# Catholic Citizen

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

Yol. XI, No. 6.

JUNE 15th, 1925.

Price Twopence.

Daughter of the ancient Eve, We know the gifts ye gave and give; Who knows the gifts which you shall give, Daughter of the Newer Eve?

-Francis Thompson.

# The Social Status of Women.

A REPLY TO THE IRISH MONTHLY.

By Professor Mary Hayden.

When reading the Reverend Edward Cahill's two articles on the Social Status of Women, in the issues of the Irish Monthly for last December and last January, elderly persons, like myself, may well feel themselves transported back to the mid-Victorian days of their childhood. They may conjure up visions of damsels in tight-waisted frocks, which modestly-if unhygienically-sweep the ground. They may hear in fancy the orators debating in the British House of Commons, when the "annual farce" of the Women's Suffrage Bill comes before them, on all the things that women, by reason of their sex, are incapable of doing efficiently (they have done a good many of them quite excellently since), and on the certainty that they will, if an opportunity be afforded them, do a lot of other very dreadful things (a good many of which they might have done since, but haven't).

Through these articles breathes the spirit of gentle patronage of the physically and mentally weak; the ever immature, which the Victorian maiden accepted—or pretended to accept. Women are to be "permitted" this and "excluded from" that. They must not engage in work "outside their natural sphere." There is need "to safeguard female modesty." They are to have "fair access to all employments suitable to their sex." Regarding the limits of the "natural" sphere, the suitability of the employments, the nature of the safeguards, men are, it is evident, to

be the judges. Little children must allow themselves to be guided and restrained; in their own interests, of course. "He for God only, she for God in him," says Milton. "Das Weib bleibt immer Kind," says Goethe. Father Cahill evidently agrees with these two Protestant writers. Could he quote anything similar from the Catholic epic poet. Dante?

At the description quoted from Father Castellan's "Droit Naturel," of the doings of girls in the University Colleges of America, who can forbear to shudder! These misguided creatures "follow the same methods as the young men." They learn Greek, Algebra, etc. (just as the learned ladies in convents and amongst the laity did in the Middle Ages). Furthermore, they "are trained in gymnastics." They "elect their own prefects and administrators." Flirtation has become "a regular institution with them" (one seems to remember having heard of it as being an "institution" several centuries ago). Most terrible of all, "they arrange their own marriages"!! However, notwithstanding the flirtations, they are, in many cases, quite unsentimental, and "marry for money rather than inclination"-just as they do in countries where the marriages are arranged by papa and mama.

The "radical feminism" of which Father Castellan complains is, he considers, the chief cause of the very frequent divorces in America. "Since the greater number of

these" "are granted on the demand of the the human family-the infirm, the old, and wife." Here the reasoning is a little hard to follow. Is the implication that the "radical feminism" of their wives caused the husbands to beat them, or pull their hair? After all, these husbands must have done something, else, even in America, decrees of divorce would not have been granted against

Father Cahill's own reasoning is not always very clear either-or else he has failed to note the real facts in connection with ordinary married life. He considers that since "the harmony and peace of the matrimonial relations" are of great importance, it would be dangerous for the Government to risk disturbing them by allowing husband and wife to vote as "distinct units." If husband and wife are inclined to quarrel, the whole wide world of opportunities for finding subjects for dispute is open to them. They can even quarrel on politics where no question of voting is involved. He suggests that each of the married pair be accorded a vote, "but their votes should be inseparable." This, he thinks, "in practice would mean that a married man would be accorded a double vote." Has he never known of establishments in which such an arrangement would mean "in practice" that the married man would have no vote at all?

All through these articles a connection is assumed between the prominent participation of women in public affairs, their economic independence, their will to direct their own lives as free adult citizens, and the general relaxation of morals and the spirit of irreligion observable in present-day life. One would ask whether morality is worse and irreligion more rife in Norway, whose women were the first in Europe to be "emancipated," than it is, for example, in France: whether the divorcées, whose scantily-clothed forms are portrayed for us in the illustrated papers, are, as a rule, persons who take, or desire to take, a share in public life?

That the motives which have induced women to seek political and economic equality with men have been in all cases unselfish, cannot, of course, be maintained, but, in general, they have really sought "the right to serve"-the right, that is, to work freely and effectually for the good of humanity, and very particularly for that of the weakest and most helpless sections of

the children. Had that right been their's earlier, the Church itself would have benefited. Would the anti-religious laws have been passed in France by an assembly which knew that it would have to reckon with the wives and mothers of France? Would even Bismarck have pushed his Kulturkampi so far, if the German women-folk had been able to make their influence felt?

When reading the statement that it is 'contrary to the Christian ideal of female modesty" that women "should be eligible to act as jurors in certain types of criminal cases," one thinks of the devoted nurses, lay women and religious, who, in past ages, performed, and still perform, for patients of both sexes, offices the most trying and most repugnant to ordinary delicacy of feeling. That the Church does not consider that they act in opposition to "female modesty," is evident, for amongst them are many canonised saints. If that is so, is not the jury woman who, suppressing her feelings of disgust, listens to the painful details of certain very terrible types of criminal cases, also worthy of praise? That her presence is often needed to protect the interests of helpless little children, a study of the verdicts sometimes returned in such cases by wholly male juries would, I think, convince Father Cahill.

Women are only beginning to make their influence felt in the higher spheres of public life, yet already they have accomplished much. Legislative Acts, long overdue, have been drafted; others, again and again rejected, are now being brought forward with good prospects of success.

Those who claim equality for the sexes in public life and in opportunity, most certainly do not assert that the characteristics or the capacities of men and of women are the same. In fact, it is very largely on the divergence of these that their chief argument, from the point of view of utility, is based. It is for the good of society in general that the peculiar gifts possessed by each sex should be utilised to the full for

That a large number of women will ever take a prominent part in public life, to the extent that is of adopting regular public careers, is, I think, scarcely likely. The majority will, no doubt, give the best years

(Continued on p. 49.)

# Notes and Comments.

President of the Newfoundland Franchise League, sends us a copy of the Daily News (St. John's), containing a full report of the banquet with which Newfoundland women celebrated their enfranchisement. It has given us great pleasure to read the splendid speeches made by our colleagues overseas. Mrs. Hutton, responding to the toast of the Franchise League, made a spirited and eloquent defence of the women's movement, which opponents still call reactionary. She concluded her speech by reminding her audience that a tedious campaign had finished, and the real work begun. Their first demands would be for better housing for the poor, a bigger grant for maternity and child welfare, and compulsory education.

We cordially wish the new citizens of Newfoundland a successful campaign, and hope to hear before long that a number of women have been returned to the House of Assembly and Legislative Council.

We are asked by the Women's Indian Association to call attention to the defeat of the bill to raise the age of consent for girls, from 12 to 14 for marriage, and for unmarried girls to 16. The letter we have received states that the Government should have remained neutral, and the English members of the Assembly should have refrained from voting; whereas the Government was against the bill and sixteen Englishmen voted against the amendment for raising the marriage age, and only six for it. Sir Alexander Muddiman gave a serious warning to the Assembly not to go far against public opinion, by raising the age of consent in the case of marriage. As the consequences of accepting the amendment would be serious, Government members would vote against it.

Indian reformers seem in this instance to have been defeated by official timidity. To all social reformers, whether in the East or the West, the official mind is suspect, and generally with very good reason.

In spite of efforts made in various quarters advance. to induce the Government to include a woman

Our member, Mrs. Hutton, first Vice- in the British delegation to the Labour Conference, no woman delegate was sent, though Miss Julia Varley was appointed as adviser to the workers, Denmark, France, Holland, Irish Free State and Roumania, also sent women advisers, no women delegates were appointed by any country.

> Unless women are adequately represented in the International Labour Office and the International Labour Conferences, both are likely to become a new danger to the woman worker. We are frankly afraid of a paternal solicitude for restricting women's work.

> > \* \* \* \*

We have the good news that the Government of Geneva has decided to close the maisons tolérées on November 30 of this year. This means the abolition of the last remnant of the "Red Light" houses in Switzerland, and strengthens the abolitionist movement on the Continent.

\* \* \* \*

The Guardianship of Infants' Bill and the Separation and Maintenance Bill passed their second reading in the House of Lords on May 26th, and the Committee stage of both Bills will be taken on June 18th. Several amendments have been put down to extend the Separation and Maintenance Bill, including a clause making adultery a ground for a Separation Order.

While we regret the defeat of the Peeress' Bill in the House of Lords, by a narrow margin of two votes, we congratulate Lord Astor on coming so near to victory. It cannot now be long deferred,

We rejoice in the suffrage victory gained by Italian women, by the Bill which was passed recently in the Chamber of Deputies. The success of the Bill was due largely to the influence of Signor Mussolini. It is limited to administrative elections, and is in no sense an equality measure, none the less it is a very welcome

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# ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE,

Editorial Office of "Catholic Citizen":

55 Berners Street, London, W.I. Tel. Museum 4181.

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

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# Widows Pensions,

By L. DE ALBERTI.

Women's organisations which have been tends a gracious hand to the childless widow, fighting for so long for pensions for widows with dependent children, are disappointed in the scheme proposed by Mr. Winston Churchill. In the first place, we have asked for a non-contributory system, because a contributory system excludes a large number of the poorest widows who will still be left struggle for life than other workers. Ten to the mercy of the Poor Law. We have shillings a week is not sufficient to keep asked for pensions for widows with de- her, but it may enable her to take lower pendent children, because no woman can fill wages than other women, and make the satisfactorily the double office of breadwinner and home-keeper. She cannot be out than it already is. At the same time, while all day earning her own and her children's the demand for widows' pensions was based livelihood, and find time to bring up her on the needs of the children, the question family in decency and comfort. If she can as to what was to become of the mother succeed in the double task at all, it can only when her children were grown up, was conbe at the expense of her health.

by the new Bill is totally inadequate. The widow of an insured person will receive 10s. a week for life; if there are children, the eldest will receive 5s. and the rest 3s. a week until fourteen years of age. No woman can keep herself and her children on so small a sum. She will still have to go out to work to supplement her income.

Another great drawback is the fact that the pensions for children stop at fourteen. This will mean, in many cases, that the children will have to leave school at this age and start earning for themselves. The movement for the extension of the compulsory school age will suffer from this new State sanction of fourteen as a responsible age for starting to make one's way in life.

and provides her with a pension of 10s. a week for life. The societies which have been advocating pensions for widowed mothers these many years, have never asked for any such thing. A young, healthy, childless widow is not more handicapped in the struggle for adequate pay in industry harder stantly raised at meetings where the matter Bearing this in view, the pension suggested was discussed. In criticising Mr. Churchill's scheme, it is perhaps fair to remember that unanswered question. Another clause against which women are protesting is that which deals with the cancelling of widows pension. Women demand that no woman should be deprived of her pension, nor should it be paid to a third person on her behalf unless it has been proved in a Court of Law that she is unfit to have charge of her children. They also ask that no disqualification should be attached to Widows' Pensions that does not equally apply to other

But in spite of criticism, we can rejoice that the principle of widows' pensions has been established. But for the enfranchisement of women, it is more than doubtful that the question would ever have been raised in Parliament. Ever since Judge Neil, the Father of Mothers' Having thus ill-provided for the widow Pensions as he is called, came to this with dependent children, Mr. Churchill ex- country in 1917 to preach a crusade for

the widowed mother, the feminist societies, including St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, have been persistent in their demand that a system similar to that established by Judge Neil in America, should be established in Great Britain.

Judge Neil, it will be remembered, was inspired to institute widows' pensions after witnessing, in a Children's Court in Chicago, the agony of a widowed mother whose five children were to be taken from her and placed in institutions, as her own health had broken down in a vain endeavour to provide for them. He there and then conceived the brilliant plan by which a State pays a mother to take care of her own children, instead of keeping up expensive Institutions to do a work which she is far better able to do herself. For the principle underlying Judge Neil's scheme is that the mother is as a general rule, the best person to have the care of her children.

The first Mothers' Pension Law was established in Illinois in 1911, and in a few years thirty States had adopted Mothers'

Pensions.

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance heard from Judge Neil himself that the Catholic Church in America was one of the greatest forces in getting the Mothers' Pensions' Laws enacted. It is this system which we desire to see established in Great Britain. and while dissatisfied with Mr. Churchill's new system, we do recognise that it is a step towards helping the widow and orphan-but it is a beginning only.

### Miss Elenor FitzGerald's At Home.

A most enjoyable afternoon was given by Miss Elenor FitzGerald at Mecklenburg Sq. on Sunday, May 17. It was pleasant to see that members from New Zealand, Hungary and Spain, were present, thus emphasising the International character of our Society. Miss FitzGerald charmed us with some of her delightful stories, and a lady from South Africa told us some amusing experiences of hers in that country. We hope that members will follow the good example set by Lady Laughton and Miss de Alberti and Miss Fitz-Gerald, and give some more "At Homes." St. Joan's is sure to benefit by members informal manner.

NOTES AND COMMENTS .- Continued from p. 47.

French feminists are, of course, disappointed that-owing to the Municipal Enfranchisement of Women Bill not having yet been passed by the Senate-their participation in the municipal elections of May 3 could only be in the nature of platonic demonstration. With the concurrence of the authorities, some eighty women candidates were nominated in Paris on the distinct understanding that they could not be validly elected. On the other hand, piece-meal legislation is not regarded as the most practical policy by our French suffrage friends, and now that no elections are imminent, they will probably prefer to agitate for a single measure of political enfranchisement. The situation is complicated in France—as in Belgium-by the fact that Woman Suffrage is so closely mixed with religious questions, and it is the anti-clerical partynow in the majority in the French Chamber -which fears a clerical reaction through feminine influences. Unfortunately, many Catholic women by caring nothing for the vote as a measure of political justice or as a means of combating sex disqualifications, play into the hands of their opponents and tend to postpone the day of their own emancipation.

#### THE SOCIAL STATUS OF WOMEN.

Continued from p. 46.

of their lives to discharging, what I agree with Father Cahill in describing, as "their most important function in society"-their duties as wives and mothers. These duties, however, need not prevent them from taking the amount of interest in public affairs which will enable them to perform intelligently their duties as citizens also: to register their votes, to sit on juries, even, since juryservice comes to each individual but rarely. Besides these, there are the unmarried women and the childless widows. Also there are the women, perhaps no more than 40 or 45 years of age, whose children are grown and no longer need their care. Such women may well devote their talents and their time, wholly or in part, to public affairs. No artificial obstacle should be placed in the way of their doing so. "Nature" may be trusted to confine women, as she confines meeting each other in this pleasant and every other living thing, within the limits of her "natural" sphere.

## International Notes.

It appears that in spite of the ineligibility of women, two municipalities in France, St. Denis and Bobigny, have elected women as assistant-mayors. No one knows yet what will be the outcome, but it is assumed by *La Française* that being elected they will be allowed to serve until such time as the Conseil d'Etat makes up its mind to intervene.

An Austrian woman Deputy has broken the record with a seven-hour speech in the Chamber, the object being to obstruct the passage of a particular Bill. After this—comments *La Française*—no one ought to urge that physical weakness prevents women from participation in public life.

The U.S.A. can now lay claim to a woman diplomat, Miss Lucile Atcherson, a keen suffragist as well as a brilliant postulant in diplomacy, who has recently been appointed to the American legation at Berne.

Jus Suļfragii reports that Mrs. Corbett Ashby has had a most enthusiastic reception in every city in the United States that she has visited, more especially from the various organisations of university women.

Equal Rights publishes on its front page an excellent photo of Miss Alice Paul with Viscountess Rhondda, Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence and Miss Robins, taken at the American-Women's Club when the English Advisory group—on which St. Joan's is represented—was formed last April to make a connecting link between American and English suffragists. It is intended that similar groups shall be formed in other countries, and thus the American Women's Party will be kept in touch with the van-guard of the women's movement in all parts of the world.

The Equal Rights Party has recently helped to win an important victory in New York State, where Governor Al. Smith, in response to the protests of a number of women's societies has decided to veto the Joiner Bill which established a 48 hour week in industry for women and children only. Obviously the first result of such a Bill would have been to drive a number of women out of industry altogether.

Geneva is at present enjoying its first Exhibition of Women's Work, which was officially opened by Melle Gourd, the editor of the *Mouvement Féministe*, and president of the organising committee. Every form of art and industry appears to be represented.

It is interesting to learn that Melle Irène Curie, who has just obtained her degree as doctor of science at the Sorbonne, is already recognised as a scientist of great promise. She does valuable work as assistant to her distinguished mother at the Radium Institute in Paris

V. M. C.

### 5th International Democratic Congress.

DEAR EDITOR,

I am anxious to bring immediately before the readers of the Catholic Citizen a few details concerning the Fifth DEMOCRATIC INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS which it has been decided to hold this year at Luxemburg from the 10th to 15th of September. Our members will remember that our Alliance took an active part in organising the Congress held so successfully last September in London, and how we entertained the Catholic congressists to breakfast after the Mass at Westminster Cathedral. This year we would like our participation to be no less real, and it will be a great encouragement to the Paris organisers if in addition to the non-Catholic English friends of peace whom we shall all hope to meet at Luxemburg, there were also a little group of English Catholic women eager to shew by their presence their adherence to the great principles of international peace and justice for which M. Marc Sangnier and his friends are making so valiant a stand. Now is the time, before holiday engagements are irrevocably fixed, to give the matter sympathetic consideration. Luxemburg is a charming little town set amid wooded hills, reached in a few hours by express train from Brussels, and a visit there can easily be combined with one to Bruges and Antwerp or to any of the attractive summer resorts of the Belgian Ardennes. Three days—Thursday to Saturday—will be given over to serious business; on the Sunday there will be a great public meeting followed probably by a banquet, and Monday will be devoted to excursions. Marc Sangnier, Georges Hoog, Mme. Malaterre-Sellier and other French friends of last year will be there, and large contingents of Belgians and Germans are expected. Our Alliance has already promised its active co-operation in the Congress and I appeal to all our members who can possibly do so to make Luxemburg the goal of their autumn wanderings. The presence of a few "under thirties" is specially desirable, as the "youth" organisations of the Continent are certain to be well represented. Further details will be published in the Catholic Citizen as available and Miss Barry will gladly receive the names of intending participators at any time. That of the writer of this appeal has already been handed in.

yours etc,
27th. V. M. CRAWFORD.

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

On Thursday, June 4th, St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance gave a Dinner at the Rendezvous in honour of Father H. F. Hall, who has recently celebrated his silver jubilee, and of Miss FitzGerald for many years chairman of the society.

Mrs. V. M. Crawford in proposing the toast of Father Hall spoke of his long association with the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society. He had been a suffragist and friend of the society long before it was respectable to be a supporter of votes for women. Suffragists were particularly grateful to Father Hall for the part he had played at the International Women's Suffrage Congress at Geneva in 1920, when he had preached a special sermon in support of the Women's Movement and the Congress, at the Church of Notre Dame at the Mass offered for the Congress.

Father Hall in replying said it had always been a great pleasure to him to be associated with the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, now St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance. It must be remembered that he was only able to preach a special sermon at Geneva, because he took with him credentials from Westminster, otherwise the Curé would not have permitted it. The women's vote had brought an entirely new factor into politics, and Catholic women whose principles were founded on the rock of truth had a big part to play in the political field.

In the absence of the Hon. Mrs. Walter Roch through indisposition, Miss Marguerite Fedden proposed the toast of Miss FitzGerald, after reading Mrs. Roch's regrets and her appreciation of Miss FitzGerald's services to the women's cause, and the Catholic Suffrage movement in particular.

Miss Fedden spoke eloquently of all that Miss FitzGerald had done for the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society. She was the first chairman, and for many years had steered the Society through perilous waters.

Miss FitzGerald, in replying, gave a brief outline of the early days of the Society, and of the dangers and troubles it had encountered. Misrepresentation in the Press had been one of its great dangers, though at times the reports were merely amusing. Though retiring from the chairmanship of the Society she would always take a great interest in its welfare. Her motto for St. Joan's S. & P.A. was: "Never give up." Women were not citizens while they were still being told how to dress.

Speeches from Miss Wall and Miss Whately brought a very enjoyable gathering to an end.

# SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS. May 1st to 31st.

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Currie, Lady .					2	6
Donovan, The Misses B. & K					5	0
Fay, Miss .					4	6
FitzGerald, Mis	ss E				2	6
Franklin, Miss					17	6
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#### TREASURER'S NOTE.

Almost as soon as this paper is published the June Quarter Day will be upon us. Not only have we no funds in hand to meet it, but at May 31st we were £11 in debt. This is the situation in plain words, and there is no need to stress its gravity. It means that, however unwilling I am to make these continual appeals, I must call once more on all our members to support the Alliance by giving some extra donation, no matter how little. The greater the number who respond the smaller the burden on the individual will be.

GABRIELLE JEFFERY.

#### LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

Hon. Secretary-Miss Jervis, 99 Edge Lane Drive, Liverpool.

Our congratulations and best wishes were sent to our Vice-Chairman, Dr. Isabel Collier on the occasion of her marriage to Mr. Powell Heath, on June 6th. She will be a great loss to our branch.

On May 25th a meeting was held at 119 Shaw Street, when Miss M. Wells spoke on "Settlement work."

The Branch sent a resolution to the Chancellor of the Exchequer regretting that his scheme for widows pensions was to be on a contributary basis and protesting against the inadequacy of the proposed scale of pensions.

# ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE.

NON-PARTY

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.

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All Catholic women are eligible as Members, who approve the object and methods, and will pay a minimum annual subscription of is, 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.

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# Catholic Studies

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Occasional Classes will be held for further explanation and discussion of the matter treated in the lectures.

TICKETS (price 7/6) and all information may be obtained from the Hon. Sec.: Rev. J. F. McNulty, St. Edmund's House, Cambridge.

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OF THE

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(By arrangement with the Catholic Council for International Relations)

AND

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Bishop Waitz (Austria); Herr Joos (Germany); Dr. Lapp (U.S.A.); Sr. Nosolini (Portugal); Mgr. Pfeisfer (Czecho-Slovakia); Ct. Stephano Jacini (Italy), and many other distinguished foreign visitors are expected.

C.S.G. Opening Mass, Sermon and Annual Meeting [H. G. Archbishop of Liverpool presiding] Aug. 9th. Aug. 10th to 14th, four Lectures by Rev. M. Cronin, D.D. [Dublin] on "THE NATURAL LAW." Three Lectures by Rev. A. Elrington, O.P., on "PSYCHOLOGY" and MODERN PROBLEMS. 1 ectures and discussions opened by Bishop Waitz, Ct. S. Jacini, Mrs. V. M. Crawford, Fr. L. Watt, S.J., etc.

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