

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),  
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Signed Articles do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Society.

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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.

## The Prevention of Prostitution\*

By E. M. TURNER.

This is a report which the most ardent abolitionist can approve with few exceptions, and the old campaigner will, therefore, realise with considerable pleasure that truths he has held against opposition all his life are now taken for granted. It

is concerned chiefly with minors. In the first place, prostitution can be prevented only by removing its cause, and these lie as much in heredity, environment and education as in the circumstances of adult life. Secondly, many girls become prostitutes before they are of full age."

In spite of this paragraph, which may give the impression that it is only concerned with "prostitutes," this report does make it clear that the prevention of prostitution is not merely a question of preventing girls and women from becoming "prostitutes" and removing them from these activities after they have been entered on. It recognises that the "prostitute" (including the amateur, the pick-up, the good-time girl) is only one factor of the problem; male demand and the third party interests who exploit this demand being even more important factors.

... the causes of prostitution fall naturally into two groups, those which give rise to the demand for prostitution and those which result in the supply. The first are recognised to be the decisive factors; indeed, if prostitution could be reduced by reducing the supply of prostitutes, it seems most improbable that the many attempts to suppress it would all have failed so signally. In spite of this recognition, the causes of the demand have received less attention than those which result in the supply. . . . Since the demand in this case appears to determine the supply, measures to reduce it are the more fundamental and offer the greatest hope of effecting a permanent reduction in prostitution. Unfortunately, since the causes giving rise to the demand have received comparatively little attention, so also have the measures for removing them."

One of the most interesting chapters in the report, written by Dr. J. A. Cavaillon, who was Technical Inspector General of the French Ministry of Public Health until removed by the Germans in 1940, begins:

"A reduction in the demand would undoubtedly be a decisive factor in limiting prostitution. Nobody will deny that if there were no more custom for prostitutes

there would soon be no more prostitutes. The law of supply and demand governs even such a special trade as prostitution."

Dr. Cavaillon is positive that brothels must be abolished, but alas! he advocates the repression of soliciting.

"Only too often the prostitute is allowed, if not by law, at any rate by customary police tolerance, to solicit in the street, directly accosting a man and asking him, by gesture or words, to go home with her. It is obvious that such soliciting is very effective. It should clearly not be allowed and should be severely punished." This is a grave flaw in an otherwise admirable chapter, and one would have thought that Dr. Cavaillon would realise the danger of attempting to suppress solicitation by severe penalties while the demand exists for the services of the "prostitute." The unpleasant spectacle of women soliciting in public is a constant challenge, dangerous to drive underground. Repressive action against solicitation means repressive police action. There is plenty of evidence to show the bad result of action of this kind. It produces corruption in the police forces, unjust convictions against women (innocent women have been condemned and imprisoned without the slightest possibility of redress) and, above all, a situation in which third party agents create hidden vice centres and a new class of soliciting agents—liftmen, hotel boys, cabmen, and touts of all kinds—operating freely in the streets from which the women have been arbitrarily removed. The danger of solicitation for men has not been removed; it has been increased, and has become more subtle in form.

None the less Dr. Cavaillon's chapter is full of good sense. He wants to know *why* a man becomes a souteneur and *how* he becomes one, and advocates a full enquiry into this. Why do young men consort with prostitutes? He argues that even if all possible incitements to immorality brothels, pornography, drink and solicitations could be suppressed, the sexual desire must still exist, and he devotes the latter part of his chapter to suggestions whereby young men may be helped and trained.

The rest of the report deals with methods of dealing with girls and young women which, though they follow lines which are familiar to all workers on these problems, are interesting and informative. In a historical introduction tribute is paid to "the abolitionist movement which began in England in 1870 under the leadership of Josephine Butler, and later spread to other countries, directed against the system of regulating prostitution, which at that time was almost universal." The concluding paragraphs of the report emphasise the necessity for

"the growth of new standards of sexual morality, not only on the part of young women, but—and this is even more important—on the part of young men."

\* Being a study of measures adopted or under consideration particularly with regard to minors. Published by the Advisory Committee of the League of Nations, Geneva, 1943. Price 6s., pages 182. Obtainable from Allen & Unwin, 40, Museum Street, London W.C.1 (Official No. C.26 M.26, 1943, IV).

## Notes and Comments

The following passage occurs in the Papal Allocution made by the Holy Father to the College of Cardinals on the 2nd June, two days before the Allied Armies entered Rome, in reply to the greetings offered him by Their Eminences on the feast of his patron Saint Eugene:

"We nourish the hope that all our sons and daughters, scattered over the earth, may have a lively consciousness of their collective and individual share in the responsibility for the setting-up and organisation of a public order consonant with the fundamental exigencies of the human and Christian conscience, being always mindful of the fact that for those who glory in the name of Christians every peace proposal is always made under the unerring standard to reject all that is hostile to that name and to promote that which is consonant with it."

Mr. Bevin stated in the House of Commons on 8th June that the government "welcome" the Philadelphia Charter adopted by 41 nations at the recent conference of the International Labour Organization. This document, circulated by the Ministry of Labour, includes the following dicta:

"II. (a) All human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex, have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity."

"III. The Conference recognizes the solemn obligation of the International Labour Organization to further among the nations of the world programmes which will achieve:

... (b) the employment of workers in the occupations in which they can have the satisfaction of giving the fullest measure of their skill and attainments and make their greatest contribution to the common well-being."

"V. The Conference affirms that the principles set forth in this Declaration are fully applicable to all peoples everywhere, and that while the manner of their application must be determined with due regard to the stage of social and economic development reached by each people, their progressive application to peoples who are still dependent, as well as to those who have already achieved self-government, is a matter of concern to the whole civilised world."

We hope to deal with the conference fully in a later number when we have received the official report.

A memorandum issued by the Women's Farm and Garden Association shows the change effected by the war in the position of women in the agricultural industry. Between 1918 and 1939 women employed on agriculture, excluding those who worked on their own land or who did only seasonal work, were to men in this industry in the ratio of about 1 to 8, and numbered some 40,000. Since then their number, leaving out of account the 70,000 members of the Women's Land Army, is believed to have more than doubled, and increasingly they have included trained, experienced and highly qualified workers. Consistently they have been paid less than men whose qualifications are the same as theirs. A national minimum rate for agricultural workers was fixed for men in 1941, for women not until 1943. The memorandum recommends that all administrative and advisory posts in agriculture, and posts in botanic gardens, public parks and the forestry service, be opened to women on the same terms, and at the same rates of pay, as to men; that women be more largely represented in the Ministry of Agriculture and the Fisheries Inspectorates, and serve on all committees concerned with agriculture and cognate matters; that the facilities for women's agricultural training be increased, and that scholarships for this training be more numerous and generous and better publicized.

## International Notes

The *Fides* Agency of Rome states that two-thirds of the missionary staffs in the territories under the jurisdiction of the Congregation of Propaganda were in 1939 made up of nuns, namely, 53,025 sisters, of whom 3,118 were in Asia, 2,698 in Africa, 579 in America, 2,177 in Australia and 263 in Europe. Of these 17,347, or nearly a third of the total number, were native sisters, who were considerably in the majority in Asia—in Indo China there were 4,678 native sisters to 351 foreign, in China 1,077 to 585, in British India 5,941 to 3,128.

**Canada.** In the absence of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker from the Canadian House of Commons on one occasion during April, Mrs. Flora Casselman presided as Speaker, the first woman to act in this capacity.

**Poland.** A representative of the Alliance was present at the very interesting meeting held at the Polish Hearth by the Polish Association of University Women in Great Britain on 27th June, to mark the tenth anniversary of Madame Curie's death. Mrs. Corbridge-Patkaniowska, M.A., Ph.D., in an eloquent speech, made the personality of this woman of genius live; the President of Magdalen, Sir Henry Tizard, estimated her most remarkable service to science; Lady Briscoe, M.B., B.S., honorary secretary of the Marie Curie Hospital in London, described the use made of radium in treating cancer in that institution. A further tribute was paid to her by the vice-president of the Association, Professor M. Skalinska, Ph.D. Professor Winifred Cullis was in the chair.

**South Africa.** We are very grateful to our old and valued member, Annie Dorman, who died last year, for her legacy to the *Catholic Citizen* of £5. Writing in 1936 Miss Dorman said: "I should like to have the prayers of St. Joan's Alliance for my soul"; and some months later, "Why I am so drawn to St. Joan's is that it is such a sane association and keeps to a special work and does not mix up devotions with public work and yet is so thoroughly Catholic in spirit. I can most honestly say it has done a great deal for me, just what I need as a feminist and Catholic! Also I love the link with London and my own land, for, after all, much as I love South Africa, I am an Englishwoman." We are happy to hear that Miss Dorman "is buried, as she wished, at St. Dominic's Priory (in Port Elizabeth), just behind her friend, Mother Dominic."—R.I.P.

We learn with interest from Pretoria that our member Mrs. McGrath has been elected a president of the National Council of Women.

**Switzerland.** We much regret to learn from *Le Mouvement Féministe* of the death of the distinguished oculist, Dr. Gourfein-Welt. Many of us had the pleasure of meeting her at Geneva and were struck with her enthusiasm both for the women's cause and for the welfare of the blind. It is not surprising then to learn that even after death she still works for the blind. In her will she instituted the "Sisters Welt Competition," which awards biennially a prize of 750 francs (Swiss) for a thesis on either the prevention of blindness or the betterment of the lot of the blind.

From the same paper we learn of the appointment as a director of the Zoological Gardens at Berne of Madame Meyer Hoslzapfel, who has held posts in other great zoological establishments in Europe, and who last winter gave a remarkable course of lectures on the psychology of domestic animals. E.F.G.

## All India Women's Conference

The presidential address of Shrimati Kamaladevi to the seventeenth session of the All-India Women's Conference, delivered in Bombay last April and printed in the June issue of the *Bulletin of Indian Women's Movement*, is of great interest. The president first surveys the women's movement as a whole: "the issues round which it revolves, such as right of votes, inheritance, entry into professions and the like, are an intrinsic part of the bigger issues striving to overcome the prevailing undemocratic practices that deny common rights to certain sections of society. It is therefore a comrade to the struggle of the backward castes and the long oppressed classes. To give it any other interpretation or shear it off, to isolate it from the main current, is socially injurious. It is equally erroneous to hold the nature of man responsible for women's disabilities and give the women's movement an anti-man twist. It is the nature of our society which is at fault." The movement seeks "to instil" into women "a consciousness of their own faculties and functions and create a respect for those of the other sex." The president deprecates the tendency to depreciate domestic work, still universally women's major industry, and at the same time she welcomes the entrance of women into non-domestic occupations.

She goes on to deal with India in particular. The training of women for social services is "grievously neglected" and health services are "appallingly" inadequate. Roughly, "there is one nurse for every 56,000 people or to 256 square miles. The health visitors are about one per 350,000." In the whole country there are only 800 maternity and child welfare centres. Women should be trained for handicrafts and their creative work should be fostered.

Since the food problem is acute, they should learn to avoid both waste and lavish hospitality, and to understand balanced dieting. Above all, they should aim at securing nourishing food, particularly milk, for the children.

Coming to points of law, the president says: "It is regrettable that in the Marriage Bill the barriers of caste

and gotra, which have lost most of their significance in modern society, have not been overcome. The clause on monogamy is welcome, though it would not serve the purpose without certain other changes which are envisaged. The Women's Conference, along with other liberal sections of society, has always stood for the institution of marriage. The strong allegiance of women to this institution hardly needs reiteration; it is proverbial." We lack the knowledge to criticize appositely her further statement that there is need, in some instances, to relax "a rigid marriage law," but are disturbed by it.

When she states that "the Women's Conference . . . must get women out of the mines as speedily as possible" we join issue with her definitely, for we believe, as we said in our March number, that Indian like other women should be free to choose their work. But no economic necessity consequent on their husbands' underpayment must drive women into the mines.

The following fine sentence occurs in the last paragraph of the president's address: "Women can have real freedom only in a society which will uphold the sanctity of life and the dignity of labour, a society which will give every child the fullest opportunities for development, enforce and practise those fundamental economic and social rights that entitle every individual to a decent life, the fruits of his or her labour, and the benefits of science and culture."

The Conference passed resolutions mainly in the sense of the President's remarks. Certain of them condemn traffic in women and children, and a violation by the Maharajah of Baroda of the law of monogamy in force in his state, and favour co-operation with labour organizations. Political resolutions ask for representative government, and protest against curtailment of civil liberties, in particular the imprisonment of certain Indians and the ban on public statements by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and others. Another condemns "the action of the Punjab Government in depriving women of the franchise in the coming municipal corporation elections."

### THE PARISH ASSISTANTS OF GERMANY

The Alliance's summer reunion was held in Hampstead on June 24th and was a well attended and pleasantly sociable occasion. Mrs. Meyer, who worked for a time as one of the Parish Assistants of Germany, gave an extraordinarily interesting address on this organization. The Parish Assistants were laywomen, to whom a few young nuns were eventually added, and who were organized soon after the 1914-18 war to help the parish priests. Several hundred of them were at work in the early 'thirties, and since they were protected by the Concordat their activities continued. They were the outcome on the one hand of the sense of public responsibility awakened in German Catholic women by the grant to them of the vote in 1919, and on the other hand of the parish priests' great need for help in post-war Germany, with its problems of unemployment, a fluctuating industrial population, and the rising danger of neo-Paganism. Many of them were the widows and spinsters who are a legacy of war. They were paid at the same rates as elementary school teachers. All of them had received both a general education up to a high fixed standard and a special training for their duties. These were to be secretaries to the parish priests, whom the authorities charged with much clerical work of many kinds, to keep in touch with Catholic organizations, acting as their leaders or advisers, to give religious instruction to the children, and to do other appropriate work. As much as they could they kept faith and courage alive in the Catholic population of Germany. They worked both in the Catholic districts and among the Catholic minority in Protestant districts. Increasingly their help was welcomed by the parish priests.

### MARY MEREDITH

One of our oldest and staunchest members, beloved by many of us, Mary Meredith, died on 28th June at the age of 89. Her lively interest in our doings was unabated to the end, and she still helped us to the limit of her powers. Although a woman of very slender means, she made us in 1927 the gift of £100, preferring, she said, that we should have it then rather than wait for it till her death. She was, as she herself said of Gabrielle Jeffery, "a sweet lady." The Requiem, at which we were represented by the Hon. Secretary, was at St. Mary's, Clapham, on 4th July. Mass has been offered, at the request of the Alliance, for the repose of her soul. We know that all our members will pray for her and that she will pray for us.—R.I.P.

We ask for prayers for Mr. Barnard, editor of *The Universe* (always friendly to us, who died recently.—R.I.P.)

### Hon. Treasurer's Note

The Bring-and-Buy Sale at our summer party in Hampstead on 24th June realised the useful sum of £15 3s. 6d.: we thank all who were responsible. Will those of our members who have not yet paid their subscriptions for this year to the Alliance (minimum 2s.) and the *Catholic Citizen* (3s.) kindly do so at once, thus enabling us to make up our books? J. M. ORGAN.

As usual the office will be closed throughout August. Correspondence will receive attention.

## Reviews

**Sweet Is The Rose.** By Helen Douglas Irvine. (Longmans, Green & Co.). 8s. 6d.

In this book Helen Douglas Irvine, with her usual exquisite artistry, has yet another variation on a theme that she has made peculiarly her own—the contrast between the world's superficial judgments and the inner truth which must escape all categories through the uniqueness of every human soul. Here is a drunken old hag, a man of letters whose gifts are frustrated by his essential crookedness and . . . a thoroughly respectable woman. So the world would classify them. But as the book unfolds and the characters, seen through the eyes of first one observer then another in oblique revelation, come to life in all their complexity, we know the first as a lovely and loveable soul whom tragedy has broken, the second as possessed of rare spiritual qualities, even though interwoven with moral deficiency, and the third as a monster of cold wickedness.

The sensitiveness of the writing, the economy of style and method, the convincing characterisation—perhaps at its very best in the diary of one of the two tragic children who figure in the story—combine to make a book at once beautiful and terrible. In the world—so seems its conclusion—disaster may be irremediable, tragedy complete, but the deeper realities are not of this world. Miss Douglas Irvine is a Catholic novelist in the fundamental, intrinsic sense in which Mauriac and Bernanos are Catholic novelists; she is also one of the most accomplished novelists writing in England to-day.

BARBARA BARCLAY CARTER.

**Art Notes.** (St. Michael's Workshop, 28a Cornmarket Street, Oxford). Quarterly 1s. 3d.

The summer number of this quarterly includes reproductions of photographs from *Modern Sacred Art* (now out of print) of modern churches in Rome. All are beautiful and two are of poignant interest since they are of frescoes in the church of St. Benedict which was damaged in an air raid—one showing the meeting between Our Lord and Saint Veronica and the other St. Benedict with two of his disciples, the former movingly sincere and the latter impressive in its dignity, both by our member, Joan Morris, who edits *Art Notes*. We greatly hope her lovely work has escaped destruction.

H.D.I.

**Oxford Branch.** Hon. Secretary, Miss J. Scott, c/o Women's Service Library, 56 Woodstock Road, Oxford.

This branch is holding monthly meetings: at that held in March a paper by Mrs. Lemon on the position of the housewife was read and discussed; the May meeting heard an address by Miss Barry on the nationality of married women, and passed a resolution consonant with her remarks which was sent to local M.P.s; the June meeting took the form of a one-day retreat at the Sacred Heart Convent, Father Gerald Vann, O.P., giving stimulating conferences on women's contributions to society.

### ST. JOAN'S ALLIANCE IN AUSTRALIA

Miss Margaret Flynn, secretary of our Australian section, tells us in an airgraph letter, dated 7th June, that our Australian members were with us in thought on D-Day and afterwards: "We are all participating in the war. On Saturday Mass will be offered for our intentions and those of the Holy Father and a just peace." "On St. Joan's Eve," Miss Flynn continues, describing an evening party and supper in Melbourne, "we made Miss McMahon our guest of honour as the oldest member.

. . . We presented her with a basket of flowers in our colours and tied with them also. She made a nice little speech describing your method of recruiting members." We in London have affectionate memories of Miss McMahon, until her retirement a highly placed civil servant in Australia, who joined us here in 1925 and then spoke to us at an At Home given in her honour by Mrs. Crawford. She was almost a founder of the Australian section, and it was she who obtained the signatures of the Prime Minister of Australia and Dame Enid Lyons to the International Petition of Catholic Women and Men on the Nationality of Married Women which was presented to the League of Nations Assembly in 1932, and who thus brought us into touch with Dame Enid, now President of the section. Activities about nationality have persisted.

St. Joan's Day, which fell on Pentecost, was celebrated in Melbourne by this section by Holy Mass and Corporate Communion, followed by morning tea at the P.A.G. Rooms.

### TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.

From the "Catholic Citizen" of July 15th, 1919.

"Nous voudrions voir des femmes électorales partout." Such are the words of our Holy Father Benedict XV, exactly as they fell from his lips on the occasion when the present writer had the privilege of a private audience. . . . Loyalty to the Holy Catholic Church was the primary motive actuating the founders of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, and when the writer had humbly given the . . . account of its object and activities and respectfully asked whether it had the approval of His Holiness, the reply came in emphatic tones, 'Oui, nous approuvons.' . . . Catholic women the world over will not be less eager to comply with the wishes of the Holy Father who would fain see women voters everywhere, counting on the 'devout female sex' to defend the cause of religion and of Christian morality. In England the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society will always look with especial confidence and gratitude to that Pope who raised to the Altar the humble maiden most fitted to be the model of modern womanhood. May Saint Joan of Arc, patron of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, ever watch over and pray for its members and their undertakings that they may justify the trust of Benedict XV!—Annie Christitch in "Yes, We Approve."

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