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THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

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

VOL. VII., No. 6.

June 15th, 1921.

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.

POLICEWOMAN OR PATROL.

BY VERA S. LAUGHTON, M.B.E.

Policewoman or Patrol! To the man in the street, the words mean very much the same thing, and when the patrol is dressed in regular police uniform, the uninitiated can hardly be blamed for thinking that her duties correspond in some degree to those of the ordinary constable.

At the present time there is a widespread demand for the employment of women police, and the presence in the London streets of a certain number of upstanding young women dressed in the regulation blue, with helmet and "duty" armband, certainly lead the general public to believe that the system of women police has been adopted in the Metropolitan Area. In reality the women police and women patrol movements were founded on a different basis, developed on quite distinct lines, and their aims and ideals have been throughout and still are, totally dissimilar.

Though the need of women police had been recognised by social workers in this country before the war, no one had had the courage and determination to take the first step towards organising a definite scheme. However, with the war and its special urgent problems came the call to take action. The late Miss Damer Dawson heard the call and she, together with other pioneer women, founded the first women police organisation in this country. There was no red tape to disentangle, no official obstruction to combat, and before the War was one month old, women were working in police uniform at the big railway termini. Two months later, uniformed women were employed,

in a semi-official capacity, at Grantham, one of the biggest military training centres, and a letter highly appreciative of their work was received at the Women Police Service Headquarters from the General commanding the troops. After that the Service never looked back, and many local Authorities, in different parts of the country made application for trained women. Though in the early days they were only semi-officially employed, yet no woman took up work without the consent and co-operation of the local Chief Constable, and later the women were in many instances sworn-in as regular members of the Police Force, and exercised the power of arrest.

The fact must be emphasised that although the movement came into being with the war, there was no thought in the minds of its promoters that it was a temporary emergency measure. Always their aim was to provide a trained disciplined and uniformed force, who would act as agents of the law in all matters concerning women and children.

The early beginnings of the women Patrol movement were of a very different character. A number of voluntary workers, organised by the National Council of Women, undertook to give a few hours weekly to patrolling the streets in various localities where troops were stationed. They were not, of course, in uniform, but wore an armband with plain clothes, and their sole aim was preventive work among young excitable girls, to whom the soldiers formed a source of temptation. As social work their achievement was admirable, as a basis

on which to build a woman police movement it would have been deplorable. Without the practical success and widespread propaganda of the Women Police Service, the women patrols would undoubtedly have come to an end when the need for their war-work ceased. But in the meantime a great movement in favour of women police had grown up in the country. More and more of the provincial towns both in England and Scotland were employing uniformed women, and at the end of the war Sir Nevil Macready decided to form an experimental body of women as an adjunct to the Metropolitan Police Force. Unfortunately he determined in favour of the limited duties undertaken under the patrol system. He applied to the National Council of Women and the present Metropolitan Police Patrols may, quite literally, be said to have developed from the voluntary patrols of the early days of the war. They are still mainly employed in dealing with the moral question. That this limitation of the duties of women police is the studied opinion of Sir Nevil Macready and Mrs. Stanley, Superintendent of the Metropolitan Police Patrols, is clearly shown in their evidence last year before the Home Office Committee of Enquiry into the employment of Women Police, and in Mrs. Stanley's evidence, before the Criminal Law Amendment Bill Committee, when she stated that the work of the women patrols was mainly among "amateur" street girls. If the system of the women police patrols in London were followed to any extent throughout the country England would be steering for precisely the same disastrous position which caused so much trouble to the women's societies in Germany.

Patrolling should certainly form a part of the policewoman's duties, but as a protection for respectable girls, and not as a further weapon against the immoral woman while the man goes free.

The danger of using women patrols only for the regulation of prostitution is outlined in a recent article in the "Calcutta Statesman," which says: "The Women Patrols are merely auxiliary to the male police force. They work, as it were, behind the ordinary police force, enabling it to tighten its grasp upon women suspects and women culprits. . . it is proverbial that once a man gets into the clutches

of the police, it is difficult, if not impossible, for him ever to get out of them. Bearing this tendency in mind, it is obvious that a system of women patrols, which merely tightens the grip of the police upon the criminal or semi-criminal classes, may easily be productive of more evil than good."

One sees the deplorable lengths to which such a system may go in the evidence before the Home Office Committee of Patrol Sergeant Lilian Wyles. This Sergeant boasted that frequently girls who had not really broken any law were arrested and imprisoned. "As a preventive measure it is sometimes well to get the girls run into prison. . . If a constable will arrest them, we have them put in for insulting behaviour, which as you know, leaves no stigma behind." What a weapon such a confession is in the hands of the opponents of the employment of women police, and how it emphasises the gulf between the methods of the Metropolitan Police Patrols and those of the Women Police Service. In a word, the former are out to strengthen the law against women prostitutes, whereas the aim of the latter is to make things easier for all women and children who come in touch with the law, by giving them the support of a member of their own sex. When once the girls have the idea (as unfortunately many in London already have) that all the woman in blue is there for, is to blow a whistle and have them run in, then all chance of helping them is gone.

And the opportunity for helping is so great.

It must not be thought that the majority of women who appear in the dock are hardened criminals. A very large percentage are first offenders or young women who are only just starting a life of vice. The occasion when they are first sentenced to prison is probably the most psychological moment in their lives, and no one may approach them at that time but a constable. That constable in London is still a man. Male constables too are on duty outside the women prisoners' cells at the Police Courts.

Then there is the case of the woman who is accused of concealing the birth of her child. All the very intimate investigations—the examination of the bed and clothes—have to

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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The C.W.S.S. has written letters of congratulation to His Grace the Archbishop elect of Liverpool, and to His Grace the Archbishop of Birmingham on their nomination to these important Dioceses. It is scarcely necessary to remind readers of the "Catholic Citizen" that both these eminent prelates are good friends of our Cause.

In answer to our letters of greeting, Mme. Parren writes from Athens thanking us for our good wishes, and says that the Congress of Greek women was very successful. Our letter was read at the Congress.

By the agreement which was reached in Committee there is every hope that the Plumage Bill will pass into law without further obstruction. Under the agreement the Act will come into operation nine, instead of six months, after it is passed, and the Board of Trade is to appoint a Joint Advisory Committee to advise the Board as to the plumage which may safely be imported.

The Guardian of Infants Bill passed its second Reading without a division. The House and the Government were impressed by the great number of women's Societies supporting it. The C.W.S.S. was among those who sent up resolutions urging the Government to adopt the Bill.

Miss Alison Neilans, of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene writes:

"I am so glad to see your paper 'THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN' is pressing its members to support the Criminal Law Amendment Bill. You will have received during the week-end an invitation to attend a meeting in the House of Commons, and I hope you will be able to come.

Our Abolitionist Conference will be held this year in Rome, in the first week in November, and I think you may be interested to see the letter which our International Secretary has received from His Holiness the Pope, indicating that he gives his apostolic benediction to the Conference. I enclose you a copy of the letter.

Some of the subjects to be discussed at the Conference will be especially interesting, and

I hope we shall get a British delegation. The whole question of compulsory rescue, prophylaxis, and compulsory treatment of Venereal Disease, will be discussed."

* * * * *

Dal Vaticano.

30 Avril, 1921.

Monsieur le Secrétaire,
Vous venez de faire implorer de la paternelle bonté de l'Auguste Pontife une marque d'approbation pour le bien que fait votre Société à l'avantage de la moralité publique. Sa Sainteté, appréciant avec ses illustres Prédécesseurs de sainte mémoire, le but louable que poursuit cette Société, vous accorde bien volontiers, ainsi qu'à toutes les personnes qui travaillent avec vous à cette oeuvre de charité, la Bénédiction Apostolique.
P. CARD. GASPARI.

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The Index for the Catholic Citizen for 1920 is now ready and may be had on application at the office, 55, Berners St., London, W.1.

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be carried out by a male constable, and it generally seems to be a very young constable who is chosen.

The taking of depositions from the women and child victims in assault cases is quite obviously work that should always be undertaken by a policewoman. So too, the support of those victims in a Police Court, from which every member of their own sex has been excluded.

In Scotland and in many provincial towns in England, women police are being employed on an absolutely sound footing, and it is a tragedy that in the great Metropolis of London better use should not be made of Women Police. Of course with these special and difficult duties, everything depends on obtaining the right women—women highly trained and with experience of social work. If every Chief Constable is able to employ at random any woman who happens to be on the spot, and that with inadequate training, the experiment is not being given a fair chance. The advantage of a central Women's Auxiliary Service (as the Women Police Service is now called) to select, train and supply the right type of policewomen will be obvious to every one who really has the question at heart.

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

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

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

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CATHOLIC FEMINISM IN SPAIN.

The distinguished Spanish writer, the Condesa Emilia Pardo Bazan, whose death we regret to see announced, may be said to have been the first apostle of feminism in modern Spain. I say modern for I firmly believe that Saint Teresa was the first to sow the seed, though it has taken time to bear fruit. It was, however, the Condesa Pardo Bazan, who introduced John Stuart Mill's "Subjection of Women," into Spain in the year 1892, contributing a preface to it. Since then the growth of Feminism in Spain has been most remarkable, and the war, and the work of women in the belligerent countries, have given a new impetus to the movement. But in a country so intensely Catholic as Spain, no movement can really take root unless it is taken up by Catholics, as such. This, too, has happened, for in the March of 1919, a Catholic Feminist Society was founded by the late Primate of Spain, Cardinal Guisasola, under the title of *Acción Católica de la Mujer*. In his letter to the Condesa de Gavia in May of the same year, since printed as a leaflet, his Eminence states quite frankly that an exotic feminist movement has invaded Spain, and that the time has come to found a definitely Catholic Society suited to the characteristics of Spanish life, and in harmony with the new exigencies of the times. He has no doubt the letter says, that all the Bishops of Spain will welcome the new association, and favour it in every way.

Due to this welcome, we may presume, the

new National Society already numbers 35,000 members. There are, of course, many other Catholic Women Societies in other lands, which enjoy the special protection of the hierarchy, but the *Acción Católica* differs from them in the fact that it stands quite definitely for the political and legal rights of women, and the Central Committee has in preparation a volume dealing with *Woman Suffrage*, and giving the opinion of 14,000 Spanish women in reply to the enquiry undertaken by the *Acción Católica*.

It is this political demand which lends added interest to the letter of this Holiness Benedict XV. in which he conveys his blessing to the Society and his entire approval of its statutes and objects. Any Catholic now who opposes woman suffrage on religious grounds, becomes more Catholic than the Pope; Catholic anti-feminists will have to find some other excuse for their antedeluvian prejudices, and piety will be the gainer.

The *Acción Católica* publishes a monthly bulletin, with which we exchange the "Catholic Citizen." It records the numerous activities of the Society, and gives news of the movement abroad. The progress of feminism in Catholic Spain must necessarily be of particular interest to Catholic feminists here, and we watch with gladness its rapid growth. The outlook seems favourable, the soil is fertile, and Spain may yet be the first of the Latin Countries to enfranchise her women.

L. DE ALBERTI.

MRS. V. M. CRAWFORD'S SPEECH AT THE FRENCH FEMINIST CONGRESS.

LADIES,

The Catholic Women's Suffrage Society has requested me to lay before you their views on woman's right to liberty in matters concerned with her own work. Unfortunately our Society has not been able to agree wholeheartedly with the Resolutions adopted by the Washington Convention. We agree fully with the Resolutions concerning maternity and the six weeks enforced rest before and after child-birth: it is on the subject of night-work that we wish to make a protest, and here I may say that we are in complete accord with other Suffrage Societies in England. Clearly we are all agreed that night work for women is unhealthy, but surely it is unhealthy for everybody and ought only to be tolerated under exceptional circumstances. In the opinion of many people to exclude women from night work is likely to prolong it for men. If all night work for women is to be forbidden they are likely to be shut out altogether from certain industries. Again if they are to be excluded from all so-called dangerous trades they may become the victims of the most arbitrary decisions. The moment employers are controlled as regards the hours and conditions of work of their female employees, they are tempted to replace them by men or boys. This danger has already been pointed out by the women of Holland and Denmark and by certain industrial organisations in the United States. Frankly we have not sufficient confidence in male disinterestedness to be willing to leave our labour conditions in their hands. It is very tempting to serve our own economic interests under the cloak of chivalrous solicitude for the weakness of the other sex.

But it is more especially as regards the principle that no special prohibition shall be adopted for women until they are in a position to vote freely for or against that the English Society wishes to record its views. People are too much in the habit of coupling women with children and settling their careers without even consulting them. As a basis of legislation we insist on the absolute equality of the sexes in the eyes of the law. It might then happen that women would be willing to accept special regulations for their factory labour. But let us never forget that

the evil industrial conditions from which we wish to release women are quite as harmful to men; that the true remedy lies in laws which would apply to men and women alike. Let us take as an example what happened in agriculture during the war. Agricultural labour in England was so wretchedly paid, and the conditions of work were so bad that the whole industry suffered, and public opinion was emphatically against all field work for women. But during the war we all realised that improved methods of agriculture were essential to victory and that women's labour was a matter of vital concern to the nation. Straightway agricultural conditions were improved all round, wages increased and hours of labour decreased, and it was soon proved that with higher wages, shortened hours and a becoming costume agricultural work offered great advantages to healthy girls, and as a matter of fact a great many adopted it with enthusiasm.

I would therefore beg of you, ladies, to reflect well before adopting a policy of restrictive legislation dictated by men on our behalf, but not inspired, in full freedom, by ourselves.

WOMEN JURORS.

A well attended meeting of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society was held on Wednesday afternoon, May 11th, at the Women's Institute, 92, Victoria Street, when a stirring address on Women Jurors was delivered by Mrs. More-Nisbett of the Women Police Service.

Miss Fennell, who presided, pointed out that Jury Service for women as for men, was not an honour, but a duty, and as such not to be shirked or evaded, but conscientiously fulfilled.

Mrs. Nisbett dwelt on the importance and value of the work, especially with regard to those cases concerning women, girls and little children, against which the attack on the presence of women jurors was chiefly directed. It was just when the court was cleared, and the woman or child victim of foul attack was subjected to the awful ordeal of cross-examination that she needed the moral support of the presence of her own sex. The mere fact that women jurors were there imparted a different atmosphere into the proceedings, and hateful as it was to listen to these terrible stories, Mrs. Nisbett appealed most eloquently to women not to shrink from this great task, but to carry it through in the spirit of true Christianity and humanity. Her sincere and courageous address supported by many illustrations drawn from her own experience as a policewoman in the Scottish Courts, made a profound impression on her audience, and sent them away eager to convince those timid souls who, from want of knowledge, misunderstood their responsibility and their duty in this great matter.

International Notes.

The news from India, reported in detail in *Jus Suffragii* (May), is better than suffragists have dared to hope. Already the Legislative Council for Madras, under the new constitution, has passed a resolution by a large majority in favour of giving Indian women the vote on precisely the same terms as enjoyed by men. Thus Indian women will vote at twenty-one, while their English sisters remain disfranchised to the age of thirty. This great victory was the outcome of a well-organised women's campaign. It is anticipated that the Bombay Legislative Council will soon follow the good example set by Madras, and it is worth noting that already three Native States—Travancore, Cochin and Jahalwar—have given the suffrage to women.

The Belgian Chamber of Deputies passed a Bill (April 27th) with only one dissentient authorising women to practice as lawyers.

* * *

General Smuts' reply to the very remarkable deputation of women that waited on him in Cape Town last February to present petitions in favour of the franchise signed by 54,548 women of S. Africa, undoubtedly inaugurates a new phase of the long struggle for the suffrage that has been carried on in this Dominion. The Prime Minister, whose speech is given in full in both *Jus Suffragii* and in *The Women's Outlook*, could not pledge his Government to the support of any Women's Suffrage Bill, as political parties at the Cape—as was the case here—are too divided on the subject; but he did definitely promise time and facilities for such a Bill. And he expressed unreservedly his own entire conviction that "the case for women's franchise has passed beyond the region of argument."

* * *

La Femme Belge (April), publishes an excellent article in time for the Belgian Municipal Elections on the Need for the Woman's vote in Municipal matters—health, housing, child welfare, public morality and so forth—and urges on Belgian women both to vote and to offer themselves for election. Another article which describes the growth of the Girl Guide movement in Brussels shews how adaptable the organisation has proved itself to Catholic ideals and needs.

The Catholic women of Croatia can boast an excellent monthly periodical *Zenska Misao*, the *Women's Mind*, published at Zagreb, with which the *Catholic Citizen* is very pleased to effect an exchange. The latest number to reach us contains articles on the need for the organisation of women, the intellectual and physical activities of women, lay catechists and so forth. V.M.C.

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I again thank the above subscribers very heartily. The List includes several who have responded to my appeal last month, but it is evident that it is necessary for many more to do so. One of our members in sending her contributions remarks that many no doubt abstain from helping because they feel they can give so little; but if only the many would give a little, nay even, in some cases, their annual subscriptions, it would amount to a considerable sum collectively.

Another member makes the sporting suggestion that I should appeal to 30 people to promise £1 each by an early date, and so clear the Society from debt. Two have already given this sum. Surely there are twenty-eight more to be found who are able and willing to help the cause so effectively!

GABRIELLE JEFFERY,

PREVENTION BETTER THAN CURE.

In the medical world at present, great interest is being taken in Dr. Spahlinger's recent discovery of a 'new cure' for Consumption. But the special serum to be used is very costly and if the discovery is to be of any practical value large funds are necessary.

Among interesting press comments on the subject one reads: "Specialists have assured us that the dread disease of consumption *can* and *should* be driven out of civilised communities, and if Spahlinger's serum represents the most effective method of treatment, then the necessary funds should be raised without delay in order that it may be made available for all who are afflicted. . . Consumption is the great white scourge which carries off thousands every year in these islands and gives rise to distressing poverty. If a portion of the money spent yearly on horse-breeding and racing were devoted to the exploitation of Spahlinger's discovery remarkable results may be attained."

Such an appeal ought surely to succeed, especially if it secures, as it should do, government and municipal support. Yet, granted that undoubtedly in many cases "consumption gives rise to distressing poverty," one cannot help thinking how true is the reverse; that "distressing poverty gives rise to consumption." It is the chief cause among the working classes, if not elsewhere. And if one feature more than another can be selected it is the poverty of domestic environment that is to blame: poor air, poor room, poor light, poor water—in a word the poverty of a slum dwelling.

Many, nowadays, are apt to think slums are a thing of the past. Many cities boast of their progress in this respect. No one would wish to minimise any efforts made. Yet it is distressing to see what still remains to be done.

In Liverpool, for example, which is in the van of slum-redeeming cities, there are still, especially in the South quarter of the city, extensive slum areas, some of them of the very worst type: dismal "Courts," for example, with houses in a shocking state of delapidation and whose tenants, being as many families as there are floors and sometimes more, share one common water tap and common sanitary arrangements! Miserable ventilation seems in comparison a minor detail. Many houses of the district, too, are of the basement type where the bottom rooms besides being gloomy and exceedingly damp owing to lack of proper drainage, or broken pipes or a step worn out of existence. One case was noted recently where the mother of a family living in such a place complained that in winter the floor of the living room *was hardly ever dry* and on several occasions she had taken up the rain, that had run in, *with a shovel*.

What chance have children born and reared in such homes as these? The health of the sturdiest gives way under the strain while those "with a tendency" to consumption, haven't the ghost of a chance.

If only women electors would unite in demanding complete reform in this one respect of slum dwellings, they would aid the suppression of "the White Scourge" every bit as much as those who are able and generous enough to support the "new cure" financially.

This last may not be within the power of all, but none who have a vote need disregard the appeal. For the vote, even as money, CAN be if properly used, a great power for good, a means to lift the weight of evil; and such weapons must not be let to "rust unburnished" but must "shine in use."

E. C. HUGHES.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

Hon. Sec., Miss A. J. Musson, Fair View West, Rainhill, Lanes.

A Meeting was held on Tuesday, May 10th, at 6, Lord Street, Mrs. T. M. Smiley in the Chair. In the absence of Mrs. Crawford owing to a motor accident in France, Miss N. Stewart Parnell read a most interesting paper on the League of Nations.

The Hon. Secretary of our London Executive then gave an account of the various activities of the Society up to date. We take this opportunity of congratulating our late Hon. Secretary, Miss T. M. Browne, on her marriage with Mr. Smiley and wish them both every happiness.

MOCK ELECTION.

Under the auspices of the C.W.S.S. a very interesting Mock Election was held at Bedford College, by kind permission of the Council, on Saturday, June 4th, Miss Kathleen Fitzgerald, B.A., in the Chair. Miss Elsie Morton, of the Proportional Representation Society explained the system of Proportional Representation. Parliament, she said, should be as representative as possible, and a citizen's vote should be as effective as possible. Under our present system voters could go through life never succeeding in getting their opinions represented in Parliament. Whatever the present Parliament might be, it could not be called representative. The Proportional Representation system had been tried on the continent, in Scotland, in Ireland, and in the colonies. Wherever it was tried increased interest had been shown at elections, and a larger percentage of voters went to the poll. After Miss Morton had explained the system seven candidates addressed the meeting: Miss Fedden, Unionist, Miss C. M. Gordon, M.A., Coalition Liberal, Miss A. L. Petty, Free Liberal, Miss A. M. Havers, Independent, Miss B. O'Kelly, Labour, Miss Moclair, Nationalist, Mrs. Warren Jones, Sinn Fein.

After the count had been made Miss Morton declared the Coalition Liberal and the Sinn Fein candidates elected, and demonstrated on the blackboard how their surplus votes could be used, according to the voters' intentions, in electing two other candidates—the Free Liberal, and the Independent, the Labour, Unionist and Nationalist being defeated.

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June 15th, "The Modern Novel." MR ALEC WAUGH. Chairman—Miss Olga Hartley.

June 22nd, "The Zionist Movement and Modern Palestine." MRS BLOK, B.Sc. Chairman—Colonel Patterson, D.S.O.

June 29th, "The Mysticism of Islam." Mr. F. M. SAYAL, M.A. Chairman—Mrs. T. Dexter.

July 6th, "Co-operation versus Conflict." Miss M. P. GRANT. Chairman—Miss Adeline Bourne.

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2. Active propaganda by political and educational means.

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