

WOMEN'S SERVICE

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NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

THE

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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.

A Woman's Place*

BY C. M. CHEKE

"Unknown to you is my thirst: unseen by you are the waters that would save me." This cry of Florence Nightingale to her puzzled and interfering relatives might also be applied not only to Elizabeth Fry as her biographer, Janet Whitney, suggests but to all the would-be workers of good, especially women, hampered by the prejudices of others.

Elizabeth Fry, like Florence Nightingale, was fortunate in that she did eventually find her real place in life and "scope for her morally active powers." It may be said that she had some unusual advantages: her family was wealthy and influential, she married into an even richer one, and in the Quaker world she had become accustomed to truly democratic ideas—especially that of sex equality. She also suffered great disadvantages, yet the amount of excellent work carried out by her is astounding; especially when it is remembered that in addition to what is generally considered to be her life's work, she brought eleven children into the world, and being a good nurse when nurses and doctors were scarce, was at the continual beck and call of numerous relations. She looked upon these things as duties and trials that helped to form her character just as she believed that her constant physical sufferings were sent to prevent her from becoming too absorbed in the joys, cares and troubles of family life which she never considered as the whole of life: at a very early age she recognised that there was a supernatural side to her

that needed satisfying in other fields of action.

The early chapters of this excellent biography show well the gradual development of her spiritual life. In early youth, i.e., before the age of seventeen, she read and discussed the works of such writers as Voltaire, Rousseau, Godwin and Tom Paine. Perhaps it was these thoughtful (if heretical) studies that deepened and broadened her mind so that although she did not then believe in God, perhaps some of the seeds of belief implanted by the Catholic youth, John Pitchford, found fertile ground.

The Quaker services were tedious and uninspiring, and Pitchford, the only real religious influence of her early youth, though he never tried to proselytize, was soon banished from the house, and we find young Elizabeth Gurney on her own, painfully seeking after Truth.

As a result of Pitchford's influence, one of the Gurney sisters read the New Testament to her motherless sisters and brothers and Elizabeth found it "unusually interesting." She desired Faith, at first because of the comfort it would bring, then because of her "need" for it and finally because it is the foundation of "the good life"; and although Elizabeth never arrived at the one true Faith she at last "felt God" after a sermon by a Quaker preacher, William Savery, in which he showed himself so "advanced" in thought as to press the need for returning to first Christian principles; for example, even while the Napoleonic wars were going on and there had been a panicky fear of a French invasion, he expressed

* Elizabeth Fry. By Janet Whitney. (Harrap 12s. 6d.)

the hope that "countries assuming the appellation of Christians would no longer delight in war," and opined that to thank God for victory over an enemy could not be "an acceptable service."

As her faith grew she saw in the varying circumstances of her life the possibility of a Divine care and guidance, and when another great Quaker preacher, Deborah Darby, spoke of those who were to be as "a light to the blind, speech to the dumb, and feet to the lame," Elizabeth took this as a message to herself—that her religion must be expressed in action and she never forgot it. Her faith was not vain for she immediately began to "do." In an age where the wealthy were almost unconscious of any mode of life other than their own Elizabeth's eyes were suddenly opened, she realised the sin of "not noticing," and discovered the poor, with their great want, and their untaught, dirty, ill-fed children; "and as she found scope," says her biographer, "for morally active powers, she felt those powers increase with use."

Her wisdom shows itself in her deliberations about marriage. When hard pressed by a suitor she argues with herself: "If I have active duties to perform in the Church (*if I follow the voice of Truth in my heart*) are they not incompatible with the duties of wife and mother?" Virginité without prudery!

She then searches for the truth of that conclusion—is it of God or of men? What if she is merely following her own inclinations to simplify life—"not to have domestic and duties of the Church unite—for with God all things are possible."

She discussed this matter with her lover, and whether from conviction or the determination to win her we are not told, but Joe Fry answered aright and she eventually yielded to his importunities "though more" she tells her diary, "from duty than anything else."

Elizabeth had never been robust and it took her some months to recover from each of her dreaded eleven confinements. Yet while still very weak and tending her first beloved little daughter her conscience pricks her for the poor little scholars that she has let drop out of her life. Her growing love for her husband, her travels in his company, the dread and exhaustion of childbirth, the cares of family life, the illnesses, love affairs and deaths of numerous relatives cannot crowd out of her life "the ache of unused capacities that she could not define." She was ever conscious of "other duties," and after the birth of her third child we find her

in company with Joe Fry seeking out and ministering to the poor.

She gained a widespread reputation for nursing, and before her seventh child was born established a village school for poor children. At 31 she felt herself called to speak at Quaker meetings, and her spirited and spontaneous preaching won the hearts of her hearers. Then the tongues began to wag. Elizabeth might leave her home, to minister to the sick, tend infectious cases among relations while nursing a new-born child—but occasionally to minister to spiritual needs, this was out of place.

Her detractors discovered that her children were sometimes naughty. Neither they nor she realised that for six healthy unrepresed children of tender years to conform to Quaker standards of goodness—and at a Quaker meeting—was impossible. Elizabeth's sound judgment would never countenance brutish punishments, and yet she blamed herself for over-indulgence.

At last a new call came to Elizabeth and she did not delay in her response. Stephen Grellet came to her in distress with a woeful tale of prison conditions.

After the loss of one child and the birth of an eighth, while a body of well-intentioned men discussed prison reform, Elizabeth went into the prisons and reformed them. She began prison schools for both children and women—advocated and introduced employment with a little pay—warm clothing, clean bedding, female warders, and while Sam Hoare and Fowell Buxton questioned as to what extra punishments would be reasonable for this scum of thieves and prostitutes, "No punishment at all," said the unreasonable Elizabeth.

Elizabeth's husband and his money and influence had to help her in her fight against the "entrenched conservatism of authority."

The timid Elizabeth, as she learned of horror upon horror, upset complacent officials by her unladylike curiosity and persevering interference, till at last none could withhold the fact that she had succeeded and she became the fashion. Then the important ones flocked round her and harassed her work by their flattering obsequiousness where before they had condemned. She became "the favourite saint" of great reformers and her aid was much sought after. Reform followed reform at home and abroad. She was relieved of some of her family cares and two growing daughters became their illustrious mother's secretaries. At last, worn out with work and ill-health and the selfish demands of relatives she ended her useful life.

Notes and Comments

The following message from His Holiness Pope Pius XI has been received by St. Joan's Alliance:

"Eugene Cardinal Pacelli, Secretary of State to His Holiness, begs to express the paternal gratitude of the Holy Father for the message of devoted homage addressed to Him on the occasion of His eightieth Birthday Anniversary, and to convey to the sender, in pledge of abundant grace the Apostolic Benediction of His Holiness."

* * * * *

We offer our congratulations to the Rt. Hon. J. A. Lyons, C.H., Prime Minister of Australia, on the new honours conferred on him, namely the Freedom of the Cities of London and Aberdeen and the honorary degree of LL.D. of Cambridge University; also to Miss Thelma Cazalet, M.P., on her appointment as Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Education.

* * * * *

The Widows, Orphans and Old Age Contributory Pensions Bill passed its third reading in the House of Lords on June 30th, but not without a final protest by our friends.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh moved an amendment which, on division, was lost by 8 votes, these being 33 to 41. The amendment sought to make the income limit for women in the first year £400 and not £250, thus including within the scope of the Bill a large group of the hard cases now in existence.

The amendment was supported by Lord Gainford, Lord Strabolgi and Viscount Cecil of Chelwood. Of the Catholic Peers who took part in the division Lord Denbigh voted in favour of the amendment; Lord Iddesleigh, Lord Howard of Glossop, Lord Semphill and Lord Strickland against.

The Bill received the Royal Assent on July 1st.

* * * * *

Opportunity draws attention to a point which "the opponents of equal pay are far too prone to forget."

The following figures are quoted from recently published tables. "On an earned income of £400 a single person pays £32 10s. in income tax; a married man without children pays only £12 10s.; with one child he pays still less, i.e., £6 13s. 4d."

This disposes of the fallacy that equal pay will give a single woman the same effective income as a married man with a family. It simply puts her on the same footing as an unmarried man, who is never penalised in the matter of wages on the score of not having dependents.

* * * * *

"A Call to Christian Womanhood." This is the title of an article by Father Raymond O'Flynn, M.A., appearing in the June number of the *Catholic Gazette*. "Unquestionably the status of woman has been considerably lowered within the last few decades . . . Women have insisted on being treated like men, and have forfeited in consequence the homage which was paid them precisely because they were not men," writes Father O'Flynn, and much more of the same ilk, which most of us have heard before. He goes on: "It is not by any alteration political or economical; it is not by doing badly what men by nature do better that such a state of things can be remedied, but by insisting on the virtues in which woman is naturally superior—through her more delicate moral perception her instinctive sympathy with what is right and praiseworthy, her greater capacity for self-sacrifice."

Poor men. Not much is left for them in the way of virtue; one wonders that there are any men saints or priests at all!

This article was originally an address given at the *Children of Mary* Rally at Exeter on May 22nd.

* * * * *

The *British Medical Journal* comments on an article in the *Charity Organisation Quarterly* which deals with information elicited by a questionnaire sent out to collect material from this country for the International Congress of "La Mère au Foyer," recently held in Paris. The *British Medical Journal* says:

But although it is difficult to see the wood for the trees the main theme appears to be the question whether a mother should work or stay at home. Provided that pregnancy is safeguarded, that an adequate alternative to maternal supervision is available for the children, and that the mother's employment does not take the form of heavy manual labour, the general consensus of opinion appears to be in favour of work. With small families housekeeping is not a whole-time job, and the beneficial effect of outside interests for the mother, together with the improvement in material living conditions for the family provided by her earnings, are points adduced in support of this view.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE,

AND

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

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Bethany*

In the September of 1864 a young Dominican, Father Lataste, preached a mission to the women prisoners of the "Maison Centrale" of Cadillac-sur-Garonne. In the course of his talks he told his listeners of other "prisoners" who were prisoners for love's sake—the Carmelites, Trappistes, Capuchins, Dominicans. Comparing these lives with their own he showed his sad congregation how to "transform into love and joy the sinister walls, the heavy labours, the terrible silence, the poverty, the subjection, the absence of human affection" which was their lot. "God loves purity and virtue," he cried, "but what He loves above all is to be loved. God does not care about what we may have been; he only cares about what we are . . . If you want to, you can become more beloved of God than those souls who have never fallen . . . Is Magdalene less loved for having sinned so greatly?"

It was during this mission that the project of "Bethany" sprang to life to haunt Father Lataste until it was accomplished. In effect he conceived the idea of a congregation of women within which "Magdalenes" of all types could rise to the highest ranks of religious life, and which would save many a poor soul, on her release from prison. The world was not willing to show trust in the good will of these, therefore they should be given the chance of rising to greater heights than the world ever attains. Moreover, Father Lataste considered that some characters are not made to be mediocre—they are only capable of the heights or the depths. These characters, often found among prisoners detained for serious offences, ought to be given the chance of trying a vocation in

* Les Dominicaines des Prisons. By M. H. Lelong, O.P. (Les Editions du Cerf. 15 frs.)

which they might lose their lives to find them again in a manner undreamt of by the more mediocre.

After the objections and the many difficulties, which usually beset the launching of a new idea, had been partly overcome and the consent of his Dominican Superior had been obtained, Father Lataste, by what can only be called the Providence of God, succeeded in finding the right woman to start his work. She was a Presentation nun, forty-four years of age, and directress of a girls' school, who, hearing of Father Lataste's project, wrote to him and also to her spiritual director, Father Sandreau, who happened to be the former superior and faithful friend and admirer of Father Lataste. To cut a long story short she left the Order in which she had worked for twenty-three years and became Mother Henri-Dominique, first Mother Superior of "the Sisters of the Congregation of Saint Mary Magdalene, called Bethany, of the Third Order of Penitence of St. Dominic." A house was bought at Frasnelle-Château not far from Besançon, Cardinal Mathieu at length gave his authorisation, and here the poor beginnings were made. Father Lataste stayed at the new Convent in order to rule the details of conventual life. Gradually the plan of the new Congregation worked itself out in his mind. The "rehabilitated" (note the past tense) are to compose one third of each House. They are at first to be called Aspirants (one year) then "little Sisters" (three years), then a year's postulancy and they can receive the habit of novice and go straight on to simple profession and perpetual vows. Even if they do not quite fit in to this schedule "the door is never to be closed"—they can always attain to perpetual vows, whatever their past may have been.

The point to be remembered is that "réhabilitées" are able to ascend by steps and themselves become "réhabilitantes" ready to help on the upward journey their sisters who are still at a less happy stage. At all times "réhabilitées" are so to be mingled with "réhabilitantes," even as far as dress is concerned, that outsiders cannot distinguish one from another. Their identity is a professional secret kept strictly within the Convent walls, their past is buried and known only to the Mother Superior and perhaps one other. The atmosphere of the Convent is not to partake of the refuge or the reformatory—in short the penitentiary—but the "réhabilitées" are truly to be part of one great family. Father Lataste wished them "from the very first moment to aim no longer at rehabilitation but at the religious life," and every stage they go through has as its ultimate aim their training for this life.

Father Lataste did not hide or cover under a cloud of sentiment the difficulties of his task. For an Order or Congregation to receive as one of itself an occasional "penitent" is quite a different thing from setting out to woo discharged prisoners of every type (long term prisoners were Father Lataste's especial predilection) to embrace the religious life. No doubt some would be more sinned against than sinning but all would need individual consideration and help to a greater or lesser degree. Father Lataste had to impress on the workers in this particular vineyard the fact that they would need the patience, humility and love of God Himself, together with a sense of humour and proportion. In truth the record in the Convent Chronicle of the reception of the first Aspirant ("enfant") expresses a naive disappointment, though the recorder perceives the humour of the situation. Here was "no angel" but someone outside the canons and the personal experience of the Sisters. How were they to tackle her? And how were they to tackle those that would follow her? But the Sisters were on the right road, the road of those who seek first the Kingdom of God—and so all things were added to them, even the infused experience which should help them to understanding. All would have to realise the truth of the phrase: "There but for the Grace of God . . ."; many would come to know the utmost depths of sin, degradation and wretchedness in a vicarious manner; they must all be able to act in an emergency. In such an atmosphere there is little room for pettiness and lack of vision, and this freedom from the shackles of small-mindedness is their reward, it is, so to speak,

the gift of the little Sisters, once prisoners.

The love that inspired Father Lataste in the founding of the Congregation of Bethany may be noted in every thoughtful provision made by its rules. Nothing is to remind the little Sisters of prison life (for this reason the grille was abolished); a "réhabilitante" and a "réhabilitée" are to watch together, two by two, before the Blessed Sacrament exposed all day; the great Canonical Office according to the Dominican rite is to be the liturgical prayer of the religious at which all the inhabitants of the Convent are to assist. Those who know the calming effect of the great liturgical offices of the Church will realise the value of this last provision.

As one reads Father Lelong's beautiful and tender account of "Bethany" one is reminded of a truly "Bethanian" verse from Father Faber's famous hymn:

For the love of God is greater
Than the measures of man's mind,
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind.

CHRISTINE SPENDER.

Look to Your Votes

Again we remind our readers of the importance of inspecting the lists of electors which were published on July 15th.

The annual register of electors will be published on October 15th next and will remain in force for a year. The preliminary lists may now be seen at the various post offices and other public buildings and at the office of the registration officer in each district. It is important that these lists should be inspected to ensure that names are not omitted.

Should the name of any person entitled to a vote be omitted from the list, a claim should be sent in at once to the registration officer at the local town hall. The last day for sending in claims is August 7th in England and Wales, and August 21st in Scotland.

We send our sympathy and good wishes to Miss Chrystal Macmillan who we are glad to know is now recovering from her serious illness in the course of which she was obliged to have her leg amputated. Miss Macmillan has so far recovered as to have been able to travel to Scotland.

St. Joan's Alliance in Australia

Hon. Secretary: Miss Margaret Flynn, c/o The Catholic Central Library, Collins Street, Melbourne.

As we go to press an air mail letter from Miss Flynn tells us that on St. Joan's Day, May 30th, the blue, white and gold of the Alliance was worn for the first time in the Church of St. Francis, Melbourne's oldest church, by a band of women who received Holy Communion at a special Mass offered in honour of St. Joan for the King and Queen and the Alliance. Many members came long distances, and those who were unable to travel to Melbourne received Holy Communion for this intention in their own parish churches.

Alliança Santa Joanna D'Arc

President: Exma Snra Maria Herminia Lisboa, 69, Praça Pastem, Petropolis, Rio, Brazil.

Alliança Santa Joanna d'Arc has recently published a leaflet setting forth the revised constitution of the Society. His Eminence Cardinal Leme on receipt of the leaflet sent a telegram to the President: "In thanking you for the statutes I call down Divine blessings on so interesting, Christian and highly beneficent a work." His Excellency Bishop J. P. Alves also expressed approval in a letter saying: "I am certain that the new constitution is increasingly calculated to create an atmosphere beneficial to the work of feminine culture and women's activities it sets before itself."

The President sends us details of the badge and banners of Alliança and its motto: "In veritate in caritate laetitia." The badge, shield-shaped, has a white cross on a blue background, and in the centre a small white shield with a three-branched candelabra in gold. One of the banners (a white cross on a blue background) is the flag of "Nossa Senhora de Saudade" (Our Lady of Salette). Miss Lisboa writes: "The cross stands for her sorrow and means also Christian life. The Blessed Virgin is our Sovereign, St. Joan our General." The flag of Alliança is white with the gold candelabra in the centre and with a border of green and gold signifying loyalty to Church and country. The white field stands for St. Joan's mission in Brazil.

The January-April issue of *A Candeia*, the official organ of Alliança, announces that one of the dearest wishes of the Society has been realised in that the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, of Rio (rua da Gloria, 78) have put at the disposal of Alliança a beautiful room which can be used as a library and reading-room and where Alliança can organise meetings and conferences. Alliança has been very busy preparing for the opening of this centre. *A Candeia* also contains news of the woman's movement in other parts of the world, and of the other Sections of St. Joan's Alliance. A very interesting article by the President on the Education of Women insists on the right of freedom to develop fully. Whether woman's vocation lies in professional work, a religious life or in the home the benefit of higher education will be felt. The writer stresses the equal right of men and women to fair remuneration and to positions of responsibility. Other articles are contributed by Edtih Ortiz and Maria Amalia de Faria and there is a poem to Our Lady of Saudade by Valentina Briosca.

Miss Lisboa tells us that the Brazilian Government has organised agricultural colonies for the Indians of Brazil in which they are persuaded to live. Here girls and boys have equal opportunities as far as primary education is concerned, young children being taught together. "After that, boys may have some advantages owing to the more varied professional instruction they receive. Women are taught domestic work, machine sewing, etc., and are encouraged in their own native industries. They weave beautiful hammocks, in cotton and different native fibres." Missionaries work in these colonies and Christian families grow up in them and gradually the Indians become civilized and are able to enjoy the same rights as other Brazilians.

The Franciscan Missionaries of Mary have a Mission school in Teffé, near the Amazon River.

L'Alliance Ste Jeanne D'Arc

General Secretary: Mademoiselle Lenoël, 22 Avenue de la Bourdonnais, Paris VII.

L'Alliance sent delegates to the Abolitionist Conference and also to the Conference of the National Council of Women of France. At the International Congress of the Christian Family, Mme. Pesson Depret, speaking as

International Labour Conference

At the 23rd session of the International Labour Conference, held recently in Geneva, the following resolution was moved by Miss Grace Abbott, Government delegate from the U.S.A., seconded by Mr. Sandoval E. Saavedra, Government delegate from Cuba, and adopted without further discussion:

Whereas, in view of the social and political changes of recent years and the fact that women workers have suffered from special forms of exploitation and discrimination in the past, there is need to re-examine their general position; and

Whereas, it is for the best interests of society that in addition to full political and civil rights and full opportunity for education, women should have full opportunity to work and should receive remuneration without discrimination because of sex, and be protected by legislative safeguards against physically harmful conditions of employment and economic exploitation, including the safeguarding of motherhood; and

Whereas, it is necessary that women as well as men should be guaranteed freedom of association by Governments and should be protected by social and labour legislation which world experience has shown to be effective in abolishing special exploitation of women workers; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Twenty-third Session of the International Labour Conference, while recognising that some of these principles lie within the competence of other international bodies, believes them to be of the greatest importance to workers in general and especially to women workers; and therefore requests the Governing Body to draw them to the attention of all Governments, with a view to their establishment in law and in custom by legislative and administrative action.

We regret that this resolution is so loosely worded that it is difficult to know what it means. Do paragraphs 2 and 3 indicate a desire for protective legislation for both men and women or for women only? If for women only, then it should be recognised that this form of legislation is merely a continuation of "the official forms of discrimination" referred to in the first paragraph of the resolution.

This year there were nineteen women delegates from thirteen different countries, one of whom was Miss Brigid Stafford, Government expert from the Irish Free State. Miss Stafford is a member of St. Joan's Alliance.

The Alliance was glad to welcome our member, Madame Vallé Genairon, when she passed through London recently. Members of the International Council had the pleasure of meeting her at dinner at the house of our Chairman. Mrs. Crawford kindly invited a few members to a lunch at the Sesame Club to meet Mme Vallé Genairon.

President of L'Alliance, asked for consideration of the abolition of polygamy and support of the work of the Missionaries in this respect. She also asked that the various governments concerned should be approached on this subject.

Mlle Cordelier, a well-known writer, spoke recently for l'Alliance on women's work in various careers; and Mlle Lenoël lectured on the position of African women to *La Ligue du Droit des Femmes*.

Letters have been sent to the Government on various subjects. A memorandum was sent to Senator Violette on the subject of a Bill to give votes to the natives of Algeria, and Senator Gautherot was approached on the subject of African women; documented information was supplied to him together with the views of L'Alliance.

L'Alliance has collaborated in the work of the Feminist Studies Committee of the Musée Social, and supplies documented information to the Marguerite Durand feminist library.

Status of Women

The subject of the status of women has been placed on the agenda of the 18th Assembly of the League of Nations which will meet in Geneva in September. Memoranda have been sent in by Governments and by the International Women's Organisations. St. Joan's Alliance has sent in a Memorandum on the Status of "Native" women, on which a great deal of work has been expended during the last few months. In reply to a Questionnaire sent out by the Alliance, first hand information about women in certain territories was obtained from Government Officials, Missionaries of various denominations, Doctors, Nurses, Teachers and Social Workers, etc., many of whom have spent a life time working among the peoples about which they write. The Memorandum was compiled, in collaboration with our Australian and French Sections, by Miss Christine Spender with the help of Miss Challoner and Miss K. Davis.

Many distinguished women will assemble in Geneva in September to watch the discussions on the status of women and impress the delegates with the importance of the feminist point of view. Members of St. Joan's Alliance from several countries will be present, and it is important that as many as possible should endeavour to be in Geneva.

International Notes

The Alliance was represented by Miss Kathleen FitzGerald, B.A., at the Congress of "Les Activités Féminines" held in connection with the Paris Exhibition under the auspices of the National Council of Women of France. Miss FitzGerald greatly interested her audience by her first-hand account of her tax-resisting experiences when she was working for the Vote in this country. Miss FitzGerald was the first Chairman of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society. * * * *

The women of Ecuador are threatened with the loss of the franchise. A decree has been issued by the acting President, Frederico Paez, intended to deprive women of the right to vote in the July 10th elections at which time a Congress will be elected which will sit also as a constituent Assembly to reform the Constitution.

Feminists the world over have sent letters of protest to M. Paez appealing to him not to deprive the women of Ecuador of the right to vote which they have enjoyed since the 1931 elections. * * * *

It gives us great pleasure to congratulate our member, Miss Helen C. White, on her appointment as Professor of English in the University of Wisconsin, U.S.A. This is the first time a non-administrative woman (not head of home economics or physical education) has been promoted to full professorship in the College of Liberal Arts. A review of Miss White's latest book on literary criticism appears in this issue. * * * *

Four women have been returned to the Dutch Parliament which was elected on May 26th. Three of these have sat continuously since 1922; the fourth is a newcomer. One woman has become a member of the Senate. * * * *

Madame Ivana Brlich-Mazuranitch, the well-known Croatian writer, has been elected to the Yugoslav Academy of Science and Art. This is the first time in Yugoslavia that a woman has had conferred on her a distinction of this kind in recognition of her literary work. * * * *

We draw the attention of our readers to the particulars of the 3rd International Women's Week in our advertisement columns. Mrs. Magda de Spur Feltoronyi, Chairman of the organising committee, invites women from all over the world to meet in Budapest. Mrs. de Spur is a member of St. Joan's Alliance.

An article—"Women in Germany To-day"—appearing in the March edition of *Frontières* (France) quotes statements made by the Director of the German Government's statistics department:

From their infancy they (women) should be educated for this end (motherhood), considering marriage that for which they were made—but in the unique sense of reproduction; if circumstances (debaring them from marriage) force them to become mothers outside legal marriage, they need feel no shame because it is maternity not marriage which is woman's crown.

Births outside wedlock are to be considered normal and necessary. (*Univers.*)

How thankful we should be for Holy Church's definition of Everywoman's end—the second answer in the catechism. S. A. B.

Nationality of Married Women

The *Times* report of the Committee on Constitutional Questions of the recent Imperial Conference states that the question of the Nationality of Married Women was considered but that "it was not found possible to arrive at an agreement in favour of any change in the existing law" within the British Commonwealth. It was assumed that the matter would be the subject of further consideration by a consultation between the respective Governments.

So the British married woman's possession of an independent nationality is once more relegated to the future. Needless to say, feminists are not to be discouraged and will continue to work for this measure of justice both here and in the Dominions. * * * *

A Bill has been presented by Captain Cazaret, M.P. (U), proposing two main changes in the law. The Bill provides firstly that marriage is not to deprive a woman of her nationality nor to enable alien women to acquire British nationality; and secondly that British women may transmit their British nationality to their children born abroad in the same way as British men do now. A further clause would enable women who have lost their British nationality on marriage to regain it, the Secretary of State to have no discretion in such cases.

The Bill is supported by Miss Ellen Wilkinson (Lab.), Mr. Vyvyan Adams (U), Mr. Lovat Fraser (Nat. Lab.) and Miss Ward (U).

Reviews

The current issue of *The Shield*, organ of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, contains much which is of great interest to our readers. "The 'Strip-Tease' Act which has just been put on at one of the London Variety Theatres ought, we think, to be condemned by ordinary public opinion," states an editorial on this subject.

"These girls and women are, for the most part, hard-working, honest and decent people, and it is an utterly shameless exploitation to compel them, in order to get jobs, to go as near, night after night, to the edge of obscenity as they dare . . . we are putting them into a position where their capacity for real entertainment will count for nothing in getting employment as against their willingness to appear naked on the stage."

There is a further editorial on "Italian Racial Purity," quoting a statement made by the former Government of Somaliland, Senor Mauregio Rava, now a Minister of State—sic:

"It will be necessary to regulate in all centres of the Italian African colonies a sufficiently large and often renewed supply of white women of another quality than honest women. They must be white women, but not Italian. Italian women of that class should never be allowed to pass the frontiers of our Empire: it is an elementary question of prestige in relation to the natives."

"This is one way of ensuring 'racial purity,' by encouraging a traffic in 'white women but not Italian'," comments the *Shield*.

"It will be necessary in Italy, as in Great Britain, to make a public opinion specifically directed against these evils and we trust that this will be initiated by the authorities of the Catholic Church."

Among the many excellent articles is one entitled "Women for Sale," which is a review of "Madame Magdaleine Paz's fine book" of the same title, the publication of which proves that "Abolitionists in France are at long last stirring." They have a hard battle in front of them and we in England can

"hardly realise the state of public opinion and of the press in France to-day; or the headway that has to be made against those whose ignorance makes them regard the imaginary safeguards of regulation as a lesser evil than the closure of *maisons tolérées* would prove to be."

Lastly, *The Shield* publishes letters to Mme Brunschvicg, former Under Secretary of State to the Minister of Education, and to Mme Magdaleine Paz from "pensionnaires" in "tolerated" houses. These are poignant and revealing documents and well repay study. "Sixty-five per cent of the women in houses (I speak only of Paris), without exaggeration, would joyfully return to honest work if they could be found employment with a living wage," writes one of these women.

We recommend our readers to procure for themselves this quarter's *Shield* from the A.M.S.H., Livingstone House, Broadway, Westminster, S.W.1. Price 1s. C. S.

The Metaphysical Poets. A Study in Religious Experience. By Helen C. White. (Macmillan, 15s.)

Here is a book of which it is hard to speak too highly, notable at once for its profundity and breadth of treatment and for its absorbing interest. By the approach indicated in her sub-title, Miss White has gone to the heart of her subject, for as she shows in an admirable introductory chapter on Mysticism and Poetry, "the problem of excellence in mystical poetry is a double one, involving both poetical and mystical values."

How far the five poets with whom she deals can be considered mystics in the true sense of the word is a question which she treats with delicate discrimination, but there is no doubt that in all five their poetry is the blossoming of genuine religious experience, variously conditioned by differences of temperament and the trend of the times.

The chain of their lives stretches through the seventeenth century, a period in which the exuberant aspirations of Elizabethanism gradually cool into the naturalistic, rationalist outlook that would characterise the Age of Reason. (Miss White gives a masterly analysis of the forces at work, and warily avoids the conventional over-simplifications of too many historians:

"No world quite passes away," she says, "no world is ever quite born. Only currents set in the broad stream of history, now swift, now slow, and sometimes the whole movement is one and dominating, but most often the waters are swirling embroiled with torrents from many directions.")

Each of the five, too, is a man of strong and complex individuality, and yet they hold so much in common as to form a single family, with curiously characteristic traits. The tradition born with Donne, passes on to Herbert, from him to Vaughan and Crashaw, and from all four to Traherne, though in each it will show different aspects. Into all Miss White enters with the same sympathy and insight. She is indeed marvellously well equipped for her task. She has the command of philosophy and even of theology necessary for a full understanding of men who were all men of learning and speculative mind; she has the command of history which enables her to situate them in their age, to trace the threads of process that weave their background; she has a poet's sensitive appreciation of their poetry, and finally, she has a

command of language (a reward, I should say, for her immersion in the seventeenth century masters of style) which makes her book a delight to read. It shows American scholarship as second to none.

BARBARA BARCLAY CARTER

Our Yesterdays. The Story of the British Peoples. Book I. By Margaret M. Elliot. (Edward Arnold 2s. 6d.)

Our Yesterdays (Book I deals with the period between the coming of Julius Caesar and the death of Elizabeth) is the kind of history book that some of you will doubtless furtively steal from your children's satchels or, better still, read and discuss with them. It is written simply and clearly, and the illustrations are charming.

C. M. CHEKE.

With regard to the review, contributed by Mrs. Crawford to our May issue, of G. N. Sebrennikov's **Position of Women in the U.S.S.R.** (Gollancz 7s. 6d., one of our readers points out that the other side of the picture may be seen in a book entitled: **I Was a Soviet Worker**, by Andrew Smith (Robert Hale 12s. 6d.) which we commend to the study of those interested.

Brother Petroc's Return. By S. M. C. (Chatto & Windus 6s.)

This is a story founded on the hypothesis that a monk 400 years entombed is in truth not dead but sleeping; he awakes in modern times when the Benedictines once more take possession of the Cornish Monastery abandoned at the time of the dissolution of the Monasteries. To quote the dust-cover: "Half parable, half fantasy, the story unfolded is as strange as it is enthralling and is told with such conviction, and with such a fine sense of history, that it seems the record of an actual experience." This book, though essentially *not* plagiarism, has affinities with the fine historical tales of Fr. Robert Hugh Benson. S.M.C. (who is according to the dust-cover, a Dominican nun) follows in his footsteps in the skilful manner in which the pure doctrine is interwoven with the excitements of the story.

But S. M. C. does not possess Fr. Robert Hugh Benson's intuitive perception of the mystical life, which makes the more poignant passages of books such as *Richard Raynal—Solitary, Come Rack—Come Rope*, and many others, still unparalleled in modern fiction.

C. S.

A Charge on Her Husband?

Vendredi (France) has published the results of an "enquête" undertaken by Delaisi on the numerical strength of the different classes. Among the figures given we find the following: nineteen million women who are a charge on their husbands. The husbands in question are workers (manual and clerical), and teachers, earning from 1,000 to 2,000 francs per month.

Thus, a wife who gets up at 6 a.m. to make the breakfast and goes to bed at 11 p.m. after having darned the last sock of her household is a charge on her husband . . .

But everyone knows the classic example. A young man earns from 1,000 to 1,500 francs per month. Like 99 males out of every 100 he is incapable of using his own ten fingers and is also incapable of staying at home and of finding employment there. However simply he lives he spends every penny he earns.

He marries a wife who becomes a charge on him. She has nothing. In all logic he ought to be poverty-stricken but, on the contrary, he lives better than he had lived before and has some savings to show at the end of the year to boot.

For the work of the housewife creates wealth. When will this fact be acknowledged?

Again, how illogical: on the one hand, people try to keep women out of paid employment by holding work in the home up to them as something sublime; on the other hand, those who follow this advice are described as *women who are a charge on their husbands*. Only one of these two things can be true. It is time people decided which. (*Women's Supplement to "International Information."*)



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DHB

Australian Aborigines

Under the auspices of the British Commonwealth League, Mrs. Guy Innes gave an At Home on June 30th to meet Dr. Duguid of South Australia, the well-known authority on Australian Aborigines. Several members of the Alliance were present.

Dr. Duguid gave an account of the life of the aboriginal as personally observed by him when living in various centres right among these peoples. He insisted on the necessity for Women Protectors for the sake of the Aboriginal women.

Under the auspices of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, Dr. Duguid will give a lantern lecture on Australian Aborigines on October 14th. We advise all our members to keep this date free.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH

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

A Garden Party will be held at 66, Park Road South, Birkenhead, by kind permission of the Misses Barry, on Saturday, August 7th, 3-30 to 6-30 p.m. Our Hon. Secretary and Hon. Editor from Headquarters will be there, and we shall hope to hear from them about recent activities of the Alliance at home and abroad. Entrance 1/-, including tea.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS

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HON. TREASURER'S NOTE

Please note the Garden Party on Saturday, July 17th, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., at 57, Carlton Hill, St. John's Wood, N.W.8. Our hostess will be Mrs. Laughton Mathews. Tea will be served and there will be sideshows for your amusement. Entrance free. All members and their friends are welcome.

Whilst preparing for your holidays please send us any clothes you will not need. The "Barrow" is going strong, but to keep up its strength we need more clothes to sell.

Will those who have not yet paid their subscriptions please send them along.

C. J. GARRARD.

THE ANNUAL SUMMER SCHOOL

OF THE CATHOLIC SOCIAL GUILD

will be held in Oxford from July 31st to August 7th. The SCHOOL is open to members of the Guild and non-members alike. Accommodation is provided by the Guild, or members may make their own arrangements. AUGUST 1st—High Mass, "coram Pontifice." Sermon by Rev. Alec Robertson, of Westminster. Annual Meeting of the Guild, His Grace the Archbishop of Westminster in the chair.

AUGUST 2nd to 6th—LECTURES AND DISCUSSIONS. Rev. J. E. Coffey, S.J., Professor at the Gregorian University, Rome, on "The Catholic Doctrine of the Origin, Authority and Functions of the State." Rev. Lewis Watt, S.J., B.Sc. (Econ.), Professor at Heythrop College, on "Interest and Usury." Miss M. D. Leys, M.A., Tutor to the Oxford Society of Home Students, on "British Economic History with special reference to the Reformation Period." Mr. G. Woodcock, Secretary of Research Dept., T.U.C. General Council, on "Present-day Trade Union Problems." Mr. H. G. L. Hussey, M.A., on "Social and Economic Effects of the Falling Birth-rate." A woman trade union leader on "The New Factories Bill."

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