

THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

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

Francis Thompson.

Child Adoption

By M. E. EDWARDS, J.P.

The report of the Hurst Committee* is not a dramatic document, but a painstaking attempt to state the way in which the law of adoption might be improved, for the benefit of children, parents and adopters alike. Adoptions vary so much in so many respects that any rigid code would have been difficult to apply; and the committee has therefore recommended very few hard and fast prohibitions, and has concentrated on the spirit rather than the letter of the law. There are several dilemmas which are bound to face anyone trying to legislate about adoption. First, while not allowing it to be undertaken on impulse, one must not surround it with so many rules, regulations and inspections that good adopters will be deterred from undertaking it at all. The last thing anyone wants is to increase *de facto*, informal adoption at the expense of proper legal status for adopters and child. Secondly, one must somehow contrive to reconcile the interests of the child's natural and his adoptive family, and at the same time prevent his being passed from one to the other except permanently and happily. For this reason, the Committee recommended various safeguards for the child's natural parents, designed to ensure that consent to adoption shall be understood for what it is, and given solemnly and without pressure. Once the decision has been made, both the natural mother and the adopters should feel settled and the child should be given a chance to put down roots in his new home as quickly as possible: the time therefore for doubt and delay is *before* the decision to hand the child over has been made. Several witnesses would have liked to see a total prohibition of the handing over of babies before the age of six weeks; but the committee, while deploring these early placings (and making various suggestions designed to minimise them) felt that there might well be circumstances in which it was better to part the child from his mother even at a few days old, and to place him straight away in his new permanent home, rather than pass him from one relative or foster-mother to another for six weeks in order

to comply with the letter of the law. Furthermore, this suggestion brings out another very difficult dilemma. Adoption so often grows out of fostering, or even out of temporary visits to relatives or friends, that to circumscribe placing *for adoption* in isolation would be meaningless. It would be necessary to apply prohibitions, inspections and notifications to every case where a child was placed, even temporarily, apart from his own family. Those who suggested stringent safeguards in connection with adoption placements did not always seem to realise the extent of the interference with personal liberty which would be involved. But in order to give the parents of children offered for adoption ample time to come to a reasonable and permanent decision, the committee recommended that the provision of mother-and-baby homes should be a first priority with local authorities. It is perhaps unfortunate that express mention is not made of voluntary homes — the recommendation should of course cover the case where a local authority has it in its power to help an existing, or to co-operate in establishing a new, voluntary home.

A very difficult question arises when a mother whose baby has been placed with her consent subsequently refuses her consent to legal adoption. The present law is that her consent can be dispensed if she withholds it "unreasonably." This has never been a very happy provision, since what is reasonable in a given case is a matter of opinion and not of fact; and the committee recommend that it should be repealed, but that a parent's consent may be dispensed if he or she has made no attempt to discharge the responsibilities of a parent. Thus parental rights are linked with parental duties. This does not mean, of course, that a baby who is out of his mother's actual possession (e.g., in a Home) even if she is not paying for him, can necessarily be placed for adoption without her consent; but it does mean that a parent must not just leave a child to languish in a Home, even if she pays for him, without making any attempt to see him or enquire about his welfare, and then expect to find her parental rights over him unimpaired.

* Report of the Departmental Committee on the Adoption of Children (Cmd. 9248, 3s.).

The very small change proposed in the clause referring to religion may possibly need explaining. At present a parent may give consent "provided that the religious persuasion in which the child is to be brought up is . . ." This appears to give a parent control of the child after the adoption order has been made; and very conscientious adopters might well be in a dilemma if they themselves changed their religion, wondering whether they would be justified in bringing the child over with them, or ought to leave him as the only representative in the family of another faith. The suggested new wording "provided that it is the intention of the applicants, if an adoption order is granted, to bring the child up in the . . . religion" makes the intention of the Act clearer, and gives a question of present fact as the criterion.

There is a group of recommendations about the duties of the guardian *ad litem* (appointed by the Court and responsible to it) and the supervising officer, responsible to the local authority. Since in fact these are often one and the same person, the duties have been apt to run into each other; and the Committee recommend that they should be regarded as quite distinct, and that the detailed investigations needed before the guardian *ad litem* can make her report should not be undertaken until after application for an adoption order has been made, which in turn must not be until two months after the child has come into the adopters' home. Once an application has been lodged, the guardian *ad litem* will be appointed immediately, and will have at least six weeks in which to make her enquiries, before the application is heard. The guardian *ad litem* must be someone entirely unconnected with any arrangements for placing the child in the home; and her report must include all relevant material, including a statement from the adoption society or local authority (if any) who placed the child, and from the supervising officer and health visitor. For the first time it is recommended that private individuals (e.g. doctors or midwives, etc.) making adoption arrangements should be respondents to the application, and liable to be interviewed by the guardian *ad litem* or even to appear before the court to account for their action. The mother's written consent will include a section saying when she last saw the child and to whom she handed it, and how she heard of the adopters. Many witnesses would have liked to see "third-party" adoptions abolished altogether; but there was no evidence to show that they were any worse as a whole than those arranged by experts — though one would surely expect to find this if any comprehensive research were undertaken—and in this case also, it was felt that no hard and fast prohibition would take into account the very many different patterns of adoption, the least

orthodox of which may sometimes be the happiest.

The recommendations about taking children abroad are based on the conviction that children living as members of an adoptive family should be legally adopted if at all possible. If these recommendations are accepted, British citizens resident abroad will be able to adopt children during their periods of leave, instead of merely taking them abroad under a licence which gives them no legal status in their adoptive family. It is also recommended that licences (as distinct from adoption orders, which depend on domicile) should be available to others than British subjects in suitable cases. This would entitle (e.g.) American service personnel on duty here to "adopt" British children—a provision which might be of great help in providing good homes for the many Catholic babies for whom British adopters are so hard to find.

The Report is stiff reading, but because it contains so many interdependent recommendations it is difficult to summarise. It is the result of over a year's hard and constant work by an extraordinarily happy and well-integrated group of people: it seems that there is something about the contemplation of adoption which makes for a happy atmosphere—we have noticed it in other connections—and it is not surprising that the committee should have produced a unanimous report. Whether it will ever be acted upon is of course another question.

SAINT AGATHA, PENELOPE AND THE WEAVERS

We are indebted to "Vita e Pensiero" (Milano) for an interesting story. It is a fact that there is a parallel between the life of St. Agatha, the early Christian Virgin Martyr of Sicily, and Penelope, the wise woman, wife to Odysseus or Ulysses. Not only were they both consecrated to an ideal in a way of life, to which both were faithful, but they both carried out identical work, in an age when all women of consequence wove and spun. One knows the story of Penelope, who was left alone at home by her wandering husband, and was much badgered by innumerable suitors, being no doubt rich as well as beautiful. She wove by day a tapestry of many coloured thread, and promised the importunate men that she would have one of them when it was finished; but what she wove during the day she unravelled by night, so none of them had her, and when Odysseus returned he found a faithful wife.

Saint Agatha consecrated herself to God when a child, and made a vow of virginity. But her father tried to marry her by force to a youth Quinziano; she managed to gain a respite by telling her parent that she must weave and spin her linen, in preparation for marriage. She also wove by day and unravelled by night, and by the time she reached the age of twelve or thereabouts, her Christian practices became known to the pagans and nobody could save her from a violent death.

Poets and writers all down the ages have sung the praises of Penelope and of St. Agatha, and to this day weavers and spinners have as their patroness and protector, St. Agatha, the Virgin Martyr of Catania, the patroness of their Guild in the Middle Ages.

Francesca Graham

Notes and Comments

On December 8th, the Marian Year which was proclaimed by Pope Pius XII to celebrate the centenary of the promulgation of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady in 1854, comes to an end. On November 1st the Pope proclaimed a new Feast in honour of "The Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven"—to be kept on May 31st. He crowned the figures of Our Lady and the Holy Child in the picture, which was placed above the High Altar in St. Peter's.

This fresh honour done to Our Lady brings nothing new to the belief and practice of Catholics but it bears witness to what we may reverentially suggest is a fresh aspect of Her glory, which in no way detracts from Her glorious title of Mother of God. The appearances of Our Lady at Lourdes and Fatima reveal Her as Herself, the Woman, and the new Feast emphasises this in proclaiming Her Queen of Heaven.

The Alliance is delighted to report that, together with donations in cash and sales in the office, the Fair held on November 20th realised over £200. Thanks are due first and foremost to Mr. Gilbert Harding for opening the Fair. It is impossible to thank everyone who contributed to the success of the Sale individually, but stall-holders and Back Room workers are equally worthy of our gratitude. Mention must be made of Miss McGovern, who acted as Hon. Secretary of the Fair, and Miss Carr who, with her admirable team, supplied the most delicious teas.

If anyone who kindly sent a gift has not been thanked, it is because contributions at the last came in so thick and fast that there was not time for them to be acknowledged, but we are indeed grateful.

There are still Christmas cards and gifts in the office which the Hon. Secretary will gladly sell to anyone who cares to call.

N.B. We hope to make up the amount to £250—our figure to date is £235 5s. 6d.

Hereford City Council is proposing to engage women road-sweepers. This is of course nothing new in countries abroad, and those members of the Council who had seen women working on the roads on the Continent said that they maintained "a very high standard." It is hoped that should the Council engage the women as proposed, they will pay the rate for the job.

The office will be closed from December 24th to January 4th. Correspondence will be attended to as usual.

Miss Challoner was invited to give a lecture on the "history of women," to the staff and students of Bedford Training College on October 27th. The lecture, which was entitled "Landmarks in the History of Women," gave a survey of the variations in the status of women before the nineteenth century, and a more detailed account of their emergence into public life during the past one hundred years.

We are grateful to our Chairman for undertaking this work on behalf of St. Joan's Alliance. She has already spoken to several senior classes in Convent Schools and further opportunities would be welcomed in order to give the present generation some idea of what has been won for them, and at what a cost.

At a meeting of citizens of Hampstead, held under the auspices of the Women's Freedom League, a resolution was passed, protesting against the insertion of the word 'male' in the advertisement of the Health Committee in "The Times" for a Deputy Medical Officer of Health, and asking that the advertisement be redrafted without this sex discrimination. A copy of the resolution was sent to each member of the Borough Council.

We are greatly indebted to our member, the Hon. Mrs. Geoffrey Edwards, J.P., for her article on the work of the Departmental Committee on the Adoption of Children, of which she was a member.

We ask the prayers of our members for Dr. Gertrud Haas, a keen young member of the Alliance, who died in Vienna on November 17th following an operation. R.I.P.

"We should not talk so much about the lack of responsibility in women in general and that they must be awakened to take an interest in the world outside their own life. In my experience women on the whole have more sense of responsibility than men have. If we feel critical towards our own sex we will be less energetic to find out what is the reason behind this apparent lack of responsibility in one special respect, less eager to help women to analyse their situation and we will not learn to stick together and help one another. This talk about the lack of responsibility also makes some women try to run too many jobs at the same time (professional work, home, politics) and to get overworked very quickly. Personally I long for a really spiritual leader who has not only experienced herself the hardships of a woman's life in our society, but knew the history, could analyse the present situation and prophesy for the future."—Karin Westmanberg, M.A., in *International Women's News*.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE

AND

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Signed articles do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Society

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Equal Pay

Memorandum sent from the Equal Pay Campaign Committee (U.K.) to the Status of Women Commission

The history of the campaign to secure the practice of equal pay for equal work in this country is a long one. Those in the van of the women's suffrage movement realised that the acceptance of the principle was vital to the recognition of women as full citizens with the same human rights as men.

The first victory was won by the medical women, whose pioneers were staunch in their demand for the rate for the job. The male members of the profession realised the risk of undercutting if qualified women were paid at a lower rate, and the strength of the British Medical Association has thus been behind the medical women in their struggle. In the early stages, however, it depended primarily on the singleness of purpose of individual women; and the application of the principle to medical women employed in the Civil Service was largely assured by Dame Janet Campbell's refusal to take less than the "man's rate" when she was appointed Senior Medical Officer for Maternity and Child Welfare, Ministry of Health, in 1919.

The Civil Service and the Armed Forces are the only fields of employment for which the Government is directly responsible, and, indirectly, for all employees of local authorities including teachers. For these, therefore, all citizens have a responsibility, and so the campaign in this country has been concentrated on the Government Services.

The question of equal pay was under review in 1914 by a Royal Commission on the Civil Service; and the increased use of women's labour in factories and offices during the first World War focussed the attention of the Government and the public on the principles governing women's remuneration. A War Cabinet Committee on Women in Industry in 1919 pronounced in favour of the principle of equal pay for equal work, and its Report was accompanied by a famous Minority Report by Mrs. Sidney Webb who was a member of the Committee, in which she argued much more forcibly than her fellow committee members for the application of the principle.

After the passing of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act in 1919 all the major professions—law, accountancy, etc.—were opened to women, and those who qualified received the rate for the job unless they were employed in the Civil Service. In 1920 and again in 1921 Resolutions were moved in the House of Commons and passed without a division, recommending that women employees in the Civil Service should have equal opportunity and equal rates of pay with men. Behind these expressions of opinion in Parliament went much "education" of M.P.s. The first women had been enfranchised in 1918 and much lobbying of M.P.s was organised by the feminist societies, some of them acting

St. Joan's Alliance is a member of the E.P.C.C.

in co-operation with each other and in association with Members of Parliament who sympathised with their aims.

Continual vigilance was exercised by some of the older and more experienced women's societies who seized every suitable opportunity to get the subject raised by Questions in the House, or during appropriate debates. On such occasions all Members of Parliament would be circularised urging them to give their support.

Despite the obviously favourable view of Parliament and the country in general, no immediate results were achieved then or during the years that followed. In 1929—on the eve of a General Election—a Royal Commission was appointed to report on conditions of service in the Civil Service with particular reference (*inter alia*) to the differentiation between the rates of pay of men and women Civil Servants. After two years the Commission published its Report. This recommended the adoption of "A Fair Field and No Favour," but went no further than that.

Pressure in Parliament was maintained in the years before the outbreak of World War II. There were further debates and resolutions, and frequent questions were asked by Members in the House.

During the Second World War the Trades Unions agreed to the employment of women in work normally restricted to men on condition that they were paid the rate for the job, and this has been maintained in a number of fields since, e.g. London Transport. But in the Government Service apart from a very limited number of cases only members of the medical profession and its auxiliaries have equal pay.

Since its formation in 1944 the Equal Pay Campaign Committee has stimulated and co-ordinated the activities in this field of its member organisations. It has organised deputations to the leaders of the main Political Parties at the time of General Elections and of the main local government elections. It has approached all candidates for Parliament at each General Election to secure promises of support for equal pay should they be returned.

The Committee has endeavoured to keep the subject to the fore in the House of Commons, where Miss Irene Ward in particular has given valiant aid, never losing an opportunity to raise the topic. On suitable occasions, such as the opening of a session, M.P.s are circularised asking them to raise the subject in the debate on the Speech from the Throne. At other times M.P.s who have intimated their support for the subject are asked to put down motions on the Order Paper or to raise the question of equal pay on the Adjournment.

It was at the request of the Campaign Committee that Lord Pethick-Lawrence initiated a debate on equal pay in the House of Lords in 1952.

History of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society

By Leonora de Aliberti

(continued)

THE SOCIETY DURING THE WAR

In most years deputations have been taken to the Chancellor of the Exchequer prior to his presentation of his Budget. Public meetings, for which every effort is made to secure wide publicity in the national press, have been held about once a year in Westminster and are usually addressed by Members of Parliament of each Party. Leaflets and pamphlets suitable for distribution among members of the public are published, and brooch badges and pencils bearing the slogan "Equal Pay for Equal Work" put on sale as a means of gaining publicity. Data is supplied for debates and speeches, and, through the member organisations, speakers are sent to many groups.

In effect the campaign for equal pay has been pursued in much the same way, and with the same methods as the earlier constitutional campaign for women's suffrage. It is only by constant repetition before the public and in responsible quarters that claims for justice can find a practical solution.

The present position with regard to equal pay in the Civil Service in this country is that negotiations are proceeding between representatives of the Civil Service Staff and the Treasury. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has expressed the hope that as a result of these he will be able to begin during the current financial year the application of equal pay on a "gradual" basis, i.e. over a term of years.

The activities of the Equal Pay Campaign Committee over the eighteen months preceding the opening of these negotiations illustrate the methods that have proved successful in arousing public opinion to such an extent that the Chancellor has at last agreed to take this step.

During the course of 1953 a *Petition to Parliament* was organised the main purpose of which was to provide a focus for educating public opinion. Signatures were collected through the member organisations of the Campaign Committee and from individuals all over the country.

To the pamphlets already published by the Committee a new one was added—"Equal Pay—Any Questions?"—which gave the answers to some of the more common arguments brought against equal pay.

A short 15 minute film—"To be a Woman"—which had been produced by Miss Jill Craigie for the Equal Pay Campaign Committee a few years ago, continued to be shown at private and public meetings and in cinemas throughout the country.

A mass meeting was held in Westminster in December, 1953, which was addressed by three members of Parliament representing the three main Parties, and by Gilbert Harding the popular radio artist.

In February, 1954, the Chairman of the Equal Pay Campaign Committee, Mrs. Cazalet-Keir, led an impressive *deputation to the Chancellor of the Exchequer*, comprising representatives from each of the 50 organisations on the Committee and Advisory Council.

When the time came, in March, for the presentation of the Petition in Parliament, this was performed by Miss Irene Ward, M.P., with much *press publicity*, gained by the spectacle of the transport of the signed petition forms in horse drawn carriages to the Houses of Parliament. At the same time a second petition was presented by another M.P., Mr. Douglas Houghton, which the Civil Service Staff organisations organised during the first two months of the year. The whole of "Question Time" was taken up that day—9th March—with questions on equal pay.

A further *public meeting* was held by the Equal Pay Campaign Committee in Westminster within two days of the introduction of the Budget in April, again addressed by Members of Parliament, to deplore the Chancellor's refusal to commit himself to introducing equal pay in the Civil Service.

At all times a watch was kept on the *Press* and *Correspondence* initiated or answered, both in national and local papers, but in particular in The Times.

The C.W.S.S. helped to keep the Suffrage fires burning during the nightmare years of the War, and with other societies kept vigilant watch that nothing was done to jeopardise the suffrage position. Suffragists were not led away by the vain cry of votes for soldiers. They said in effect: We are willing not to urge our claim for the moment, but if the suffrage question is touched, we come in!

Throughout the duration of the War, the C.W.S.S. had a monthly Mass offered at St. Patrick's, Soho, for peace and for the souls of all killed in the War.

There was no lack of work to be done during the war. It had scarcely started when the Watch Committee of Plymouth suggested that the Contagious Diseases Acts should be re-enacted. The C.W.S.S. sent a direct protest, and co-operated with the other societies in denouncing the proposal. Later on the Society took part in the agitation against the tolerated houses of Cayeux opened for the special use of British Officers. An agitation which resulted in the closing of these houses.

In 1918, the C.W.S.S. was again to the fore in protesting against the iniquitous Regulation 40 D. This War Office regulation made it a punishable offence for a woman suffering from venereal disease to solicit or to have intercourse with any member of His Majesty's Forces. Any man protected by His Majesty's uniform was free to accuse any woman he pleased of having infected him. He was a privileged person, he had but to lodge his complaint, he was not called upon to appear in Court, his name was not published.

The C.W.S.S. called a special meeting at Caxton Hall, October 1918, at which Father Vincent McNabb, O.P. was the chief speaker, and which had the support of a number of the Catholic clergy, including Bishop Keatinge, and Monsignor, now Bishop, Brown. Father McNabb's lucid and convincing address was published verbatim in the "Catholic Citizen" of November 1918. Dr. Alice Vowe Johnson spoke from the medical point of view, and Miss Alison Neilans spoke in the name of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, which had first called attention to the matter.

In other ways too, the C.W.S.S. helped to protect the liberties of women, such as when calumnies against soldiers' wives were spread about. Many busy-bodies were anxious to prove that the women were spending their allowances on drink, and neglecting their children—the improved health of the children during war years testified to by many persons, calculated to know, gave the lie to this, and proved suffragists to have been justified in their protest.

We may mention here that though the Committee was by no means unanimous it was decided in the early days of the War to send a representative to the Hague Conference where women of many nations, belligerent and others, met to discuss peace, suffrage and other questions. Miss O'Sullivan undertook to represent the Society, and was instructed to vote on the suffrage question only. She and others did not succeed in getting a passport in time as the Government was not anxious for Great Britain to be represented.

(To be continued)

We are indebted to the following firms for so kindly sending goods for St. Joan's Fair: Messrs. Burns Oates & Washbourne, Ltd.; W. & A. Gilbey, Ltd.; J. Lyons & Co., Ltd.; George Mason & Co., Ltd.; Ronuk, Ltd.; The Shredded Wheat Co., Ltd.; United Dairies (London), Ltd.

THE MONTH IN PARLIAMENT

In the House of Lords, at the Report Stage of the Mines and Quarries Bill, the question of the employment of women at the pithead was again debated. Lord Macdonald of Gwaenysgor moved an amendment "from the date of the coming into operation of this Act, no female shall be employed at a mine on any work involving the getting, processing or preparation of coal, unless she was in the employment of the mine at that date." In Lord Macdonald's view, the availability of work of this type for certain old and disabled men was desirable, and he considered it an unsuitable occupation for women. The Earl of Selkirk questioned whether all the 700,000 miners wanted women excluded, but said, even if this were true, "are we to accept the argument that in a substantially man-run industry like this, if the men engaged in it wish, they can drive out all the women?" Lord Macdonald expressed amazement at the suggestion that the National Union of Mineworkers had any thought of driving the women out of the industry. "What the men have said is that the women ought to go out, and that they ought to go out with Parliamentary approval"—(a distinction which would appear to make very little difference in its practical application). The amendment was lost by forty-three votes to eleven.

The House of Commons on November 12th considered the Reports from the Select Committee on the Army and Air Force Acts, and approved their recommendations. Sir Patrick Spens pointed out that their most important recommendations concerned courts-martial in which women were involved. They had recommended that "(1) where possible, women should be tried by courts consisting of a majority of women and that, for the trial of men, courts should be composed only of male officers unless it is considered particularly desirable that a woman officer should be appointed as a member; and (2) until women officers have much more practical experience of courts-martial, a male officer be always appointed as president." These recommendations had been accepted by the heads of the Women's Services. It had come as a great shock to find that, by virtue of the 1948 Act, a man might easily find himself being tried at a court-martial of which the majority, if not all, the members were women.

In moving the continuance of the Supplies and Services (Transitional Powers) Act, 1945, for a further year, the Home Secretary, on November 15th, said that Defence Regulation 59 conferred on the Minister of Labour the power to grant exemptions from the provisions of the Factories Act, 1937. This power was now, in fact, used primarily in regard to the hours of work of women and young persons. "For

example, during and since the war there has been a considerable increase in the number of women employed in what are known as 'continuous process' industries, notably glass production. Compliance with the provisions of the pre-war Factories Act as regards women's hours of work in this and other essential industries, would be quite impracticable."

On November 16th, Dr. Edith Summerskill introduced her motion regretting the failure of H.M. Government to relieve the plight of old age pensioners. In the ensuing debate the needs of the aged were rather lost sight of in the attempt by both parties to make political capital out of the issue. Mr. Peake, the Minister of Pensions and National Service, however, gave an undertaking to make a statement before the House rose for the Christmas Recess, and indicated that the statement would give satisfaction both to old age and war disability pensioners. It might even be possible for a Bill on the subject to pass into law before that date.

An interesting debate took place on November 17th on the disparity between the awards to University students made by different local authorities. Throughout the discussion, many instances of the alleged injustice inflicted on boys by the methods of selection were given, but only in one case was mention made of a similar injustice to a girl.

Though the matter was actually reported to the House of Commons last month, it may perhaps be mentioned here that Mrs. Eirene White was one of the delegates who handed over the gift of a Mace to the new Federal Assembly of Rhodesia and Nyasaland last September. This is the first occasion on which a woman has formed part of such a Parliamentary Delegation. Let us hope that the Governor-General did not find her "bossy", for it will be remembered that during the debate last year on the Life Peers Bill, Lord Llewellyn pleaded for the continued exclusion of women from the House of Lords, on the ground that while in the House of Commons he had found this quality to be all too prevalent among his fellow Members of the opposite sex.

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ST. JOAN'S FAIR

The St. Joan's Christmas Fair held in the Westminster Cathedral Hall on November 20th, 1954, has been voted a great success.

Many people awaited the doors' opening at 2 o'clock and the spacious hall held a goodly number of people when Mr. Gilbert Harding arrived.

Dame Vera Laughton Mathews said that she felt there was no need to introduce Mr. Harding—such a famous personality—to the audience, but she did want to say how delighted we were that he had found it possible to agree to open the Fair, and how very grateful we were to him for sparing the time from such a full and busy life. She felt that among such a large audience there must be many who were unaware of the aims of the Alliance and she, therefore, gave an outline of its work, referring also to the work carried out by the Women's Freedom League who had taken a stall with us.

In reply, Mr. Harding said he thought it might be more accurate to say that he had a claim to "notoriety" than to "fame"! He was never too busy to spend time in support of the women's cause and thought it a pity that more men had not the same view. Moreover, there were very many women who were not sufficiently enthusiastic and, in his opinion, women had a duty in the matter. He suggested that we should worry our Members of Parliament and enlist the help of their wives to put forward the claims of women, more especially on the question so much before our minds today—equal pay. So far as he was concerned there was absolutely no doubt of the right of equal pay for the job and he referred particularly to the injustice of the case of women teachers; in his view, it was apparent that not only did women frequently carry out the duties of a job as efficiently as men but they worked a good deal harder.

He hoped that those present would help forward the work of St. Joan's by spending a lot of money at the Fair which was the result of much time, effort and thought on the part of the organisers, and he paid special tribute to those behind the scenes who were responsible for refreshments and the dull task of washing up!

After the speeches there was an immediate rush to the stalls, all of which were very well stocked and showed considerable ingenuity on the part of stallholders and helpers in making an attractive display. The proceeds to date amount to £235 5s. 6d. and we are grateful to everyone who sent gifts in cash or kind as well as to all those who worked so splendidly towards the success of our first "large-scale" Fair since the war.

We feel that we cannot thank Mr. Harding enough for giving up a Saturday afternoon and bringing in so much support. **Maude McGovern**

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Canada. The citizens of Montreal are to be congratulated on their fight to reveal the evils of commercialised prostitution in their City. This fight began in 1950, when the *Comité de Moralité*, representing seventy-four citizens led by Doctor R. Levesque, demanded a judicial inquiry into the fact that, between 1941-1950, hundreds of disorderly houses had carried on their trade to the knowledge of the Police and the Municipal Council. It accused fifty-eight officers of the Police and five members of the Council of knowingly tolerating and protecting organised vice.

Every effort was made to obstruct the work of the inquiry, but it pursued its way and finished on April 2nd, 1953. Eighteen months later, Judge François Caron, who presided, delivered his judgment, a scarifying indictment of the *Police des Moeurs*. This represents a real victory for those citizens of Montreal whose courage and persistence won the day.

It is good to know that the lawyer, M. Jean Drapeau, who, with his colleague, M. Pacifique Plante, assisted Judge Caron in this work of cleansing the city of Montreal, has been elected Mayor by the overwhelming vote of the citizens. All his eight opponents lost their deposits of two hundred dollars.

* * *

Nigeria. A White Paper issued in Enugu proposes to establish *universal* primary education in East Nigeria by December, 1956. The magnitude of the task that lies ahead may be gauged by the fact that at present only 19 per cent. of the girls in East Nigeria (some 750,000) attend school, compared with 62 per cent. of the boys.

* * *

U.S.A. *Equal Rights* reports that the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labour, which for years has opposed the Equal Rights Amendment, has now withdrawn its opposition. It was stated in reply to a deputation from the National Women's Party, by the new Director of the Bureau, Miss Alice K. Leopold, that the Women's Bureau was acting in this matter under the personal direction of the Secretary of Labour. The Equal Rights Amendment reads: "Equality of Rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

* * *

Sister Ann Joachim of the Dominican Order is the only nun in U.S.A. to have the status of judge. She was born in Cologne and after studying in U.S.A. became a highly-valued lawyer. She is actually Head Mistress of a girls' school, but exercises her legal profession occasionally on behalf of religious institutions.

REVIEWS

The Meaning of Holiness. By Louis Lavelle. With an introduction by Dom Iltyd Trethowan, of Downside. Translated by Dorothea O'Sullivan. (Burns Oates, 10s. 6d.)

Professor Louis Lavelle considers holiness in a preliminary essay, illustrating his theme by short studies of four saints — St. Francis of Assisi; St. John of the Cross; St. Teresa of Avila; and St. Francis de Sales. He says: "it is through the saints that the material world is joined with the spiritual world and time is merged into eternity" and that "each of us is able with their help to discover his vocation and fulfil it." In many illuminating pages he brings home the lesson of the variety yet one-ness of sanctity. Sometimes the thread of philosophical reasoning is a little difficult for the ordinary lay-person to follow (though by no means always), but how delightful to be reminded that St. Teresa "desired all her daughters to love a valiant spirit as she did. And she said to them: 'I do not want you to trade on your womanhood. You must be as strong as the strongest of men: and if you do what lies in you to do, I promise you that Our Lord will give you such strength that men will marvel at you.'"

The translation by Dorothea O'Sullivan is an accomplished achievement. **C.S.**

Mrs. Siddons. Tragic Actress. By Yvonne French. (Verschoyle, 21s.)

Mrs. Siddons (1755-1831) was the most amazing and outstanding figure of her time. Not a person, from the highest to the lowest, was unaware of her, and, starting as the charming and pathetic actress of her youth she ends majestic, sorrowful, almost a legend—indeed the Tragic Muse. The Kembles revolutionised theatrical life and Sarah brought dignity to the profession of actress. She acted with Garrick, was "managed" by Sheridan (who never kept his promises or paid her); she was a friend of George III (and his favourite actress); of Mrs. Thrale and of Mrs. Piozzi, and she met Fanny Burney who wrote a bad play for her. She was painted by Lawrence and Gainsborough and Lawrence threw himself large across her domestic scene.

Miss French has drawn a very vivid portrait of the actress, her family and the English domestic background of the time. One learns how very different audience, actors and staging were in Mrs. Siddons' time, and yet how modern she was in her approach to her parts, so that her rendering of Lady Macbeth has become a sacred theatrical tradition.

This book is beautifully illustrated and it contains the family tree of the Kembles; a bibliography and a chronological list of Mrs. Siddons' repertory at Drury Lane. But, alas, no index! **C.S.**

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