

THE

Catholic Citizen

Organ of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, (formerly Catholic Women's Suffrage Society), 55 Berners Street, London, W. 1.

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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

Do we Appreciate our Heritage?

BY STELLA GREGSON

A girl may leave school to-day and embark on her chosen career with the same chances of success as her brother. No longer need the ambitious female raise the cry that so often punctuates the novels of the last century: "If only I were a boy." There is no longer any need for her to hide her light under a bushel, nor to bury the gifts that God gave her in the duties of domesticity.

This is the world for which women fought and prayed and suffered; the dream-world of the first feminists, won at last after the long battle against so-called tradition and arrant stupidity.

Does the girl who now tastes of the fruits of this victory appreciate her position? Does she ever pause and thank Heaven for the noble band of women who gave her this heritage? No. She takes it all for granted. She considers sex-equality as just one of the many improvements in a century that has cast aside outworn traditions.

Suffragettes? Yes, she has heard of them. Her impression of them is gained chiefly from those pictures which the newspapers are constantly reviving. Being endowed with a deep respect for her sex, she does not enjoy looking at them—women looking absurd with their hair falling down, struggling in the arms of grinning policemen; women shrieking and breaking windows, throwing themselves in front of horses, burning buildings, destroying pictures. Well, thinks the young lady who has inherited the victory without knowing the fight, it is a good thing women have some sense nowadays. They don't make fools of themselves like that now. And thus she dismisses the whole subject of feminism.

There must be a reason for her misguided attitude, and it is not lack of intelligence. Good use has been made of the reformed educational systems. Nor is it lack of fair-mindedness. The young girl of to-day does not appreciate her inheritance for the simple reason that she is not taught about Feminism, and is wholly ignorant concerning any aspect of the subject save the one which is generally held up to ridicule.

Her History course tells her of other reformations that have influenced our lives. She knows of the great movement of the nineteenth century which resulted in crowded towns and altered the entire outlook on all social questions. But that same History course does not stress the reformation that affects her more nearly. She knows, of course, that the position of women was profoundly different in the time of her grandmothers' girlhood. But is not everything on a different basis? We can forgive her for thinking that the Feminist revolution is merely a part of the world-wide adjustment towards sanity and fairness. The lack of appreciation is not her fault. It is the fault of those responsible for her general knowledge.

If only she could be told the story of the Cause in a sane and fair-minded way, I believe that she would enjoy it more than any other event in the history of humanity. Nothing appeals to young blood more than a tale of a small country rising against and defeating a nation of powerful oppressors. How greatly would the schoolgirl relish this story of the small band of women who won their rights from the powerful nation of oppressive tradition. A story that is not an ancient one dealing with powers of long ago, but one in which her own

life is implicated. Let us tell her that there is a promised land that has been won for her; that there are still those who begrudge her that land and say that she is incapable of holding it. Let her thus gain a sense of responsibility, not only to herself, but to those who went before her and whose patience and suffering gave her this heritage.

If we allow her to continue in her present state of ignorance, lacking this enriching stimulus, the result may easily be the gradual return of women to their old position of inferiority. One generation has gained an incomplete but magnificent victory. The present generation of women must turn that victory to good account, must hold the land already won and add to it. For the battle did not end, as so many believe, with the winning of the vote; there are still positions to which women are barred; there is still work to be done in the ranks of the feminists, but it is being done by the older generation. We need Pankhursts and Fawcetts among the girls who are in their teens to-day.

If we allow the young to retain this attitude of indifference and ignorance towards Feminism, there may be a tale told in future years of a strange whim that possessed the female mind round about the beginning of the twentieth century; of how, for a little while, women decided to be considered the equals of men, but that it all died away eventually . . . a mere flesh in the pan . . . a tale to be laughed over, very ridiculous, and a little pathetic.

This is the danger that we are facing. The question that the die-hards are constantly asking is: "Can woman hold what she has won?" The answer lies with the younger generation, and they do not even know what all the fuss is about. Let us teach her the price of this treasure of liberty, so that we may be assured that her labour will be worthy of that magnificent struggle in which indignity, hardship and abuse were counted as nought, so that she could come safely into this dreamed-of world, and, for the first time in the history of woman, be given a fair chance to prove her worth in every sphere of thought and action.

Miss Gregson who contributes the above article asks us to inform our readers that she is "not an old fogey, but merely a sweet young thing straight out of a convent, therefore not possessed by a prejudice against the much abused 'modern girl,' but speaking from first hand experience of the views of school fellows."

BLESSED JOHN FISHER AND BLESSED THOMAS MORE

On behalf of St. Joan's Alliance the following letter has been sent to the Holy Father: Most Holy Father,

We, members of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, most humbly prostrate at Your feet, venture to express to You our deep desire for the speedy canonization of our glorious Martyrs, the Blessed John Fisher and the Blessed Thomas More.

Blessed John Fisher and Blessed Thomas More are particularly dear to us because they died not only for the unity of the Church but also chose death rather than consent to the violation of marriage laws; to a violation in itself unjust and injurious to all women.

We honour the names of these holy men, gallant defenders of the rights of the Holy See, and desire their enrolment in the company of the saints. We remember their work for the education of the young; the college founded by the learned Bishop still stands. The letters of the martyred chancellor and the conduct of his household are a continual reminder of his zeal for the higher education of women. To Blessed Thomas More we who wish to see the full and true development of womanhood are forever indebted.

Begging You to accept our homage and humbly imploring Your Apostolic Benediction.

VERA LAUGHTON MATHEWS (Chairman), P. M. BRANDT (Hon. Treasurer), F. A. BARRY (Hon. Secretary).

MONSIGNOR T. J. WALSHE

Our very good friend, Monsignor T. Walshe, of Liverpool, writes in response to our congratulations on his Golden Jubilee:

" . . . I wish to express to you . . . my deep appreciation of the 'affectionate' message from yourself and the members of the Alliance. Any little help that I have given in the past I regarded as not only a privilege but a duty. For I felt and feel that the influence of women is needed to give stability to our political and social organisations . . .

" . . . Surely events have justified our policy, and I hope that, before the end comes for me, the cause will triumph in France. I am convinced that the women of France, and they alone, will be able to bring about some measure of stability in the government of the country.

Notes and Comments

In the death of Archbishop MacIntyre, St. Joan's Alliance loses a friend of many years standing. We recall that in 1920 during the Liverpool Catholic Congress, Archbishop MacIntyre, speaking at the Mass Meeting of Women organised by the Catholic Women's League, laid great stress on the importance of the vote, and of the use Catholic women could make of it if properly organised. At the same time His Grace paid tribute to the Catholics already in the field. "We are not starting from nothing," he said, "the successful work of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society and the Catholic Reading Guild has more than prepared the foundations."

When in 1920 the C.W.S.S. convened a meeting calling upon the Government to establish a Truce of God in Ireland, His Grace sent a message of sympathy.

Again on the occasion of his elevation to the Archbishopric of Birmingham, in thanking us for our message of congratulation, he wrote: "I bless the Society, and pray that under the banner of St. Joan of Arc it may gain fruitful victories."

At the meeting held under the auspices of the Alliance in 1926 "calling upon the Government to introduce and pass without delay a Bill giving votes to women at the age of 21, and on the same grounds as to men," we received our last message from him. It reads:

"I wish the meeting on the 29th every success. The burden of proof should be laid upon those who refuse an equal franchise between men and women, not upon those who demand it. The very giving of a franchise at all to women is an admission *in principle* of their right to an equal franchise. That principle must be carried to its logical and just conclusion."

The Alliance will ever hold his memory in gratitude.—R.I.P.

Fr. Martindale, S.J., describing in *The Catholic Herald* the procession which ended the International Eucharistic Congress at Buenos Aires, says: "Women's societies simply had to be ranged on either side, else the procession never would have finished."

We wonder whether the ranging on either side could not have been managed in such a way as to permit some of the women's societies to take part in the main procession. After all, it was a woman, Mlle. Marie Tamisier, who originated the International

Eucharistic Congress. Last month the 100th anniversary of her birth was marked by the opening of a new church dedicated to Christ the King, in the parish of Tours where she was born.

As readers will remember the Council of the University of Liverpool passed a resolution last year terminating the contracts of women members of the staff on marriage. This resolution was a direct result of the marriage of Dr. Miller, a distinguished professor in the University to one of her colleagues. Following protests by Dr. Miller and the Women's Organisations, the Council has withdrawn the ban, "postponing consideration of any case until tenure lapses in the ordinary way."

Mr. Anthony Eden, replying to Major Hills in the House of Commons on November 12th, stated that the Report of the Committee appointed to consider the Admission of Women to the Diplomatic and Consular Services was under consideration by the Government. A decision would be taken later as to its publication.

It will be remembered that St. Joan's Alliance gave evidence before the Commission and, with other women's organisations, the Alliance is pressing for publication of the Report.

Our best wishes go with Mrs. Corbett Ashby and Dr. Maude Royden who have been invited to attend the All-India Women's Conference at Karachi at the end of December. They will bear with them messages from the British Women's Organisations to our Indian sisters written on a vellum scroll beautifully illuminated by our own artist, Miss Butler Bowdon.

The Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform, as it affects women, will be considered in a later issue.

We offer our congratulations to Fr. M. Fennell, of St. Peter's, Cardiff, who will celebrate his sacerdotal Jubilee on December 20th.

Father Fennell joined the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society during the National Catholic Congress held in Cardiff before the war, since when he has never failed to renew his subscription to the Alliance and CATHOLIC CITIZEN annually. His support is a great encouragement.

(Continued on page 103)

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE,

AND

Editorial Office of "Catholic Citizen":

55 BERNERS STREET, LONDON, W.1. Tel. Museum 4181

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

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MISS CHRISTINE SPENDER, *Hon. Editor.*

Maternal Mortality

The Maternal Mortality Conference which took place in London recently under the auspices of the Maternal Mortality Committee, was marked by a spirit of unrest and revolt. Lady Denham who presided pointed out that in 1934 the death-rate among mothers was as high as in 1924. Figuratively speaking, from then on, the cry of the Conference was: "How long?" Sir George Newman, Chief Medical Officer to the Ministry of Health, was on the platform.

Mrs. Eleanor Barton of the Women's Co-operative Guild moved the main resolution which read:

1. This Conference welcomes such encouragement to Local Authorities to maintain and develop the Maternity and Child Welfare services for which they are responsible as is given by Circular 1433 dated October 10th, 1934.

2. The Conference, however, is deeply impressed by the report it has received of malnutrition among married women especially in areas where prolonged unemployment persists; it is not satisfied that all Local Authorities are exercising, or can exercise, their present powers so as to prevent continuous and increasing deterioration in health among such women; and it therefore urges the Ministry of Health and H.M. Government to consider what additional measures, either administrative or financial, are necessary to correct a growing evil.

3. Further, in view of the reported deterioration in health among women in certain areas, the Conference calls upon Local Authorities to make special arrangements for the setting up of Women's Clinics under the Public Health Acts for the supervision of post-natal and associated ailments.

Mrs. Barton pointed out that malnutrition played a large part in the high death-rate of mothers, and afterwards many speakers bore her out through personal experience. She said that childbirth was treated far too casually in medical training. As for Local Authorities, some were doing splendid work, why not all?

Mrs. Frankenburg, a State certified mid-wife, in seconding the resolution maintained that malnutrition was not the only cause of maternal mortality. There should be properly trained mid-wives and the Local Authorities should be stirred up to do all that they were enabled to do.

Lady Barrett of the London School of Medicine for Women suggested that one way of dealing with malnutrition was to have a dining room for nursing mothers run in connection with all ante-natal clinics. This would give the mother at least one well-calculated meal and one half-hour of rest a day.

Lady Williams urged the importance of an extension of the district nursing service so that trained nurses could look after mothers in their homes.

Resolutions moved by members of the audience were carried, asking that the means test should not be applied to families where the mother was pregnant, that a maternity allowance should be granted in all cases where there was no insurance benefit and that Local Authorities should provide a complete gynaecological service, *such service to include information on birth-control.* (Italics ours. We deplore this part of the resolution and wish there had been more people in the Hall to oppose it.) A further resolution was carried asking that a deputation be sent to the Minister of Health and the British Medical Association to urge a fuller develop-

DEPRESSED AREAS AND WOMEN WORKERS

In the report on Depressed Areas Captain Euan Wallace dealing with Durham and Tyneside makes the following statement:

"It would appear necessary, having regard to present conditions and future prospects, to consider seriously some limitation of the fields of female and juvenile labour, except in cases where the absolute existence of an export industry depends upon it."

Thanks to the vigilance and prompt action of the Open Door Council, a letter of protest signed by eleven women's organisations, including St. Joan's Alliance, was immediately sent to every member of the House of Commons with the result that on November 15th, on behalf of the Government in the debate in the House of Commons, Mr. Hudson, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Labour, spoke as follows:

"There is one other point I might mention in passing, and that is the question of the employment of women. The Civil Lord suggested in his report that there was an excess number of women to-day in employment, and that if arrangements could be made to substitute males it would be an advantage. No doubt many Hon. Members have received, as I did, a violent complaint from women's societies at the bare suggestion. I am happy to be able to relieve their minds because we have no intention of doing anything that will upset the present arrangement, more especially as of recent months the number of men has been catching up, and the disproportion which was noticeable some years ago is disappearing. In the distributive trades, which are usually quoted as the classic case, the proportion of insured males in employment to insured females is exactly the same this year as it was in 1923."

On November 20th, Mr. Lansbury in the Debate on the Address said:

"One of the Commissioners in the Depressed Areas dealt with the question of the large number of women employed now, and made a suggestion, which I am glad to know the Government did not take into account, that there ought to be some restriction on their employment."

We are grateful to Mr. Lansbury for drawing attention to the matter on this occasion.

Continued vigilance will be necessary if woman's right to paid work is not to be insidiously taken away from her. As our letter sent to Members of Parliament says: "It is a startling innovation, in this country, that a Government Investigator should suggest that the adult woman might be shut out of paid work as if she were a thing or a slave; her right (equal with every other adult human being) to earn her living denied her; her own right to existence ignored; and herself used merely as a pawn in international trade competition, to be thrown aside when no longer wanted."

We congratulate our member, Miss Eleanor FitzGerald, on the great success of her play, "The Sun Goes Down," which was produced for the first time by the Dramatic Circle of the Irish Literary Society on November 26th and 27th, Miss FitzGerald being one of the chief actors.

ment and maintenance of maternal and child welfare services, and calling on Local Authorities to provide a first-rate medical and mid-wifery service.

Before the end of the meeting Dr. Edith Summerskill rose to say that she was glad to see that a more militant spirit than in former years had taken hold of the Conference. She urged them to imitate the methods of their suffragette sisters. "Rather than another mere deputation I would urge a mass demonstration in Trafalgar Square with banners saying: 'Three thousand dead.'"

The departmental Committee appointed to consider Maternal Mortality in 1932 reported that half the deaths in child-birth were preventable. It is more than probable that malnutrition is the root cause of the increase in the maternal mortality rate this year, and the resolutions concerning the means test and maternity allowance were directed to this problem. It is tragic that "Birth Control" should be regarded as a means of combating poverty and distress especially as this divides people over the main issue. There is, after all, no quick, easy way of building the new Jerusalem.

Besides combating malnutrition, every other remedy should be tried to prevent these unnecessary deaths in child-birth. Action should be taken by the Local Authorities; adequate hospital accommodation, properly trained mid-wives and up-to-date doctors should be available everywhere; women should be encouraged to make use of the increasing number of ante-natal clinics.

In this connection we would urge our readers to study the latest Government Circular No. 1433, and the excellent Report just issued by the Maternal Mortality Committee, both of which emphasise the serious deficiencies still holding in the Maternity Services of the country. It will be seen that the Local Authorities possess great powers to combat Maternal Mortality and we should all agitate unceasingly to ensure that our own Local Authority makes full use of its powers. As the *Manchester Guardian* says in a recent leader on Maternal Mortality: "Only by hammering away at every possible solution can we hope to overcome a record that is a disgrace to our community."

CHRISTINE SPENDER.

The prayers of our readers are asked for the repose of the soul of Mr. John Collier, the father of our members Miss D. J. Collier, F.R.C.S., and Dr. Isabel Heath.—R.I.P.

International Notes

"La Française" (Paris) reports the inauguration of a new centre for the co-ordination of all feminist activities in France—"La Femme Nouvelle"—under the able guidance of Mlle. Louise Weiss, so well known for her work in the cause of peace. It is described as a "centre of propaganda for the equality of civil and political rights of the French of both sexes."

We also read in "La Française" that the Fédération Internationale des Femmes Magistrats et Avocats, held its Council meeting in Naples in September. Among subjects discussed were legal rights in the modern family and the laws regulating marriage between persons of different nationality.

* * * *

We welcome the first number of "Boletim da Federacao Brasileira pelo Progreso Feminino," organ of the Brazilian Federation for Women's Progress, which appears in the hour of victory. It does well to remind its readers in the "feminist decalogue" of their duties towards the State, society, and their individual development.

* * * *

From "Jus Suffragii" we learn of two Government measures in Holland which threaten the position of women. One of them is the dismissal on marriage of women teachers in municipal schools. The second is a circular letter from Government to all public bodies in which the wish is expressed that whenever possible, women in public employment shall be replaced by men. Both these measures are incompatible with the spirit of the Dutch Constitution from which all sex disqualifications have been removed.

* * * *

The third Pan Pacific Women's Conference took place in Honolulu in August. Resolutions in favour of peace and protesting against the manufacture of arms for private profit, and one asserting the right of every woman to choose a career and engage in gainful occupation, were among those adopted.

* * * *

The Catholic Women of Spain have organised a relief centre in Madrid for the victims of the Revolution. In the "Vida Social Feminina" of Barcelona there is an interesting account of the School for Nurses, "L'Escola d'Infermeres Socials." The year's course of training includes not only the usual subjects, but unusual ones such as legal questions of interest to nurses.

I. M. D.

Reviews

Good Morning and Good Night. By the Ranee Margaret of Sarawak. (Constable, 15s.)

The Ranee is pleasant company; she has such a sense of humour; together with a love of adventure such an enjoyment of the simple things of life; such a love of beauty wherever it is to be found. This zest for life never seems to have left her even through experiences which would have embittered many another woman. She has always accepted the outrages fortune has dealt her with a certain graciousness and dignity which leaves on the reader of her life the impression of a singularly sweet and attractive personality. Her evident talent for making friends contributes not the least to the charm of her autobiography. Living in Sarawak with her husband for many years, she made friends with the Malayan women and the picture of their relations is one of the most pleasing in the book. Her husband took her with him on many of his expeditions of conciliation and on many an occasion she showed resource and an ability to handle an emergency which must have been of the utmost value to him. The Ranee gives us a full-length portrait of the Rajah as a splendid ruler, but Sarawak meant more to him than wife or child and it was well for the Ranee that, unlike most wives of colonials, she could enter into his feelings for the country.

This book makes one wish that more women with the greater part of their lives behind them would give us their memoirs.

Zachary Macauley: An Appreciation. By Charles Booth. (Longmans, 6s.)

Zachary Macauley was early imbued with a horror of the slave trade and of slavery through his experiences in Jamaica at the age of 17. He devoted his whole life to the anti-slavery cause and armed with inexorable statistics, was behind every phase of the parliamentary struggle for abolition. He possessed calmness and excellent judgment, never exaggerating facts for his own ends, and he wore away opposition as the proverbial water dropping on a stone—by a merciless persistence.

Before the centenary year of the abolition of slavery comes to an end, it is fitting for us to recall the lives of those who spent themselves for this cause and Zachary Macauley, the subject of this excellent study, was one of the finest characters among them.

C. S.

TWENTY-ONE YEARS SERVICE

We offer our affectionate congratulations to Miss Florence Barry who last month completed twenty-one years as our Hon. Secretary at Headquarters.

With characteristic selflessness, Miss Barry has refused to accept a personal gift of money to mark this anniversary, but on December 8th, at a party given in her honour by Mrs. Laughton Mathews, she was presented with a purse containing £74 subscribed by members and friends of St. Joan's Alliance, for the purpose of sending our delegates to the Istanbul Congress of the International Alliance for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship next spring—this being an object which we knew would specially appeal to her. A small personal memento was also presented to her at the same time. A full account of the event will appear in next month's "Catholic Citizen."

The prayers and good wishes of St. Joan's Alliance will go out to our Hon. Secretary at this anniversary, with the fervent hope that she may be long with us, and live to see much of her work for the cause of women's emancipation brought to the fulfilment which we all desire.

GABRIELLE JEFFERY.

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HON. TREASURER'S NOTE

The proceeds taken in the Hall at the Christmas Sale this year amount to £20 10s. 11d., and as there are still some unsold goods in the office it is hoped that we may be able to realise £40 before Christmas. Miss Butler-Bowdon has again designed a new Christmas Card for us this year (2d. each, 7 for 1/-) and there are some attractive Christmas labels for sale, 3d. per dozen.

We offer our grateful thanks to all those who helped to sell at the bazaar and to those who sent articles for the stall and also to those who came to buy.

Would any who have not yet paid their annual subscription please do so as we have to make up our books before the end of the year.

P. M. BRANDT.

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Would find our paper cause for cheer.

Come, courage, friends, let no one shirk,
But one and all let's get to work.

C. S.

NOTES AND COMMENTS—Continued

In reply to a question on native taxation in Kenya asked by Mr. Banfield in the House of Commons on November 14th, Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister disclosed that a new Ordinance provides for the levy of Hut Tax from women. It appears that this is "intended to meet the case of women, the numbers of which are increasing, who are in an independent position as householders and who make a sufficient income to justify their payment of Hut Tax."

Whatever we may think of the Hut Tax, we cannot but rejoice that an increasing number of African women are attaining a position of economic independence.

* * * *

On November 22nd, Mrs. Laughton Mathews addressed a meeting of the East Grinstead Branch of the Catholic Women's League on "Feminism." She outlined the work past and present of St. Joan's Alliance and spoke of the ideals underlying it which have prompted so many to make the complete emancipation of women their life work.

Miss M. M. A. Ward, in the chair, paid a tribute to the work and personality of Miss Leonora de Alberti. A lively discussion took place at the close of the meeting.

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A Sherry Party was recently given by kind permission of Mr. and Miss Spender when £3 was made for "The Catholic Citizen." Thanks are due to Miss Fedden and Miss Butler-Bowdon for their kind assistance.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE.

NON-PARTY.

Office—55, Berners St., Oxford St., London, W.1.
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Organ—"The Catholic Citizen," 2d. monthly.

OBJECT.

To band together Catholics of both sexes, in order to secure the political, social and economic equality between men and women, and to further the work and usefulness of Catholic women as citizens.

MEMBERSHIP.

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can be placed at the disposal of families

Telephone: Bay 3046. Telegrams: Requiem, Kens, London

