

WOMEN'S SERVICE
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THE

Catholic Citizen

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

Vol. XIV, No. 2.

15th FEBRUARY, 1928.

Price Twopence.

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.

Women in the Civil Service of the Irish Free State.

By PROFESSOR MARY HAYDEN.

Early in the year 1925, the Civil Service Commissioners of the Irish Free State announced by notices in the press that, at a date some months later, an examination for posts in the Junior Administrative Department would be held, and that intending candidates would be furnished with particulars on application.

Several women applied, but were informed in reply that only male candidates were eligible. It was objected that, as no mention of this restriction had been made in the advertisement, the exclusion of women was not only unfair but of doubtful legality. Whereupon, the Commissioners announced that the proposed examination would not take place, but that another would be substituted, for which they would issue "amended regulations." When these regulations appeared it was seen that they were precisely similar to the former ones, except that the word *male* had been prefixed to *candidates*.

The various women's societies in Ireland, and especially the Irish Women's Citizens' Association, resolved, after consideration, that the legality of the action of the Commissioners should be ascertained by a test case. It seemed that Article 3 of the Free State constitution, which laid down that women and men should have equal rights as citizens of the State, was violated, when either sex was excluded from a position under Government, for which no sex unfitness could be proved. One of the women who had intended entering for the examination expressed her willingness

to bring a case into court, and the Association agreed to give her financial assistance in the matter.

Suddenly, when all arrangements had been made, the Commissioners gave way. The second notices were cancelled, as the first had been, and it was announced that the forthcoming examination would be open equally to women as to men. The common report was that this capitulation of the authorities was due to the opinion expressed by their legal advisers that their position was untenable, and that, if they fought the case, they would, almost certainly, be beaten.

The Government now sought to carry its point, and to secure the exclusion of women from the higher and better-paid posts by other means.

Next year (1926), a measure was introduced into the Assembly (the Dail) which would, if it became law, enable the Civil Service Commissioners, at their mere discretion and without stating any reason for so doing, to confine their competition for any post in their service to either men or women. How this power would be exercised was obvious, and indeed was scarcely denied.

Several members of the Government declared in private that they disapproved of the principle of the Bill, but that, as it had been declared to be a Party Measure, they could not vote against it. The Irish Women's Citizens' Association did all in its power, by leaflets, by personal interviews and by "lobbying" the members of the Dail, to obtain

the withdrawal or the defeat of the measure.

The debate on the Bill lasted a considerable time and was very heated. Those who favoured the measure spoke much of the unsuitability of women for night duty and for such rough work as sometimes (in reality, not often) had to be performed by Civil Servants. It was even thought needful to point out that they could not undertake the duties of soldiers and of policemen (who are not Civil Servants at all). On the other hand, it was urged how peculiarly adapted they were for such (poorly paid) posts as those of typists and writing assistants. Whether this suitability was mental or physical was not stated. Some speakers on the opposite side drew attention to the existence of women night-nurses, and remarked that, in scrubbing, chain-making, sack-making and such like rough occupations, female labour was employed.

In the end, the victory of the Government was not a brilliant one; the Bill passed by a majority of only five.

The measure had now to be admitted to the Senate or Upper House. The Women's Citizens' Association exerted itself again, using the same methods as before, to prevent its passage. In this they were successful. The Bill was rejected by a fairly large majority.

Unfortunately, the veto of the Senate is only a suspensory one, and after the lapse of nine months (September 1927), the Civil Service Bill became Law.

It was suggested that an attempt should be made to obtain a Referendum on the subject. But, as this would only be granted on the written request of either one twentieth of the registered voters, or three-fifths of the members of the Senate, the chance of obtaining it seemed too slender to be worth the trouble of the attempt and the risk of failure.

The power placed by this Bill in the hands of the Civil Service Commissioners seems likely, if their past record is considered, to have a very detrimental effect on the prospects of women in the Civil Service of the Irish Free State. Already it has discouraged several women of brilliant abilities from selecting this career, and has induced them to seek outside of Ireland, a field more promising for their talents.

International Notes.

The National Catholic Welfare Council Bulletin (Washington) publishes an article by the Rev. William Bolger in which he advocates that "legal minimum wage laws for women and minors" be put on the statute books of the industrial states of the United States. This is not the place in which to discuss the economic merits and demerits of a minimum wage, fixed by law. But it is proper in this and every other place to assert that if there ought to be a minimum wage for women there ought to be one for men also. In the same way if the further protective legislation, of which Father Bolger speaks, limiting the work day, and prohibiting night work, be advisable for women, as he contends, it is so also for men. To include women in the same category as minors, that is in the class regarded as incapable of managing their own affairs, is bad economics as well as false psychology. It is a favourite means of bolstering up wrong economic conditions, for instance the underpayment of women.

La Unión Católica Feminina, Barcelona, reports an interesting speech made by Doña Juana Salas de Jimenez at the conference of the Leagues against Public Immorality which was held in Madrid in November.

The new editor of the *Sower* seems to advocate that girls should not receive a solid literary or scientific education. We would recommend him to read the verbatim report in *La Française* of the lectures delivered by Mgr. Jullien, Bishop of Arras, during the Semaine Sociale at Nancy in which he ably defends the policy of giving a sound classical or scientific education to as many girls as possible. He quotes Fénelon's regret that girls should be "blindly left to the management of ignorant and indiscreet mothers." Would this ignorance and indiscretion be sufficiently modified by the instruction in "music, Italian and housecraft" which the editor of the *Sower* quaintly thinks peculiarly suited to training a new generation of women.

It is announced from Brazil that since the vote for the State legislation was granted

(Continued on page 13.)

Notes and Comments.

St. Joan's S.P.A., has lost a valued friend in Father Philip Fletcher. We shall always remember with gratitude how he associated himself with our work by joining the society in its early and troubled days. He was at the starting point on the embankment on the occasion of the last suffrage procession July 1926, to show his sympathy; and his last letter to us was received October last. Father Fletcher's great work for the Catholic Church in England is too well known to need repetition. May he rest in peace. Miss Barry and Miss Fedden represented us at the Requiem Mass, and at the funeral.

We believe it is unnecessary to impress upon the readers of the *Catholic Citizen*, the importance of using their votes at the coming County Council elections, which take place in the first week of March. The apathy which is sometimes shown at municipal elections is hard to understand. The policy of the Councils affects very closely the well being of the residents of the districts concerned. Housing, education, maternity and child welfare, the drink question, etc., come under the Councils. The administration of public funds, is surely a matter of interest and it depends on the electors whether they return candidates who may be trusted to look after their welfare. We hope that a large number of women will be elected. Our member Mrs. Mathew, J.P., who has served on the L.C.C. since 1923 is standing for re-election as Labour candidate for Stepney Limehouse Division, and Mrs. Laughton Mathews as we reported last month, is standing for South Hackney. Both candidates would be glad of helpers.

The following is the questionnaire of St. Joan's S.P.A. to women candidates:
If elected will you work to secure:

1. An adequate number of women on all committees and sub-committees of the Council?
2. Equal pay for equal work and equal opportunities of training, entry and promotion between men and women employees of the Council; also freedom for women to continue their employment on marriage?
3. An adequate number of women police,

especially in Parks and open spaces?

4. Equal educational facilities for boys and girls?
5. An adequate number of lodging houses for women as well as for men.

We offer our sincere congratulations to Miss Scott. Women are new to architecture, and that a women's design should have been chosen for the Shakespeare Memorial is a fine omen for the future.

We have received a circular letter from the Edinburgh Corporation Bill Protest Committee, signed by many societies including St. Joan's S.P.A. The letter explains the Bill which the Corporation of the City of Edinburgh has in mind. It is proposed to give to the Medical Officer of Health, the power to compel any person, who he has reason to believe is suffering from venereal disease, to submit to treatment by a medical practitioner, or at a treatment centre for Venereal Disease. Our readers are aware, we believe, of all the danger and injustice involved in such a power. Publicity will kill the Bill, and we trust all enlightened persons will join in protesting against the proposals.

Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell will be one of the speakers at the Queen's Hall Demonstration on March 8th. Those wanting 1s. tickets, reserved for St. Joan's, should apply immediately to 55 Berner's Street.

The following resolution has been passed by the Societies affiliated to the Equal Political Rights Committee including St. Joan's S.P.A.

"This Meeting of the Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee notes the statement in the King's Speech that proposals will be brought forward in Parliament for amending the law relating to the Parliamentary and Local Government Franchise.

Relying upon the pledge made by the Prime Minister on behalf of his Government, that women shall have the Parliamentary vote at 21, and on the same terms as men; and shall exercise that vote at the next election: this meeting calls for the immediate introduction and passage into law of a simple measure, not complicated with other electoral matters."

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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1927.

The year just come to an end gave us no outstanding victory to record in this country. It will, however, be remembered as the year in which the campaign for Equal Franchise brought victory within sight. It seems practically certain, if nothing occurs to bring this Government to an end, that Equal Franchise will reach the Statute Book this year. The strenuous efforts of 1927, preceded by a struggle which goes back over fifty years will be rewarded, we trust, though the campaign will be continued till victory is assured.

Another significant feature of 1927 was the increased opposition to restrictive legislation for women in industry. The Open Door Council has well advertised the dangers of special protection, and has provided the means of concentrating feminist opposition to meet any new danger threatening women in industry. It is a work in which we take special interest, and in which we shall be every ready to co-operate. St. Joan's S.P.A. as we have reported before is associated with the O.D.C.

Sir Robert Newman's Bill, the Married Women (Employment Bill) for which the N.U.S.E.C. was responsible, though defeated on its second reading, did help to advertise the fact that the interference with married women's right to engage in paid employment is keenly resented.

The agitation to raise the age of marriage

has resulted, as we reported last month, in the chief women's societies, including St. Joan's S.P.A., coming to an agreement to support a single one clause bill to make marriages under sixteen illegal.

We are glad that the Home Secretary has appointed a Committee of Enquiry, on Street Offences, which is now taking evidence.

In counting the gains of 1927, we must not forget the Southend election, which gave us another woman M.P. Lady Iveagh is a sound supporter of Equal Franchise.

Internationally, perhaps the most remarkable feminist gain is the fact that thirteen women sit in the National Assembly of Spain. A victory which should give impetus to the feminist movement in Latin countries.

We offer our sincere congratulations to our member, Frau Olga Rudel Zenek, the first woman to be President of the Federal Council, the second chamber of the Austrian Parliament. Frau Rudel Zenek, whom representatives of St. Joan's had the pleasure of meeting at the Paris Congress, is a Catholic and a member of the Christian Socialist party; she was for two years the member for Styria in the Lower House. In a letter to St. Joan's S.P.A., she expresses the hope that more Catholic women in Austria will be successful at the next elections.

In the League of Nations prejudice against giving women the position to which they are entitled is still rampant, but here again

the increased interest shown by women both in this and other countries, leads us to hope that by their united efforts they will compel Governments, and the Council of the League, to mend their ways.

On the whole 1927 has left a good memory behind, and we can face the new year full of hope and courage.

L. de Alberti.

International Notes.

(Continued from page 10.)

to women in the state of Rio Grande del Sur, the campaign in favour of women's suffrage has been much stimulated throughout the country.

* * * *

It would appear, however, that the women of Rio Grande del Sur have been wrongly credited with being the first women in Latin America to obtain the vote. The authoritative newspaper *La Nacion* of Buenos Aires reports an interview with the newly appointed minister of Ecuador in Argentine, Dr. Rafael Elizalde, in which he "cited legislative ratifications recently adopted in Ecuador, including votes for women." It is however difficult to appreciate this reform exactly because ever since the severe political crisis which occurred in Ecuador in 1925, constitutional government in that country has been superseded and ruling power exercised by a commission over which Dr. Isidro Ayala presides. It does not appear therefore, that the votes of Ecuadorians, whether men or women, have real value for the moment.

* * * *

El Mercurio (Santiago-de-Chile) reports that Don Santiago Rubio has introduced into the Chilean Chamber of Deputies a Bill to complete the civil rights of both men and women citizens of Chile. This Bill enlarges the civil rights granted to Chilean women by the decree-law of 1925. By its passage into law, a married woman would retain *patria potestas* over her children by a former marriage, and would have the use of her own property and the power of disposing of it, the community of property between husband and wife, which the Civil Code established, being thus abolished. Finally, the Bill would give a woman *patria potestas* over her illegi-

itimate children, a position which would make her position a privileged one as compared with that of men.

* * * *

We much regret that our contemporary *Nylanede*, the oldest organ of the woman's movement in Norway is obliged to cease publication, partly because of the ill-health of Fröken Morck, who has edited the paper with great ability since 1916.

H. D. I.

Some lovers of peace are distressed at the position which the O.T.C. holds in boys' colleges. We are told that in some of our own Catholic colleges, boys are compelled to become members of the O.T.C. This goes beyond the State and is in our opinion much to be regretted. We are informed that on the Sunday following last Armistice day, boys in uniform, complete with tin hats, were allowed to parade in one church, and present fixed bayonets at the Elevation. We know that it is customary for professional soldiers to present arms as an act of reverence, but for schoolboys to be play-acting in this fashion may well be taken for a glorification of war. It is scarcely consistent with Our Holy Father's plea for the Peace of Christ in the Reign of Christ.

We are indebted to our member Miss Dorman for a copy of the Annual Report of the Women's Enfranchisement League of South Africa, of which she is secretary. The report is a record of excellent work, which should bring the enfranchisement of women in South Africa nearer. In wishing St. Joan's a happy New Year, Miss Dorman makes some very cheering remarks about the Alliance and the *Catholic Citizen*, she finds them both a comfort and a joy and is good enough to say that she thinks the tone of the paper perfect, as it "just ignores sex discriminations and speaks as one human being to another, and shows the best Catholic spirit, which is really one of equality for all." Another subscriber writes that she finds the *Catholic Citizen* most useful as propaganda among French Catholics. It is messages like these, which show us that our work is successful.

Extracts from Miss Fedden's Speech

At the Annual Meeting of the Children of Mary (4th October, 1927).

I must first thank our good friend Dom Gilbert Higgins for giving us an opportunity of voicing the claims of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance to Catholic women at this meeting of the Children of Mary.

St. Joan's, I may start by saying, is a political organization of Catholic women. Political but non-party. Don't be afraid of politics. Now that so much is decided on the floor of the House of Commons, they enter into our daily lives at every point; they affect our work, they affect our homes, our schools and our Church.

Our Society which was formerly the C.W.S.S. was started by two young girls 17 years ago on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady. These girls had no money and no influence, but as the great oak springs from the tiny acorn so our alliance has developed into the well-known organization which has such prestige and influence in the Feminist Movement in this country and indeed in the Feminist Movement all over the world.

Most of you in this room are too young to remember the wonderful hold that the fight took on the minds and hearts of suffragists. We were inspired by a glorious vision of freed Womanhood, a promise of benefit to humanity at large. We were bound together in a great sisterhood of sacrifice and endeavour.

I remember standing outside Brook Green Church selling papers in 1916 one Sunday morning when Dom Gilbert Higgins hurried by to preach a sermon for some great cause.

He smiled and said: "I wish people would work for the Cause I am advocating as your people do for Suffrage."

I replied: "Our Suffrage work is our contribution to Christianity; the vote has spiritual significance for us; we believe a freed womanhood will change the world. How can Catholic women stand aside when they have seen the vision of a New World—a world of justice and the abolition of the Subjection of Women."

Then came our reward. Partial enfranchisement in 1918. We were glad, for 'Half a loaf is better than no bread,' but we

were not satisfied. Nothing will satisfy us but complete political equality. Votes for women on the same terms as men, viz., at 21.

You may ask what the Representation of the People Act, 1918 has done. Over 20 beneficent Acts have been passed since then affecting the status of women, and as Dame Millicent Fawcett has said: "I wish to emphasize not merely the number and value of the acts that have been passed since women had the vote, but the completely different and improved atmosphere that has been created as regarded the sphere of women in national life and its responsibilities."

But the fight is not over yet, even if we are at the last lap. We want all and each of you to give us a helping hand.

We have laboured all day in the vineyard and have borne the burden and the heats, but at the eleventh hour there is still time for you to join us. The many Catholic Societies have their work cut out and "more power to their elbow"; they carry out the spiritual and corporal works of mercy in the usual way, but we carry them out in a particular way, the political way. We dig deeply and are not content with tinkering at the surface. Our objects are to raise the status of womanhood the world over and to find fresh fields of usefulness for women as Catholics and citizens.

Our immediate work is to get Equal Franchise, after that we can concentrate on just legislation as between men and women particularly as regards an equal moral standard and equal pay and can more easily fight with all our power against State recognition of Birth Control. Our paper *The Catholic Citizen* contains information of the various bills before Parliament affecting women and only costs 2d. monthly.

Every Catholic woman is needed in the fight. No one must say "I don't count." We need every worker. We cannot do without one.

Then again every Catholic woman voter must use her vote; she must go to the polling booth as a sacred duty. Let her vote as she thinks right in her own political

party, but she must never waste her vote or under-rate her birthright. To stand aside and grumble when things go wrong is not worthy of a sportswoman. Remember the words of Pope Benedict XV "We would like to see women electors everywhere."

If you join St. Joan's, the only organization of Catholic women which has been working and is still working for franchise you will get ample guidance.

We are told "Woman's place is the Home," and we agree. Woman's place is in the home and in the world and in the State by the side of her mate, for it was divinely spoken: "It is not good for man to be alone."

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

45 Falkner Street, Liverpool.

Hon. Secretary: Miss N. S. Parnell, B.A.

It is hoped to hold a Whist Drive on March 14, to augment the funds of the Branch. As this is the first venture of its kind for many years, the Committee earnestly appeals to members to do their utmost to support it. Members are also reminded that their subscriptions are now due.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS.

January 1—31.

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£26 13 10

TREASURER'S NOTE.

We are grateful to all who have sent their annual subscriptions promptly, and hope that others will follow their good example this month. With the opening of the new session of Parliament, the Equal Franchise Campaign begins in deadly earnest, and every penny which our members can send will be needed to attain the end.

G. JEFFERY.

A correspondent sends us a copy of the Anti-Vivisectionist Review containing the text of the Humane Slaughter Bill. Every person who has feelings of humanity, whether vegetarians or not, must wish every precaution to be taken in the slaughtering of animals. There does not seem to be room for two opinions on the subject.

Annual Meeting.

The Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, March 17th, at 3 p.m., in St. Patrick's Club Room, Soho Sq.

After the business meeting is over Miss Alison Neilans will speak on the Solicitation Laws.

The business meeting is open to members of the Alliance only, but at 5 p.m. the public will be admitted. Tea may be had for 9d.

We trust that all members within reach of London will be present.

A report of the New Year Party will appear in our next issue.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE.

NON-PARTY.

Office—55, Berners St., Oxford St., London, W.
Patron: Saint Joan of Arc. Colours: Blue, White & Gold
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.

All Catholic women are eligible as Members, who approve the object and methods, and will pay a minimum annual subscription of 1s. Men are invited to join as Associates, on the same conditions, with the exception that they may not elect or be elected to the Executive.

I desire to be enrolled a Member (or Associate) of the St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance.

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CONVENT OF OUR LADY OF THE GENACLE,
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Saturday, February 25th to Sunday 26th p.m. Week-end Recollection; Fr. Geddes, S.J. Friday, March 9th, 11 to 5, Recollection Day; Fr. V. McNabb, O.P. Friday, March 9th—Tuesday, 13th, Ladies' Retreat—Fr. P. Sweeney, O.P.

The International Woman Suffrage News

The Monthly Organ of

THE INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN FOR SUFFRAGE AND EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

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St. Joan's Social & Political Alliance.

The Sixteenth Annual Meeting

(for members only) will be held on

SATURDAY, MARCH 17th, at 3 p.m.

At St. Patrick's Club Room, Soho Square.

SPEAKERS:

MISS ALMEDINGEN.

MISS ELEANOR FITZGERALD and others.

MISS HELEN DOUGLAS IRVINE in the Chair.

At 5 p.m. the Meeting will be open to the Public for Address by Miss ALISON NEILANS, on

"The Solicitation Laws."

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SPEAKERS:

The Rt. Hon. Stanley Baldwin, M.P.,

Sir Oliver Lodge, Miss Margaret Ashton, M.A.,
Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell, Miss Margaret Rippe,
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