

THE

# Catholic Citizen

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

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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.

## Catholic Women in Public Life.

BY C. M. GORDON, M.A.

The purpose of this article is to urge Catholic women to take full advantage of their rights as citizens, and especially to realise that these rights are not something that can be taken or left according to inclination, but involve definite duties which may not lawfully be left undone.

It is important to stress this point because many fail to realise how immense are the changes that have recently taken place in our social life, and how far-reaching others foreshadowed in the future. Unless each one of us takes her share in directing and influencing these changes, they will not be kept in harmony with the Catholic principles, which our predecessors endured so much to maintain; we shall be disloyal to their leadership and misuse the political power they placed in our hands, and this at the very time when we are commemorating their action, and when for the first time all women possess this weapon.

There is a strongly-marked tendency to-day among both men and women to regard this as the only life, and to seek to obtain from it the utmost gratification without any thought for a future existence. Hence the popularity of such aids to comfort and physical satisfaction as limitation of families, rejuvenation and sterilisation of the "unfit." To it is also due the idea that a worker need give during his working hours not his whole energy and ability, but just sufficient of these to ensure his continued employment. This tendency is also responsible for the despair-

ing doctrine that since some people can not be relied on to exert self-control in matters such as their desire for alcoholic drink, there must be prohibition for all. To counteract these doctrines is of urgent importance, but as yet this is left to the few. To oppose the popular panacea of the moment is neither easy nor pleasant, but it would be much easier and much less unpleasant were there more to do it.

Further it is quite impossible for a small number adequately to represent the view of the Catholic body. They can do no more than touch the fringe and we should aim at permeating the entire structure. During the recent election, I spoke twice or thrice daily at meetings in all parts of England—North, Midlands, East and West. The respective parliamentary candidates came to each meeting to answer questions put by the electors as to how they would vote if returned to the House of Commons, on unemployment, nationalisation, equal moral standard, temperance, disarmament, equality of pay and opportunity for women, and countless other matters. At not one single meeting was one of these candidates asked to support fair play for Catholic schools, and although they had all been approached officially by those in authority, I think that both the candidates and the people attending these meetings might be pardoned for assuming that religious education was a matter in which the men and women in their constituencies took no real interest. We know that this is not the case, but of what

use is this knowledge unless we see that our legislators share it? I would also remind you that there is not one single organisation in the country which is not crying out for more workers, and this in an age when enormous numbers spend their days "killing time." But even if every Society had as many workers as it could possibly employ, we should not yet be fulfilling adequately our civic responsibilities. Organisations have to carry on their work in education, rescue, prevention, emigration or other field within limits laid down by legislation or departmental rules. The best Society is grievously hampered if compelled to work along unsound lines, and the lines will not be well laid unless women play their part as citizens. A woman's point of view differs from a man's. She looks at matters from a different angle, and in consequence her contribution to the solution of a problem is not identical with his. To leave to one sex the far reaching problems which face us to-day reminds me of nothing so much as of the Scotsman who wanted a cheap honeymoon and so left his wife at home.

There are two types of Catholic women, neither of which play their part as citizens. One is genuinely shocked at the idea that she should attend a political meeting, or read the report of the Street Offences Committee. She murmurs reproachfully, "My dear, what would Our Blessed Lady have thought?" forgetting how She stood amid a howling mob at the foot of the Cross. Were you to pursue the matter and remind her that His Eminence presided at a public meeting in which women were urged to fulfil their duties as citizens, she would merely shake her head sadly over the degeneracy of the Hierarchy! This type is rapidly decreasing, but the second is both numerous and hard to move. Its members agree enthusiastically, often volubly, with everything you say. But when you come to ask them to do their share, to write to their member of Parliament, or hand in at a meeting a written question, which you are prepared to give them already drafted, they begin one and all to make excuse, one has her husband's tea to get, another plays bridge on the particular day when the meeting will be held, a third is not "clever enough" (to give a written question to a steward)—and

having salved her conscience with this false humility, thinks you unreasonable if you continue to press her.

To play one's part as a Catholic citizen it is not necessary to be highly educated or possessed of outstanding qualities. We do not want an army entirely composed of generals, though Catholic women should produce a goodly share, but we do urgently need a large body of men and women who care sufficiently for freedom, justice and charity, to see that these principles are used as the foundations of the social, economic and educational structures which are rising daily around us. The requisite powder and shot and any advice and help we may desire will be readily provided by the existing organisations, such as the Ladies of Charity, the Catholic Women's League, or in the political field by St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance.

Whether or not we approve of women possessing full civic rights, these have been won for them by the Pioneers in the movement for women's emancipation, and we can not get away from the fact that women now form the majority of the electorate, and have duties and obligations to fulfil. I do urge all Catholics to make full use of our three chief faculties: memory, to recall what we owe to the leaders who fought and won for us Catholic Emancipation and women's emancipation; understanding, to realise that we have to carry on the work they were compelled to lay down; will, to determine to take up this burden here and now.

#### Catholic Congress.

The celebrations of the Centenary of Catholic Emancipation will take place in London, September 13—17. No doubt a great number of our members will attend. Pontifical High Mass will be celebrated in the grounds of Westminster Cathedral on Sunday, September 15.

On Monday, 16th, at 8 p.m., there will be a mass meeting of women at the Albert Hall, at which H. E. Cardinal Bourne will preside. Among the speakers will be his Grace Archbishop Mostyn, Miss Balfe, Mrs. Dooley, Dr. Letitia Fairfield, Miss C. M. Gordon. Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell will recite an ode composed for the occasion by Miss Enid Dinnis.

## Notes and Comments.

### THE DEATH OF DAME MILLICENT FAWCETT.

The passing of the great Pioneer, Dame Millicent Fawcett, casts a gloom over women's societies. She had the gift of winning the affection and admiration, not only of her own immediate followers, but of many others. Her name is dear to countless women in this and other lands. She was always on the best of terms with the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society—now St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance—and attended with her sister, Miss Garrett, the Mass of Thanksgiving for the Enfranchisement of Women at Westminster Cathedral last year, and also in 1918. Dame Millicent was the Leader who never lost heart, and who never sought the limelight, her invariable cheerfulness in moments when the outlook for suffragists was dark was an inspiration to all. We shall ever remember with gratitude her noble work for women.—R.I.P. St. Joan's S.P.A. offers sincere sympathy to Miss Garrett, and Miss Philippa Fawcett. We hope that women of this and future generations may carry on her work in a worthy manner.

\* \* \* \*

In thanking us for our congratulations on his appointment as Archbishop of Edinburgh, the Right Revd. Abbot Macdonald, O.S.B. (who was an associate of our Liverpool Branch in 1913), wishes St. Joan's S.P.A. all success.

\* \* \* \*

The Westminster City Council are contemplating the appointment of women as managers on their new Grosvenor Estate. The idea is that the women managers should get into touch with the families who were affected by the Thames flood, and give lectures on hygiene, etc. When the move has been effected, they will act not only as rent-collectors, but as health visitors, and advisers in general. It is hoped that the representatives of the Duke of Westminster will approve of the plan, if so, Westminster will be the first Borough Council in the Metropolis to employ whole-time women estate managers.

\* \* \* \*

It is to be hoped that the Minister of Health will yield to the representations made to him, urging the publication of the Report of the Committee appointed to enquire into the management and administration of the London Lock Hospital. It will be recalled that the Ladies Committee of the Hospital resigned in a body as a protest against the dismissal of the matron, assistant matron, and a nursing sister. The Committee of Enquiry was set up in February 1928—this Committee issued their report last January, but so far it has not been made public, in spite of the protests of women's societies and others. The Minister of Health has now published the recommendations of the Committee, and a letter from the Board of Management. The latter now offers, as an act of grace, financial compensation to the dismissed members of the Staff. The mystery surrounding this matter can only do harm to the hospital. Sir Reginald Ward Poole, in a letter to the *Times*, July 22nd, urges the publication of the Report, and reminds Mr. Arthur Greenwood that, when in opposition, he likewise urged the publication of the report, to use his own words: "In the public interest it is advisable that the truth should be made plain." Why has Mr. Greenwood changed his mind?

\* \* \* \*

We note that the Committee of Enquiry recommend that the Board should include a substantial number of women, that a proper status should be given to any woman acting on the honorary medical or surgical staff, a proper status to the matron, and an increase in the number and salaries of the nursing staff, etc.

\* \* \* \*

We read with interest in the *Woman's Leader*, that Miss Picton Turberville has been appointed to serve on the Ecclesiastical Committee during this Parliament, the Committee consists of fifteen members.

\* \* \* \*

We offer our sincere sympathy to our member, Mrs. Gaffney, on the death of her husband.—R.I.P.

## ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE,

AND

Editorial Office of "Catholic Citizen":

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

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

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## The Aims of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance.

In the Suffrage Campaign, happily a thing of the past, it was a favourite saying that the vote was a symbol and a weapon, a lever to remove obstacles blocking the path to necessary reforms. It was, therefore, but logical when enfranchisement was won, for non-party societies such as St. Joan's S.P.A., to continue in being, to work for equality between men and women.

After the partial victory of Woman's Suffrage of 1918, the programme of the Alliance—then known as the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society—was broadened, and in the words of the membership form, the Alliance exists "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."

Ten years later, after the victory of Equal Franchise in 1928, a Special General Meeting decided that St. Joan's S.P.A. "shall continue to work for the remainder of its programme." It was further decided that the Alliance must be an equalitarian society, and not weaken its forces by working for other, no doubt very important, questions, but for which other societies exist. Such questions, for instance, as peace and temperance, upon the solution of which opinions differ so widely.

No one would seriously maintain that all inequalities between men and women are now removed, though certain victories have been won. We have now equal

suffrage, but the House of Lords is still closed to peeresses in their own right; and there is but a handful of women in Parliament. The Parties should allot to women candidates seats where there exists some prospects of success. Widow's Pensions have been won; a measure of equal guardianship of infants; we have women lawyers and magistrates, but the Diplomatic Service remains closed.

There is yet much to be done.

In the forefront of our programme stands the question of an Equal Moral Standard, which involves the problem of prostitution and all its concomitant evils: State Regulation of Vice, unequal Solicitation Laws, and, in our opinion, the advocacy of the degrading practice of Birth Prevention. The Alliance we may say urges that the Solicitation Laws be repealed and an equal law substituted, applicable to all persons who annoy or molest others in streets or public places, the evidence of the person annoyed being essential. The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene drafted a Bill for the purpose, The Public Places (Order Bill), introduced into the House of Commons by Lady Astor. We wish to see this Bill become Law.

Next in importance to an equal standard of morality comes economic and industrial freedom, including equal pay for work of equal value, and equal opportunities. Progressive feminists see a grave danger in special protection, so called, for the woman worker. St. Joan's S.P.A., with other societies, while believing in protection for

all industrial workers, knows that to impose special restrictions on women, so far from being a protection is a handicap. The Alliance holds that the only safe and just policy is to base labour regulations and restrictions upon the nature of the work, and not upon the sex of the worker.

Into this question comes the demand that married women shall have the right to decide for themselves whether or no they shall engage in paid employment. This demand is sometimes misunderstood. We do not deny that a woman who marries contracts special duties to husband, children and home, which she may not neglect, but we do say that the woman herself has the right to judge, whether she can best fulfil those duties by working within the home or outside of it. It is not the business of the employer or of the State to dismiss her on marriage, or to tell her that her duty is to stay at home.

These are some of the problems which St. Joan's S.P.A., and other feminist societies, have to solve, not in this country alone, but internationally. For ourselves we have had many proofs, and not only from Catholics, of the value of such a society as the Alliance, a progressive political society, composed of staunch Catholics. Politics cover a wide field, and who shall say what tasks lie ahead, and when our work will be ended? For St. Joan's S.P.A. stands for complete equality between men and women, an equality nowhere yet achieved, but inherent in the teaching of Our Master, Christ.

L. DE ALBERTI.

## Madeleine Parnell, R.I.P.

St. Joan's Alliance has suffered a great loss by the death of Mrs. Parnell, one of our earliest and most enthusiastic members. Mrs. Parnell was a born feminist, and like many another, though not a militant, was drawn into the movement by Mrs. Pankhurst. She rejoiced in the foundation of a *Catholic Suffrage Society*, and joined the Liverpool and District Branch at its inaugural meeting. In spite of chronic ill-health and domestic ties, she was a devoted member, and served on the Committee from 1917-25, when a

breakdown in health compelled her to resign, but she was vice-chairman of the Branch from 1927 till her death. At one time but for her determination and enthusiasm, which overcame all obstacles, the Branch would probably have been abandoned. She gave of her best to St. Joan's—as indeed to all she cared for—and she gave it, though her body was racked with suffering and her mind with anxiety. She was a fine example of the valiant women.—R.I.P.

We offer our deep sympathy to her daughters, Miss Nancy and Miss Mary Parnell.

## Nationality of Married Women.

No Cuban woman may ever again be deprived of her nationality against her will. That is the substance of an amendment just passed by the Cuban Congress, stating that the marriage of a Cuban woman to a foreigner does not henceforth in any respect alter her status as a Cuban citizen. News of this amendment, passed on July 1, and published in the *Gacete Oficial* of July 9, was cabled to Doris Stevens, Chairman of the Inter American Commission of Women, by Amalia Mallen de Ostolaza, President of the *Partido Nacional Suffragista* of Cuba, and confirmed by the Cuban Embassy in Washington.

"Cuba has joined the other seven Latin American countries which lead the world in guaranteeing the nationality of their women," commented Miss Stevens. "The Inter American Commission of Women has devoted much of its work during the past year to the vexed question of nationality, and has found that the world-wide picture is nothing short of chaotic. In the midst of the wilderness, these seven countries—eight, now that Cuba has taken her place among them—rise like mountain-peaks in the New World; with only Russia in the Old World, providing an equal guarantee of the nationality of its women citizens. It is fitting that Cuba, which saw the birth of the Inter American Commission of Women, and has so consistently aided in its work, should thus publicly proclaim its pride in the Cuban woman and her inalienable right to citizenship in the land of her birth."

The countries of the world which now declare that a woman shall never lose her nationality by reason of her marriage with a foreigner, are Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Panama, Paraguay, Russia, Uruguay, and Cuba.

## International Notes.

The text of the new Constitution for Spain, which will replace the Constitution of 1876, is now available. Amongst other reforms it gives equal political rights to men and women over twenty-five years of age. The Senate is to be abolished and replaced by a Council of the Realm, consisting of thirty-six members, eighteen permanent members by virtue of birth or office, and eighteen elected members. Among the first is the Hier to the Throne from the age of sixteen. It is suggested that princesses of the royal family are also eligible to sit on the Council, since men and women are to have equal civil rights. If, and when, this Consitution becomes law, a great impetus will be given to women suffrage in the Latin countries, which now lag behind.

We were glad to note that on the last days, before the Recess several M.P.'s, pressed the Colonial Secretary to publish the Report from the Governor of Hong-Kong on the question of the abolition of the system of mui tsai. The Report is long overdue, and all who are acquainted with the position of the question are very uneasy. That such a system, which amounts to slavery, should continue to exist under the British Flag is a disgrace to the Empire.

*The Flashlight*, organ of the Woman's Enfranchisement Association of South Africa, (edited at the moment by our member, Miss Dorman), is optimistic as regards the prospects of the enfranchisement of women under the new Government, and calculates that there must be at least two-thirds of the members ready to vote for the Suffrage Bill. We trust that in South Africa, members stand by their promises once elected. In Great Britain we have not always found it so. We wish our Sisters of South Africa better luck.

We have received the Annual Report of the Women's Indian Association, Madras. This energetic and progressive society—founded in 1917—now numbers about 80 branches, 24 centres, and over 4,000 members. It stands for woman suffrage, and eligibility on equal terms with men; the

abolition of Child marriage, and the raising of the age of consent, for education, etc. The Association is making its influence felt in the Legislative Councils.

It is reported in the Press that M. Venizelos, Prime Minister, Greece, stated in the chamber that the Government was prepared to introduce a Bill granting the Municipal Franchise, but that the time was not ripe for granting the Parliamentary Franchise to Women. We are left wondering whether M. Venizelos will ever consider the time ripe for this elementary act of justice.

Mme. Brunschvicg, in *La Française*, appeals to all feminists to unite in bombarding senators in preparation for the Autumn elections. She calls upon all suffragists to work against hostile senators and their party, if efforts to convert them fail. We wish success to the campaign.

We learn from *Le Féminisme Chrétien de Belgique*, that besides a woman in the Belgian Senate, there is now a woman member of Parliament, elected by the Socialists of Liège—Mademoiselle Lucie Dejardin, who first worked in the mines and later as a laundress. She is a Municipal Councillor of Liège and was a prisoner during the War.

The same paper deplores the action of the Swiss Catholic Women in not signing the Suffrage Petition, the reason given being that they wished to reserve their sympathy for a System of Family Suffrage. Mlle. Van den Plas points out that in practice this system would not give any appreciable political influence to women, and would only be "familial" in name, for its influence would be destroyed by the votes of the unmarried and of married men with few or no children. Unfortunately certain groups of French Catholic women appear to take the same view as the Swiss Catholic women.

We offer our congratulations to Mlle. Elsa Barraine, a girl of nineteen, to whom the *Grand Prix de Rome* has been awarded for her symphony on Armand Foucher's poem, "La Vierge Guerrière" which depicts three scenes from the life of St. Joan. We hope, with *La Française*, that Mlle. Barraine's compositions will prove once more that women have a serious contribution to make to music.

L. de A.

## Equal Rights Treaty.

Lord Cecil, who is a member of the British Delegation to the Assembly of the League of Nations, has received officers of the Six Point Group, who had asked him to discuss with them how best to facilitate the passage by the League of the Equal Rights Treaty. This Treaty was first launched at the Pan American Conference in 1928, and later in the same year at the gathering of nations to sign the Kellogg Peace Pact. Its major Article runs thus:

*Article 1. The contracting States agree that, upon the ratification of this Treaty, men and women shall have equal rights throughout the territory subject to their respective jurisdictions.*

Lord Cecil received the representatives of the Six Point Group sympathetically, and discussed various methods of approaching the League. Among precedents alluded to by the representatives were the Labour Charter, stating that men and women shall receive equal pay for work of equal value; Article 7 of the Covenant of the League stating that all positions in and in connection with the League shall be open equally to men and women; the international work done by the League in dealing with the Traffic in Women; the Equal Rights Treaty presented at the Pan American Conference. The possible attitude of individual nations towards the Equal Rights Treaty was considered, and stress was laid on the necessity of presenting the international aspects of the Equal Rights Treaty so that it should come within the scope of international business intended to be done by or through the agency of the League of Nations.

## St. Joan's S.P.A.

A public meeting will be held at St. Patrick's Club, Soho Square, on Monday, October 7th, at 6 p.m. Speaker: Miss Susan Musson, Secretary of the National Council for the Unmarried Mother and her child. Chair: Miss Kathleen FitzGerald, B.A. Admission free.

## TREASURER'S NOTE.

The JUMBLE SALE will be held on Saturday, October 26th. Will all members help to make this a really big success by sending goods and also by helping to sell on the day. Parcels marked "Jumble Sale" may be sent to me at 57 Carlton Hill, N.W.8., or if notified I will

arrange for them to be fetched at the time of the Sale. Mrs. Kerr is organizing two dances in aid of our funds at the Westminster Cathedral Hall—one on October 31st and one on November 12th. She is also holding one for the Catholic Citizens' Parliament on September 28th. Tickets 2/6.

St. Joan's will have a stall as usual at the Green, White and Gold Fair on November 14th and 15th, and we hope that all members will send a gift for the stall.

VERA LAUGHTON MATHEWS,  
*Hon. Treasurer.*

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## LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

*Hon. Secretary: Miss N. S. Parnell, B.A.,*  
45 Falkner Street, Liverpool.

The Branch has sustained a grievous loss in the death of its Vice-Chairman, Mrs. Parnell, who passed away suddenly on July 14th. During the seventeen years of her membership she gave unstintingly of her thought and service and money, and was at one time instrumental in saving the Branch from disbanding. When increasing ill-health compelled her to withdraw from all her many activities, she still clung to St. Joan's, where her wise counsel and wide experience were of the greatest value. Indeed, of late years she came to be regarded as the very cornerstone of the Branch. R.I.P.

The Hon. Sec. and her sister would like to take this opportunity of thanking most sincerely all the members of St. Joan's for their great kindness and sympathy. Both Headquarters and the Branch sent most beautiful wreaths and were represented at the Requiem, besides having Masses offered up for the repose of her soul.

**ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND  
POLITICAL ALLIANCE.**

NON-PARTY.

Office—55, Berners St., Oxford St., London, W.  
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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.

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Compiled by PHYLLIS C. CHALLONER, M.A. and  
VERA LAUGHTON MATTHEWS, M.B.E.,  
for St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance.

With forewords by MILLICENT GARRETT  
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