembled crowd were that so far from repenting her harbouring a Catholic priest she wished she could have entertained a thousand.

Valiant women, these four martyrs of England, of whom England was not worthy.

Other women there were in the centuries of persecution, who if they did not achieve martyrdom suffered willingly for the faith in prison.

Eleanor Hunt, a widow, died in prison at York in 1600 for her loyalty to religion. In London, the widow of the Venerable Swithen Wells, (who was hanged outside his own house in Grays Inn Lane in 1591), was kept in Newgate for more than ten years till death brought her release.

There should be mention also, of that courageous group of young women who in open court at Winchester in 1591, when certain Catholic laymen were sentenced to death, declared they too were willing to die since they were Catholics. The outburst distressed the magistrate, and he bade them go home!

It is certain that in the struggle against the government for the right of freedom of conscience—which the Protestant government stoutly denied to Catholics—and in the resolute will neither to conform to the religion of the newly established Church of England, nor to surrender the opportunity of hearing Mass, the laity, women equally with men, did its part in saving England from utter loss of faith. Persecution is never absent from the world. And in the spirit of the three Margarets—Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, Margaret "Pearl of York," Margaret Ward, of Mistress Line, of the widows who died in prison, and of the young women at Winchester ("under thirties" all of them), will persecution be met while ever sun and moon endure.

The King.

The prayer "God save the King" is on the lips of his Majesty's subjects from the lowest to the highest. A resolution of sympathy with the royal family was passed at the meeting of St. Joan's S.P.A. on December 3, and Miss Fedden called at Buckingham Palace on behalf of the Alliance, and signed the Visitors' Book.

Notes and Comments.

Messrs. P. S. King and Son have now published our book "TOWARDS CITIZENSHIP"—A Handbook of Women's Emancipation, by Miss P. C. Challoner and Mrs. Laughton Mathews, with forewords by Dame Millicent Fawcett, and His Lordship the Bishop of Pella.

It would no doubt make an acceptable Christmas present, especially to the newly-enfranchised young women voters, and to the Reverend Mothers and Headmistresses of schools and colleges.

Please send your orders at once to the Secretary, St. Joan's Alliance, 55 Berners Street, W. 1. The price of the book is 2s. 1d. post free.

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We were delighted to read in the *Vote* that Mrs. Despard has so far recovered that she has been able to speak at a meeting in Ireland.

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The Home Secretary, in response to agitation at the omission of women, has asked Mrs. Barrow Cadbury and Miss Elizabeth Haldane to serve on the Committee which has been appointed to enquire into the working of police courts and juvenile courts. They have accepted. Their experience as magistrates should, and no doubt will, make them useful members of the Committee.

* * * *

Our co-religionist, Sister Margaret Slachta, who was the first woman to be elected to the Hungarian Parliament sends congratulations on the passing of the Equal Franchise Bill. In her letter to Miss Barry she says: "In a country, where women's political rights are in their babyhood, and Equal Franchise is a far off ideal, one realises the value of a victory like yours so much the more. We Hungarians have still to fight our battle" . . . We hope the victory in our own country will help our Hungarian colleagues in their strenuous fight.

* * * *

We congratulate Miss Wilkinson, M.P., on her victory in persuading the Kit-

chen Committee of the House of Commons—of which she is a member—to open the Strangers' Dining Room to women for dinner, from which up to the present they have been strictly excluded. The question of economy as well as status was involved as the price of meals is cheapest in the Stranger's Dining Hall. Women are still excluded from lunch.

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We note with pleasure that the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council has granted leave of appeal against the decision of the Canadian High Court, which ruled that women are not "persons" under the British North American Act of 1867, and are not therefore eligible to sit in the Senate. We earnestly hope that the five valiant Canadian women, who have brought the case, will be rewarded with success.

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The National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, and the London Society for Women's Service, are making arrangements for the presentation of her portrait to Dame Millicent Fawcett. Lady Astor is kindly allowing the presentation to be made at her house on the 12th of December. The portrait has been painted by Mr. Lionel Ellis, it is a faithful and natural likeness of Dame Millicent, wearing her doctor's robes. It is a likeness which grows upon one, and like Titian's portraits would be pleasant "to live with." Mr. Ellis is to be congratulated on his achievement. The artist was recommended by Sir Joseph Duveen's Committee, which exists to encourage young artists. Societies, other than the two above named, have been allowed to associate themselves with the presentation, and St. Joan's has availed itself of the privilege.

Obituary.

We ask the prayers of our readers for our member, Mrs. Mort, who died recently. —R.I.P.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE,

AND

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Signed articles do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Society.

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History of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society

(Now St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance).

(Abridged Edition)

By LEONORA DE ALBERTI.

SECTION III, and last.

THE SOCIETY DURING THE WAR.

The C.W.S.S. helped to keep the Suffrage fires burning during the nightmare years of the War, and with other societies kept vigilant watch that nothing was done to jeopardise the suffrage position. Suffragists were not led away by the vain cry of votes for soldiers. They said in effect: We are willing not to urge our claim for the moment, but if the suffrage question is touched, we come in!

Throughout the duration of the War, the C.W.S.S. had a monthly Mass offered at St. Patrick's, Soho, for peace and for the souls of all killed in the War.

There was no lack of work to be done during the war. It had scarcely started when the Watch Committee of Plymouth suggested that the Contagious Diseases Acts should be re-enacted. The C.W.S.S. sent a direct protest, and co-operated with other societies in denouncing the proposal. Later on the Society took part in the agitation against the tolerated houses of Cayeux opened for the special use of British Officers. An agitation which resulted in the closing of these houses.

In 1918, the C.W.S.S. was again to the fore in protesting against the iniquitous

Regulation 40 D. This War Office regulation made it a punishable offence for a woman suffering from venereal disease to solicit or to have intercourse with any member of His Majesty's Forces. Any man protected by His Majesty's uniform was free to accuse any woman he pleased of having infected him. He was a privileged person, he had but to lodge his complaint, he was not called upon to appear in Court, his name was not published.

The C.W.S.S. called a special meeting at Caxton Hall, October 1918, at which Father Vincent McNabb, O.P. was the chief speaker, and which had the support of a number of the Catholic clergy, including Bishop Keatinge, and Monsignor, now Bishop, Brown. Father McNabb's lucid and convincing address was published verbatim in the *Catholic Citizen* of November 1918. Dr. Alice Vowe Johnson spoke from the medical point of view, and Miss Alison Neilans spoke in the name of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, which had first called attention to the matter.

In other ways too, the C.W.S.S. helped to protect the liberties of women, such as when calumnies against soldiers' wives were spread about. Many busy-bodies were anxious to prove that the women were spending their

allowances on drink, and neglecting their children—the improved health of the children during war years testified to by many persons, calculated to know, gave the lie to this, and proved suffragists to have been justified in their protest.

We may mention here that though the Committee was by no means unanimous, it was decided in the early days of the War to send a representative to the Hague Conference where women of many nations, belligerent and others, met to discuss peace, suffrage and other questions. Miss O'Sullivan undertook to represent the Society, and was instructed to vote on the suffrage question only. She and others did not succeed in getting a passport in time as the Government was not anxious for Great Britain to be represented.

SUFFRAGE, 1918.

The C.W.S.S. was represented at the Conference convened by the National Union of Women Suffrage Societies to consider the desirability of accepting as a first instalment a limited measure of women suffrage. The Suffrage societies had persistently demanded the "vote on the same terms as men." All shades of opinion were represented at the Conference, and it was decided to accept the terms offered, under which six million women would be enfranchised. But it was not accepted until a pledge was registered that the suffrage societies would continue to work for Equal Franchise. It has taken ten years to redeem that pledge!

At the Annual Meeting in 1918—after the passing of the Representation of the People Act—it was decided that the C.W.S.S. must continue. The scope of the Society was extended by the following resolution: "That this meeting of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society approves of the continuation of the Society with the intention of working for the further extension of the franchise to women on the same terms as it is, or may be, granted to men, to establish the political, social, and economic equality between men and women, and to further the work and usefulness of Catholic women as citizens."

Ten years later, October 27, 1928, a special general meeting voted with enthusiasm that the society must work for the

remainder of its programme, thus approving the wisdom of the meeting of 1918.

At every General Election since the enfranchisement of women, the Society has had Mass offered on polling day to beg Divine guidance for the electors.

THE SOCIETY AFTER THE WAR.

International Relations.

The society being composed of members of a universal Church the leaders had always in mind the possibility of international work. As far back as 1913 we find the C.W.S.S. represented (by Mrs. Shee Gwynn) at the International Woman Suffrage Congress held at Buda-Pesth. The war inevitably interrupted international relations, but when the Congress of the International Woman's Suffrage Alliance was held at Geneva in 1920, Miss Barry and Miss de Alberti attended as delegates of the C.W.S.S. It was at Geneva that the Society claimed to be affiliated to the International Woman's Suffrage Alliance on the ground that it "differed from the original Auxiliary (the N.U.W.S.S.) in religion." In 1920 this was one of the conditions of admission for societies in countries where one auxiliary was already affiliated to the Alliance. The other condition, based on numbers, Miss Barry succeeded in getting omitted from the constitution.

In asking for admission Miss Barry said that the C.W.S.S. was a pioneer of suffrage in the Catholic world that it was the Catholic unenfranchised countries which most needed help and that possibly the enfranchised Catholic women of England might be of service.

At the request of the C.W.S.S. the Curé of Notre Dame, Geneva, gave permission for Mass to be offered to ask Divine Blessing on the Congress. Catholic delegates and others attended the Mass, and a special sermon was preached by Father H. F. Hall, an associate of the C.W.S.S., sent with credentials from Westminster. Father Hall took as his text the words: "A great sign appeared in Heaven, a woman clothed with the sun . . ." He compared the Woman's Movement to a stately ship fairly launched and well started on her voyage. He spoke of the troubled period when the C.W.S.S. was the object of prejudice, sus-

picion, distrust, contempt and derision. He considered the great organisation of women of our days as a deep and irresistible current having its spring in the conviction of noble-hearted women of many lands, widely separated, that the checking of crying evils would only be successfully grappled with by the determination and united efforts of women themselves. The sermon aroused considerable interest, and was published later by the Catholic Truth Society under the title: "Women in the Catholic church." We may say that Father Hall's attendance at the Congress was due to the efforts of Miss Annie Christitch, who the previous year had obtained from Pope Benedict XV a definite opinion in favour of Woman Suffrage: "We would wish to see women electors everywhere," said the Holy Father. This opinion was printed in the *Catholic Citizen*, and circulated in many lands. The Pope was, of course, only expressing his personal opinion, but he could scarcely favour a cause which was in opposition to Catholic doctrine, as anti-suffragists had been so fond of proclaiming the suffrage cause to be. The society frequently receives requests for literature from different countries. It has members in many countries who are active workers for suffrage and equality. Such are Miss Dorman, South Africa, Mme. Mulder, Holland, Miss Calnan, U.S.A., etc.

The Society has been represented at many International Congresses, other than feminist, such as the International Abolitionist Congress at Graz, at the Semaines Sociales, etc., etc. While anxious to co-operate with international societies the C.W.S.S. lost no opportunity of co-operating whenever possible with societies in the United Kingdom, both Catholic and non-Catholic. In December 1921, the C.W.S.S. organized a bazaar and sale of work at the Central Hall, Westminster, in which seventeen other Catholic societies took part. The sale was opened by His Eminence Cardinal Bourne, who in his address spoke with approval of the spirit of co-operation shown by the C.W.S.S. in bringing so many societies together. The Fair was an unqualified success.

It is unnecessary to dwell at length on

the work done by the C.W.S.S. in late years, since it is to be found in the files of the *Catholic Citizen*, and in our press books, which have been kept with great industry. The Society has always been very fortunate in having devoted workers, who have given freely of their time often at great sacrifice. The heavy and ever increasing work done at Headquarters is all honorary. The C.W.S.S. would never have weathered the war, had not all the work been voluntary. Among our younger workers in recent years, we mention with gratitude Miss Brandt, Miss Butler-Bowdon and Miss Hynes, while Miss Springett and the Misses Connolly have helped our finances by doing our circular letters etc.

Before passing on we must speak of a great day in the annals of our society, May 16, 1920, when the canonization of St. Joan of Arc was celebrated at Westminster. A contingent from the C.W.S.S. walked in the great procession, organized by the Catholic Women's League, which passed round the Cathedral and through the streets of Westminster. The contingent, carrying our banner of St. Joan, our name banner, and pennants, was also present at the open-air Benediction in the vicinity of the Cathedral.

In that year, also, we attended the Catholic Congress at Liverpool, at which we had a sectional meeting on Widows' Pensions, (a paper written by Miss Fennell) and held a public meeting on the need of Women M.P.'s. at the Picton Hall. Professor Mary Hayden was the chief speaker, and Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell made her maiden speech. The chair was taken by Miss L. de Alberti. At the mass meeting of women, organized by the Catholic Women's League, Archbishop McIntyre laid stress on the importance of the vote, and spoke of the successful work done by the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society.

A TRUCE OF GOD IN IRELAND.

The C.W.S.S. being composed of Catholics, could not but sympathize with the sufferings endured in Ireland at this time, no matter to which political party each member might belong. The society, therefore, convened a meeting in Caxton Hall in December 1920, to call upon the Government to proclaim a 'Truce of God

in Ireland' without delay. The meeting received enthusiastic support, and many societies, both Catholic and non-Catholic sent representatives. Letters of approval were received from H. E. Cardinal Logue; Archbishop McIntyre; the Archbishop of Tuam, the Archbishop of Simla, the Bishop of Northampton; the Bishop of Clifton; the Bishop of Portsmouth; Bishop Bidwell; the Bishop of Galloway; Father Bede Jarrett, O.P.; Abbot Butler; Father Bernard Vaughan, S.J.; Mr. Hilaire Belloc; and Mr. Arthur Henderson, M.P. Father H. F. Hall presided at the meeting, and the speaker was Councillor Mrs. V. M. Crawford recently returned from a tour of inspection in Ireland, in a private capacity, at the invitation of Catholic Irish friends. Many distinguished men and women were on the platform, including Father Philip Fletcher and Mr. Devlin, M.P., etc.

CHANGE OF NAME.

Early in 1923, when preparations were being made for the Congress of the International Women Suffrage Alliance to be held at Rome in May of that year, the C.W.S.S. received official intimation from H. E. Cardinal Bourne that in accordance with a ruling of the Holy See "no society calling itself Catholic could take part in, and be officially represented at, any meeting of a non-confessional, Protestant or neutral nature, and referring to the announcements in the press that the Society would be represented at the Rome Congress.

The Committee sent up a Petition to the Holy Father, explaining the position and policy of the Society towards the International Woman's Suffrage Alliance. The petition was forwarded by H. E. Cardinal Bourne. The reply from Rome was to the effect that the Pope adhered to his decision, consequently the Society was not officially represented. Miss L. de Alberti attended the Congress, but solely as temporary editor of *Jus Suffragii*. Catholic delegates from various countries were present as individuals.

Much misconception existed as to the Rome Congress, certain people had obviously made it their business to blacken the I.W.S.A. and spread misrepresentations as to the questions to be discussed at the

Congress. Even after the Congress was over, the President of the International Catholic Women's Leagues issued two manifestoes concerning it, which were quite erroneous. The C.W.S.S. as an auxiliary, felt it incumbent on the society to take the defence of the I.W.S.A., which it did not hesitate to do. The Society's reply printed in the *Catholic Citizen* was translated into many languages, and circulated in many lands. The Society sent representatives to the Paris Congress in 1926.

The ruling of the Holy See, of which we have spoken, would have made the Society's work extremely difficult, if the word "Catholic" in its title had been retained, it was consequently decided at a special general meeting held on June 23, 1923, that the name of the Society should be altered, and the word "Catholic" omitted, and at an extraordinary General Meeting held on October 20, of the same year, the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society was transformed into "St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance."

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE.

The change of name has in no way interfered with the society's work, which has steadily increased of late years. St. Joan's S.P.A. is as honoured, and as well known, as the C.W.S.S.

The Alliance took a prominent part in the last stage of the suffrage campaign, and its representatives were present in the House of Lords when the Equal Franchise Bill received the royal assent.

At the request of the Alliance on July 8, 1928, the 10-30 High Mass in Westminster Cathedral was offered in thanksgiving for the enfranchisement of women. Seats had been reserved for members and friends of the Alliance, and there was a numerous attendance. Among those present were Dame Millicent Fawcett, Miss Garrett, Mrs. Despard, and representatives from many societies. After Mass, a procession was formed, led by the chairman of the Alliance, Miss Douglas Irvine, and Miss Gabrielle Jeffery, and passed round the Cathedral to the shrine of St. Joan, where Miss Jeffery placed a wreath tied with the colours of

the Alliance.

A recent general meeting has decided that the Alliance must continue to work for the remainder of its programme. St. Joan's S.P.A. is definitely an equalitarian society—an adjective which has happily replaced the word feminist—and in almost every walk in life there are disabilities to be removed, if women are to have equal opportunities with men. We have no doubt that the Alliance has a big role to play in the future, and that it will be able and willing to face and conquer any difficulties the years may hold.

END.

Council for the Representation of Women in the League of Nations.

The C.R.W.L.N. held its annual meeting on Thursday, November 29, at 35 Marsham Street. A series of resolutions was passed unanimously dealing with the improvement of the position of women in the League. The Council asks for the inclusion of women among the technical advisers who accompany the British representative to the Council of the League; it urges the Government to send a woman as full delegate to the next Assembly of the League; it urges the Council of the League to appoint women to the Health Commission; etc. The following resolution was proposed by St. Joan's S.P.A. and was, also, carried unanimously: "This Council notes that Dame Rachel Crowdy's contract in the Secretariat of the League of Nations has been renewed for one year. It strongly urges that her contract should be extended for seven years, as in the case of other heads of sections, in order that she may be enabled to continue the work which she has so successfully carried on for the abolition of the Traffic in women and the Equal Moral Standard."

After the business meeting, Dame Edith Lyttelton gave an interesting address on the work of the ninth assembly of the League.

Helen Hanson. A Memoir.

By E. Louie Acres (H. R. Allinson Ltd. 2s. 6d.)

No one could be better fitted to write a memoir of Dr. Helen Hanson, fatally injured by a motor car in 1926, than Mrs. Marston Acres, who as Chairman of the League of the Church Militant, worked with Helen Hanson as a colleague for a number of years. Dr. Hanson's selfless devotion has made Mrs. Acres' task a difficult one, a person so free from any desire of fame, eager to advertise the work of others, and make light of her own, necessarily leaves few records behind. She lives indeed in the memory of those who knew her, and Mrs. Acres has helped to make her live for many who in different paths work for the things which she valued. Readers of this memoir will get the impression of a Christian to whom religion was a vital force, and who had taken to heart the Apostle's exhortation to 'Rejoice in the Lord'; they will get the impression, too, of a most lovable personality.

L. de A.

International Notes.

We are deeply interested to see that some French suffragists are imitating, with very similar immediate result, the tactics which helped British women to win the vote.

Madame Maria Verone, a barrister who practises in Paris, and some companions were arrested by the police for the perfectly legal act of walking in the streets near the Senate-house and sitting on a public bench, wearing suffrage placards in their hats. We hope the good sense of the French government will keep it from following the example of our own, and will induce it to grant its women subjects their rights without undue delays.

It is with great regret that we learn of the death at the age of eighty-four of Marie Mangeret, founder of the Catholic feminist movement in France, and a pioneer among women journalists since she founded, in 1883, the *Echo littéraire de l'Ouest*, which she edited and printed herself in order to

propagate feminism among Catholic women. She was honoured only a few weeks before her death at the jubilee celebrations of the *Fédération Jeanne d'Arc*.—R.I.P.

The Dawn (Perth, Western Australia) contains the gratifying news of the success of the Pan-Pacific Women's Conference held at Honolulu last August. Japan, Australia and New Zealand sent larger delegations than to any previous meeting in Hawaii. Four years of hard preparatory work by the Union's sections, which deal, respectively, with Health, Education, Women in Industry and the Professions, Women's Social Service and Women in Government, went to make the Conference as representative and important as it was. Mrs. B. M. Rischkilt, chairman of the Australian Delegation and delegate from the I.W.S.A., read a most interesting paper on the influence of women in government, speaking in detail of the women who now hold government offices or are in parliament, and of the part taken by women in Pacific politics.

We are profoundly grieved and bitterly disappointed to notice that the editor of the *Week* (Bombay), in the memorandum which he recently presented to the All Parties' Conference at Lucknow, "omitted the clause about equality of rights between men and women" on the ground that it was "unwise to place this among fundamental rights in the prevailing conditions of Indian society." The *Week*, which describes itself as "the only political paper Indian Catholics boast of," and "the organ of the more progressive and nationalist section in the community" thus lagged behind the body it addressed, for the All Parties' Conference, as we learn from *Stri-Dharma* (Madras), evolved a Commonwealth of India Constitution which includes "the commendable decision to remove all sex-disqualification and to acknowledge women's title to complete equality in citizenship."

La Nacion (Buenos Aires) informs us that in the State of Ceará in Brazil, Judge Livino Cavalho has decided that the name of Doña Carmelita Aboim shall remain on the electoral register. His pronouncement has caused much rejoicing among the local suffragists who consider that the first step

has been taken towards obtaining votes for women in a second Brazilian State, the women of Rio Grande del Norte having secured this right already. How Doña Carmelita Carvalho came to have her name entered on the register is not stated.

A writer in *Fiamma Viva* (Milan), a review which expresses the opinions of the young university women of Italy, regrets the fact that Father Filippo Roboti, when commenting recently on the large extension of the Italian franchise in 1912, rejoiced that it excluded women. The writer of the article rebuts him with words spoken by Pope Benedict XV in 1919 to the first Congress of the Union of Italian Catholic Women: "The changed conditions of the time have been such as to give to woman functions and rights which were not allowed her by an earlier age." The article recalls that while Italian women received the municipal vote in 1925, they were deprived of it in 1928, before they had had the opportunity of using it. At present, a woman in Italy "is excluded from every and any participation in political or administrative elections, even when she fulfils the conditions desired by the law for the acquisition of this right."

L'Egyptienne (Cairo) congratulates Galal Fahim Bey, Egyptian government delegate to the International Agricultural Congresses held last year, on the concluding recommendation in his report to his government, in which he advises that instruction in agriculture, suited to the special needs of the country, should be provided for the women of Egypt. H. D. I.

The Dames of St. Joan have opened a Bureau at 40 Harleyford Road, where Catholic women and girls in difficulties can apply for help and advice. They feel there is an urgent need for such an undertaking, where the applicants will realize at once that they are in an atmosphere that is essentially Catholic.

At present the Bureau will be open from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., and as soon as arrangements can be made, it will be open from 10 a.m. until midnight. This undertaking cannot have a better sponsor than His Lordship the Bishop of Pella, founder of the Order of the Dames of St. Joan.

Unequal Pay for Equal Work.

Attention has very rightly been called to the action of the Woolwich Borough Council in cutting down the wages of its women employees, but some confusion seems to exist as to the circumstances in which this was done.

For nine years Woolwich has had a Labour majority on the Borough Council, and since 1920 the Councillors have carried into practice the Labour Party principle of equal pay for equal work. Women cleaners were paid on the same scale as outdoor manual workers, and duties performed by men and women alike, according to circumstances, were equally remunerated.

In 1925, the District Auditor, who is appointed by the Ministry of Health, questioned whether this equal payment was reasonable on the ground, apparently, that women were less well paid for manual work in the ordinary outside labour market, and in 1926 he was successful in getting all-round reductions on men and women alike.

Since then the position has changed. By the Audit Act of last year, if local authorities do not accept the dicta of the District on what are "reasonable" wages the recalcitrant members, if the amount in dispute is over £500, are disqualified for public office, are proceeded against in the courts for the amount of surcharge and may be made bankrupt. Hence the Auditor, backed by the Government of to-day, is absolute dictator in these matters.

In Woolwich the Auditor has now spoken. Women's wages, reduced from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 4d. per hour in 1926, were reduced to 1s. 0½d. per hour, or £2 9s. 2d. per week in the very week when the Franchise Act received the Royal Assent, in spite of the protests of the Woolwich Borough Council. Let us get the thing in its right proportions. We are not up against the decision of any local body, but against the official government decision as to what is the fair and proper relation of men and women's pay for similiar duties, a decision which must have effect not only on the wages paid by public authorities, but on wages generally.

What are we to say to the Ministry of Health about this, and indeed to the

Government as a whole?

The Open Door Council held a conference on the 16th of November, at which St. Joan's S.P.A. was represented, to consider what action should be taken on the matter. Various suggestions were made as to the best means of bringing pressure to bear on the responsible authorities.

Tolerated Vice in Calcutta.

In May of this year the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene received a letter from the Bishop of Calcutta asking the Association—in the name of the Calcutta Vigilance Association—to send out an experienced worker for a definite period of three years, for the purpose of concentrating more especially upon the brothel problem in that city, with a view to the investigation of the facts, and the education of public opinion. The A.M.S.H. undertook the financial responsibility of this work, and have sent out Miss Melisent Shephard. She left England on November 24. A valedictory meeting and service were held on November 20, at Mary Sumner House, Westminster.

At our last monthly meeting, December 3, Miss Fedden spoke on the nationality of married women. She brought out very effectively the great hardships involved in a woman's loss of nationality on marriage. She urged societies to continue to educate public opinion of this matter before the next Imperial Conference. Mrs. Nevinson gave instances of great hardship which had occurred during the war, when British wives of Germans and other foreigners were treated as aliens. A resolution was passed unanimously asking the British Government to include a qualified woman lawyer in the delegation which will attend the first Conference on the Codification of International Law, to be held in 1929 or 30, at which the question of nationality is to be discussed.

We offer our congratulations and good wishes to our member, Dr. Stella Moore, on her marriage with Dr. Peter Boylan.

Catholic Schools.

We have received an appeal for funds from the Catholic Societies Education Committee, convened by the Westminster Catholic Federation, approved by His Eminence Cardinal Bourne. We regret that limited space prevents us from publishing the appeal in full. The C.S.E.C. are organizing a series of meetings to explain the position of Catholic schools, issuing pamphlets, etc., to arouse public opinion before the General Election. To our mind their chief object should be a constructive scheme to be laid before the candidates at the General Election. No doubt the speakers and writers of the C.S.E.C. will concentrate on making known such a scheme, so that in exposing the evil, they may at the same time advertise the remedy. Information may be had from the Hon. Sec., A. J. Smith, Esq., (room 10) 5 Chancery Lane, W.C. 2.

We take this opportunity of registering our protest once more against the omission of women on the Education Council. As far back as 1920, our society, the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society as we were then called, sent an official protest to the Catholic Education Council, and asked for the appointment of women. There are many able women teachers to choose from, and the Council would be strengthened by the appointment of suitable women.

New Year Revel.

A Grand New Year Revel will be held in Westminster Cathedral Hall on Monday, December 31. To commence at 8 p.m., doors open 7-30. Admission 2/6, refreshment at popular prizes. Spot prizes. Lucky numbers. Stuart's Orchestra. Make the revel a success by making up parties. Tickets from Miss Barry, at 55 Berners Street, W. 1.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS.

November 1 to 30.

	£	s.	d.
*Bain, Miss	2	0	0
*Borton, Miss	5	0	0
*Bowden, Mrs.	2	6	
Butler-Bowdon, Miss E.	8	8	0
Carter, Miss Z.	2	6	

*Cockshutt, Miss	2	6
Fox, Mrs.	2	6
"Grateful Heathen"	5	0
Kerr, Mrs., per	10	0
Robson, Mrs.	10	0
*Roch, The Hon. Mrs. Walter	10	0
*Sheehan, Mrs.	1	13
*Stafford, Miss A.	5	0
Stafford, Miss B.	2	6
Tynan, Miss	2	6
*Wall, Miss	1	11
Whately, Mrs.	2	6
Whitehead, Miss L.	2	6
	£26	8
* Christmas Sale.	0	0

TREASURER'S NOTE.

The Christmas Sale realised over £20 this year. We heartily thank our helpers at the Stall, those who sent donations in cash, and the following for their gifts: Miss L. de Alberti, The Misses Barry, Miss Brettingham, Mrs. Burgess, Miss Burman, Miss E. Butler-Bowdon, Miss Douglas Irvine, Miss Fedden, Miss Gordon, Miss Gorry, Mrs. Groves, Miss S. Hynes, Mrs. Kerr, Miss Landy, Lady Laughton, Mrs. Laughton Mathews, Mrs. and Miss O'Connor, Miss O'Farrell, Miss Moclair, Mrs. Smiley, Miss Stack, Miss Stammers, Miss Wellbeloved.

We are also most grateful to Mrs. Kerr, who has handed over £10, the proceeds of the dance on November 12, and to Miss Butler-Bowdon for £8 8s. received from the sale of her pictures.

I regret to say that there are still a few annual subscriptions to come in. Members, I am sure, will not let the year close without rectifying this omission.

G. JEFFERY.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

Hon. Sec.: Miss N. S. Parnell, B.A.,
45 Falkner Street, Liverpool.

On November 12 members had an opportunity of learning the history and aims of the Labour Party from Miss Tart, of Birkenhead. This was followed on November 23 by an address on "Why I am a Conservative," by Miss Mabel Fletcher, C.C., J.P. The Committee desire to thank Mrs. McManus for her kindness in allowing us to hold this meeting in her drawing-room and for her hospitality.

Miss M. Parnell represented the Branch at a meeting convened by the Women Citizens' Association to discuss the desirability of setting up a Child Adoption Committee in Liverpool. The Hon. Secretary has been invited to represent it on the Catholic Emancipation Centenary Committee.

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