

· WOMEN'S · SERVICE ·  
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# THE Catholic Citizen

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

Vol. XI, No. 2.

FEBRUARY 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.

## Societies and Individuals.

BY ISABEL WILLIS.

Does it ever occur to us to consider the enormous number of Societies of various kinds existing amongst us at the present time? And if we do sometimes take count of them, does it occur to us further to consider whether the amount of good brought about by their means is at all proportionate to their number? My object in calling the attention of readers of the *Catholic Citizen* to the subject of this second question is to get a more satisfactory state of things; or, at least, to suggest a few thoughts that may be helpful to people wiser than myself, so that they may form a definite opinion as to what might be done. In speaking of Societies, I would leave out all such as exist chiefly for recreation, or some other social purpose of which the object is to benefit their own members—these having more of the nature of Clubs. But taking for our consideration the political, philanthropic and religious Societies, which have all been set going with the intention of gaining some particular object supposed to be for the advantage of the country, or certain sections of it, does it appear that these objects are being brought about as speedily or as thoroughly as might reasonably be expected? If we look around us we see in every direction some Society or other intended to bring about a reform in the matter as to which its founders desired a reform. Political—from the high and dry Tory kind, designed to save the nation from Socialism, down to the ultra Socialist or Communist that would

fain exterminate the high and dry Tory. Then the Philanthropic, most numerous of all, and the Religious, nearly as numerous as the Philanthropic and with aims as diametrically opposite to each other as are the Political. Each of these Societies has its committee, its subscribing members, its published reports, and so on. Is it really a fact that all these Societies are doing any work at all commensurate with the intentions of their originators, or even with the amount of money subscribed by their members? My own opinion is that the effect upon the country as a whole is very slight indeed, and that the reason is that the great majority of the members take their responsibilities far too lightly. They give in their names on the impulse of the moment, pay their subscriptions more or less regularly, and do nothing more. They seem either to expect that all necessary work will be done by the committee, or secretary, or they do not even trouble themselves to think about the matter at all—as if in some mysterious kind of way the mere existence of a Society is enough to bring about the end for which it was formed. Anyone who has much experience of serving on committees will, I believe, endorse what I have said. We find that out of say—3,000, or 300—nominal members, hardly a tenth can be reckoned as doing any actual individual work for the cause, whatever it may be. But let us suppose that all the 3,000, or 300, were full of zeal, that they talked and wrote about it continually,

believing most fervently in the urgent need for its speedy success—can anyone doubt that the result would be very different from what as a matter of fact it is? What is needed in every cause is that each individual who believes in the justice of that cause shall make it his or her chief object in life to bring others to believe in it, too, and never to rest satisfied with less than complete success. To take as an example one with which Catholic citizens are all familiar, and that is Woman Suffrage. For fifty years and more it moved slowly and slackly along, sometimes, it is true, making a little progress, but then seeming as far from fulfilment as ever. This was because numbers of people, who, if questioned, would have said they were Suffragists, did not really take it to heart and exert themselves to the extent of putting it forward as the chief object of all their efforts. The Militants acted very differently. They did not leave everything to committees. Indeed, they had no committee. They just worked at the thing themselves. When the Civil Authorities, objecting to their methods of working, sent them to prison, they cheerfully went on with their work inside the prison, and carried it on by means of hunger striking and other devices as thoroughly as if they had still been outside. The result was victory.

Citizens who stand aloof and fail to realise that they have a duty to the world they live in, may talk about Progress, but will never help it on. It is something in their own natures that they must set about altering first. They live too much on the surface, just drifting along. Good citizens know that if there is work to be done they have to take their share in doing it. "Practical Idealism" is an expression I once heard in a speech, and it seems to me to mean precisely what I have been trying to point out to-day. Idealism must come first: it is the one thing that can lift us up from our narrow personal views of life. Great things must come first and our Ideal must form our motive power. A great many people must have been struck with the beauty of the grand motto, "The Peace of Christ in the reign of Christ." Whilst with some the effect quickly passed away, with others it has become the Ideal fixed in their minds, to be carried out practically. They can do so in their work for the League of Nations' Union, and do their share in it by supporting it with all the means

in their power. Or they can apply it in a zealous effort to bring about the peace so sorely needed at the present time between Capital and Labour—employers and employees. Whatever their Ideal may be, let them keep it always before them and let it drive away all that aimless drifting attitude towards life which does so much harm not to themselves only, but by infecting others with the same fatal disease.

If one may quote from so despised a poet as Longfellow is in these days, we might learn something from his "Psalm of Life," and become "heroes in the Strife." His countrymen at the present time would express the same thought by remarking something to the effect of putting "more pep" into our way of doing things; but it matters very little how the thought is expressed so long as it forms a real motive power, first for thought and then for action.

#### "The Catholic Citizen."

Our gallant little paper has now been running for ten years, and thanks to the hard work and perseverance of our hon. editor, Miss Leonora de Alberti, has taken its place with the leading Suffrage papers, and is known not only in this country, but internationally. It has meant a hard struggle to keep its head above water, and we owe a great deal to Miss de Alberti and the professional writers who have contributed to the pages of the *Catholic Citizen*, and last, but not least, to the indefatigable paper sellers who, in rain and shine, in heat and cold, have sold it so regularly at church doors and outside meetings.

But now we feel the paper must be put on a firmer basis, and we are asking members and readers to rally to its help and to try and put it on a better business footing.

It is proposed to hold a party in honour of the editor, in order to show our appreciation of her ten years' devoted work. We hope to make the party (particulars of which will be found in our advert. column) a most successful function, with tea and entertainment, and we hope all members and readers will patronise it and buy tickets. Meantime, if each subscriber could obtain another one for the paper, it could be made a financially

(Continued on next page.)

## Notes and Comments.

We call the attention of our members to the advertisement of the Annual Meeting of St. Joan's S.P.A., to be held at Women's Service House, 35 Marsham Street, Great Smith Street, Westminster, on Saturday, March 14, at 3 p.m. We hope every member within reach of London will do her best to be present. The Annual Meeting is the chief opportunity for the Committee to meet members, and hear their views on the past year's doings, and future policy. Criticism is very useful.

\* \* \* \*

The picture of the introduction of the first woman M.P. is to be lent by the Office of Works to the Municipality of Plymouth. In his letter to the Mayor of Plymouth, recently published in the *Times*, Lord Astor says that it will be lent to Plymouth for a relatively short time, as a number of M.P's. of all parties have urged the Speaker to take charge of the picture temporarily, and that he is willing to do so. We sincerely hope that this is a preliminary to its being re-hung in the House of Commons, where it properly belongs. Its removal was a blunder keenly resented by women's societies.

Since the above was written, the picture has been lent by the Office of Works to Bedford College, until the Government has further need of it.

\* \* \* \*

A step forward in the movement for criminal law reform has been made by the appointment by the Home Office of a Committee to inquire into the treatment of young offenders, "who, owing to bad associations or surroundings, require protection and training, and to report what changes, if any, are desirable in the present law or its administration." The chairman is Sir Thomas F. Molony, formerly Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, who replaces Sir Evelyn Cecil, who has resigned owing to ill-health. Among the members are Mrs. Barrow Cadbury, Lady Lawrence, of the L.C.C. Education Com-

mittee, and Lady Lyttelton. We regret that Miss Marjory Fry has not been appointed to the Committee.

A great step forward was marked by the passing of the Children's Act in 1908. Since that Act, no person under sixteen can be sentenced to death or penal servitude, and no child under fourteen may be sentenced to imprisonment. The Committee will no doubt investigate the whole working of the Children's Courts set up under this Act. We shall look forward with interest to the result of this enquiry.

\* \* \* \*

The National Union of Women Teachers have sent a letter to Lord Burnham on certain aspects of the salary question, which the Union feels should be placed before him, as arbitrator, before his opinion is announced. The letter gives in the first place the resolutions passed at the Annual Meeting of the N.U.W.T., which we published in our last issue. It then proceeds to show how the N.U.W.T. has been systematically excluded from the deliberations of a Committee which the general public believes to be representative of the Local Education Authorities and the Teachers. The letter concludes with a request that Lord Burnham should bring the facts before the Board of Education and the Standing Joint Committee, and should point out to them that the terms of reference submitted to him should have included the question of equal pay. We trust Lord Burnham will accede to this request.

#### "The Catholic Citizen."

(Continued from previous page.)

sound proposition. It is often said that propaganda papers never pay, but with such a cause as ours, we believe that with a little more effort, the alleged impossibility could be overcome.

MARGUERITE FEDDEN,  
(Hon. Treasurer) *Catholic Citizen*.

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

AND  
Editorial Office of "Catholic Citizen":

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

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

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## The Rights of the Child.

Few movements have grown so rapidly, once started, than the movement for the protection of children. Elsewhere in these columns we speak of the new committee recently established in this country to consider the problem of the young offender.

The Secretary for Scotland has appointed a committee whose terms of reference are: "To inquire into the subject of sexual offences against children and young persons in Scotland, and the procedure followed in dealing with such cases (including methods for prevention and the after-care of the victims of such offences), and to report what changes, if any, are desirable in the law or its administration in the matters of prevention and after-care."

We are glad to see that on this particular Committee women out-number men. There are five women and two men, including Dr. Madeline Archibald, and Mr. James A. Fleming, Sheriff of Fife and Kinross.

To go further afield, a new chapter has opened by the decision adopted by the Council of the League of Nations last March and ratified by the Fifth Assembly, that the work carried out by the International Association for the Protection of Children, should henceforth be entrusted to the secretariat of the League of Nations. This work consists chiefly of the study of questions of hygiene and law in so far as they affect the moral and physical welfare of children. Comparison will be made between the methods and

experiences in different countries, such international co-operation as may help Governments in dealing with problems of child welfare will be encouraged, and exchange of views between officials and experts facilitated. The Assembly endorsed the Declaration of Geneva, which declares that the child must be given all opportunities for material and spiritual development, that it is entitled to be fed, clothed, taught to work, and protected against exploitation. The President of the Assembly pointed out that the League had thereby made the Declaration its Charter of Child Welfare. So far, so good, but then the demon of economy took possession of the Assembly and the question was entrusted to the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Women and Children. The two subjects are by no means akin, but there is to be no change in the Government representatives, with this exception, that Belgium has been asked to appoint a delegate.

There will be two groups of assessors, however: one to attend when questions relating to the traffic in women is discussed, the other when child welfare is under consideration.

The Council for the Representation of Women in the League of Nations, to which St. Joan's S.P.A. is affiliated, passed a resolution at the Annual Meeting held recently, urging the claims of International

Women's Organisations to be allowed to nominate one assessor on this question, in addition to their nominee on the committee for questions relating to the traffic in women. As Mrs. Corbett Ashby in moving the resolution said, we want a wider outlook on this subject than just welfare or health, we must have a woman who would not hesitate to bring forward, for instance, the question of child marriage, and the legal position of the child in the family; and the societies so far invited to appoint assessors, seem to be mainly concerned with welfare work.

The question of the rights of children is so wide that it is impossible to deal with it adequately in a short article, but there has been issued recently an admirable book: "An International Year Book of Child Care and Protection" (Longmans, 7s. 6d.), in which information is given gathered from every corner of the globe. The book has been compiled by Edward Fuller, Editor of "The World's Children," with an introduction by Mr. Percy Alden, M.P., Chairman of the Save the Children Fund, for which Fund the book is published. It is a book of reference, which all who are interested in the protection of children should hasten to buy.

L. DE ALBERTI.

## County Council Elections.

The triennial County Council elections take place on March 7. We hope that a number of women candidates will come forward and that they will be elected. We ask our readers to remember that the County Councils deal with many important questions, such as the housing problems in their districts, education, questions affecting public health, and so on. No votes should be wasted.

The National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship has issued the following questionnaire, which we borrow from the *Woman's Leader*:

"We print below a list of Questions to Local Government Candidates, and hope that great efforts will be made by our members and others to bring these before the notice of all Candidates in the approaching County Council Elections. It is particularly urged that the question relating to the right of married women to work should be brought to the Candidates' notice:

1. Will you support the application of the principle of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, 1919, so that a woman shall not be disqualified on account of her sex from any post or office under the Council?

2. Will you oppose the compulsory retirement on marriage of women employees of the Council?

3. Will you support equal pay for equal work and equal opportunities of training, entry and promotion for all men and women employed by the Council? (Equal Pay for Equal Work means that men and women should be paid at the same rate, whether this is to be computed by time or by piece in the same occupation or grade.)

4. Will you in any scheme for the training or relief of the unemployed include provision for women as well as for men, and will you pay special regard to the claims of those, whether men or women, who have dependents?

5. Will you urge your Watch Committee, or your Standing Joint Committee for County Police, to carry out the recommendations of the Report of the Departmental Committee on the Employment of Women Police, 1924, and appoint Women Police in your area?

6. Are you in favour of providing equal facilities for girls and boys in education, including technical and industrial education?

7. Will you endeavour to secure the appointment of an adequate representation of women on all Committees and Sub-Committees of your Council, either as elected or as co-opted members?"

## International Notes.

We learn on good authority that in the recent discussion in the Italian Parliament on the new electoral law, the question of Woman's Suffrage was never raised, the "Popolari" and other friends of the movement being for the present "on the Aventine"; in other words, holding aloof from the Chamber. Neither does there seem the smallest prospect of the Municipal vote being granted to women at present. Thus Mussolini's much advertised promise to women on the occasion of the Rome Congress has so far failed to materialise.

\* \* \* \*

In France, so we learn from *La Française*, the prospects are somewhat brighter. Over one hundred deputies have backed a Bill now before the Chamber to confer municipal votes and eligibility on women in time for them to vote at the next municipal elections. Let us hope for success this time!

\* \* \* \*

The position of women in the Prussian Landtag is even more satisfactory than in the Reichstag. *Frau Marie Stritt* writes to the *Mouvement Féministe* (Geneva) that there are 40 women in the new Diet of 450 members, as against 46 in the last. The most striking result for Protestant Prussia is surely that eight Catholic women have secured election as against three in the Reichstag.

It seems that the Reichstag has recently provided that women's unemployed doles shall henceforth be on the same scale as men's. In England, of course, they are always on a lower scale, although the assessment of the children is a separate one. No doubt this is one of the good results of the presence of over thirty women Deputies.

\* \* \* \*

We read in *Equal Rights* that one of the first official acts of Mrs. Ferguson, Governor-elect of Texas, has been to confer lucrative appointments on over fifty women, in order, she says, that Texas women should at length be given a chance.

\* \* \* \*

The January N.C.W.C. *Bulletin* contains a very full account of the great annual Convention of Catholic women which took place in November at St. Louis. The pro-

ceedings lasted four days, and attracted 277 official delegates and nearly 1,000 members and visitors, besides two archbishops, several bishops, and a host of priests. We are glad to note, however, that women took a leading part in the proceedings both as speakers and chair-women. A banquet attended by over 600 guests brought the Convention to an end. The new President of the N.C.W.C. for the coming year, in succession to Mrs. Michael Gavin, is Miss Florence Loeber, who, it is interesting to note, is a lawyer and one of the few women members of the Louisiana Bar.

\* \* \* \*

An interesting article in *Die Christliche Frau* describes the lives of several German anchoresses who, it appears, were fairly numerous from the tenth to the twelfth centuries, and practised amazing austerities.

V. M. C.

## Women and the League.

The Annual Meeting of the Council for the Representation of Women in the League of Nations was held on January 16, at the Women's Institute. The President, Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon, in opening the proceedings, said that as the Council's work was to be discussed, she wished to say that she thought the work of the Council was more necessary than ever. She had consented to continue as President.

The most important business of the meeting was the discussion arising from a resolution protesting against the omission of women from the Commission appointed to investigate the question of slavery. Miss Hessel, in moving the resolution, gave an account of the existence of slavery in Abyssinia, and in Kenya. The Chairman said the omission of women was a great blunder, and it was difficult to believe it was not deliberate.

In the afternoon a public meeting was held, at which Mrs. Swanwick and Mrs. Wilson Harris were the speakers, the chair being taken by Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon, who opened the meeting by a vote of congratulation to Mrs. Fawcett, present in the audience. Dame Millicent Fawcett was

received with great applause, when she rose to reply.

Mrs. Swanwick dealt with the difficulties of obtaining adequate representation of women, and with the possibility of getting questions placed on the Agenda of the Assembly. Mr. Wilson Harris dealt with the Protocol and disarmament.

We are very grateful to all who have been so good as to send their subscriptions in the first month of the year, and would ask those members who have not yet done so to follow the good example of these early ones and not delay beyond this month. Every penny of the money is needed for current expenses.

GABRIELLE JEFFERY.

## LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

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

"An American Tea" was held on January 31st, at 78 Bedford St., by kind permission of Mrs. Gordon, who also provided the refreshments. After expenses were deducted the amount realized was £2 18s. 3d., thanks to those who helped in money and kind. Several new members were enrolled.

## Equal Franchise.

The National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship have approached the Prime Minister asking him to receive a deputation of representatives of their own and of other Organisations in order to lay before him the need for the early appointment of the Conference of all political parties referred to in the following statement made by Mr. Baldwin during the "Election" Campaign:

"The Unionist Party are in favour of equal political rights for men and women, and desire that the question of the extension of the franchise should, if possible, be settled by agreement. With this in view they would, if returned to power, propose that the matter be referred to a conference of all political parties on the lines of the Ullswater Committee."

St. Joan's S.P.A. is supporting the N.W.S.E.C. in their request for a Deputation.

## International Woman Suffrage Alliance.

The British Overseas Committee of the I. W. S. A. held a conference on February 9, at the Hotel Victoria, to discuss the development of the Committee's work. Miss Collison, Australia, gave the reasons why the work of the Committee is needed, and why it should be extended. Mrs. Rischbeith, Australia, spoke of the work already accomplished, and of the importance of having a central organisation to promote equal citizenship throughout the Empire. The Chair was taken by Mrs. Corbett Ashby. Representatives from many women's societies of Great Britain and the Dominions attended the conference.

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**OBJECT.**

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

THE THIRTEENTH

**ANNUAL MEETING**

(for Members only)

will be held on . . .

**SATURDAY, MARCH 14th, 1925, at 3 p.m.**

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**35 Marsham St., Westminster.**

Speakers:

MISS BARCLAY CARTER                      MISS MONICA O'CONNOR

MISS F. de G. MERRIFIELD              MISS MARY WALL

MISS MACKINTOSH                      and others.

All members are requested to attend if possible.

*The Catholic Citizen.*

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MISS L. de ALBERTI,

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