# Catholic

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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

# What Fools We Women Be!\*

By CHRISTINE SPENDER

Yes, indeed! What fools we women be! I suppose most of us sit on the Pandora's Box of our grievances and sense of injustice with a happy smile on our faces. Oh no, it wouldn't do to open the box, that would look as though we were Embittered or Bore a Grudge. The psychologists would leap on us, public opinion would rend us. But it's no use-read this book and despite yourself you will open the fateful box and before you know where you are you wil have a Bee in your Bonnet-maybe several. And long may they stay there and buzz loudly till something fundamental is done to remove our wrongs. Well, if it has that effect, I hear someone say, it must be a morbid book, better not to read it. Anyway what are these grievances? Why haven't I heard of them, and if they exist isn't woman meant to bear wrongs patiently?

Miss Ellen Dorothy Abb (why won't she tell us her real name?) takes as her thesis: "Man has made the world for men; women are his toys, his tools or his drudges!" Startling, isn't it, in these days when it is commonly thought "that there are no more feminist battles left to fight, that, in fact, the very word feminism is out-dated?" Think again! "How many women are there in any position of authority? How many women have any share in forming laws or regulations? . . . Men are still at the head of every profession, still hold all the best-paid posts, still do practically all the interesting, remunerative, dignified, enviable work of the world." Oh, no, it isn't all man's fault it's a lot woman's fault as well. She is extremely good at being her own enemy. "What fools we women be!" But-"Man's

world breeds toys, man's world makes use of tools, man's world keeps women drudges.

"Into one of these three categories prac-

tically all women fall."

The toys are the "leisured women with rich husbands or fathers or lovers." The tools are the women behind the scenes "the women in business behind the executives, the women who prime their Civil Service Chiefs ... the unequalled private secretaries . . . never in the limelight but behind all the conferences, all the board meetings . . .

"And the drudges do all the hard and disagreeable work of the world . . . the wives of working men, the slum dwellers, the charwomen, the office cleaners . . . and mothers . . . the routine workers in offices and shops and restaurants, the women in factories and industry who are kept out of all the best paid processes by the trade unions . . . "

It is the triple headed monster-"Man's World, Poverty of Women, and Marriage Bar" which perpetuates this state of things,

according to Miss Abb.

Well, there it all is, the fact that men (and women) don't take women's work seriously enough, that women are perpetually underpaid, that the marriage bar and "the almost equally strong obstacle of public disapproval" will effectually put a stop to many a woman's career and that this will inevitably affect the attitude of young girls entering into life-"Marriage is still the best career."

Every page of Miss Abb's vital book cries out for quotation. She doesn't "care in the least" if anything "sounds contradictory of what has gone before or comes after or if some of it sounds heterodox or even retrograde" being "utterly convinced that we have got to look at these questions from every angle constituting

<sup>\*</sup> What Fools We Women Be! By Ellen Dorothy Abb (Cassell 7s. 6d.).

ourselves prosecuting counsel as well as counsel our paper. But in three chapters "This Beauty for the defence." Thus nobody need fear that Business," "The Leisure Ideal" and "This their pet theories are not given consideration. In default of being able to quote everything. I have selected some passages which I think will be of special interest to readers of the CATHOLIC CITIZEN.

On Celibacy and the Marriage Bar:

"The Church of Rome . . . has always recognised the enhanced potentialities of the celibate, all of whose energies could be concentrated into the one channel of devotion or service.

"If the value men place on sexual experience were not a mere matter of expediency, they would raise the singularly stupid marriage bar that insists on celibacy in teachers and nurses and many doctors, the very women who most need the widening experience of marriage.

If mating is fulfilment, why should so many married women lead futile, empty, aimless lives? Why should nuns be among the happiest faces one sees? Why are there any happy vital spinsters?"

On Wifehood and Motherhood:

"It has been said that motherhood is not a

perpetual exoneration.

In every class we all know wives whose home duties take up nothing like their full day. But the most flagrant examples are the idle leisured women whose husband's incomes permit them to delegate their duties to others .

'No one has any more right to deny a woman mating and maternity unless she abandons every other interest, than we have to restrict her to the traditional occupations associated with wifehood and maternity just because she is already a wife and

"If the well-off wife meets with no disapproval because she delegates her duties for the sake of being idle, why revile the woman who relinquishes them to others because she wants to do other work?"

If we tried to see straight, we should realise how little the arguments of the sentimentalists are worth as long as we drive out to work the very wives and mothers who should stay at home

'We force the poor man's wife to do two jobs, we encourage the rich man's to do neither, and we won't allow the middle-class wife to choose the one she is

"There are times when anyone must doubt whether the average wife should go out to work during the childbearing years—but it is the principle of compulsion that is wrong in itself. Wife or not, she is a free human being, entitled to choose for herself according to the circumstances.'

If she can't do things for herself singly, how can she for two, plus the children? But the point is that there are then two incomes-which means that everything can be done in the best way.'

'A woman's highest statisfaction may come from the creation and rearing of children, but that is not a perpetual satisfaction. Women need other things to fill their life before and after their

As a matter of fact, month by month, year by year the CATHOLIC CITIZEN patiently tries to impress Miss Abb's point of view. She is evidently in touch with the feminist societies, and several times while reading her book I had a fleeting impression that she had been reading

Stocking Washing," Miss Abb tackles questions which no doubt the feminist societies keep in mind but which are not often dwelt upon in our public utterances. The first two chapters should be read in conjunction with Eric Gill's "Clothes," after which one might be able to come to a decision on the place of apparel in the lives of women and men! The films with their false emphasis on sex have certainly deflected the aims of personal adornment, and unless women find the golden mean, the bas outré of the French woman, they are quite as likely nowadays to become the slaves of their own appearance as they were in former days to become dowdy. The position has unforeseen dangers as Miss Abb very rightly points out.

"This Stocking Washing" -a most important chapter-will have to be left over for a further article.

#### Status of Women

The Committee of Experts set up by the Council of the League of Nations in connection with the preparation and publication of "a comprehensive study giving full information on the legal status enjoyed by women in the various countries of the world" is as follows:

Mme Paul Bastid (France), Professor in the faculty of Law of the University of Lyons.

M. de Ruelle (Belgium), Legal Adviser of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

Mme Anka Godjevak (Yugoslavia), Doctor of Law, Technical Adviser of the Yugoslav Delegation at the

Codification Conference (1930).

Mr. H. C. Gutteridge, K.C. (United Kingdom). Professor of Comparative Law at the University of

Mlle Kerstin Hesselgren (Sweden), Member of the Second Chamber of the Riksdag, Rapporteur on the Status of Women to the First Committee of the Assembly (1937)

M. Paul Sebestyen (Hungary), Counsellor of Division, Head of the Treaties Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Miss Dorothy Kenyon (United States of America). Doctor of Law, Member of the New York Bar, and Legal Adviser to a number of national organisations.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH Hon. Secretary: Miss Bowden, 22 Fern Grove, Liverpool, 8.

All Liverpool members are cordially invited to attend the 27th Annual Meeting to be held on Saturday afternoon, March 19th. Will those who are able to go send their names to Miss Barry at 55, Berners Street, W.I.

On February 7th a Meeting on the League of Nations was held by kind invitation at the house of our Chairman, Mrs. McCann, the speaker being Miss Hickey. A lively discussion followed. The meeting concluded by passing a resolution protesting against the Anti-God Congress being held in London.

## Notes and Comments

We remind our readers of the 27th Annual recommended that the disposal of the surplus Meeting to be held at St. Patrick's Club Rooms, Soho Square, on Saturday, March 19th, at 3-30 p.m.

Among the speakers will be Miss Billing, Miss Mannion (Oldham), Miss Parnell (Liverpool), Miss Christopher St. John, Miss Walmesley, M.A. (Birmingham), Miss Webber, Mrs. Whittles.

Tea will be obtainable during the meeting.

We send greetings and congratulations to the Australian Section of St. Joan's Alliance and to all our colleagues in Australia on the occasion of the 150th Anniversary of Australia's foundation.

At the official Regatta luncheon in Sydney which took place on the flagship, the Rt. Hon. A. Lyons, Prime Minister, in the name of Australia, thanked the countries represented in the harbour and hoped the celebrations would convince the world that the Commonwealth was maintaining British traditions and ideals, notably those of friendship and peace. The fact in all her history of which Australia was proudest was that she had always had peace within her borders.

Dame Maria Ogilvie Gordon who, as the guest of the Government, went to Sydney for the celebrations was commissioned to convey the congratulations and good wishes of the British Section of St. Joan's Alliance to the women of Australia.

On reading the current Annual Report of the Oxford and Cambridge Catholic Education Board, we are at once delighted and relieved to note that "the Board has been enabled to recognise its responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the Catholic women students at both Universities. In the next issue of the Report t is hoped to make a further announcement."

We await this "further announcement"

The published list of Catholic Undergraduates in Residence is now specifically qualified "(Men)" thus avoiding the ambiguity of the past. We feel sure that in the future this list will include the names of Catholic women undergraduates.

We are happy to record that the General Council of the Trades Union Congress has at last realised the reasonableness of equal contributions and benefits for men and women in unemployment insurance. The Council has Wulstan, O.S.F.C.

in the Unemployment Fund should be used inter alia to establish equal contributions and benefits for men and women—the women's benefits to be raised to those of the men and the men's contributions lowered to those of the women, and it also recommends an overhaul of the married women's anomalies regulations.

On December 20th, Captain Cazalet, M.P., asked the Minister of Health (1) whether he would consider taking steps to remedy the hardships caused by the joint income limit of £250 a year which is imposed on a married woman applicant when her husband is over 55 years of age under the recent Widows', Orphans and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act, 1937; (2) whether he would consider taking steps under the Act to ensure that, where only the wife is of an age to apply for a pension and where the joint income is under £400 a year only half of this income should be taken into consideration? Sir Kingsley Wood replied that he was giving consideration to the posi-

Eight women who successfully passed the recent examination for the Civil Service Administrative class have received appointments. This is a record number. Women were first allowed to compete in 1925 when they took three vacancies.

'Political organisation was one of the optional subjects chosen by one woman, in which she scored 75 per cent. Another plumped for general economics. industry and trade, public finance, economic history, and English literature, her respective scores being 78, 79, 69, 76 and 90 per cent. Two competitors chose the same subjects-namely, metaphysics (three papers), moral philosophy (two papers), logic and psychology. They have proved that logic is no longer a male characteristic, for in this subject they were awarded respectively 74 and 88 per cent. Of more than 400 in the examination no man reached this level."-Times.

For the first time a woman has been appointed Deputy Governor of a mixed prison, (Manchester). Her name is Miss Dorothy Joan Wilson; formerly deputy both at Aylesbury and Holloway. We offer our congratulations to Miss Wilson, and hope that before long there will be a woman governor of Holloway.

We ask the prayers of our readers for the repose of the soul of our member, Mrs. Dobbins (R.I.P.), mother of the Very Rev. Fr. Dunstan, O.S.F.C., and of the Very Rev. Fr.

### ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE,

ANI

Editorial Office of "Catholic Citizen":

55 Berners Street, London, W.I. Tel. Museum 4181 Signed articles do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Society.

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## Greetings from Brazil

I am delighted to be able to address\* you in your own language, yet no words can express my satisfaction for finding myself among you.

The deep interest you have always shown towards the Brazilian foundation and the warm welcome with which you honour its representative are complete compensation for the hard struggles and difficulties overcome.

Allow me to call you our English sisters, for although we are separated by the wide ocean, live within quite different horizons and have quite different problems to solve each in our respective countries, yet we all have the same Heavenly Mother and Sovereign. It is Her work we are doing and let Her will be done. We have one elder sister, St. Joan, our leader in the fray.

To struggle, that is the reason of our earthly existence, and St. Joan's is well prepared to struggle. You all remember the hard beginning, and you know that new struggles are coming on as new times come on.

In every country, in this continent and overseas, there is a call for the Alliance and it will spread all over the world, holding high its banners, because St. Joan's strong arm will

The women's movement is inseperable from the social revolution that convulses the world, for the human family is one, and nothing social can affect only one country, only one class or sex. Social problems are interwoven. This conviction, of course, stimulates our courage and good will. Let us join our efforts to those of other Catholic groups. We know that in some countries we are sometimes misunderstood, let us not be discouraged, for here, exactly lies nowadays one of the Alliance's special missions, but let us collect all our physical and intellectual energy and raise high

our hearts in prayer.

Women have shown a decided bent for organisation but they do not always possess the social sense in its entire significance, and this we have to work for. How many devoted Catholics bound together in some form of apostolic work or social reform are still indifferent to the women's movement, do not understand its special nature, do not recognise the immense need there is for Catholics to join. This is sad but it is natural. Like each individual person so each organised collectivity has its special aim and its own ideal in which it encloses itself and is wont to close its eyes to other aims. Here we have the social sense incomplete. Of course it is quite right and necessary that a great number be quietly working in their own sections, but at the same time there is need to view from a higher standpoint, to bind together all these different aims through mutual understanding, to settle the relation between totally different activities, sometimes temporarily divergent interests, to smooth down misunderstandings and establish a loving collaboration, for it is the duty of women to bring peace into the world first of all by good example. How lovely to think that above each separate vision is one great ideal -God's Ideal-in which each individual vocation finds its own place, and there is interwoven with others composing the Divine Plan. That is the real sense of life. Let us pray that it may shine clearly before the eyes of those of good-will to whom Jesus has promised: Peace on Earth.

Now the Brazilian Section is only a budding branch striving to live but it clings to a deeply rooted tree. We all hope it will some day bear flower and fruit and help to bring the world to recognition of universal truth and justice.

MARIA HERMINIA LISBOA.

### Welcome to Miss Lisboa

On January 18th, members of St. Joan's Alliance assembled to give an enthusiastic welcome and to do honour to Senhora Maria Herminia Lisboa, founder and president of the Brazilian Section of the Alliance—Alliança Santa Joanna d'Arc. By invitation of our Chairman, Mrs. Laughton Mathews, the gathering was held in her house at St. John's Wood.

Mrs. Laughton Mathews in introducing Dona Maria Herminia said that she had travelled all the way from Rio de Janeiro with the sole purpose of coming into personal contact with the Mother Society in London and L'Alliance Ste Jeanne d'Arc in Paris.

Miss Lisboa had a great ovation. The first part of her speech is printed on page 12. She went on to give an account of the foundation on April 28th, 1933, of Acçao Cultural (which became Alliança Santa Joanna D'Arc in 1936) on a dark rainy afternoon at a small gathering in the school room of the parish Church of Petropolis. From the first, Miss Lisboa had the good will and friendship of the Bishop of Petropolis which compensated for the indifference which greeted the new society. There was a good deal of disguised anti-feminist opposition but through "obstinate perseverance" many opponents had been converted. The turning-point in overcoming initial difficulties was the publication of A Candeia (The Lamp) organ of the new society, which immediately had a great succes because it was both "something different" and well-written and attractively produced. It had the blessing of His Eminence Cardinal Lemme, A great sadness and set-back was caused by the deaths of Pinheiro Coimbra, one of the three founders of Accao Cultural, and Eulalia Monteiro de Barros a splendid contributor to the paper, who both died two months after the first issue.

In true feminist tradition, publicity had been obtained for the new society by the distribution of propaganda leaflets on the boat bearing the Cardinal, Bishops and clergy to the Eucharistic Congress in Beunos Aires.

Miss Lisboa said that the end of her account meant only the beginning of further enterprise. Laws in Brazil were already very favourable to women and what most interested Alliança Santa Joanna D'Arc was to prepare women to use their rights. The Franciscan Missionaries of Mary in Rio had just consented to put at their disposal a room for conferences and a library.

It was a story of heroism and great patience

and perseverance in the face of difficulties, and Miss Lisboa's audience warmly agreed with Mrs. Laughton Mathews when she declared that she found in Miss Lisboa all the qualities of a leader—vision, courage, perseverance, sound judgment—and a sense of humour besides.

Miss Monica O'Connor thanked and congratulated Miss Lisboa on behalf of the Mother Society and assured her of our continued co-operation in the future.

The meeting ended with a beautiful piano recital given by Jean Baptiste Toner.

## International Notes

Holland, Married Women Employment Bill. Within the next few months, a Bill will be introduced by Mr. Rommé, Minister of Social Affairs, to forbid married women to carry on paid work in the service of an undertaking. The Bill is at present before the Advisory Committee of the High Council of Labour. Professional women (lawyers, doctors, artists, free lance journalists, etc.) will be exempt from this measure, but a married woman doctor who is attached to a nursing home or other institution at a fixed monthly salary, will have to give up her job. Married women who are bread winners, those whose husbands earn less than 25 guilders (£3) a week and wives of the owners of undertakings are also exempt, as well as charwomen in private families though those in public concerns are affected. Thus the numbers of women affected will be quite small, though the economic aspect (giving more work to men) is frequently advanced in support of the measure. However, the Minister of Social Affairs has expressly stated in his Bill that it is a question of principle as, according to the laws of nature, the husband is the breadwinner for the family. It is therefore the Minister's wish to protect the family against the desertion of the wife, who, he states, is shunning her duties as a wife and mother by working outside the home.

The Bill has aroused great opposition all over the country as an attrack on the autonomy of the family. A national committee formed some years ago by about 20 Dutch women's societies for the defence of woman's right to work is organising the opposition.

We consider the Minister's wish "to protect the family against the desertion of the wife" as sheer hypocrisy. If he really wished to protect the family he would subsidise the wife who

(Continued overleaf)

<sup>\*</sup> Speech made on January 18th.

# Far Away Lands

China and Japan

The current issue of Far-Away Lands, the quarterly magazine of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, is mainly devoted to "the fate of our own numerous missionaries in the theatre of (the Sino-Japanese) war." There are stirring accounts from the General Hospital, Shanghai, and the Sacred Heart Hospital, Yangtzepoo, both formerly run by the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, though now perforce abandoned. As long as there was anyone dependent on them these valiant women remained at their posts in the danger zone, caring for the sick, the wounded and thousands of refugees. Their heroism in the face of danger and difficulty, their charity to all alike both Chinese and Japanese puts the modern pleasure-loving, hate-ridden world to shame. A journalist who, thanks to his reporter's pass was able to render service to the Sisters at Yangtzepoo, wrote an account of their work in the Journal de Shanghai:

... "These requests and the self-forgetfulness of the Sisters shows a spirit of sacrifice even greater than the heroism of the men."

"What amazing courage these women must have to remain alone in the midst of a starving mob! And yet they are always to be seen with a smile. They told us their tales quite simply as if they were merely the ordinary experiences of every day life. To hear them one would have thought that for women to live through a bombardment, with shells dropping all around them, was quite the most natural thing in the world!"

A further article "Catholic Press in the Far East" tells of a printing press founded ten years ago by the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary in Sapporo, Japan:

"In 1927, two nuns were sent to Sapporo for this special purpose. They had proposed to work alone as is the Institute's method in many other printing presses in Europe and America, aided later perhaps by native Sisters. But orders came in so rapidly that it was necessary to engage paid labour; and Teushi-in has therefore became an opportunity for many girls to absorb Catholic truth while acquiring a craft never before imparted to Japanese women. Difficulties were many during the first years, for the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary were forced to undertake the entire training of their printing staff, and it was interesting to note the scepticism, succeeded by admiration of the Nippens at the sight of the Sisters working the machines and directing the making up of the books."

We congratulate the Woman's Suffrage League of Japan on the publication of Japanese Women. "Japanese women," states the President, "have as yet no political rights and hence have no voice in determining our

national policy." Thirteen years ago the Woman's Suffrage League was started to secure votes for women. One of the chief concrete gains has been the right to hold, as well as to preside over, a political meeting.

One of the articles in the paper describes the difficulties the women in Japan have to obtain higher education. There are no universities for women, nor are they permitted to found any, and only a few men's universities are willing to take women. In spite of this we learn that there are some 4,000 women doctors and over 1,000 dentists.

The President writes:

"It is our earnest desire to have our co-workers abroad recognise and be acquainted with the work, insignificant perhaps but nevertheless assiduous of Japanese women. We sincerely hope that the day may soon come when we too may be more fully equipped to work not only for the welfare of the nation but for the world and humanity at large. We need your hearty co-operation and unceasing encouragement in doing so."

#### International Notes

(Continued from overleaf)

is obliged to manage home and children single handed, and yet go out to do the roughest most badly paid work because there is not enough money to go round. (Though even a measure in this sense would be retrogressive unless the wife was given free choice in the matter.) Instead he will arbitrarily fasten restrictions on the class of wife who may very well be anxious to augment the family income in order to give her children a better education and who, when she goes out to work, is in a position to employ someone to look after home and children. She has as much right to make her choice as the professional woman.

We congratulate our contemporary Le Mouvement Feministe (Geneva) on the silver jubilee of its foundation. For twenty-five years, under the able editorship of Mlle Gourd it has worked for the cause of Swiss women's emancipation. May its untiring efforts be soon rewarded by the granting of suffrage to Swiss women.

The current *Bulletin* of l'Alliance Ste Jeanne d'Arc (Paris) is full of interest. Extracts from an article by Mme Pesson Depret which appeared in *La Française* of October deal with the resolutions on the rôle of woman passed by the "Semaine Sociale." "Why," writes Mme Pesson, "was so much space given to the sacred duties of maternity when the noble and necessary duties of paternity were omitted"?

Anne Rommé writes, "In search of the Human Person" again considering some of the more ridiculous and dangerous dictums of the "Semaine Sociale." Why should "the woman as a person" be studied in a separate category? Is woman not a "human person"? "It is disquieting," declares Anne Rommé, "a contradiction in terms." As for "spiritual maternity" must this term be applied to all women's activities before they are allowable? The post-mistress, the trades-woman, the woman aviator, the artist, must they all exercise their maternity in their various callingsbe mothers in telegraphy and telephonic communications, etc., in grocery, in aviation, in painting?

HON. TREASURER'S NOTE

I appeal to all those members of the Alliance who have not yet paid their subscriptions to send them as soon as possible so that the valuable work which is yet to be done may not be delayed.

C. J. GARRARD.

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#### Ghost Party

On February 3rd by kind invitation of the Misses Billing and Davis a delightful Candlemas "Ghost Party," was given in Hampstead under the auspices of St. Joan's Alliance. There were prizes for the best ghost stories, and a silver collection meant a welcome addition to the Alliance funds. Our warm thanks are due to Miss Billing and Miss Davis for a most enjoyable evening.

# PILGRIMAGES & HOLIDAY TOURS

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