

THE
CATHOLIC CITIZEN

VOLUME XXIV 1938



ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE
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.

"Woman Invades Man's Work"

BY MARY WALL

A recent correspondence in the Catholic Press reveals such a pitiful example of out-of-date thinking as to surprise even those of us who, by reason of a long experience, should not be surprised at anything.

It is only in the season when news is scarce that such sex-jealousy as underlies this scare-heading finds expression in print. Or can it be that Catholic men are over-prone to "this everlasting quarrel with the cards" which, as a great English writer tells us, characterises "the little man"?

It becomes increasingly necessary to define results of some social changes contemporary with, rather than actually linked up with the political liberation of women; and to re-state that the progress of invention leaves the modern woman with less and less to do in the modern home, while the waste of manhood by war lessens the chance of her marrying and subsiding into:

The safe, sweet corner by the household fire,
Behind the heads of children.

Let us note here, to clear the ground, that man has never objected to woman doing all or any of the hard work of the world; it is only when developments make her demand wages for what she does that "the little man" whines, or howls or blusters, according to his nature.

A fallacy that must at least be drawn attention to, is the favourite mistake of "the little man," ever jealous of his job being taken from him. It is that there are only so many jobs and that when a woman gets a business appointment she is taking that work and so much wages, from a man. It is, rather, true that "business makes business" and that every job competently performed is by way of making more work which other men or women will be

called on to do. This is true, though in a lesser sense, even of the parasitic jobs such as banking, and of merely administrative work in the office; it is true of all work done by competent men and women.

The Crimean War, following on the long struggle with France, was responsible for the talented women of the well-to-do home of that day obtaining the right to qualify for some of the learned professions. Others, ill-equipped, inadequately educated, unequal for the fight, struggled on awhile as untrained nurses, governesses, "lady-helps," etc., subsiding all too soon into the "poor ladies totally unprovided-for," now, as a class, rapidly dying out.

The Civil War between North and South with its ghastly aftermath of long streets, every house tenanted by a widow, pushed the American woman into the wage-market. The Boer War almost obliterated the male clerk, so prominent a feature of city life before that time. It caused the invasion of the office by the woman bookkeeper; while the invention of the typewriter, coming just when the business man was finding his written correspondence too much for him, gave him the now ubiquitous girl typist. "That girl in my office" then became the favourite butt of male humour, so-called: because, if you are treating anyone unjustly, you must and you surely will malign her. Tales were rife of her bad spelling, her unsuitable dress, her little "ways"; but never, never (oh, shame!) of the criminally low wages paid to her. She was in the office, in those early days, on suffrance; she must take what she was given or go into service.

In many cases the pioneer office girl, straight from the elementary school, quick-witted, willing and determined, actually developed and

expanded the business to which she came as a typist or bookkeeper.

"I was against taking a girl to work in our office; I did not think it was suitable," a rather hard-boiled North-country man said to me, thirty-five years ago. "But Miss Smith (let us call her) has quite converted me. She knows what I want better than I know myself; and she is far more economical over my expenses." Miss Smith was then in her early teens. I caught glimpses of her twice since then; a worn, prematurely old woman; I heard she was badly paid and that she held on loyally to her job in spite of offers from rival firms. That man died last year and his will was proved at one hundred and twenty thousand pounds; Miss Smith did not get a penny of it, though she had made the fortune quite as truly as he had.

An equally hard case personally known to me was that of a little girl who took a job as bookkeeper when she left the elementary school in a Midland town. She had taught herself from the textbook of her younger brother. Her employer was a thriving corn merchant and the man he discharged had been paid thirty-five shillings a week. He paid this girl four and sixpence a week and he told me himself "the book was kept by her just as well."

You "better-class" office women of to-day, trained to the tips of your clever fingers and holding down well-paid office jobs and important secretaryships, should never forget these young pioneers of fifty years ago. They went where you could not and would not go—then. Do you know what was said of Florence Nightingale and the women she enlisted to go with her to the Crimea as nurses?

Do you know that, when Mr. Gladstone passed his Married Women's Property Act, some seventy years ago, quite decent Englishmen declared they would have no hold now on the fidelity of their wives and no guarantee that wives would run straight now that they had the legal right to spend their own money!

I intended to head this article "The Woman in the Office" but the subject touches on so many points of feminist interest, that the wider title fits the case, especially as some of "the little men," have used it first as the name of their grievance. It is indeed hard to see that the sheltered life of the office is a man's work.

We see to-day in two great European countries, a determination to drive women back from their hardly-won positions in the world of business. Let us, here and now, remember that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"; and, while consolidating the position hold on to those gains which the gallant pioneers in this

field won at such a bitter cost. Women in the office are consolidating their positions all the time; it is heartening to note their successes in night classes for the study of commercial languages, and for efficiency in the standardised arts of business life.

I have space only to mention that the Great War appears to have liberated the working woman. She is better paid, has easier hours and invention has made her work lighter. But charring and cleaning remain hard and dirty work; the cleaning of offices must perforce be done at awkward hours, that is before eight in the morning and after six in the evening; it involves the carrying of heavy burdens up and down numerous stairs. But, so far, I have not heard one of these critics who are so anxious to tell us what labour is best suited to our sex, not one lay or clerical exponent of the theory that "woman's place is the home" even hint that married women ought not to work—at charring or cleaning!

British Nationality of Aliens

Mr. Eden, replying to Mr. Sandeman Allen in the House, on November 22nd said:

Under the British Nationality and Status of Aliens (in New Zealand) Amendment Act, 1934-35, and similar legislation passed in the Commonwealth of Australia in 1936, a British woman who has acquired foreign nationality by reason of her marriage with a foreigner and has thereby lost her British nationality may elect to retain while in New Zealand or Australia, respectively, the rights and obligations of a British subject. These rights are purely local and any assistance which such women might receive from British consular officers could be given only as a matter of courtesy. They would not be entitled as of right to British protection in foreign countries and if they desired intervention on their behalf with foreign authorities their appropriate course would be to apply for assistance of their husband's country. So far as I am aware, no similar legislation has been enacted in Canada.

27th Annual Meeting for Members only

The Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, March 12th. Nominations for Committee and resolutions for the Agenda must reach the Secretary not later than February 7th.

We remind members that nominations must be duly proposed and seconded and the consent of the candidate obtained.

Notes and Comments

The officers and many members of the Alliance were at Victoria Station to welcome his Eminence Cardinal Hinsley on his return from Rome on January 9th. Mrs. Hand was our representative at the ceremony in Westminster Cathedral. Once more we offer his Eminence our heartfelt congratulations.

* * * *

Our very good friend from early days, Dom Gilbert Higgins, C.R.L., writes (Epiphany, 1938): "May this glorious feast bring the Alliance every blessing temporal and eternal!

"Your work which I am so glad to see telling in favour of woman's too long delayed emancipation has been a great comfort for me, an invalid, to watch. It will, I hope, continue to progress for the glory of God and the peace and joy of the world. Please pray for Gilbert Higgins, C.R.L."

* * * *

In connection with our front page article, "Woman Invades Man's Work," its author, Miss Wall, recently wrote a "fighting" letter to the *Catholic Herald* on the subject. One remark we feel is too good to be lost in oblivion so we repeat it here:

"Things are neither better nor worse than they were, they are only different. When I was young, one heard of men pitying themselves because they could not marry, having to support a lot of sisters at home!"

Those who blame women for men's unemployment would get rather a shock if all women came out of employment, making it necessary for their nearest male relative to support them!

Another excellent letter which appeared the same day, from H. O'Brien, supports a contention we have often upheld:

"Does the Church, ex cathedra, teach that woman is a human person and therefore (by definition) a free being created by God for Himself? If so, the definition itself implies her right to self-determination. So long as she is striving to know, love and serve God in this life and to be happy with Him forever in the next. If the Church does not regard woman as a human person then what is her classification in the hierarchy of created beings?

Further, are those talents which enable certain women to hold honourable positions as doctors, lawyers, civil servants or Members of Parliament to be regarded as gifts of God. If so, surely the fortunate possessors have not only the right, but the duty to develop these gifts to the best of their ability to His greater glory—no matter how many men, desiring their jobs for themselves, may regard them with every malice and all uncharitableness. Or alternatively must we regard every woman who has not the vocation for charring, nursing, teaching or millinery as possessed of the devil?"

From the *Woman Teacher* we cull some facts on income tax rebates which are often forgotten. By means of rebates married men have considerable help in maintaining a family. For instance, a man earning £300 might not have to pay income tax because of family rebates; while a single woman earning the same salary would pay a considerable amount even though she had dependants. A married man with one child would pay £1 13s. 4d. in income tax, while a single woman with a dependant mother would pay £26 5s. 0d. This help which men receive towards bringing up their children should be remembered by the opponents of equal pay.

* * * *

When Miss Martindale retired from the post of Director of Women Establishments, the women's organizations in the Civil Service asked that the post should be abolished and a new post be created, of rank not lower than Assistant Secretary. If aggregation is to be wholeheartedly adopted, such a post as that vacated by Miss Martindale is an anomaly. The Treasury has met that request only halfway, for the new post to which Miss Curtis has just been appointed bears the somewhat lengthy title of "Assistant Secretary and Director of Women Establishments." However there is no doubt about the new official having all the duties and responsibilities of an Assistant Secretary, and she will, further, be available for work specially affecting women, as on Selection and Promotion Boards.—*Opportunity*.

* * * *

At a recent meeting of the Torquay Town Council, the Finance Committee reported that it had been resolved at a meeting of its members that in future the appointment of women employees should terminate automatically on their marriage. We deplore this reactionary decision.

The Surrey Education Committee has decided to lift the ban on the employment of married women teachers in its elementary schools. Women teachers will still be required to resign on marriage, but will be eligible for re-appointment in open competition, excepting to schools or departments where their husband or a near relative is employed.

This seems a curiously unjust and clumsy method of removing an injustice. But perhaps justice was not the object of the Committee?

* * * *

For the first time in 700 years a woman has been elected Sheriff of Chester.

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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Surrounded With Variety

It was a Frenchman whose method rather than his message we admire, who said, "toutes choses sont dites déjà, mais comme personne n'écoute il faut toujours recommencer!" It is more than ever necessary to have the patience to begin again, and the perseverance to continue, when patience is not a popular virtue, and when everything that seems to us to call out for the frank co-operation of men and women in the service of humanity seems to others to prove that the "emancipation of women has destroyed their womanhood." It is when a cause is advancing that there is the greatest temptation to impatience, but it is patience that is promised her "perfect work."

The subjects of these brief studies* are women of all types who were similar in their determination to use their gifts, to follow their vocation at a time when the attempt to do so exposed the sensitive to such criticism that only the strongest persevered. Nowadays when the choice of a career should be so much easier, it is astonishing how easily the young person gives up hope of achieving his or her desire, how tamely they seem to give way before the slightest opposition, to seek "security" rather than adventure. These miniature lives, if not the full biographies, should be in school libraries to encourage the young to follow their bent with patient determination, and so add to the infinite variety of the manifestations of the human spirit. For these women, as for us today, the struggle to be allowed to use their talents was a moral one, and they brought to it an undismayed faith in the power of truth to

prevail that is an example to those controversialists who tend to score a point rather than present a case. Not that they all suffered fools gladly and were all models of patient exposition—but it is in the capacity to bide their time, to overcome their obstacles, that they show their moral strength.

Some would undoubtedly have found their vocation in a Religious Order if they had lived in other circumstances, but all of them followed their vocation to develop gifts that add to the sum of human achievement in the world. Apart from the already famous Elizabeth Fry, Florence Nightingale, Agnes Jones and Elizabeth Blackwell, explorers are here, and writers, scientists and a mathematician, an intrepid missionary who did the work of an unofficial District Commissioner, and a great and noble actress. Each did her work with a sense of personal humility and a profound determination to vindicate her right to do what she believed it was intended she should do.

Emancipation means setting woman free for duty, not from duty, and the realisation of the tremendous potential value of her contribution to the human race. It does not imply that woman should be dragged, an unwilling Galatea, from her pedestal, but it does imply that she should be given the chance to co-operate with man in the attempt to raise the human race, for whose fall, at least, she has never been grudged her full share of responsibility.

Patience and courage are necessary, and these are the keynotes of these lives. They are worth studying, for, "courage is catching, too!"

P. C. CHALLONER.

* Pioneer Women. Series 1—4. By Margaret Tabor (S.P.C.K. 2s. 6d. each).

State Regulation of Vice

We note that at their last Annual Assembly the Cardinals and Archbishops of France adopted the following resolution:

"This Assembly issues a decree that movements in favour of the Abolition of the Regulation of Prostitution shall be encouraged."

The Shield (December, 1937) publishes papers presented to the Congress of the International Abolitionist Federation held in Paris last May. Among them are those of two priests the Abbé Viollet and Dr. J. Ude, Professor at the University of Graz.

M. l'Abbé Viollet deals with "Regulation and the Adolescent."

"... He (the adolescent) has been given to understand that impurity is an evil; now society tells him that it is so normal that it must be organised and protected. A kind of object lesson is given to the young adolescent to show him that relations with women outside marriage are perfectly normal..."

"We are told that there are men for whom sexual satisfaction outside marriage is absolutely necessary. We know that it is impossible to prevent the existence in our society of thieves, drunkards and violent persons; why not organise houses where those who cannot help stealing may steal under the protection of the law, and where those who cannot control their craving for alcohol may under the protection of the State, drink till they fall to the ground?"

"... By Regulation evil is made to appear a normal and regular thing, and that is why the whole system of Regulation is an abomination."

Dr. Ude, dealing with "The Crux of the Problem of Prostitution," says:

"... Pope Benedict himself gave his blessing to the International Abolitionist Federation, which strives for the complete abolition of state regulation of prostitution..."

"Our moralists and our theologians often judge this question without sufficient knowledge of the terrible conditions under which prostitution is carried on in these houses. Those who hold the existence of such houses to be a lesser evil must also admit as a 'lesser evil' the shameful traffic in girls, which is a logical outcome of this system and many ignominious practices besides."

"... If the State regulates prostitution and tolerates licensed houses, it is entering into a compact with vice and inciting men to give way to their sensuality..."

"No Christian can continue to uphold such a point of view. How is it that they do not show greater courage in such a grave question and do not make their way of thinking a triumph?"

"... It is vain to try to justify State Regulation from a moral point of view. In reality it is nothing more than the systematic destruction of souls and a cause of the degradation of public morality."

María Herminia Lisboa

We extend a warm welcome to Miss Lisboa, founder and President of the Brazilian section—"Alliança Santa Joana d'Arc"—on her approaching visit to London. Our members will shortly have the pleasure of meeting her.

Women Shop Assistants

In the Debate on the Adjournment on December 22nd Mr. R. J. Davies (Lab., West-houghton) called attention to the conditions of employment in the Distributive Trades, and urged the necessity of a more strict and uniform administration of the Shops Acts.

He said there were over 1,000,000 shops of all kinds in the country and about 2,500,000 shop assistants, the majority of them in some towns being women and girls, who were easily exploited. It was not uncommon to find women receiving 15s. a week, less reduction for meals expected to be taken in the establishment and for the several social services.

Mrs. Tate (U., Frome) said she knew of a girl who paid £45 for a three-term course at a florist's with the idea of getting a good job. When she had completed the course she was unemployed for three months and then obtained one at 10s. a week. She urged that that kind of thing should not be permissible, and went on to say that there were in London a large number of beauty parlours which sometimes took assistants who signed on nominally as apprentices to learn the trade. They might be skilled masseuses and manicurists, but they received no pay for four or five years. The idea was that when they left the shop they would be experts in beauty culture and know how to make the various creams and lotions, but the proprietors took every precaution that the girls should not learn one of the recipes, and the girls left the shop, no more fitted for expert employment than when they entered it.

Mrs. Tate also drew attention to agreements put forward between the employers and employees—the proposed scales of wages being: 17s. for male assistants at 16 to 63s. at 25; and for females 14s. at 15 to 39s. at 24. It was indefensible that the wages of a girl should be 3s. a week less than those of a boy.

—*Women's Freedom League Bulletin.*

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions to the Alliance and to the "Catholic Citizen" are now due. We beg all our friends to send their subscriptions without delay and thus save extra work and expense at the Office. Subscription to the "Catholic Citizen" 2s. 6d., minimum annual subscription to the Alliance 1s. At the same time we remind members that 1s. does not cover even the expense of sending notices, and we ask them to increase their subscriptions if possible.

Reviews

Angel's Mirth. By Ethel Cook Eliot (Sheed & Ward, 7s. 6d.)

This the second novel by Ethel Cook Eliot holds one's interest as much or more than her first story "A Time to Keep." Not all the characters have a firm air of reality but Mary Stevens, the little heroine of sixteen, and Irina Sands, her Catholic friend, are true and convincing. A novel with a central religious appeal is difficult of achievement without becoming "preachy"—and Mrs. Eliot is certainly never that. Yet her book is not entirely satisfactory. There is often something forced and affected about her writing—a kind of unhealthiness which makes one long for a breath of fresh air.

An Irishman's Calendar. A Quotation from the works of T. M. Kettle for every day in the year. Compiled by his wife. (Dublin. Browne and Nolan, 2s.)

This little book is compiled from the works of a man who was a wonderful Catholic, a good feminist and "the sworn foe of the belittlers of Ireland." To quote again from the foreword by Robert Lynd: "He gave his life greatly for his ideal of a free Ireland in a free Europe." Mrs. Kettle, the able compiler, is a keen member of St. Joan's Alliance.

Careers and Openings for Women. By Ray Strachey. (Faber & Faber, 3s. 6d.)

A revised and cheaper edition of this excellent book reviewed in the CATHOLIC CITIZEN, 1935.

Liberty of the Subject: How "Prostitutes" are Treated. (The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, price 1d.) is "prepared for Members of Parliament but of interest to non-members also." This excellent penny-worth asks the pertinent question: "Do you think that because a woman—often a young girl—is immoral she has no right to legal justice?" It begs M.P.s to help get altered laws applying only to alleged "common prostitutes" and "laws not dealing with solicitation but often applied to women, not known to be prostitutes, for alleged annoyance of men by solicitation," and lastly asks: "Will you help this Association to get these words 'common prostitute or of known immoral character' deleted from the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1885* so that all third-party sexual exploitation of women, whether moral or immoral, shall be punished?"

C. S.

* Any person who procures or attempts to procure any girl or woman under twenty-one years of age, not being a common prostitute or of known immoral character . . . shall be guilty, etc.

A Candeia

There is much to command our attention in a recent number of *A Candeia* (Brazil) organ of Aliança Santa Joanna d'Arc. In view of the present sad situation in Spain the following two extracts are of current interest.

Conception Arenal

(By Leontina Licinio Cardoso.)

Among the Internationalists of the 19th century, one of the major figures of the country of St. Teresa of Avila was Conception Arenal. Born in 1820 she was a poet, a social student and a writer with a philosophic bent. She became a distinguished jurist after attending the Academy of Law in male clothes to avoid scandal. Her writings affirm the necessity of educating and raising the social standard of the poor, and her "Essay on the Right of Nations" lays down a code of international rights based on arbitration for the pacific solution of disputes. Dorado, a professor of Penal Law at Salamanca, said of her: "If we have deserved the consideration of other nations in the matter of penal law, we owe it to the work of Conception Arenal." Internationally she set forth humanitarian ideals, denounced wars of conquest, laid down rules of pacific policy and even suggested the creation of a Supreme Tribunal of Conciliation. (The writer goes on to say that if such gifts as Conception Arenal's have been rare among women, it is because their education has been so poor that they have not been conscious of what they are, and what they are capable of.)

Letter to the Women of Spain

(By Martinez Sierra. 1921.)

Women of Spain, ladies—in my humble and respectful opinion you are rather asleep. Yet for Spain too the hour of testing may come and in conflicts less noticeable but sufficiently so it has already come. You too, no doubt, desire to do your duty heroically. But for effective heroism the wish is not enough, it is necessary to have the means of being heroic. There is need for preparation, for a little more knowledge, for stepping out of the enchanted circle in which you are enclosed by certain pretty lies of men, for caring a little less about fashions and a tiny bit more about life, for less enthusiasm about flirting and more about justice. The men of Spain give you lamentable examples of frivolity, ignorance, cowardice, of being wanting in abnegation and patriotism? True, but do not you follow their example, for ever since the first woman brought into the world the second man, the future of Humanity has lain in women's hands.

International Notes

On December 8th the Rt. Hon. J. A. Lyons, C.H., Prime Minister of Australia, stated that he intended to call an early conference of Federal and State representatives on the future of the aborigines.

He admitted that there was room for improvement in the treatment of the natives and that improvement was even imperative and urgent but deprecated recent exaggerated statements. The Commonwealth Government, he said, were dissatisfied with the present system of control and desired to consult the States.—*Times*.

* * * * *

In an article "New Horizons in the Missions" (*The Commonwealth, U.S.A.*) Edward F. Garesché describes a new community of religious women which at his suggestion, approved by His Eminence Cardinal Hayes, was founded in 1935. Its object is to work for the establishment of a native profession of doctors and nurses in the missions. It was given the name of Daughters of Mary Health of the Sick but the Sisters are also known as the Mission Health Education Sisters.

" . . . This foundation derives from and is dependent on no other institute. Its Constitution and Rules and even its religious habit are new and especially designed for its work. It will seek to send its members in well-prepared and well-organized groups to establish a school of medicine, in mission lands, for native students of medicine and nursing."

* * * * *

Mrs. Jennie Loitman Barron, of Boston, Mass., U.S.A., has been appointed by the Governor of Mass., and sworn in as Associate Justice of the Municipal Court of the City of Boston. She is a graduate of Boston University Law School, a practising attorney for many years, serving first as Assistant Attorney General of Massachusetts and later as a Special Justice of a District Court, but now the first woman of Massachusetts to be appointed as Associated Justice of the largest Court in this State. She is married to an attorney and has three children.

* * * * *

We congratulate our member, Miss Theresa Dowling of the U.S.A. on her appointment on the "Criminal Law and Its Enforcement Committee" of the National Association of Women Lawyers.

* * * * *

We rejoice that in Sweden women teachers in primary schools will now enjoy equal pay with men. This measure was passed by the Riksdag during its last session. S. A. B.

HON. TREASURER'S NOTE

Once more we have had a Christmas Stall at the Women's Freedom League Fair. Whereas in 1936 we raised the sum of £36 9s. 7d. and were delighted with the achievement, this time (1937) we have raised the magnificent sum of £57 8s. 11d. To all who have given, whether in goods, donations or by selling and buying we offer our most grateful thanks.
C. J. GARARD.

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LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH

Hon. Secretary: Miss Bowden, 22, Fern Grove, Liverpool, 8.

On January 3rd we held our 25th Annual Meeting, by kind permission of Miss Bowden at her house in Fern Grove.

The Annual Report and Treasurer's Statement were read by Miss Bowden and adopted by the meeting. The Treasurer's Statement showed a substantial balance on the right side. We were glad to welcome Miss Barry and Miss Spender from headquarters. They gave us an account of events in Geneva last September when the "Status of Women" was on the League of Nations Agenda.

Resolutions were passed urging equality in the solicitation laws; equal pay and opportunities; equal benefits and contributions under all National Insurance schemes; the appointment of women police with full powers of arrest and equality of status with men; deploring the passage of the divorce bill and one on slavery.

The meeting was enthusiastic and was well attended in spite of the cold night.

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