

# Catholic

THE

# 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.

## Equal Pay for Equal Work

By D. J. AICKMAN

(President, London Unit National Union of Women Teachers)

On Monday, November 25th, at 8 p.m. a Mass Meeting, convened by the London Unit of the National Union of Women Teachers, and supported by prominent women's organizations including St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, will be held at the Friends' House, Euston Road, to demand Equal Pay for Equal Work as between men and women in all trades and professions.

The principle of Equal Pay for work of equal value has for long been conceded a fundamentally sound one. The principle has been laid down in Part XIII of the Treaty of Versailles which states: "The following methods and principles for regulating labour conditions seem to the High Contracting Parties to be of special and urgent importance . . . The principle that men and women receive equal remuneration for work of equal value." It is of importance to remember that Great Britain is a High Contracting Party. The House of Commons on May 19th, 1920, affirmed its belief in the equity of Equal Pay in the Civil Service, the resolution then passed declaring "That it is expedient that women should . . . receive equal pay." Women are still anxiously waiting for some small indication that these pledges will be honoured.

Meanwhile, the gross under-payment of women in State Services continues. In the Teaching Profession, equality of service is indisputably evident. The training of men and woman teachers demands an equally long probation to obtain equal qualifications. Both men and women work the same hours, teaching an equal number of scholars, who sit for the same

examinations, and are expected to reach the same degree of proficiency. No one will now assert that the education of girls is of less value to the community and of less importance than that of boys. Bearing these facts in mind, it is hard to appreciate the reasons for paying a woman teacher only four-fifths of a man teacher's salary, and for finally penalising her at the end of her career by awarding her a smaller pension, since, in this profession, pensions are based on the average salary for the last five years of service. Women teachers await with growing impatience a revision of salary scales with these disabilities removed.

In the Civil Service, the same salary disabilities are evident. In spite of repeated tributes to the efficiency of women from Business and Government Sources—tributes which frankly assert that there is little difference in the relative output of men and women—that, moreover, the introduction of women into the business life of the city has improved and facilitated business (an opinion delivered by Sir William Waterlow, a former Lord Mayor of London)—the standard rate of women's pay in the Civil Service is considerably lower than that of their male colleagues. To this is added the further indignity that if she attains an administrative post, a woman often receives less than the men who work under her. Women Civil Servants also wait with growing impatience the coming of this long-delayed reform.

It is important to remember, however, that Equal Pay is the symbol of a movement much wider than its monetary aspect. It is assumed too often that the question is merely one of



wage differentiation. Its antagonists bring forward the old argument that women's needs are not as great as men's, assuming that women have no requirements beyond the strictest necessities of life; and, therefore, demanding that this entirely fictitious assumption should govern their rate of payment. Actually the monetary aspect of the problem is the lesser one. The real evil, apart from the grave injustice to the women concerned, lies in the effect this under-payment has upon men workers, and potential workers in the same occupations. A large supply of cheap labour—in this case—female labour, jeopardises the position of men, and reacts adversely upon wage standards; for, in all cases where a reserve of cheap labour is available, employers tend to give it preference, men's positions become correspondingly precarious, and any attempt to secure improvement in wages is defeated at the outset.

These facts must be forced home to men and women alike. The strength of the case for Equal Pay grows as women increasingly demonstrate their ability to do the same work as men, and to do it under similar conditions. The process is slow and gradual, but many of the results can already be seen to-day in the professions, and in the ever-growing absorption of women in industry. Conditions governing the employment of men and women are matters of public interest. The problem is a grave social one which cannot lightly be ignored. Established custom, in this case, can and must be broken. The question of Equal Pay for Equal Work is a question confronting men no less than women.



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### LABOUR.—33

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### I.L.P.—1

Mrs. A. Bevan, Lanark, Northern.

### INDEPENDENT.—1

Mrs. van der Elst, Wandsworth, Putney.

By request of the Alliance the 9 o'clock Mass on polling day, November 14th, was offered in the Lady Chapel at Westminster Cathedral, to beg Divine Guidance for the men and women electors.

## Notes and Comments

### THE GENERAL ELECTION

By the time this number is in the hands of our readers the results of the General Election will be known.

On another page we publish the Election Address of the Equal Status of Women Committee on which our Alliance is represented.

St. Joan's Alliance has its own questionnaire which has been sent to all our members for submission to Parliamentary Candidates. Besides questions on points dealt with in the Equal Status Manifesto, our questionnaire asked candidates if they would press for: Fair and adequate financial treatment for Catholic elementary and secondary schools; Adequate Maternity Services throughout the country; and if they would oppose any policy of the Ministry of Health designed to allow information on artificial birth control to be given at centres and clinics maintained out of public funds, and the introduction of any legislation designed to promote the sterilisation of mental defectives.

We are not unmindful of the gravity of the present issues at stake, both in the national and international field, but it is essential that justice between men and women should form the basis of any national policy, and it is the work of our Alliance to press for equality.

As the Alliance is composed of members of all shades of political opinion, help was given to candidates pledged to our reforms irrespective of party. We publish elsewhere in this issue a list of women candidates which includes two of our members, Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell, B.A., a member of the Executive Committee, and Miss Monica Whately, one of the first members of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society. We congratulate Miss Eleanor Rathbone (Ind.) on her unopposed return for the Combined English Universities.

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As reported in the *Evening Standard*, Sir Charles Higham speaking recently on "Women in Business" at a luncheon of the Association of Trade and Technical Advertisement managers, said that women should get the same pay as a man for doing similar work.

"Unfair prejudice still exists," he said, "men will use women in the home, doing unpaid work for 12 hours a day. They will ask their advice in everything artistic. They will allow them to control the world's markets with their shopping baskets, they will allow them to rear them, bear them, prepare their food,

wash their clothes, so long as they will do so without an honest salary.

"A wife gets her keep. A maid gets her keep and wages. Why?"

\* \* \* \*

Readers should procure this quarter's *Sower* (a journal of Catholic education published at Alton, Stoke-on-Trent) and read for themselves the excellent article on "Catholic Women at Oxford," by our Committee member, Miss P. C. Challoner, M.A. This article pleads that the education of Catholic girls at Oxford should be taken seriously, and was written in reply to another article on the same subject which appeared in a previous *Sower*.

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In order to express appreciation to Mrs. Corbett Ashby for her many years of devoted service to international and feminist causes, it has been decided to make her a joint presentation. For this purpose a Committee has been formed representative of the many organizations whose work she has forwarded. Mrs. Seligman is Chairman and Viscountess Astor, M.P., Hon. Treasurer. A book containing the signatures of all those who have contributed to the fund (individual amounts not mentioned) will make part of the presentation. Contributions should be sent before December 14th and should be accompanied by a signature.

Letters (marked Presentation Fund) containing subscriptions with signatures, may be sent to: The Viscountess Astor, M.P. (*Hon. Treasurer*), Miss Anne Buchanan, Miss H. M. Todhunter (*Joint Hon. Secretaries*), 17 Buckingham Street, Adelphi, London, W.C.2. Cheques to be made payable to Corbett Ashby Presentation Fund.

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We offer warmest congratulations to our chairman, Mrs. Laughton Mathews, M.B.E., on her very fine speech made at the Mass Meeting of Catholics which took place in the Albert Hall under the Chairmanship of His Grace the Archbishop of Westminster, on October 29th. Readers will find the speech on page 99.

\* \* \* \*

The Woman's Movement has lost a staunch supporter by the death of the Rt. Hon. Arthur Henderson, M.P., who was an advocate of the cause of woman suffrage in its early and unpopular days. Miss Somers represented St. Joan's Alliance at the Memorial Service in Westminster Abbey.

We ask the prayers of our readers for the repose of the soul of our member, Mrs. Walmesley, who died recently. R.I.P. We offer deepest sympathy to her daughters, both members of our Alliance.



## 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.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

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MISS NANCY STEWART PARNELL, B.A.

MRS. SHATTOCK, M.B., B.S.

MISS CHRISTINE SPENDER, *Hon. Editor.*

## GENERAL ELECTION, 1935

### Election Address of the Equal Status of Women Committee

To the Men and Women of the Nation, the Political Parties, and to all Parliamentary Candidates

Although women now vote on the same terms as men, there are still injustices to be remedied and obstacles to be removed in order that they may have full political, economic and social equality and responsibility with men.

The Societies united in the Equal Status of Women Committee set forth in this Election Address a number of the reforms which are essential to the establishment of this complete equality, and call upon all men and women to co-operate in securing the speedy abolition of all disabilities imposed upon women, so that they may share fully with men the responsibilities and rights of adult citizens.

#### 1. EQUAL ECONOMIC STATUS Emancipation of the Woman Earner

We demand recognition of a woman's fundamental right to be regarded as an individual, of her right to contract, to earn, to receive equal pay for equal work, and to have equal opportunities with men for entry and promotion in her work.

We demand that a married woman shall be free to decide for herself whether or not she shall engage in paid work and that the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, which purported to throw open all posts to women irrespective of marriage, shall be made effective.

#### Government and Municipal Services

On the grounds of justice, efficiency and the maintenance of the standard of living, we de-

mand that women Civil Servants, Teachers, and all other employees of Local Authorities, shall be paid at the same rate as men for similar or identical work.

*Government Service.*—The Diplomatic, Consular, Indian and Colonial Services and the Trades Commissioner Service, are closed to women by Order in Council under the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act.

Women Civil Servants are still paid at a lower rate than men in the same grade although resolutions in favour of equal pay were passed by the House of Commons in May, 1920, and August, 1921.

We demand that these injustice be remedied.

*The Teaching Profession.*—Since the Educational Service is directed by Local Authorities under the control of the Board of Education and the Treasury, the Government is directly responsible for the present inequitable conditions under which women teachers, having the same qualifications and performing the same duties as men, receive approximately 80 per cent. of their men colleagues' rate of salary. Also, since pensions are based on average salaries, women teachers are further penalised by receiving smaller pensions than men for the same length of service.

We call upon the Government returned to power to take immediate steps to establish equal pay for equal work in the teaching profession, and, further, we demand that

appointments to the headships of mixed schools, to administrative posts and the inspectorate shall be open equally to men and women and that the best candidate, irrespective of sex, shall be appointed.

#### Equal Social Insurance

Women have been treated with gross injustice in the Social Insurance schemes of the country.

In *Unemployment Insurance* women have taken far less out of the fund than have men, yet a much higher percentage of women have been disallowed benefit. They have been more severely dealt with than men under the means test, they get less than men proportionately, and their funds have been taken to pay for some of the men's dependents.

Under the *Anomalies Act* nearly a quarter of a million married women have lost their insurance rights—rights they have paid for—solely on the ground of marriage.

Under *Health Insurance*, because their claims were higher than those of men (but not higher than several groups of men) women have had their benefits lowered.

We demand that this exploitation of women in Insurance shall cease and that:

(a) the contributions payable by and on behalf of women be made the same as for men, and that the benefits be the same for women and men;

(b) the *Anomalies Act* shall be so amended as to restore to married women workers the right to obtain unemployment benefit on the same conditions as other workers.

#### Women in Industry

We demand that, in industry, any regulations and restrictions shall apply equally to men and women, that is to say, they should be based on the nature of the work, and not on the sex of the worker.

Restrictions on women's work, which are not placed on men's work, are not protection but are limitations of women's right to contract and her wage earning opportunities; they encourage the exploitation of women in already over-crowded and under-paid trades.

At present the adult woman is classed in Labour Law with the young person and the child. The recognition of women, in such laws, as adult human beings with the same personal rights as adult men will be the first step towards the abolition of the present artificial division between men's work and women's work, and towards the abolition of the present

artificial division of wage rates into a "male rate" and a "female rate" irrespective of the similarity or even the identity of the work done. The only real protection for wage earning women is equal status and equal pay.

We demand that the Government shall not ratify the new (Geneva) Night Work Convention, and shall denounce all international conventions imposing differential restrictions on women's right to work.

#### Trade Boards

We demand that, when Trade Boards fix minimum rates of wages, these shall not be lower for women than for men.

#### Income Tax of Married Persons

We demand that the incomes of married persons shall be automatically assessed and taxed separately. Each spouse shall be entitled to the ordinary personal abatements on his or her separate income and shall share between them any marriage and children's abatements.

#### Women Police

We demand that women police shall be an integral part of every Police Force in the country, with equal training, equal status, equal pay, and equal opportunities for gaining wide practical experience of criminal procedure and of all branches of police work.

#### 2. EQUAL MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

We demand that the laws of Great Britain shall uphold and maintain the principle of equal moral responsibility for men and women. We welcome the decision of the Court of Criminal Appeal in 1933, placing an equal responsibility under the Criminal Law upon women as upon men for indecent assault of any male or female person under 16.

But the existing laws dealing with solicitation by alleged "common prostitutes" are the negation of equal responsibility for both sexes. They are unjust as between men and women and make of a small group of women a class of legal outcasts. These laws, passed over 80 years ago, are obsolete. They have been declared unsatisfactory by the Departmental Committee on Street Offences which, in 1928, recommended their complete repeal.

We demand the repeal of all the existing laws of Great Britain dealing with solicitation by women, and the substitution of a genuinely equal law under which any person, whether man or woman, wilfully annoying or molesting any other person in any street, or public place, shall be guilty of an offence. We demand also



that in all such cases the evidence of the person annoyed or molested shall be required before a conviction can be obtained.

### 3. EQUAL PERSONAL STATUS

#### Nationality of Married Women

We demand that a British woman shall have restored to her the right of retaining her nationality on marriage with an alien, which was taken from her in 1870, and that, irrespective of marriage, she shall have the same right as a man to retain or change her nationality.

#### Women Peers

We demand that Peeresses in their own right shall sit and vote in the House of Lords and this before any other alteration in the constitution of the Second Chamber, so that they may take part in the discussions on any further reform of the House of Lords.

We demand that, in any such reform of the Second Chamber, men and women peers shall have equal eligibility and voting rights.

#### Purchase of Women: Marriage Contracts

We demand that in all territories under British jurisdiction it shall definitely be laid down that no woman, whatever her race, shall be sold by her father or alleged proprietor; that no marriage contract shall be made for any girl under 14 years, or for a girl over 14 years without her consent, and that there shall be no inheritance of a widow by her husband's heirs.

### 4. EQUAL STATUS THE BASIS OF INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

This country is committed to support the Covenant of the League of Nations; and to co-operation within the League to secure the peace of the world and to further various social and humanitarian reforms. In pursuing these aims the full and effective co-operation of women is essential. The League itself has sought it. But if Great Britain denies to its women the full equal status with men which is their right as adult persons it is hindering that co-operation. British women can neither take their right place nor assume a full responsibility so long as they suffer from the disabilities detailed in this manifesto, and we consider it a reflection on the British Government that, in 1935, women still have to waste time, energy and money pleading for that equality of status which is the common right of any adult citizen.

**On the grounds of international as well as national well-being we demand for the women of Great Britain a complete equality of status.**

## St. Joan's Meeting

On October 22nd at St. Patrick's Club Room, Soho, a meeting was held by St. Joan's Alliance to hear the report of Mrs. Laughton Mathews, M.B.E., and Miss Flynn who had both represented the Alliance at Geneva during the XVIth Assembly of the League of Nations.

Lady Sanderson, in the Chair, pointed out how much of the most important work of the League is done by the Committees whose activities do not form the subject of press headlines; such for instance was the Advisory Commission on Slavery, and here it was very necessary that women should ensure that due regard was paid to the status of women.

Mrs. Laughton Mathews described how both she and Miss Flynn had taken part in the deliberations of the Liaison Committee of Women's International Organisations whose business it was to keep in touch with the League. The Standing Joint Committee of International Womens' Organizations, on which the Alliance is also represented, had held a reception for the women delegates to the League at which Mrs. Laughton Mathews had spoken. Mrs. Laughton Mathews gave a vivid account of the good work achieved in Geneva, as reported in our last issue. She added illuminating pictures of the various personalities at the League.

Miss Margaret Flynn of Melbourne, to whose valuable assistance at Geneva Mrs. Laughton Mathews had more than once referred, declared that for years she had been looking for an association of Catholic women such as St. Joan's. In her opinion the Alliance was missionary, and its members exerted a potent influence in the circles in which they moved. She then spoke of the pioneer Catholic women of Australia. It was through women such as the famous Caroline Chisholm and through the nuns, assisted by their brothers of the religious Orders and the secular priests, that without any Government encouragement, the population of Australia to-day was between 20 per cent. and 25 per cent. Catholic.

A vote of thanks was moved by Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell, B.A., and seconded by Miss Sylvia Terry.

On October 10th, Mrs. Laughton Mathews gave a short broadcast on the work and personalities of some of the women delegates to the XVIth Assembly of the League of Nations.

## Moral Evils of the Day

### "Birth Control"—the Woman's Point of View

Speech delivered by **Mrs. Laughton Mathews, M.B.E.**, at a Mass Meeting of the Westminster Catholic Federation, at the Albert Hall, London, on October 29th, His Grace the Archbishop of Westminster, presiding.

Ever since I came into this Hall I have been haunted by a ghost—there is a girl down there in the stalls, dressed in white—as a good ghost should be. A tall girl, yes, about the same height as me—and about half as broad! She is a steward at one of those wonderful demonstrations of the Woman Suffrage Movement which packed this great Hall more than twenty years ago. I can see her standing there so really, gazing earnestly up at the platform and drinking in this new inspiring doctrine of the emancipation of women.

You may think this has nothing to do with my speech this evening, but I may tell you it has a great deal to do with it, for if that girl in white and hundreds like her had not stood there twenty odd years ago, I should not be standing here now. Firstly, I don't think it would ever have occurred to the organisers of this great meeting to ask me or any other woman to address you on the difficult subject of morality in marriage. Secondly I should never have had the courage.

It is not an enviable task—to attempt to deal with such a subject from the woman's point of view—but if we have been forced into the open to uphold the teaching of the Church before the world, it is no good at all doing so with folded hands and down-cast eyes. I can assure you our opponents do not mince words and in that they have us at disadvantage. So you must forgive me if I speak frankly.

Birth Control is a very difficult subject, and I speak to you in a spirit of deep humility knowing that I am not myself faced with the problems that many people have to face. But all the same the whole of life is so full of problems, some are more obvious than others but we none of us know the special difficulties and temptations which beset our neighbour in their intimate personal life. However, we may be pretty sure—human nature being what we have made of it—that there are very few people who have not had problems of sex to cope with at some time.

St. Francis of Assisi says: "He who wishes to remain pure must flee the world."

St. Joan on the other hand—St. Joan whom some of us have adopted as our special patron, took the whole world to her heart and purity blossomed around her.

Well, here are we who cannot flee the world—it is too late to think of that solution. We have to live in the world and at the same time to endeavour to live up to the high moral standard laid down by Christ's teaching. Heaven knows we all fall short at times but at least we Catholics don't keep our standards on a level with our falls; we have a high ideal to aim at.

If only the Christian standard of morality—that there shall be no sexual relations outside the marriage state and that within marriage there shall be strict moderation—if only this ideal were always lived up to, many of the problems which some people outside the Church think should be solved by the use of contraceptives, would never arise at all.

I said just now that we all have our problems. I should like to add that if some of us look into our own hearts we shall know to what extent our own past life has added to the difficulties with which we are now faced.

Self-control cannot be learnt in a day. You cannot expect for example a young man who has been spoilt as a child, who has always gratified his own desires in matters of food and drink and pleasure, who has not attempted to control his passions before marriage—to find self-control easy in marriage, even if it is a case of considering the health of his wife.

In the days of the Suffrage Movement one of the big forces in bringing women into the public arena—and to women who had led sheltered lives it called for immense courage—was the realisation of the double code of morals and the belief that women in public life could help in upholding a high and equal standard of morals for men and women.

Like the Church, the Woman's Movement always stood firmly against the idea that it was impossible for men to lead chaste lives—but before the new generation of young men had grown up along came this doctrine of birth prevention, with its trail of corruption, broadcast everywhere among young people, of both sexes, and saying *in effect* that self control is impossible and that it must be made easy for them to escape from it. And as always when a line of least resistance offers, many gave up the good fight.

Chastity has always been expected of a girl—in the past loss of virtue was the unforgivable sin—and because of this rigid expectation of public opinion she accepted that certain things were not done and accepted it in a spirit which did not entail undue repression.

Unfortunately public opinion has not expected the same high standard of young men and we have had the extraordinary situation of an act which involves two people being considered natural for one and a grave moral lapse for the other. And what has been the result of this double standard of morality? Earlier in the evening His Grace, in referring to another subject (the relationship of employer and employed) used words which apply equally here. He said: "No human being has the right to use another as a commodity." From the double standard of morality has arisen what is the most hideous blight on the face of civilisation—the buying and selling of the bodies of young women—a commerce that in some countries is organised and regulated by the State itself. And to our shame be it said in some countries calling themselves Catholic.

We know of course that the Church does *not* compromise on the question of the equal moral standard, but I sometimes wonder when Catholic speakers and writers, even eminent ecclesiastics, are so insistent that women are the guardians of purity, if they are not unconsciously giving the impression that a lower standard of morals is expected of men.

Now I have a high opinion of men and I believe that both men and women will respond to a high



spiritual appeal if it is made to them, but the appeal of the birth prevention propagandists is made to their lower nature. And as a result of that appeal there is grave danger that instead of the moral standards of men being raised, the standards of women will be lowered.

I have stressed this point of an equal and high moral standard because I am quite certain that antecedents are of paramount importance in the making of a good marriage.

Many young people do not realise, or realise too late, that marriage requires continuous self-restraint. The problem of too many children is lessened if self-control is practised from the beginning of marriage. It is when the early children have come too close together that difficulties become acute.

When speakers upholding birth prevention quote cases such as of a woman who has had a child every year for ten years—or the woman whom I heard, myself, on a public platform say that she had had four children (not twins) in 3½ years, I always marvel that anyone can consider contraceptives a solution of such a state of affairs.

I do think that children should be spaced—but by natural methods.

We hear a lot about repression, of the danger to health, of the nervous strain. I can tell you something else that leads to nervous strain and poor health—to be at war with one's own conscience, to be violating moral codes that are part of ourselves—in a word, not to be at peace with God.

Even advocates of birth prevention have agreed with me that the natural instinct of every right-thinking person is at first against this practice. Instinct they call it—or tradition or convention.

We know that it is the voice of conscience, the divine in man seeking expression, and what will be the result—not only spiritual but mental and physical—of continuously repressing the divine element.

Of course it is true that human nature is different and that what is not a very difficult matter for some, amounts to heroic virtue in others—but that is equally true of other forms of passion. Some people are naturally sweet-tempered while others have to make great efforts to keep their tempers within reasonable bounds—but that does not mean that they are given licence at intervals to throw the crockery about the house—and if in a fit of passion they should kill someone the law does not take their special difficulties into account. We know that human nature is prone to evil and must be corrected by self-denial. What hope should we ever have of peace in the world if the instincts of nature were uncontrolled?

We must not forget too the effect of birth prevention propaganda on the unmarried. We are told that self-control is a more difficult problem for the married. Is it always I wonder? There are many people with no opportunity of marrying who are beset by acute sexual temptations which only a deep sense of religion can help them to overcome. No one in their senses believes that love is confined to the marriage state, and if the physical expression of love is to be divorced from the obligations and sacrifices which married people should undertake, then is it possible that the general standard of sex conduct should not be indefinitely lowered?

One of the most objectionable things about birth prevention propaganda is the undue emphasis that is always placed on the physical side of marriage: "that physical union which is the basis of married life" as one report has it.

That is simply not true. Love is the basis of

married life—love which is many-sided, spiritual, mental and physical—and spiritual and mental affinity are certainly as important, to my mind infinitely more important—than the physical relationship—especially in these days when the greater intellectual development of women has made possible a more perfect comradeship than in the past.

And the outward expression of marital love is children. Don't you think some of us exaggerate the difficulties of bringing up a family? We want to do so much for our one or two children, and sometimes we deny them one of the greatest blessings in life, the companionship of brothers and sisters near their own age. The best education is not necessarily the most expensive and there is no better training ground for character than a good Catholic home where money is a bit scarce and self denial in the small things of everyday life is a necessity. The most selfish children are often those who have had every worldly advantage lavished on them.

And what nonsense is talked about "the wanted child." How many households do we know in which the child unwanted before birth has come to be the most precious and dearly loved of all. The birth of a child is always a very serious event—it upsets one's usual mode of life for a long period and may interfere with plans one thinks important. It affects the wife's health and makes her run some measure of risk—it is always a financial burden. When one knows that a child is coming one fits one's life to it—and how thankful one is afterwards, how worth while it all is—but if birth prevention were accepted as not being opposed to any deep moral principle—anyone who liked could persuade themselves, as indeed many do, that theirs is an exceptional case.

We are often told that birth prevention is an economic problem. I have not attempted to deal with it as such. Firstly because to attempt to cure our terrible social conditions by preventing children is obviously beginning at the wrong end; secondly, because no one would ever have dared to suggest to the poor as a solution of their miseries, a practice that for ages long had only been associated with prostitution, unless this practice had been first adopted by the well to do and middle classes. So this question must be considered as a whole and the moral and social issues which are at stake.

As you know it is a question which has been debated in women's organisations, in public bodies, in Parliament itself. Catholic women who are now full citizens and equally responsible with men for the laws of the country, good and bad, have their duty clear. But it is no use rushing in at the last moment simply on a negative proposition—nobody will listen to you. To fight this problem as good citizens we must have shown ourselves to be good citizens; we must have been *inside* these bodies earning the right by our good work for legitimate reforms, to be heard and listened to when a question of Catholic principle is involved.

And you must be prepared to uphold the Catholic teaching on high moral grounds. Many of our opponents are thoroughly good people—but they have not thought deeply enough.

That the Christian solution of this problem—whether it means a large family or limitation by natural methods—that the solution is one which calls for constant self denial and sacrifice, no one will deny.

But does anyone expect, or even desire, the Christian Life to be easy?

In the words of Thomas à Kempis: "Do what is in thy power, and God will be with thy good will."

## International Notes

We offer heartiest congratulations to Me. Clara Mulder van de Graaf de Bruijn of Holland, on the attainment of her 70th birthday. Me. Mulder is one of Holland's most distinguished feminist workers. She was a member of the Board of the Dutch Suffrage Society as well as of the Dutch branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and for many years she served on the Executive Committee of the National Council of Women of the Netherlands. We are proud to count her a member of St. Joan's Alliance and wish her many years of happiness.

The Minutes of the 27th Session of the Permanent Mandates Commission contain details of a petition signed by a number of Moslems and presented to the Mandatory Power, protesting against a French Maison Tolerée in Hons. Hons is an almost entirely Moslem City and we rejoice at this stand the Moslems have taken against tolerated brothels.

In Belgium the Order of January 23rd, 1935, fixing a lower basic salary for women teachers, was repealed by a Royal Order of June 8th, 1935, which fixed a new scale of salaries for primary schools based on equality between the sexes, but taking into account family responsibilities. The Order of January 28th, 1935, reducing the salaries of women public servants, was repealed by a Royal Order of June 11th, 1935. It is not saying too much that the firm stand and the protest of Belgian women's organisations of all political and religious shades have largely contributed to bring about this decision and we are glad to hear that the decree of December 8th authorising the Minister of Labour to fix the proportional number of married and unmarried women who may be employed in industrial and commercial undertakings, with a view to replacing them by unemployed male workers has been temporarily suspended and it is unlikely that it will ever be put into force. The question has been referred back to a Study Committee, which, under the presidency of M. Vandervelde, will enquire into it with a view to safeguarding woman's right to earn her living. (We take this information from the *Bulletin of the I.C.W.*)

In Czechoslovakia five women have recently been returned to the Upper Chamber. Among them is Senator Me. F. Plaminkova, a parlia-

mentarian of many years standing and a member of the Board of the International Woman's Suffrage Alliance. To the Lower Chamber eight women have been returned.

At the recent elections in Canada out of fifteen women who stood for Parliament two were returned, one being Miss Agnes Macphail (Greybruce), who has had a seat in the Dominion Parliament since 1921, the other being Mrs. George Black (Yukon).

There are now two women members of the Canadian Senate.

### CHRISTMAS SALE

We are having a stall as usual at the Green, White and Gold Fair, organised by the Women's Freedom League. It is to be held at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Friday and Saturday, November 15th and 16th, from 3 to 9 p.m.

As this falls just after the General Election the office will be very busy beforehand and will not be able to give as much time to the preparations as usual. We therefore rely on our members to make a special effort to support the sale in order that it may be a financial success. Please help us by coming to the sale and also by sending gifts either in money or kind to the office, and it will be a great help if the gifts are priced.

Mrs. Laughton Mathews is holding a Bridge Drive (Progressive Auction) in aid of the funds of the Alliance, on Wednesday, November 20th, at 7-45 p.m., at 57 Carlton Vale, N.W.8. (Tel. Maida Vale 1617.) Please get any bridge playing friends to come. Tickets 2s. 6d. (including refreshments).

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Members are invited to a meeting on November 19th, 5-30, at Livingstone Hall, Broadway, to receive reports and information concerning the present position of Russian Women Refugees in the Far East.



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