

THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

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

VOL V., No. 10.

October 15th, 1919.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

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.*

WOMEN CITIZENS ASSOCIATIONS.

BY MARY FENNELL.

As soon as it was evident that the long fight for the vote had been won and that the Government would grant freedom to women a number of representative women societies met together under the Chairmanship of Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon, D.Sc., to determine how the educational propaganda that was needed could best be done. Several plans were put forward and discussed, and it was finally agreed that all women societies should be asked to combine into local "Women Citizens Associations" for the purpose of self-education in the duties and responsibilities that appertain to citizenship. Each society preserves its individuality as far as the special object for which it exists, but unites with others in political and social work. Other women not already belonging to any society are inscribed direct as members. Thus in the local association to which the writer belongs no less than twenty-two societies united with the expiring Women's Local Government Association to form the new body.

Besides the local associations there has been set up in London a Central Committee as a centre from which the local bodies may obtain first hand political information, lecturers, pamphlets and help of various kinds.

Scarcely was the scheme launched than fifty large and flourishing societies of women gave it their adhesion, thus securing at once a large membership. It was the writer's privilege to attend as delegate the General Annual Meeting in 1918 and again in 1919, and there to hear woman delegates from all parts of the Kingdom—from Aberdeen to Falmouth and from Manchester and Bristol to Canterbury—women delegates from widely divergent classes of the community and of

various interests, take council together as to how the women of the nation might best use their new and precious freedom.

The first aim of the W.C.A. is to have a politically well-educated body of women electors in every parliamentary borough, helpful to and in touch with one another; for it was at once apparent that the new electors are faced with problems and tasks that are, to say the least, unfamiliar: they are also at a loss as to the machinery of government, even local government, and of matters which belong to what is generally called "procedure." But, lack of familiarity is no reason for flinching from the work, rather it is an incentive to earnest enquiry; and it is a widely acknowledged fact that women are not wanting in adaptability, a very important quality when new tasks are towards.

Local Committees work out schemes of subjects to be studied with special reference to the district affected such as Housing, Health, Child Welfare, After Care, Education, Women Police, the scope of Watch Committees. Courses of lectures, followed by discussion and debates are held at public meetings open, that is, not alone to the members of W.C.A., but the general public: in the intervals between the lectures the various societies of the district are invited to get up discussions so that, for instance, the Mother's Union and the Teachers' Federation may mutually inform and enlighten each other. And not only this, but groups of women are asked to have drawing-room or parlour meetings and to apply to the local secretary for someone to address them or to conduct a debate. Thus there is a closely connected scheme of educational propaganda among the women electors and

future women electors for the downward age limit to the W.C.A. is as low as 16 years.

Another important aim of the W.C.A. is to secure a larger number of women being elected to Borough Councils and to public bodies and Committees of every kind; there has been a tendency lately for the Government to ask women societies to provide representatives to committees and it is pleasant to know such offers have been refused unless women had a just proportion of members allotted to them. For it is needless to labour the fact that one or two women on a large committee of men are in an unfavourable and unpleasant position. Locally the W.C.A. call for rotas of members to attend the borough council's meetings, to attend the police courts or any other place where they can by their presence ensure that questions relating to women and children shall be justly treated. Take for instance the case of young girls seeking affiliation orders in a court crowded with and presided over by men—can it be anything but debasing to all her finer instincts to be a woman alone at such a moment? Yet it would seem to be an every day occurrence. Women citizens must learn not to be frightened of such work—evil grows unchecked in the world partly because the burning searchlight of women's public opinion has not been turned on it. It is the ignorance of so many good women, this distaste (a very natural one) to look unpleasant facts in the face that so severely limits their influence. In these and other ways it is hoped to bring together women of all classes that they may learn the value and the responsibility of citizenship. As to elections it is not intended to have what is called a Woman's Party or to support women merely because of their sex, for that would be to perpetuate a wrong against which women have struggled and even now protest. The W.C.A. is not so much *non-Party* as *All-Party*—all shades of opinion meet to find out what is best for the nation. Therefore when the elections come the W.C.A. will not advise women *how* to vote, much less seek to *bind* them, but it will give them the opportunity of hearing the various candidates and then leave them free to decide for themselves. Freedom and Progress are its watch words!

Much is being written in the daily press of the new world that is to arise phoenix like from the ashes of the old—many and alluring

are the prospects put before struggling and well nigh hopeless humanity, few of them ever to be realised. For looked at more closely we see that the grossness which disfigured the years of war is stamped afresh on the glittering words that paint the new era. The strife that began with the great war is not yet over—it is altered in character perhaps, but it is none the less strife; on all sides is there angry word and deed, and the gross materialism of the war is still shewn in the greed which has the world in its grip. Not a better world but a richer one is what all appear to be striving for. And yet to thinking and God fearing men and women the very magnitude of the struggle, embracing as it does all the nations of the earth, brings us face to face with the fact that the lust of gain, the desire for power, the unbridling of ambition, the free rein to the passions leads, as ever, to the bottomless pit. It is either Christ or Anti-Christ, the two ideals never before perhaps were so plainly held up to men's eyes—never was the choice so sternly put to mankind—"Which will ye?"

And in the making of such choice women surely, and Catholic women above all, will wish to make their influence felt: women have in fact to regain their influence on life if they would see their children save their souls alive! Prayer and the supernatural are as ever their supreme means to this end; but after comes the natural means, chief among which is the political power so tardily put into their hands. Let Catholic women not disdain or under-rate its usefulness, for even so will they be able by its means to ameliorate the heavy burden that the war has brought to mankind. By using it they may help to rear aloft and hold on high the Christian ideals: in a greedy world drunk with the lust of power let Catholic women and Christian women fearlessly cry out "Blessed are the Poor"; in a licentious world given over to debauchery let them again cry out "Blessed are the Pure of Heart," and in a world torn by strife let them remember that the Peacemaker is likewise "Blessed!"

Formerly when things went wrong, women having no political power, had neither responsibility nor redress; but with their enfranchisement came both duty and power. In describing the main features of the W.C.A. I

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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The Borough Council Elections take place on Saturday, November 1st. We print in this issue our member, Miss Agnes Mott's, election address. Miss Mott is standing as an Independent Candidate for Marylebone, Ward 2. As we go to press we learn that our member, Mrs. V. M. Crawford is also standing for election, as Labour Candidate, for Marylebone, Ward 3. Any members and friends able to work for either of these candidates should send in their names to Miss Barry, at 55, Berners Street, W.1. It is not necessary to remind the readers of this paper of the great importance of getting women on to the Councils and other public bodies.

We learn from the *Common Cause* that the news published in the London papers that the Italian Senate had passed a woman's Franchise Bill is a mistake, the bill was passed by the Chamber of Deputies. It gives the vote to women on the same terms as men, with this exception, that it excludes registered prostitutes—it does not, of course, exclude their clients. The clause is both illogical and unjust, but the State Regulation of Vice is doomed in all countries, and we believe, with the *Common Cause*, that this clause will hasten its doom in Italy. The success of the Franchise Bill in the Senate is expected. We send hearty congratulations to Italian Suffragists on their victory.

As a sign of the times the principle of Woman Suffrage was endorsed for the first time in the House of Assembly, South Africa, recently. In Rhodesia and the British East Africa Protectorate, women have been enfranchised. The movement for the enfranchisement of Indian women is daily gaining ground, which is admitted even by opponents of this reform.

In France, where the suffrage movement has received a momentary check, it is reported that legislators are becoming uneasy at the number of French girls marrying foreigners, and that there is some talk of bringing forward a bill to enable French wives to retain their nationality upon marriage with a foreigner, and to enable the children to join the mother's name to the father's. That, after all, is the established custom in Spain, and

among Spanish speaking people, and is one which other countries might follow with advantage.

* * * *

The National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship has started a campaign in support of the amendments to the Sex Disqualification Bill, which will make the Bill a real Emancipation Bill, and not the shadowy thing it now is. The amendments will (1) give the franchise to women on the same terms as men; (2) will open the Home Civil Service to women, both married and single, on the same terms as men, but will permit of special regulations being laid down for the admission of women to the Civil Service overseas; (3) in addition to women being qualified in their own right to act as Jurors or as Justices of the Peace, the amendments will render eligible the wives of husbands who are qualified to act as Jurors, and Justices of the Peace respectively; and (4) will give peeresses the right to sit in the House of Lords; (5) an amendment is also being introduced to delete the Clause which lays down that juries consisting of men only and of women only, might be set up. The C.W.S.S. has sent resolutions in favour of these amendments to Catholic M.P.'s. The amendments will be moved by Lord Robert Cecil, Lt.-Colonel Sir Samuel Hoare, and Major Hills.

* * * *

We are glad to see that His Eminence Cardinal Bourne has been elected a Vice-President of the League of Nations Union. In the July issue of the *CATHOLIC CITIZEN* Miss Willis urged Catholics and especially Catholic women to join the Union, the support of his Eminence will no doubt bring many Catholics into its ranks.

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have endeavoured to shew that they meet the needs of the women electors and afford them an opportunity of making their influence felt, an influence that must be ever that of the "Peace Maker"; the freedom from party spirit and party strife also commends these associations to Catholic women who will in joining them, I feel sure, find a congenial atmosphere and an ever growing sphere of usefulness.

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.

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

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THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN.

Monthly, post free, 1s. 6d. per annum.

Hon. Editor MISS LEONORA de ALBERTI.
Hon. Treasurer MISS BRADY.

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

A DEFEAT FOR THE MATERIALIST.

Last January there was appointed by the Minister of Health, Dr. Addison, an Inter-Departmental Committee to consider the question of what concerted measures should be taken to mitigate the dangers of the dissemination of tropical and other diseases among the civil population of this country, arising from demobilisation. In view of the public interest in the subject this Committee has issued a preliminary note relating to the prophylaxis of Venereal Disease. The note is concerned mainly "with the advisability or otherwise of officially making available for the civil community certain methods of prophylaxis against venereal diseases (commonly spoken of as the "packet" system) which have been publicly commended as having been successful among combatants during the war."

The Chairman of Committee was Major Waldorf Astor, the members appointed were representative Medical Officers from the Local Government Board, the National Health Insurance Joint Committee, departments now incorporated in the Ministry of Health, the Army, the Navy, and Air Forces. In order to obtain a full and adequate presentation of the case medical representatives specially qualified from professional experience, as well as others who had taken an active interest in the question were invited to give evidence and furnish the Committee with their views. Among those who came before the Committee were medical officers from the Australian, Canadian, and New

Zealand Forces, from the United States Army Corps, the British Expeditionary Force, and other medical men and women whose names are honoured in this country. It will be seen, therefore, that the Committee were eminently suited to their difficult task, and spared no pains in their efforts to reach an impartial and scientific decision.

It is with the profoundest relief that we are able to record that the iniquitous 'packet system' is condemned by this influential committee. They find that the issue of prophylactic packets tends to give rise to a false sense of security, and thus to encourage the taking of risks which would not be otherwise incurred, and the neglect of facilities for early treatment when available, and, in certain circumstances, might even increase the spread of disease. They call special attention to the failure of the Contagious Diseases Acts in reducing disease, a method no less vaunted in its time than is the use of "prophylactic packets" at the present time. In a general conclusion they state that they "are not satisfied that there has been sufficient evidence put before them of the beneficial results gained by the distribution of prophylactic packets in various Forces to prove the value of the system or to justify them in recommending its official encouragement among the civil population. Unquestionably there have been many individual cases which appear to afford positive evidence in favour of a system of distribution of such prophylactics before exposure to infection; but the volume of such

evidence is too small and too exceptional, and the instances of its failure, even under favourable circumstances, are too numerous to allow of any other conclusion than that, in view of the considerations mentioned above, and of the administrative and social difficulties involved, the official application of a packet system to the civil community is neither desirable nor practicable."

That is good so far as it goes, but to our mind the paragraph preceding it is still better, for there the Chairman states that he has been asked on behalf of all the representatives of the different Departments who assisted at various times in the deliberations on this subject, to record their unanimous view that the true safeguard against these diseases is individual continence and a high standard of moral life. This implies a sound public opinion and a healthy national tone. The Committee set out to examine the evidence placed before them from the scientific and the medical point of view, and it is strictly in this spirit that they desire to record it as their opinion that the irreplaceable effect of the moral factor has been too frequently neglected or forgotten.

By the decisions of this Committee the materialists who think only of the physical and ignore the spiritual welfare of the nation, have suffered a heavy defeat; and they have been defeated not only on moral, but on scientific and medical grounds. And it is precisely from a scientific and medical point of view that they have vociferously claimed the right to spread their noxious and immoral propaganda.

L. de ALBERTI.

THE CHRISTMAS SALE.

Reconstruction is in the air—we hear talk of it on all hands, but action does not walk hand in hand with the vapourings which proceed from the mouths of politicians or the clap trap and vacillating suggestions of a large section of the press.

Our civilisation despite the enfranchisement of certain women is still lop-sided, awkward and illogical, and lacks the practicality, resource and attention to detail which should be characteristic of women.

Many a woman reading of Government schemes for the betterment of the people

gives a sigh of impatience and wails at the reckless waste, the expensive muddle, the futile economies and the lack of organisation and reasonable retrenchment.

The C.W.S.S. is a beacon of advancement among Catholic societies, and a guiding flare in the feminist world. The temporary restriction of its activities would be a disaster in the march of reconstruction and progress. The urgent work of the Society must not be limited.

Still little can be achieved without money, or better still a definite income which would relieve the Secretary and Committee members of unnecessary worry and strain and leave them free for propaganda and work.

The income is small and precarious; we have few members who are able to give big subscriptions, therefore we count on raising funds once a year by our Stall at the Christmas Sale. Will all our members support this sale by sending a donation, an article for sale or by giving personal service? Autumn is already upon us. If every member and associate pledged him or herself to give a donation or article for sale and to purchase one for a Christmas gift (at this the first Peace Christmas for five years) the success of the Sale would be assured and the Society enabled to proceed with indispensable and urgent work.

M.F.

C.W.S.S. DANCE.

Under the auspices of the C.W.S.S. a Dance will be held on Friday, November 21st, 8 to 12, at St. Edward's Hall, Catholic Church, Hoop Lane, Finchley Road, Golders' Green (5 minutes' walk from Golders' Green tube station). Finchley Road Tram from Cricklewood passes the door. Single tickets 5/6; Double ticket (lady and gentleman) 10/-, including light refreshments. Fancy or evening dress.

For particulars apply to the Hon. Sec., C.W.S.S., 55, Berners Street, W.1.

The Hon. Treasurer's note is held over till next month.

We regret that owing to the strike the CATHOLIC CITIZEN has been delayed this month.

AGNES MOTT.

THE INDEPENDENT WOMAN CANDIDATE.

Supported by the Women's Municipal Society, the Women's Local Government Association and the Mothers' Defence League.

Qualifications: Woman Sanitary Inspector during the last eight years at Leeds, Willesden, Chester, Battersea, and from 1916—1919 Woman Sanitary Inspector to the St. Marylebone Borough Council. Diploma of Hygiene and Public Health Law, Bedford College for Women, University of London. Member of the Royal Sanitary Institute, and certified Midwife, by examination (Central Midwives Board).

Housing.

1. To enforce urgent repairs to be executed at once either by the landlord or the Borough Council.
2. No turning out of present tenants to make room for the profiteer.
3. To lessen overcrowding by immediately carrying out the Housing Acts.
4. To build small houses rather than barrack-like buildings. Small houses are more convenient for working-class families and there should be sufficient bedrooms, a larder, bath, wash-houses and copper; ample water supply and a back-yard with proper conveniences.

Child Welfare.

1. By securing healthy homes and proper housing conditions.
2. By defending the rights of parents to the custody of their children.
3. By enabling parents to procure food, clothing and other necessities at a reasonable cost.

Reduce the Cost of Living.

1. By punishing the big profiteer.
2. By checking Municipal extravagance.
3. By opposing unreasonable increases in the rates.

Democratic Rights.

1. Representation of all classes and of both sexes on the Borough Council.
2. Equal rights and liberties for the poor as for the rich.
3. Equal pay for men and women for equal work.

4. Recognition of Trade Union rights and the proper payment of the servants of the Borough Council.

**VOTE FOR AGNES MOTT,
THE HOUSING CANDIDATE.**

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Ballot Paper AGNES MOTT. x

Polling on Saturday, 1st November, 1919,
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Barrow Hill Road, St. John's Wood, N.W.8.

AGNES MOTT,

25, Nottingham Place, W.1.

Oct. 13th, 1919.

WILL YOU HELP?

1. By personal recommendations of the candidate to your friends in St. John's Wood.
2. By addressing and delivering circulars.
3. By canvassing.
4. By loan of car on Polling Day.
5. By attendance at Election Rooms.
6. By stewarding at meetings.

Please address offers of help and enquiries to Miss F. Barry, Secretary of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, 55, Berners Street, W.1.

AGNES MOTT.

NATIONAL RESTAURANTS.

By V. J. F. HEAD.

The National Kitchens are once more to be restored, albeit camouflaged, under the genteel name of Restaurant. A rose by any other name is welcome, and we therefore hail with enthusiasm the National Restaurant.

The departed National Kitchens in spite of the difficulties that beset them on every side, were extremely good, they had to be cheap beyond what had been dreamed possible, and they must not be so good as to unsettle the vested interests.

Mr. J. G. Jones, Director of National Kitchens Division, tells us, the kitchens were started to cope with the submarine peril, he now quaintly informs us, there is *yet another*

peril, besides a *partial* world's shortage, the word "partial" is good—and that peril is, the menace of Trusts, Combines and Profiteers at home.

Apparently the results are much of a muchness, but no doubt the patriotic will take more kindly to the foes of their own household.

However, thanks to Mr. Jones and the Ministry of Food, the loyal citizen is provided with a bulwark, and those of us outside the favoured ranks of Trusts, Combines and Profiteers, need no longer perish by the way, but may look forward with a good hope to once more enjoying a square meal.

That the entire financial resources of the humbler type of citizen should no longer be spent on bodily nourishment is a keen matter for rejoicing, to those of us at least who feel that "Man does not live by bread alone."

Having once more got the kitchen in our midst let us insist politely but firmly that it shall remain. Let the Vested Interests rave never so madly. From this humble nucleus, for well we know a terrified Government will do nothing that savours of the horrid word *competition*, from this *humble* beginning, I say, let us hope we rise to better things. We desire that the Kitchens become a National Institution. That the best architects should design, that experts all along the line be called in, and we have a centre formed for cookery in all its branches—high class, plain, vegetarian, invalid and nursery. That the most skilled cooks be engaged and under them girls trained. In process of time the Kitchen should be able to send out meals, the ultimate aim being a kitchen to every street and square. Besides supplying a much felt want we arrive at the elements of a skilled profession carried on under possible conditions. In connection with the Kitchens let us press for domestic service hostels for necessary house cleaning, and in their wake the ideal nursery with their playgrounds. The domestic question has too long been a "side show," it is in fact fundamental. Directly this subject is approached with any proper appreciation, we are projected into the question of housing, and of health. Let us hope the Ministry of Health is taking notice. We ought not to remain content until a Central Research Bureau for Domestic Science is instituted, and last, and by no means least, a Woman Minister, who would represent those interests, and in her own person stand for the original meaning, of the ancient word, *Lady*.

REVIEW.

THE WRENS, being the Story of their Beginnings and Doings in various parts. (To be obtained from the W.R.N.S. Headquarters, 15, Great Stanhope Street, W.1. Price 1/-.)

This delightful souvenir of the work of the Wrens, edited by Miss Vera Laughton, M.B.E., Principal of the W.R.N.S. unit at the Crystal Palace, whose article "The Women in Blue" appeared in last month's issue of THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN, is intended according to her editorial article "to leave a record for the men and women of to-morrow to show that the women of to-day did not fail them." It is a record which every woman who takes an interest in the advancement of women should possess and treasure, for it will be of historic value in the days to come. At present the great event of the enrolling of women to help the English Navy is too close to us, it needs the perspective of distance to be seen at its true proportion. Was ever such thing since the world began and will it ever be again? We who hope for an end to war among civilised nations hope not, yet our hearts beat high with pride and pleasure at what our daughters and sisters have done. The Jenny Wren was a *rara avis*; indigenous to British soil; rare in quality, but not in quantity, they gathered in their legions to the whistle of the recruiting officer, and what they did, and how they did it, is set forth in this Souvenir Journal in a manner worthy of them. Between the cover with the saucy little wren perched on an anchor, with the witty motto, "Never at sea," and the row of smiling "ratings" looking over a wall, above the poem, "Afterwards" on the last page, we find inspiration, young enthusiasm, wit, humour, caricature, interesting portraits, and accounts of various activities of the women's naval service, in fact everything that good taste and good journalism could wish for.

A recent publisher's puff of a new novel describes it as a deep psychological study of the modern girl, adding a gloomy ejaculation "God help the race." The Wren Souvenir Journal is a bird-bolt to hit the graceless pessimist in the eye. Match me the true modern girl for the mother of a noble race. Clear of eye and unhampered of limb, undaunted and unchaperoned, she has won for herself the freedom of the city, and the freedom of the earth; the grace of God goes with her, and the praise of men.

THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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PUBLIC MEETINGS ON
WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS
At 3 o'clock

IN THE
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- Oct. 22nd—**WILLIAM AIRD, Esq.**: "The Food of the Future."
 .. 29th—**Miss PENROSE PHILP**: "Juvenile Delinquency: Why did the Child Offend?"
 Nov 5th—**Mrs. WHEATLEY**: "Does the Bible Advocate Women's Freedom?"
 .. 12th—**Miss M. I. INGRAM (Law Tripos Cant.)**: "Why Women need Women Lawyers"
 .. 19th—**Mrs. KEEVIL RICKFORD**: "The Problems, Immediately Confronting Women."
 .. 26th—**Miss ABADAM**: "Come and See Cometh: Go and She Goeth."

ADMISSION FREE.

Tea can be obtained in the Café at close of meeting at 6d. each.

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LECTURES.

- Wed., 22nd Oct. "Widows' Pensions." **Miss Penrose Philp**, Chairman, **Mrs. C. D. Racham**.
 Wed., 29th Oct. "Marriage and Divorce Maws." **Mr. J. Wells Thacker** (Barrister-at-Law). Chairman, **Mr. Cecil Chapman, J.P.**
 Wed., 5th Nov. "Indian Womanhood." **Mrs. Annie Besant**, Chairman **Mrs. Despard**.
 Wed., 12th Nov. "Women, the Law, and Lawyers." **Mr. Holford Knight** (Barrister-at-Law). Chairman **Mr. J. Wells Thacker** (Barrister-at-Law).
 Wed., 19th Nov. "The Preservation of Village Life." **Mrs. Warwick Draper**, Chairman, **Miss Hadow**.

Invitations given to Non-Members on application to The Secretary.

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