

THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

Organ of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, 55, Berners Street, London, W.1.

VOL. VIII., No. 11.

December 15th, 1922.

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.*

ALICE MEYNELL.

In Memoriam.

By the death of Mrs. Meynell the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society has suffered a bitter loss. Others will write of the loss to the world of literature, others of the loss to the Catholic world, but to us the loss is personal and irreparable.

In the early days when our frail bark was first launched on perilous seas, Mrs. Meynell lent to a dangerous venture the support of her honoured name. A guarantee, we may say, that the aims of the new Society were laudable and Catholic. Even those of us who most realise the dangers of those early days, even we will never know, perhaps, the full value of that guarantee.

Mrs. Meynell came on to our platform, was a member of our Executive Committee, defended us in the press, openly and valiantly championed us. She was at the inaugural meeting of the Society, and walked in the Suffrage procession of 1911. She acted on one occasion as our hostess at a joint meeting of the religious suffrage societies, and when at last the first Mass for our intentions was celebrated in Westminster Cathedral at our request, Mrs. Meynell led the procession, which, at the conclusion of Mass, passed from the Lady Chapel to the shrine of our patron St. Joan of Arc. She said in quiet tones, which conveyed so much more than another's exuberance, that it had been a real suffrage demonstration.

Later on in 1915, when we set out on an

other perilous journey by the foundation of our paper, the "Catholic Suffragist," Mrs. Meynell again came to our aid. The promoters of that new venture can never forget the sympathy and encouragement they received from Mrs. Meynell. Her beautiful article of introduction explaining the aims of the Suffrage movement in general, and of Catholic Suffragists in particular, brought to the new paper a recognition it could never otherwise have obtained. "Great work," she wrote, "great devotion, great power, great ability, are spent by those reforming women who have temporal evils to correct, and temporal good to try for. Is it not then a wonder that all Christian women, and therefore all Catholic women, are not in the forefront of such a movement, for their aim, their pain, their compassion, their hope, are for things material and temporal, but also for things spiritual and eternal."

In the course of the eight years of our paper's existence the Editor has from time to time been confronted with a difficult task, none has been more difficult, she admits in all humility, than the endeavour to express in these few halting phrases, something of what the death of Mrs. Meynell means to the members of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society.

Her name will be cherished among us in affectionate and grateful remembrance.

L. de ALBERTI.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN BELGIUM.

By LOUISE VAN DEN PLAS.

(Communal Councillor, Brussels.)

It is with sentiments of real pleasure that I contribute these few Suffrage notes to the CATHOLIC CITIZEN, whose views we share to so large an extent, and which, on several occasions, has referred to the efforts of our Christian Feminism with a sympathy that we warmly appreciate.

In Belgium the suffragist cause has made immense progress in the last fifteen years. The man in the street has by degrees become familiar with the idea that women have a real interest in voting and that they are perfectly capable of doing so. The experience gained in the Communal elections (April 24th, 1921) fully confirms this. Women displayed due interest in the electoral conflict without, however, shewing any passion, which would have been considered unfeminine and would have done harm to the Suffrage cause. Since then the idea has gained ground that women must gradually obtain full political rights and that this will be the outcome of a normal evolution.

It would, however, be a mistake to conclude from this that women in general are prepared to carry on a campaign for their rights: rather they await them with a patience which we would like to see less passive! Yet it must be remembered that they come up against a barrier before which until now all propaganda has proved helpless: the conflicting interests of party.

In our country where the religious question and the social-economic question are so closely identified with political questions, many women took part in politics before being advocates of the Suffrage. Without being enrolled in any party, or being officially members of any, many women have placed party success in front of women's interests, or rather they have held that women's interests were bound up with the success of one party or the other. Thus Socialist women hope for the success of their feminist claims through the triumph of the "reds" far more than from a parliament pledged to the Suffrage. Liberal women for the most part

consider that their feminist interests will have to give way before the danger of seeing Woman Suffrage adding strength to the Catholic Party. With the exception of a small group of declared and convinced suffragists, who make real efforts to convert those around them, the women belonging to the Left rarely carry on propaganda work. As for Catholic women they regard suffragist propaganda merely as a complement to Catholic propaganda, and that for two reasons. firstly, because only a strong Catholic majority would give them any chance of speedily obtaining the legislative vote, and secondly, because in their eyes—and here we are unanimous—the Catholic party is the only one which safeguards our religious, moral and domestic interests.

On the other hand the men who oppose our political enfranchisement from motives of pure anti-feminism have become few in number; woman's suffrage has become almost wholly a party question. The Liberal and Socialist parties, both anti-clerical, reject woman suffrage for fear lest the more Christian mentality of women should induce many to support the Catholic party even though they might not hold any strong political views. Thus we have no immediate chance whatever of winning the political franchise which, moreover, can only be carried by a two-thirds majority of both Chambers.

The position of the vote for Provincial Councils is, however, quite different, partly because its adoption can be carried by a simple majority of one, and also because the woman's vote for the Provincial assemblies appears less alarming to the parties of the Left, its consequences having but a small and indirect influence on administrative affairs.

In this respect a rather curious compact has been entered into between Catholics and Socialists. On the eve of the last dissolution of the Chambers (October, 1921), twenty-nine Socialists in return for a concession from

(Continued on p. 89.)

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The death of Mrs. Meynell is a great grief to our Society. Elsewhere in this issue we have endeavoured, most inadequately, to express something of what her loss means to us. R.I.P.

Members of the Executive Committee attended the funeral Mass. We were deeply touched by the special honour paid to our wreath. The National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship and the International Women's Suffrage Alliance were also represented at the Mass.

We are disappointed, but neither disheartened not altogether surprised, at the defeat of the women candidates for Parliament. All things considered, the number of votes cast for the women was encouraging. It was double that of 1918. There is no doubt that if they stick to their guns, and we know well that they will, we shall have a good proportion of women in Parliament before the world is much older. We do not believe that prejudice against women M.P.'s had nothing to do with the defeat which we are lamenting, but it was not the only factor. No party as yet is willing to give women safe seats, the new candidates had a sporting chance, none had more than that. We are grateful to them one and all for the splendid fight they put up, and we hope that the next time the fight will end in victory.

* * * *

Meanwhile we greatly rejoice that our own two women M.P.'s have been re-elected. We should indeed have been depressed had either been defeated.

Among the men who have not secured re-election are some staunch friends of the women's movement—Major Hills, Sir Donald Maclean, and Sir James Greig, who was the promoter and champion of the Guardianship of Infants' Bill.

The French Senate, by 156 votes to 134 has rejected the Bill to give the suffrage to women. Ces messieurs are still floundering among the exploded old arguments that women voters will neglect their homes. If only they could be persuaded to make a short tour through the countries where women are enfranchised, they might discover that the homes of women citizens have not deteriorated, they might even discover that the new responsibility has awakened women to the relation between the vote and the home, to the benefit of the latter.

Meanwhile we deeply sympathise with our French colleagues.

* * * *

Ten women law students were called to the Bar on November 17th. There are now thirteen qualified women barristers in Great Britain and Ireland. *E pur si muove.*

* * * *

We call the attention of our members to the meeting of the C.W.S.S. to be held at 37, Woburn Square, on Friday, December 15th, at 5-30 p.m. (See advert.) We hope all our members who can, will be present.

(Continued from p. 88.)

the Right, undertook to support a Bill conferring the Provincial Suffrage on women, after the elections of 1921, but before those of 1925.

Nothing has occurred to make us feel that this pledge will not be duly honoured. Nevertheless we are keenly desirous of seeing it carried into effect as soon as possible, if only that we may complete the second stage and thus be enabled to prepare more actively for the third: the right to vote for the Chamber and the Senate. Our immediate objective is therefore to obtain the Provincial Suffrage in the course of the session that opened in November.

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

AND

Editorial Office of "Catholic Citizen":

55, BERNERS STREET, LONDON, W., 1. Tel. Museum 4181.

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

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INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

Melle Louise Van den Plas tells us in *Le Féminisme Chrétien* that three measures of importance to women will be debated in the new session of the Belgian Chamber: A Bill dealing with the evil of abortion, another defining the civil status of the married woman, and finally the proposal that women should be given the vote for the Provincial Councils, bodies which correspond more or less to our County Councils but with wider powers.

* * * *

Melle de Gourlet contributes to *La Femme Belge* a most attractive sketch of the "Résidence Sociale" at Levallois Perret, one of the poorest suburbs of Paris. This is run by a number of well-to-do women living on the spot, and represents the latest French development of the English settlement idea. Besides the familiar features of a settlement—clubs, classes, etc.—our French friends seem to specialise on out-of-door attractions; the "résidence" can boast both a garden and large play-grounds and must form an oasis of sunshine in this dismal quarter.

* * * *

The October *Bollettino* of the Italian Catholic Women's Union runs to 44 pages and contains a full report of the International congress organised by the Union in Rome last September, when the Holy Father received the congressists and in the warmest terms expressed his entire approval of the work of the Union of which the Marchesa Patrizi remains President.

* * * *

Jus Suffragii publishes a full report of the recent meeting held in London to raise funds for the I.W.S.A. congress in Rome next May.

C.W.S.S. was well represented on the occasion by Miss FitzGerald, Miss Barry, Miss Christitch and others, and the outcome was the formation of a very strong committee of women.

Kabul, Afghanistan, can boast a University for women mainly for the study of medicine at which there are some 500 women students.

* * * *

We learn from *La Française* that there is open in Paris at the moment an exhibition of portraits of women celebrities—painters, writers, actresses, philanthropists, etc.—of the XIX century. It appears to be of extreme interest and the proceeds are to go towards founding a new club in Paris for women journalists and writers.

* * * *

The *Christliche Frau* prints a suggestive article by Frau Loofs on the status of midwives and the infinite opportunities they possess for religious and moral influence over their patients, and urging that they should be more carefully prepared for this side of their work. At the women's clinic at Freiburg, where midwives are trained, it appears that a priest carefully instructs each one on how to baptise, and the authoress thinks more might be done in this direction and the work of a midwife recognised as being, in its religious aspect, a real vocation.

* * * *

Le Travail Feminin, Geneva, devotes its pages (Nov.) to an enthusiastic account of the first "Semaine sociale" for men and women to be organised at Geneva, apparently with entire success.

The *Woman's Social Work* (Melbourne), M.D. gives some good advice to his co-religionists which will bear repeating over here. "We are apt," he writes, "to hedge ourselves round with our self-satisfaction and consider that what goes on that does not immediately touch us is not our affair. Then, when through our apathy outside bodies in course of time do something to offend us we are the first to call out. Yet what initial steps did we ever take to prevent such offence being given?" The particular occasion for this protest is that at a representative gathering in Melbourne called recently to discuss starting children's libraries, not a single Catholic Society was represented. Yet, as M.D. truly says, while refraining from advising and helping in a public scheme, Catholics would be the first to protest loudly if obnoxious books were to find their way on to the library shelves.

V.M.C.

Annual Subscriptions.

Subscriptions to the C.W.S.S. and the "Catholic Citizen" are due on January 1st, 1923. It saves great trouble at the office if subscribers pay punctually. The subscription to the "Catholic Citizen" is now 2/6 post free.

Meetings and Receptions.

On Wednesday, November 22nd, the C.W.S.S. and the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship gave a reception at the Lyceum Club to meet the Board of Officers of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, and of the International Council of Women, and women candidates for and Members of Parliament. To the great regret of all Mrs. Chapman Catt was unable to be present on account of illness.

Mrs. Wintringham, M.P., who was received with great enthusiasm, spoke of the disappointment felt by Lady Astor and herself at not being reinforced in the House of Commons by more women members. She begged her audience not to be discouraged, as an analysis of the votes cast for women showed a very great increase on those re-

ceived by the women candidates of 1918. Frau Schreiber Kreiger, one of the 37 members of the Reichstag, deplored the defeat of the women candidates, she was convinced that more women members of Parliament would make for better foreign relations.

Interesting speeches were also made by Lady Aberdeen, Dr. Margherita Ancona, Italy, Madame Girardet-Vielle, Switzerland, Fru Backer, Norway, Dr. Jacobs, Holland.

Miss Eleanor Rathbone, President of the N.U.S.E.C., and Miss Kathleen FitzGerald, B.A., Chairman of the C.W.S.S., were joint hostesses. Among the guests were many of the women candidates, the Marquis and Marchioness of Aberdeen, Major Hills, Colonel and Lady Greig, Miss Schlacta, Hungary, etc.

Earlier in November, by kind permission of the Council, the C.W.S.S. and the British Dominions Women's Citizens Union gave a reception at Bedford College to Miss Dorman, Joint Editor of the *Woman's Outlook*, South Africa. Miss Dorman gave an interesting account of the spirited fight for Suffrage waged by the women of South Africa. Miss FitzGerald took the Chair, and Miss Newcomb, joint hostess, brought the meeting to a close in a happy little speech of thanks to Miss Dorman.

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With the above list of further donations the

C.W.S.S. Fund for Mrs. More Nisbett's candidature at the past election is closed. All subscribers have been asked to state their wishes with regard to their contributions and the result is as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
To be retained for Mrs. More Nisbett's future Candidature	13	9	9
„ C.W.S.S. "Women in Parliament" Fund	3	15	0
„ C.W.S.S. Election Work Expenses	3	8	6
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Money returned to donors	6	15	0
	£29	0	9

HON. TREASURER'S NOTE.

Subscriptions and Donations to the General Fund and "Catholic Citizen," 31st Oct.—2nd Dec.:—

	£	s.	d.
Anderson, Mrs.	0	10	0
Atkinson, Miss N. F.	1	0	0
Bain, Miss	5	0	0
Barry, Miss F.	4	0	0
Barwell, Miss	0	2	6
Boyan, Miss	0	2	6
Brady, Miss	1	0	0
Brandt, Miss	0	2	6
Christitch, Mrs. and Miss	0	2	6
Connolly, Miss C.	0	17	6
Crowle, Mrs.	0	2	6
Duff, Miss Fraser	1	5	0
Fedden, Miss	0	3	6
Hall, Miss A.	0	7	6
Hughes, Mrs. and Miss	0	5	0
Jeffery, Miss	5	0	0
Morice, Dr. Margaret	0	2	6
Thurstan, Miss V.	0	7	6
Zaro, Mrs. de	0	2	6
Minimum Annual Subscriptions	0	12	0
	£21	5	6

CHRISTMAS SALE.

Our warm thanks are due to the following who sent gifts or money to the Christmas Sale, from which, including goods sold in the office, we realised £34 11s. 2d.:—Miss L. de Alberti, Miss Aspinall, Misses Atkinson, Misses Barry, Mme. de Bivort, Misses Brady, Mrs. Clayton, Misses Cochrane, Mrs. Crowle, Miss Dorman, Miss Fraser Duff, Miss Fedden, Mrs. FitzGerald, Miss Gorry, Miss Holmes, Miss Meredith, Dr. Margaret Morice, Mrs. Reynolds, Mrs. Shorto, Miss A. Stafford, Mrs. de Zaro. We are also most grateful to our helpers at the Stall:—Mrs. Clayton, Miss Fedden, Miss Dorman, Miss Brady, Miss Meredith, Miss Moclair and Miss Tynan.

We are having another small Sale at 37, Woburn Square, W.C., on December 15th, by kind permission of Miss Gorry, when those who were unable to come on the last occasion will have another opportunity of buying their Christmas presents from us before and after the meeting at 5-30 p.m. Further particulars of the meeting will be found elsewhere in this paper.

G. JEFFERY.

We offer our heartiest good wishes to all our members and readers for Christmas and the New Year.

A Catholic Hostel for Women Students.

Catholic parents nowadays are realising more and more the great value, indeed the necessity, of giving their girls as well as their boys the best education that can be secured for them. The numbers of Catholic girls who prepare for degrees are increasing, though where a University is not within reasonable distance, parents are naturally reluctant to send their daughters either to a non-Catholic hostel or to lodgings. The establishment of St. Gabriel's Hall, Victoria Park, Manchester, goes a long way towards overcoming this difficulty for at least one large centre. The Hostel which is under the patronage of the Bishop of Salford, is conducted by the Sisters of the Cross and Passion, and its opening about two years ago marked an important step in the advance of higher education for Catholic women. A fine new wing is now being built in order to enlarge the substantial house originally acquired by the Sisters, and when this is completed there will be accommodation for forty students. St. Gabriel's Hall has received the official recognition of the Board of Education and of the University authorities, so that students in residence who are admitted to the University Training Department for teachers, are eligible for the usual government grants during their four years' course. The hostel is of course not limited to students who are preparing for the teaching profession. Any Catholic woman student may apply for admission.

The initiative and enterprise of the Sisters deserve every success and St. Gabriel's Hall should attract students from all parts of the country. In the words of the official circular describing the Hall: "it combines the advantages of solid Catholic training and University culture. Students, while entering fully into social and intellectual University life, are directed and influenced by Catholic ideals and principles." Catholic women citizens will be doing a service to the cause of Catholic education if they make known as widely as possible the opportunities offered by this new hostel. The Warden is glad to supply particulars and visitors who wish to see the building may be sure of a welcome.

T.M.S.

Review.

MICHAEL FIELD. By Mary Sturgeon. (Harrop and Co., Ltd. 6/- net.)

The author of this biography has written a fascinating account of the strange couple known as Michael Field. She has rendered a service to literature by rescuing from obscurity the work of a poet who has enriched the English language. We use the singular for the two women, aunt and niece, were one in mind.

Michael, the aunt, wrote to Mr. Havelock Ellis, in May, 1886: "As to our work, let no man think he can put asunder what God has joined . . . the work is a perfect mosaic: we cross and interlace like a company of dancing summer flies; if one begins a character, his companion seizes and possesses it; if one conceives a scene or situation, the other corrects, completes, or murderously cuts away."

The fascination of the book, apart from the beauty of the extracts from the poet's work, is due to the glimpse one gets of the character of two idealists, whose devotion to one another is an example of that spiritual friendship between two persons of the same sex, of which poets write, but which is rarely to be met.

We should have liked more light upon the pilgrimage of these two souls from agnosticism to the Catholic Faith. Fearless seekers of truth, they did not turn from her when found, and the last tragic years of their life, both poets died of cancer, were softened and hallowed by the spiritual joys of the Catholic Church.

We hope that this book will bring to Michael Field the recognition which was denied to her, save by the few, in her lifetime.

L.A.

We call the attention of our readers to the article in the current issue of the Dublin Review, in which Mrs. L. de Alberti gives the reasons why the C.W.S.S. opposes the propaganda for prophylactic measures for the prevention of venereal disease.

Branch Notes

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

Hon. Sec.:—Miss M. A. SHORT, M.A., 7, Cressington Road, New Brighton.

A meeting was held at 6, Lord Street, on November 21st, 1922. Dr. I. M. Collier presided. Miss Annie Christitch gave us an informal and very stimulating address. She spoke of the Suffrage question in other countries and of the need for wider Catholic representation in the International Women's Suffrage Alliance. She also (by request) gave an account of her audience with the late Holy Father and spoke of his sympathy with the work of the Catholic Women's Suffrage movement. Finally she spoke of the progress and good results of the movement in America, from which country she has recently returned after an extensive tour. We offer our thanks to Miss Christitch for a very pleasant evening and also to Dr. Collier, who provided a gramophone.

We regret to announce the resignation of our Hon. Treasurer, Miss Stack, owing to her departure from Liverpool. We are sorry to lose her, and thank her cordially for the excellent work she has done for the Society.

EDINBURGH BRANCH.

Hon. Sec.:—Miss CASEY, 3, Cambridge Street, Edinburgh.

The Branch is making steady progress. The monthly meeting was held in the Cathedral parish on November 23rd. There was an excellent attendance. The Chairman, Mrs. Hamilton More-Nisbett presided, and several new members were enrolled.

The winter syllabus of lectures was arranged. The first lecture on "How to run a Society," will be given by Miss Bury (Sec. Edinburgh branch of the N.U.S.E.C.), on December 12th, at 7-30, in the parish of the Sacred Heart Church (small hall, 28, Lauriston Street.) Members present undertook to bring Catholic friends as possible recruits to the Society.

The Chairman then gave a short account of some of the women who had contested seats at the recent election.

The Hon. Sec. will be glad to receive the names and addresses of intending members.

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ON

Women and Trade Unions

will be held by kind permission of Miss GORRY at

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On FRIDAY, December 15th, at 5-30 p.m.

Speaker: Miss DONOGHUE

Hon. Secretary York Branch, C.W.S.S., and York Secretary of the National Union of General Workers (Women's Section).

A small Sale of Xmas Presents will be held before and after the Meeting. Tea from 4 p.m. (9d.)

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THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

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

Organ—"The Catholic Citizen," 2d. monthly.

OBJECT.

To band together Catholics of both sexes, in order to secure the political, social and economic equality between men and women, and to further the work and usefulness of Catholic women as citizens.

METHODS.

1. Strictly non-party.
2. Active propaganda by political and educational means.

MEMBERSHIP.

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

THE INTERNATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE NEWS

The Monthly Organ of

The International Woman Suffrage Alliance.

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