

THE

Catholic Citizen

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

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

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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.

Thirty-Fourth Annual Report

By BARBARA BARCLAY CARTER.

The Annual Meeting was held in St. Patrick's, Soho Square, on March 18th, Miss P. C. Challoner, chairman, presiding. It was opened by our good friend, Canon Reardon, who commended the political acumen which led us to concentrate on the Education Bill and the question of equal pay.

Only one nomination for committee was received, that of Mrs. Halpern, the daughter of Ray Strachey who was Dame Millicent Fawcett's lieutenant in the suffrage campaign. The meeting agreed that, to spare the labour and expense of a ballot, she should be added to the committee.

The report was read by Miss Brandt, and its adoption moved by Mrs. Halpern who said that the jubilee of women's suffrage emphasised the appearance of a new generation of women. Premising that St. Joan's Alliance is the last society to approve any divergence from the Christian view that freedom and truth go together, a view to which it must constantly witness, she warned younger women to beware of a blindly negative urge and of unreality of aims. The war period is bewildering for them. They must claim their human and social rights and, especially, must weigh and discriminate every new proposition—the Beveridge Report, Family Allowances, Widows Pensions and the rest. They must make up their own minds, taking nothing for granted, not even the cherished ideas of their elders. This movement is a living one, concluded Mrs. Halpern. If we are to live it, we younger women must know why, the genuine reason for what is done in our name.

Seconding the adoption of the report, Mrs. W. Russell ascribed to St. Joan's Alliance her growth from "a political ignoramus" to a contributor on feminist subjects to her local papers and a participant in various public activities. She has been struck by the amount of political interest that is unorganised and therefore running to seed. Miss Margaret Whittles, who supported the adoption, is, like Mrs. Halpern, the daughter of a valiant feminist, once secretary of our Birmingham Branch. She brought us news from Trinidad where she has lately lived and we were glad to learn that the *Catholic Citizen* is eagerly awaited and read there. Miss Whittles said the paper was fortunate in having a well known author as editor.

The Financial Report was read by the Hon. Treasurer, Miss Organ, its adoption moved by Miss Hulbert and seconded by Miss Danesch.

In her address from the chair, Miss Challoner declared herself cheered by the way young women are now joining the Alliance. It was twenty-one years since she herself had joined the Church and, immediately afterwards, the Alliance. She recalled the figures behind the chairman's table at her first Annual Meeting—Leonora de Alberti, with her brilliant colouring and flashing eyes, and Gabrielle Jeffery, tall and golden haired, like a white flame. We cannot do better than carry on the work of those wonderful women.

St. Joan's Alliance aims in general, she said, at interpreting Catholicism to feminists and feminism to Catholics. She deplored a certain tendency among young Catholics to segregate themselves. A great function of the Alliance is to proclaim the fundamental principle of the value of human personality, which is no more lessened by sex than by race. Equality of the sexes, like the abolition of slavery, has its root in Our Lord's teaching, and its achievement is similarly our duty. Miss Challoner touched on some of the resolutions before the meeting. Equal pay means that women expect to do equal work; we seek good conditions for all workers and oppose the undercutting of men by women. The demand for freedom for the married woman to earn implies no wish to force every married woman to earn; mothers with young children should not be driven out of their homes by economic pressure. Every demand for equal responsibility with men entails equal opportunity and preparation. All young women should be prepared to take their full share in public life. It is essential that they use their political power (how effectively this can be done was shown in Mrs. Tate's fight for equal compensation), and know how to take advantage of every constitutional device—votes, lobbying and letters to M.Ps. The importance of law should be stressed, for there is to-day a disparagement of law and legislation, akin to the tiresome assertion that politics are too dirty to arouse interest. Women must have the courage to take their place in all political issues.

In conclusion, Miss Challoner noted how the late Miss Nina Boyle had commended the Alliance for its work for African women. She suggested that the younger members should get to know the aims of St. Joan's, general and particular, so that they may express these in their own way and in their own tongue.

Miss Eleanor FitzGerald made an eloquent appeal for the office rent, which produced the sum of £34 10s. towards the £50 needed, and urged members to take out second

subscriptions for issues of the *Catholic Citizen* to be sent out as propaganda. Help in the office is, she said, badly needed, for the work is steadily growing, St. Joan's Alliance being recognised as having a sound knowledge of political issues and therefore constantly asked for information. In the last war the vote was secured, and Miss FitzGerald hoped that this war would secure equal pay for equal work, which would be a tremendous triumph.

The meeting was well attended, lively and indeed enthusiastic. It ended with tea; we have to thank some givers of delicious cakes and Miss Katharine Davis, who was in charge. Telegrams from the Liverpool Branch and from Mrs. Garrard were received.

The following resolutions were moved from the chair and carried unanimously:—

Status of Women.—(a) Believing in the dignity of human personality, St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance calls upon the Government to ensure that in all schemes of reconstruction the equal status of women with men be specifically recognised in principle and in practice, morally, educationally, legally, economically, socially and politically.

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

(c) It welcomes the grant of equal franchise in Jamaica and calls upon the Government to give votes to women on the same terms as to men in the new Constitution of Malta.

Public Morality.—(a) St. Joan's S.P.A. calls upon the Government to ensure that in no circumstances shall brothels be opened for the use of members of H.M. Forces, and that in countries where licensed brothels exist, these shall be declared out of bounds to every member of H.M. Forces, and to cease making prophylactic packets available on request to H.M. Forces.

(b) It repudiates the popular fallacy that girls and women are solely responsible for lapses in public morality and for the increase of venereal disease. It reaffirms its belief that the adoption by all men and women of a high and equal moral standard is essential for the removal of these evils and that repressive measures, such as Regulation 33B, are both harmful and futile. It further calls upon the responsible authorities for increased medical facilities, more policewomen and adequate provision of educational and recreational facilities.

(c) It calls upon the Government to ban instruction by Public Authorities on artificial birth control.

Equal Pay and Opportunities.—(a) St. Joan's S.P.A. expresses its satisfaction at the grant of equal compensation for war injuries to civilian men and women and records its gratitude to the women's organisations and to Mrs. Tate, M.P. for this success.

(b) It calls upon the Government to establish a system of equal opportunity and equal pay for equal work throughout the Government services; it further calls upon all members to take their full share in the campaign for such equality and also in the professional and industrial spheres.

(c) It further calls upon the Government to open the diplomatic and consular services to women on the same terms as to men.

(d) It calls upon the Government to base all insur-

ance and pensions schemes—including the Beveridge Plan—on a system of equal contributions and equal benefits for men and women.

Nationality.—St. Joan's S.P.A. calls upon the Government to remove all disabilities of married women in matters of nationality, and to ensure that in so far as nationality is concerned, a married woman shall be in the same position as a man—married or unmarried—or any single woman. It further calls upon the Government to place the nationality of married women on the agenda of the forthcoming meeting of Dominion Premiers.

The Housewife.—St. Joan's S.P.A. welcomes the publicity which has been given to the economic disabilities of the married woman. It recognises that there is an economic aspect in the partnership of marriage which calls for full investigation as a preliminary to any possible legal definition.

Taxation.—St. Joan's S.P.A. demands the removal of all sex discrimination in taxation. It urges that all married women receive direct notice of the amount due to them as post-war credit.

Policewomen.—St. Joan's S.P.A. calls upon the Government to make it compulsory on Watch Committees and Standing Joint Committees to appoint an adequate number of attested policewomen on the same terms as men.

Education.—St. Joan's S.P.A. calls for the amendment of the Education Bill (a) to ensure adequate financial treatment for Catholic schools, (b) to establish equal rates of pay for men and women teachers. It welcomes the Minister's promise of an amendment by which women teachers "shall not be dismissible solely on grounds of marriage" and trusts that this amendment will be so framed that there shall be no discrimination against women solely on the grounds of marriage.

Post-War Employment.—St. Joan's S.P.A. demands that all post-war employment shall be open to men and women on the same terms, provided that where a man or woman has been displaced from any particular employment, he or she shall have the right to reinstatement at the end of the war period.

International Labour Conference.—St. Joan's S.P.A. calls upon the British delegates to the International Labour Conference to urge that in all post-war planning, the principle be established that women, married or unmarried, have the right to earn on the same terms as men and that the principle of equal pay for equal work—the rate for the job—with equal opportunities for training and promotion be explicitly adopted. It further urges the provision of good conditions of work with equal safeguards for men and women, and the abolition of the division into men's work and women's work, the artificiality of which has been fully proved during the war. The Alliance therefore strongly deprecates the proposals on the Agenda of the Conference to consider women workers as a separate category as is done with "young persons and disabled workers." (Item III). The Alliance further asks the British delegates to urge that all insurance and pensions schemes be based on equal contributions and benefits for men and women.

We offer our deep sympathy to Miss Betty Lowe on the death of her father, Major-General W. H. M. Lowe, C.B.

THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE AND WOMEN WORKERS.

Of several reports issued this year by the I.L.O. in preparation for the approaching International Labour Conference, none is more topical than that which deals with the organisation of employment in the transition from war to peace. This touches on the enormous increase in the number of women earners since 1940—from 13,300,000 to 17,000,000 in the United States alone—and on the many new kinds of work allotted to women in these years. "These qualitative changes in the work done by women are the distinctive development of the present war as compared with that of 1914-1918."

The report rejects the belief that "this development is merely a war phenomenon and that women can simply be relegated to the pre-war employment status they have outgrown." It suggests that "the redistribution of workers in the economy after the war should be organised on the principle of complete equality of opportunity for men and women on the basis of their individual merits, skill and experience." Instead of unsuccessful attempts to bar married women from employment there should be a development of "social security measures which will give women real freedom to choose between whole-time domesticity and a paid occupation." Certain "training and upgrading facilities" should be available for women as for men, and would correct "the inadequacy of women's technical training, which has hindered their advancement and has been one of the main factors in the instability of which women workers have been accused."

The report points out that the provisions made in some countries, by legislation or collective agreements, for restoring pre-war industrial practices are prior in date to "the changes, unexpected in some quarters, in the use of women workers," and refers to more recent, and therefore more enlightened, proposals, for instance the recommendation made last December by the Women's Advisory

Committee of the War Manpower Commission in the United States that "all economic planning should aim at providing work opportunities for all adults in the labour market, that full employment should include all women now at work inside and outside the armed forces, and that vocational training and retraining programmes should be open equally to men and women."

As regards pay, the report supports "the principle of equal pay for equal work irrespective of sex." It recommends investigations, conducted in co-operation with workers' and employers' organisations, which would evaluate the comparative quality and quantity of the work done by men and by women. On the basis of the information thus obtained, wages should be fixed in relation to the value of work.

The raising of the status of certain traditionally feminine occupations, in particular domestic service, is advocated.

Another report, dealing with minimum standards of social policy to be observed by member states in their dependent territories, recommends that "appropriate measures" be taken "with due regard to local conditions" to secure for the women in these territories "adequate opportunities for general education, vocational training and employment, safeguards against physically harmful conditions of employment and economic exploitation, including safeguards for motherhood, and fair and equal treatment as regards remuneration and other conditions of employment." Very interesting is the appended note which emphasises the necessity of raising the status of these women. "Without a wider policy than employment regulations, not only will women remain a depressed class but the whole civilising process will be slowed." Colonial administrations are stated to have been hampered in dealing with women "by economic conditions and by reluctance to intervene in matters of local custom." H.D.I.

Notes and Comments.

Equal Pay.—Mrs. Cazalet Keir's amendment to Clause 82 of the Education Bill, providing that the Minister when approving salary scales for teachers should "not differentiate between men and women solely on grounds of sex" was passed on 28th March by 117 votes to 116.

Mr. Churchill's action in turning the matter into a vote of confidence in the Government aroused a keen sense of injustice. Since his leadership of the country is unquestioned, the reversal of the previous vote (by 425 votes to 23 the clause as amended was struck out) was a foregone conclusion. Thus was history repeated. When in 1936 the Government was similarly defeated on the question of equal pay for men and women in the Civil Service, Mr. Baldwin, then Prime Minister, similarly obtained a reversal of this vote by making it one of confidence in the Government. A three-lined whip had been sent out.

We protest against Mr. Butler taking refuge behind the Burnham Committee. There is, as several members pointed out, no reason why Parliament should not lay down general principles for a negotiating body like this committee. We protest further against his statement that he "has no recent evidence to show that the women teachers in the Burnham machinery desire this reform." We are informed that the case for equal pay has been recently presented at the Burnham Committee by and on behalf of women teachers. Moreover while the National Union of Women Teachers, which represents thousands of women and has consistently worked for equal pay, is not represented on the Burnham Committee, it has presented its claim for equal pay to that body, as well as

to the Arbitrator on Teachers' Salaries and to the President of the Board of Education. Mrs. Cazalet Keir has served the cause of justice by bringing forward her amendment and obtaining its passage, and has proved that the reform it embodies cannot be long delayed. We have written our protest to the Prime Minister.

Mrs. Hardie, Dr. Summerskill, and two Catholic M.Ps., Dr. Morgan and Mr. Stokes, voted for equal pay on both occasions.

The cognate issue of equal pay in the public services was brought up in the House of Commons on 4th April, when Mr. Granville asked the Prime Minister to define the Government's attitude to it and to give parliamentary time for its discussion. Mr. Churchill said: "The Leader of the House is considering whether an opportunity can be found in the course of the present session." Mr. Shinwell then asked for an assurance that "such a discussion will not take place on a motion of confidence."

On March 10th Mr. Butler undertook to include in the Education Bill an amendment which would follow the lines of one moved by Mr. Hamilton Kerr (Oldham), thus providing "that a teacher shall not be dismissible solely on grounds of marriage." He added that the amendment "and the spirit in which it has been moved have the entire approval of the Government at the present time." *The Woman Teacher* welcomes his statement but points out that married women must further be assured of "the same rights of appointment and promotion" as men and single women.

Continued on page 16.

International Notes.

St. Joan's Alliance in Australia.

In reply to our congratulations to Dame Enid Lyons on her election to the Australian Parliament, we have received a letter from her in which she asks to be remembered to all her "friends at 55 Berners Street" and says, "I cannot help feeling a little flattered that my friends of St. Joan's Alliance should feel so kindly towards me."

Immediately before our Annual Meeting we received an airgraph, dated 29th February, from Miss Flynn, which was read and listened to with much interest, especially its reference to the wide publicity given in the secular and church press to the statement by St. Joan's Alliance opposing the suggested amendment to the divorce laws. This, we understand, is a proposal that Australian women married to American soldiers should be enabled to obtain cheap and easy divorce.

We were especially glad to learn that the Prime Minister had promised consideration of our request that our claims regarding the nationality of married women should be discussed at the meeting of Dominion Premiers.

Miss Flynn has also sent us various press cuttings which show that Senator Dorothy Tangye has interviewed the Australian Government on behalf of Australian girls deserted by their American soldier husbands who, owing to the law of domicile, have been unable to obtain either maintenance or divorce in Australia. In many cases she blames the parents of these girls whose marriages have foundered.

We offer our sincere condolences to Miss Anna Brennan, LL.B., Deputy President of the Alliance, on the death of her distinguished brother, Dr. T. C. Brennan, K.C., formerly senator and Federal Minister, who died on January 4th and who was given a state funeral.—R.I.P.

France.—The French Consultative Assembly which now meets in Algiers has decided by 51 to 61 votes that women shall vote in the preliminary elections to be held in France as soon as the country has been liberated.

The French National Committee has extended French citizenship to certain Moslems in Algeria, entitling them to vote without renouncing the Koranic law and customs, which sanction polygamy. Moslem women will not be entitled to vote.

Gambia.—We offer our congratulations to Mrs. J. A. Mahoney, an African woman, recently appointed J.P. to help in the juvenile courts.

Malta.—We are very glad to have heard by cable from Miss Mabel Strickland that she accedes to our request that she be a vice-president of St Joan's Alliance. She congratulates us on the resolution passed at our annual meeting calling upon the government to give votes to women on the same terms as men in the new constitution.

South Africa.—Warm congratulations to our member, Mrs. G. Byrne, on the birth of a son at Pretoria on January 10th.

U.S.A.—Our American vice-president, Miss McEntee, Ph.D., writes of her pride in our member, Miss Helen C. White, Ph.D., national president of the American Association of University Women, recently the guest of honour at the Women's University Club in New York.

E.F.G.

Come at seven on Wednesday, April 26th, to the Interval Club to hear Mrs. Hartree, the Countess de Kerdel and others on the Nationality of Married Women. Miss Graham in the chair.

NOTES AND COMMENTS—Continued from page 15

In the *Catholic Herald*, Grace Conway reviews a Signpost booklet, *Quality or Equality*, by Christopher Hollis, in which he opposes "indiscriminate feminine education" as "likely to increase the reluctance of women to bear children and make it harder for them to be content with their traditional relationship to men," their "wartime adventures" increasing their aversion after the war for "the humdrum life of the home." Miss Conway asks: "(1) Will women agree that home life is 'humdrum' and (2) How are you going to prevent an intelligent woman from learning anything she chooses—from millinery to architecture?"

* * *

We wish to associate ourselves with the congratulations to Sir Henry Wood on the jubilee of the Promenade Concerts and his seventy-fifth birthday. It was a year or two before the last war that Sir Henry introduced women into his orchestra, being the first British conductor to allow any women except harpists to play under his bâton.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.

From the "*Catholic Citizen*" of April 15th, 1919.

"Delegates from women's societies were recently heard before the Peace Commission on international labour legislation. The delegates represented English, French, American, Italian and Belgian women. The British delegate, Mrs. Corbett Ashby, brought forward the protection of maternity. . . . Madame Marie Verone, a French barrister, asked that the women's demands should be included in the Treaty of Peace itself, and not only in the statutes of the League of Nations.

"That women should be heard before the various Commissions set up by the Peace Conference is all to the good, but it is more important by far that women should be appointed to the permanent Commissions, which will no doubt be established when the League of Nations takes shape."—*Leonora de Alberti* in "*Notes and Comments*."

Saints for Girls. By a Servite Nun. (Sands & Co.) 6s.

A more than grown-up reviewer found these charmingly written stories very depressing, but possibly girls, with the buoyancy of youth, will take a more cheerful view of the struggles to attain sanctity of the heroines of these stories, without being unduly conscious of the tremendous gap between saints and ordinary sinners. E.F.G.

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